



Fire Begets Ash but Lions can give Birth to Jackals: Fixed Mindset and Growth Mindset and their Influence on Leadership Succession Dynamics

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Abstract

This research employs a qualitative mixed-method research approach, integrating desk research for case analysis, thematic analysis, and comparative analyses to investigate the impact of fixed and growth mindsets on leadership succession dynamics. The metaphor “Fire begets ash but lions can give birth to jackals” serves as the conceptual framework for the study. Through a comparative analysis of leaders, the research explores how fixed and growth mindsets influence leadership succession practices. Systematic analysis of case studies and narratives challenges traditional theories while incorporating behavioral theory. The findings reveal a blended approach in leadership succession, incorporating both mindsets. The study establishes that deviating from normative bloodline succession practices enables leaders to integrate adaptability characteristics from behavioral leadership theory. This transformative journey enhances leadership skills, fosters resilience, openness to diverse perspectives, and forward-thinking approaches, shaping leaders into improved versions of their predecessors.

Keywords: Leadership Succession; Fixed Mindset; Growth Mindset; Comparative Analysis; Behavioral Leadership; Great Man Theory; Trait Theory; Leadership Theories; Conceptual Framework; Bloodline Succession; Qualitative Research Design

Abbreviations: DRC: Democratic Republic of Congo.

Introduction

In the realms of both political and business environments, the entrenched norm of leadership succession, often from parent to child and predominantly from father to son, has become a conventional practice closely linked to theories such as the Great Man theory or trait theory. This practice raises pertinent questions about the efficacy of such successions and the resulting leadership styles that may mirror characteristics aligned with fixed mindsets. The hereditary transfer of leadership prowess has been a

longstanding tradition, and its examination brings to light parallels with the Great Man or trait theories.

Mindset, serving as a silent architect, plays a pivotal role in shaping prevailing attitudes, beliefs, and perspectives about leaders and the world they navigate [1]. Rooted in past experiences, cultural background, language, geography, and education, mindset acts as the lens through which individuals interpret experiences, face challenges, and set goals. Carol Dweck’s seminal work, “Mindset: The New Psychology of Success,” explores the dichotomy of two core beliefs individuals hold about their capabilities and behaviors: the fixed mindset and the growth mindset [2].

As we employ a qualitative mixed-method research approach to understand human cognition within the context of leadership succession, an intriguing question surfaces: does leadership succession behavior have connections with mindset? This inquiry holds significance beyond theoretical contemplation, carrying practical implications for leadership development, organizational strategies, and educational curricula. The intersection of mindset and leadership styles becomes a focal point, inviting exploration into the intricate relationship between these psychological orientations, particularly concerning leaders groomed through familial successions.

Problem Statement

In the intricate dance of leadership, a complex interplay of psychological forces shapes the landscape, with fixed and growth mindsets at the forefront. Within the realms of leadership succession, especially in political and business domains, a prevailing tradition persists – the hereditary transfer of leadership, often from father to son. Rooted in theories like the Great Man and trait theories, this conventional practice raises crucial questions about the leadership styles cultivated through familial successions, particularly regarding the accommodation of fixed mindset characteristics. The core challenge lies in unraveling the intricate threads that connect mindset orientations to the nuanced tapestry of leadership philosophies among leaders groomed through the Great Man or Trait theory of succession. Do leaders shaped by these ideologies embrace leadership styles aligned with fixed mindsets, or are there variables guiding them toward a growth mindset?

Purpose of Study

This study seeks to delve into the complex interplay of mindset and leadership, transcending conventional boundaries, to comprehend how one's cognitive framework shapes leadership behaviors. Specifically, within the context of leaders succeeding their predecessors, the focus is on unraveling the nuanced relationship between mindset orientations and leadership styles. By closely examining the dichotomy between fixed and growth mindsets, the study aims to discern the profound implications these orientations have on leadership styles. The overarching purpose is to contribute to a deeper comprehension of the psychological underpinnings influencing leadership dynamics, particularly in the unique context of familial successions.

Rationale of the Study

The rationale for this study is deeply rooted in the notion that leadership succession, as a multifaceted phenomenon, cannot be fully grasped without acknowledging the role of

mindset, particularly within familial successions. Integrating mindset into the exploration of leadership enriches our understanding, providing insights into the adaptability, resilience, and innovative potential of leaders following in familial lines. By aligning with Carol Dweck's foundational concepts and extending beyond, the study aims to bridge the gap between theory and practical implications, thereby enhancing leadership development initiatives.

Significance of the Study

This research holds paramount significance for a diverse audience, ranging from organizational leaders to educators and scholars in psychology and leadership studies. By unveiling the connections between mindset and leadership, especially within familial successions, it offers actionable insights for leadership development, organizational strategies, and educational curricula. The study significantly contributes to understanding how mindsets influence leadership behaviors and succession planning, offering practical insights for shaping effective leadership strategies within the context of familial successions. As organizational landscapes evolve, the research guides leadership development programs, fostering a culture of continuous learning and adaptability, particularly in the unique context of leaders succeeding their predecessors. Its relevance to educational curricula enriches programs in psychology, leadership studies, and business management, equipping future leaders with a deeper understanding of the psychological aspects within familial successions. Aligned with global trends emphasizing resilient and adaptive leadership, this research offers timely contributions to the ongoing discourse on shaping leaders capable of navigating complex challenges, specifically within the context of familial successions.

Research Method and Design

Research Method: This study employs a qualitative mixed-method research approach that integrates desk research for case analysis, thematic analysis, and comparative analyses. This approach provides a comprehensive exploration of the impact of mindset on leadership behaviors within the context of succession planning [3]. The research aims to contribute to existing knowledge on leadership theories and practices, focusing on understanding the connections between leadership behavior, mindset, and succession planning [3].

Research Design: The research design adopts a mixed-method approach, incorporating desk research and content analysis, which employs thematic and comparative analysis [4]. This design facilitates a thorough exploration of leadership theories, mindset connections, and commonalities in succession processes [4].

Data Collection

Desk Research

- Extensive literature review of studies, scholarly articles, and books on leadership theories, mindset, and succession planning.
- In-depth analysis of Carol Dweck's seminal book, "Mindset: The New Psychology of Success," to comprehend core concepts and their relevance to leadership.
- Examination of empirical studies and experiments exploring the link between mindset and leadership behavior.

Content Analysis

- Detailed analysis of case studies on political leaders (e.g., Mahamat Idriss Déby Itno, Nana Akufo-Addo) and business leaders (e.g., Abigail Johnson, James Murdoch) to identify commonalities in their succession processes.
- Identification and categorization of leadership behaviors exhibited by these leaders based on various leadership theories (e.g., transformational, transactional, laissez-faire).

Data Analysis

- **Thematic Analysis:** This method involves identifying recurring themes or patterns within narratives. The analysis highlights common themes among political leaders (e.g., dynastic succession, educational backgrounds, early engagement in governance) and business leaders (e.g., family legacy, education, financial acumen).

- **Comparative Analysis:** The content systematically compares the characteristics of political and business leaders, examining similarities and differences. This reveals patterns in succession practices, educational backgrounds, and approaches to governance in both realms.

➤ Ethical Considerations

- Adherence to ethical guidelines in data collection and analysis.
- Proper citation and acknowledgment of sources in the literature review.

➤ Limitations

- Dependency on available literature and case studies.
- The subjectivity of content analysis in interpreting leadership behaviors

Top of Form

Literature Review

Mindset: Mindset is defined as the prevailing attitudes, beliefs, and perspectives individuals hold about the world and themselves [1]. It plays a crucial role in shaping how experiences are interpreted, challenges are faced, and goals are set. Influenced by factors such as past experiences, cultural background, language, geography, and education, mindset can either hinder or facilitate personal growth and adaptability. Carol Dweck, in her influential book "Mindset: The New Psychology of Success", introduces the concept that individuals can possess either a fixed mindset or a growth mindset, influencing their beliefs about capabilities and behaviors [2].



Figure 1: Contrasting perspectives: A glimpse into fixed mindset vs. growth mindset individuals, courtesy of Success Integrated [5].

Fixed Mindset: Those with a fixed mindset perceive their capabilities as static and unchangeable, leading them to avoid

challenges and give up easily when faced with obstacles [2].

Growth Mindset: In contrast, individuals with a growth

mindset believe that their capabilities can be developed through dedication and effort. This mindset fosters a love for learning, resilience in facing challenges, and a greater potential for achieving success [2].

Influence of Mindset on Leadership Style and Behaviors

The relationship between mindset and leadership styles has been a subject of inquiry since Dweck's foundational work. Smith [1] suggests that mindset can significantly impact leadership style. Leaders with a fixed mindset may align with traditional leadership theories such as the Great Man Theory and Trait Theory, displaying characteristics of being unchangeable and less adaptable. On the other hand, a growth mindset may align with Behavioral Theory, emphasizing adaptability, openness to learning, and responsiveness to feedback [6].

Experimentation in Leadership and Mindset

Grobman [6], a leadership coach and business strategist, conducted an experiment to explore the link between mindset and leadership styles. The results, based on a diverse sample of 179 participants from 24 countries, showed a strong correlation between a growth mindset and a preference for the transformational leadership style. This experiment provides empirical evidence supporting the connection between mindset and leadership preferences [6].

Leadership Theories

In every company, regardless of its industry or size, effective leadership is a crucial factor for success [7]. Good leaders play a vital role in implementing effective business practices, and acquiring leadership skills often requires dedicated effort [7]. That's why there are comprehensive degree programs specifically designed for management, guiding students to become exceptional leaders in their business endeavors [7].

In the realm of leadership, numerous theories explore the origin of leadership skills, debating whether leaders are inherently born with these abilities or if they can be developed over time. Some assert that leadership qualities are innate and resistant to teaching, while others contend that anyone can cultivate the necessary skills to become a proficient leader [8]. An influential study announced by Besant [9] in *The World*, a global daily news program, introduced a groundbreaking perspective by suggesting that leadership skills may have an inherited component. This study, published in the *Leadership Quarterly*, is noteworthy for being the first to identify a specific DNA sequence linked to the inclination of individuals to assume leadership roles

[9]. Collaborative research conducted by institutions such as University College London, Harvard, and New York University focused on comparing genetic samples and job-related information from 4,000 individuals within the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health [9].

The study highlighted a particular genotype, rs4950, directly associated with leadership, particularly in supervisory roles at work [9]. According to study author Jan-Emmanuel De Neve, the identified genotype, rs4950, seems to be connected with the transmission of leadership abilities across generations. He noted, "The conventional wisdom - that leadership is a skill - remains largely true, but we show it is also, in part, a genetic trait" [9]. Researchers emphasized the need for further investigation to ascertain the role of this genotype in shaping leaders, particularly in understanding how one's upbringing contributes to the development of these skills [9].

While gaps in determining the extent to which genotype shape leaders and the contribution of upbringing influence leadership exist, within the leadership domain, numerous theories attempt to explain how leadership functions, what attributes constitute good leaders, and how to achieve effectiveness in leadership roles [7]. Various leadership styles exist, with their impact contingent upon the specific group being led and the industry involved. Leadership theories serve as frameworks elucidating how these styles operate within a company, contributing to its success.

Leadership theories are explanations detailing how and why certain individuals emerge as leaders. These theories focus on identifying traits and behaviors that individuals can adopt to enhance their leadership capabilities.

Great Man Theory

The development of the Great Man Theory primarily took place in the 19th century under the guidance of Scottish historian Thomas Carlyle [7]. Carlyle proclaimed that "the history of the world is but the biography of great men," asserting that leaders possess inherent qualities that empower them to leave a lasting impact on society [7].

The Great Man Theory further posits that individuals in positions of power rightfully hold them due to their possession of unique gifts and traits. It suggests that all exceptional leaders share specific characteristics, irrespective of the time or place in which they lived [8].

Trait Theory

Aligned with the Great Man Theory, Trait Theory proposes that leaders are born, not made. Derived from

Carlyle's earlier work, the Trait Theory of leadership posits that leaders possess innate traits and characteristics that qualify them for their roles. Leadership ability, according to this theory, is a result of a combination of personality, physical attributes, and intelligence [8].

The underlying assumption of Trait Theory is that identifying individuals with the appropriate traits can enhance an organization's performance and bring it closer to accomplishing specific objectives [8].

Behavioral Theory

Behavioral theory, also known as the style theory, revolves around the actions of leaders and posits that these behaviors can be emulated by other leaders [7]. This theory challenges the notion that leaders are inherently successful and suggests that successful leaders can be developed through learnable behaviors [7]. Behavioral theories of leadership emphasize observing a leader's actions as the primary indicator of leadership success, focusing on actions rather than inherent qualities [7]. In this theory, patterns of behavior are meticulously observed and classified as various "styles of leadership" [7].

➤ Great Man Theory of Leadership

- Believes that great leaders are born and not made.
- Emphasizes qualities like charm, judgment, courage, intelligence, action orientation, and aggressiveness.
- Assumes these characteristics cannot be taught [10].

➤ Trait Theory

- Similar to the Great Man Theory.
- Argues that leadership qualities can be acquired, but good leaders have innate characteristics that facilitate easier learning.
- Assumes certain traits make a good leader [10].

➤ Behavioral Theory

- Opposite of Great Man Theory.
- Asserts that leaders can be made, not necessarily born.
- Focuses on behavioral skills that can be taught to anyone.
- Views leadership as a set of learned behaviors rather than fixed traits [10].

Leadership theories serve as comprehensive explanations for the processes that lead certain individuals to assume leadership roles and elucidate the traits and behaviors conducive to enhancing leadership capabilities [7]. These theories accentuate the significance of attributes and actions that individuals can embrace to augment their leadership prowess [7]. Noteworthy traits identified by leaders as imperative for effective leadership encompass a commitment to strong ethics and high moral standards, excellent self-organizational skills, adeptness as efficient learners, a dedication to nurturing employee growth, and the

cultivation of connections and a sense of belonging.

Research affirms the global acknowledgment of these traits as pivotal for effective leadership [7]. Ralph Nader encapsulates this perspective by asserting, "The function of leadership is to produce more leaders, not followers" [7]. This underscores the perpetual need for individuals capable of seamlessly continuing the leadership legacy left by their predecessors. However, the critical issue arises in the selection and identification of individuals deemed suitable for leadership development and grooming [7]. The decision-making process concerning who and how leaders are chosen for growth or grooming becomes a significant challenge within the realm of leadership.

Leadership practices associated with succession planning or leadership behaviors in the governance of institutions tend to reveal the mindsets and theories to which leaders align. Leaders who adhere to the Great Man and Trait theory often believe that they are inherently great, and their outstanding characteristics can be passed on to their children. Such leaders typically do not seek competence in succession or in appointing leaders to groom or succeed them; instead, they automatically nominate their children to succeed them, convinced that these children have inherited their leadership capabilities. Leaders who align with the Behavioral Theory take a more moderate and balanced approach, suggesting that leadership is a skill that can be developed over time. This shift in focus moves from inherent traits to observable actions, behaviors, and responses in various situations. The theory posits that leadership is not fixed but comprises a set of learned behaviors, asserting that anyone can become an effective leader with the right guidance and a willingness to adapt [10].

While the Great Man Theory and, to some extent, Trait Theory are perceived as less relevant due to their inherent biases and the idea that leaders are born, these theories persist in some contexts. Some leaders continue to groom individuals they believe are born with leadership qualities, perpetuating the flawed elements of these theories [10]. The case of Kim Jong-Un in North Korea is cited as an example where leadership is inherited, emphasizing the importance of education and adaptability over innate traits [10]. Father-to-son succession has historically been a norm in political and business environments, with the assumption that leadership qualities are passed on from one generation to the next.

Political Succession with Resemblance to Great Man/Trait Theory

Kim Jong-Un - North Korea In December 2011, Kim assumed leadership in North Korea following the death of his father, Kim Jong-il [11], on December 17, 2011. His

grandfather, Kim Il-Sung, was the inaugural leader of North Korea. Kim attended a state school in Switzerland from 1998 to 2000, posing as a diplomat's son [11]. According to classmates, Kim was characterized as a reserved child who was awkward with girls and indifferent to political matters. However, he excelled in sports and harbored a keen interest in the American National Basketball Association and Michael Jordan. A friend claimed to have seen pictures of Kim with Kobe Bryant and Toni Kukoč [11]. Subsequently, reports surfaced that Kim Jong Un attended the Liebfeld Steinhölzli state school in Köniz, near Bern, under the alias "Pak-un" or "Un-pak" from 1998 to 2000, posing as the son of a North Korean embassy employee in Bern. Kim is said to have later enrolled in the Kim Il Sung Military University in Pyongyang from 2002 to 2007. Ruling North Korea as a totalitarian state, Kim's leadership has embraced the same cult of personality as his father and grandfather [11]. Described as a de facto absolute monarchy or a "hereditary dictatorship," the ruling Kim family in North Korea includes Kim Il Sung, Kim Jong Il, and Kim Jong Un. Kim Jong Un's elder half-brother, Kim Jong Nam, initially appeared as the favored successor but reportedly fell out of favor after 2001 when caught attempting to enter Japan with a fake passport to visit Tokyo Disneyland. On January 15, 2009, the South Korean news agency Yonhap reported that Kim Jong Il appointed Kim Jong Un as his successor. Despite not being the original heir, Kim Jong Un was selected based on loyalty and a shared belief in his father's ideals [11].

Mahamat Idriss Déby Itno - Chad

At 37 years old, Mahamat Idriss Déby Itno, the son of the late President Déby Idriss, has assumed the presidency of Chad, succeeding his father, who had been in power for 30 years until his death in 2021 while battling rebels on the frontline [12]. Battle-hardened like his father, General Mahamat has played a leading role in the army since 2013 when he was appointed deputy head of Chadian forces, participating in anti-terror operations in Mali. He also headed the presidential guard 18 months before Chad's general elections and played a significant role in securing his father's sixth term [12]. Independent media and some observers believed that Deby's son Ibrahim was being groomed to succeed his father, especially when President Idriss Déby appointed his eldest son, Mahamat Idriss Déby, as his personal secretary [13]. The polite and self-effacing manner of Deby's eldest son belied his reputation as a rabble-rouser [13]. He has brawled with French soldiers in bar fights in N'Djamena and tangled with the law in Canada over allegedly having issued death threats. His father's move to appoint him personal secretary after his return from his studies in Ottawa in the summer of 2004 raised hackles that the President was grooming his son to be his successor [13].

Faure Gnassingbé - Togo

Faure Gnassingbé, 54, became the president of Togo, succeeding his father Étienne Eyadéma after the latter's death in February 2005. His father took over power in Togo through a military coup in 1967, which allowed Gnassingbé to enjoy some privileges, such as schooling in one of the best universities in the USA. His grooming process began after school when he was appointed as a financial adviser to his father as preparation to succeed him [12]. Later, in what many believed was a grooming project to succeed his father, Gnassingbé was appointed Minister of Telecommunications, Mines, and Equipment [12]. When his father died in February 2005, Gnassingbé was named successor by the Military. His appointment was denounced by the international community for violating Togo's 1992 Constitution, and Gnassingbé bowed to pressure and stepped down. He agreed to a diplomatic election which he later won and was installed as president in May 2005. He was re-elected to the presidency in March 2010 [12].

Joseph Kabila - DRC

At 49 years old, Joseph Kabila served as President of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) between January 2001 and January 2019. Before assuming office, Kabila was part of the rebel group led by his father Laurent-Désiré Kabila that ousted the President of then Zaire, Mobutu Sese Seko in 1997 [12]. When his father took over, Kabila was sent to China for additional training, and upon returning, he was promoted to the rank of Major General, becoming the head of the country's armed forces. When his father Laurent-Désiré Kabila died in 2001 at the age of 29, Kabila was chosen to replace his fallen father ten days later. It remains unclear why the decision went that way, but it's believed his father's senior advisers chose him because of his military leadership and his humble character [12]. Later, 300 Members of Parliament in the DRC passed a motion approving Mr. Joseph Kabila as the new president to replace his slain father. Kabila would later rule the country for over 18 years.

Ali Bongo Ondimba - Gabon

Born in February 1959 in Congo-Brazzaville, Ali Bongo, commonly referred to as 'The Magician,' has been the president of oil-rich Gabon since October 2009. He succeeded his father, Omar Bongo, who had ruled the country for nearly 42 years. Before joining politics, Bongo was a musician until he was convinced by his father to join politics [12]. His father groomed him into an ambitious politician, and by 1989, he appointed him the Foreign Minister [12]. For the time leading to his father's death, Ali Bongo led Gabon's Defense Ministry. Following his father's death, Bongo expressed interest in assuming power even though many saw him as a

'spoilt child' who hardly spoke local languages given he was raised in France. Bongo received support within the PDG Party leadership, his father's party, and was fronted as the party representative in the Gabonese presidential elections in 2009. He won the election marred with irregularities with 42% [12].

Nana Akufo-Addo - Ghana

Nana Akufo-Addo is the current president of Ghana. He has been in office since 7 January 2017. Similarly, his father Edward Akufo-Addo was one of the founding fathers of Ghana who engaged in the fight for Ghana's independence and later became the Chief Justice (1966–70), and President (1970–72) [12]. Before assuming office, Nana Akufo first ran for presidency in 2008 and 2012 but lost on both occasions to John Atta Mills and John Dramani respectively [12]. He pursued his presidential ambitions for the third time in 2016 on the New Patriotic Party, and this time, he defeated John Dramani Mahama with 53.85% of the votes. While he did not succeed his father directly, he was groomed by his father and Uncle JB Danquah who were members of the founding fathers of the "big six" who led the independence struggle of Ghana [12]. He attended the best schools in the United Kingdom and worked in France as a lawyer and simulated in the political party (National Patriotic Party) which championed the ideology of his uncle JB Danquah and served in several high-profile political positions under the NPP government, such as the Foreign Minister and Attorney General and Minister of Justice [12].

Uhuru Kenyatta - Kenya

Uhuru Kenyatta, 59, has been the President of Kenya since 2013. His father, Jomo Kenyatta, was similarly in the same position having served as Kenya's first president from 1964 to his death in 1978 [12]. Prior to that, Jomo Kenyatta had served as Prime Minister between 1963 and 1964 [12]. Uhuru's grooming was a special case. He followed his father's footsteps in becoming president of Kenya and was deliberately groomed to take up the position but the difference with his grooming was that he was not old enough to have succeeded his father. Instead, another President of Kenya, Arap Moi, who idolized Jomo Kenyatta, the father of Uhuru Kenyatta, groomed him and supported him to be president so that the name Jomo Kenyatta would immortalize Kenyatta's legacy. Njiru [14] reported that in 1999 while chatting with Moi, the issue of children succeeding their parents as presidents cropped up, and Moi expressed his displeasure that certain great men had not been succeeded by their children. He continued by saying although sometimes Lions can give birth to Jackals, he believes that "fire begets ash" and so he is looking to build Uhuru Kenyatta up to become a President so the Kenyatta name does not disappear [14].

Khama Ian - Botswana

Seretse Khama Ian was the President of Botswana from 2008 to 2018. Khama Ian also followed the footsteps of his father, Sir Seretse Khama, who was the first President of Botswana from September 1966 to July 1980. Before the presidency, Khama, a pilot by profession, had served as the Vice President of the country [12]. Ian Khama is the second child of Sir Seretse Khama (1 July 1921 – 13 July 1980), Botswana's foremost independence leader and its president from 1966 to 1980, and Lady Khama. He is also the grandson of Sekgoma II (1869–1925), who was the paramount chief of the Bamangwato people, and the great-grandson of Khama III (1837–1923), their king [15]. His great-great-grandfather of Kgosi Kgolo Sekgoma I was Chief of the Bamangwato people (1815–1885). Ian Khama was educated at Waterford Kamhlaba, a United World College in Mbabane, and at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. He is a qualified pilot. In April 1977, Khama was appointed as a brigadier general at the age of 24 during Sir Seretse Khama's Presidency, making him the Deputy Commander to the late former Vice President Lt. Gen. Mompoti Merafhe [15]. He later served as the Commander of the Botswana Defence Force (BDF) from his appointment in 1989, retiring from the position in 1998. During this time, Khama received military honors, including the Founder Officer Medal for being part of the Botswana Defence Force when it was created in 1977, the Duty Code Order for devotion to duty, and the Distinguished Service Medal in 1997 after 20 years of service. Khama, serving as Commander of the Botswana Defence Force, announced on 16 December 1997 that he would retire from his command on 31 March 1998. Because this was the same date as the planned retirement of President Quett Masire, it fueled political speculation about Khama [15]. On 1 April 1998, when Vice-President Festus Mogae succeeded Masire as President, Khama was appointed as the new Vice-President [15]. However, Khama did not hold a seat in the National Assembly, and so could not immediately take office as Vice-President. President Mogae stepped down as President of Botswana, as he had long said he would do, on 1 April 2008, and Khama succeeded him as President [15].

Navinchandra Ramgoolam - Mauritius

Navinchandra Ramgoolam was the Prime Minister of Mauritius from 2005 to 2014 and leader of the Labour Party. Navin Ramgoolam, the son of the man who led Mauritius to independence in 1968, [16] followed in the footsteps of his father Seewoosagur Ramgoolam who served as the island's first Chief Minister (1961-1968), Prime Minister (1968-1982), and Governor-General (1983-1985) [12]. He attended the Royal College Curepipe from 1960 to 1966 and proceeded to study medicine in Ireland between 1968 and 1975, where he obtained the LRCP&SI licenses from the Royal College

of Physicians of Ireland and the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland [17]. When his father died in December 1985, Ramgoolam was on the point of immigrating to Canada when Sir Satcam Boolell (then leader of the Labour Party) and Paul Berenger (the leader of the Mauritian Militant Movement) convinced him to return and assume the leadership of the Labour party with the objective of an alliance which would defeat Anerood Jugnauth in the general elections. He subsequently served as a medical doctor at Dr. A.G. Jeetoo Hospital in Mauritius from 1985 to 1987 [17]. In 1987, he started his law studies at The London School of Economics and Political Science, University of London. Upon completion of his LLB degree in 1990, he returned to Mauritius to face the electorate as the new leader of the Labour Party in the 1991 general election [17].

Business/Economic with Resemblance to Great Man/Trait Theory

Edward “Ned” Johnson III/Abigail Johnson: Fidelity Investments: Fidelity Investments, established by Ned Johnson's father, Edward Johnson II, in 1946, has evolved into one of the world's largest investment firms (Aberback, 2015). While Ned Johnson remains the chairman of the board at Fidelity, his daughter Abigail, aged 53, assumed the roles of president and CEO in 2014. Following a trajectory similar to her father's, she commenced her journey at Fidelity as an analyst in 1988 after completing an MBA at Harvard Business School. Abigail was subsequently promoted to an executive role in 1997 [18]. While Ned tended to be more of a risk-taker, his daughter exhibits a more pragmatic approach, thoroughly analyzing opportunities from every angle before making decisions. Financially, Abigail has already surpassed her father in net worth; he is currently ranked as the 63rd richest person on the Forbes list of the 400 Richest Americans, with \$7.4 billion, while she holds the 35th position, with \$13.3 billion.

Paul Newman/Nell Newman: Newman's Own: The genesis of Newman's Own can be traced back to the collaboration between actor Paul Newman and his author-friend A.E. Hotchner, who each contributed \$20,000 to establish the venture after the homemade salad dressing bottles they shared during one Christmas became a big hit [18]. The duo expanded into other products, including spaghetti sauce, popcorn, and beverages, with the aim of commercializing these products to generate income for various charities. In 1993, Newman's daughter, Nell, introduced a new division within the company named Newman's Own Organics, exclusively marketing food products made from organic ingredients [18]. In 2001, this division became an independent company, currently led by Nell. She and her father, who passed away in 2008, are prominently featured together in the company's marketing materials [18].

Carl Icahn/Brett Icahn: Icahn Enterprises: Carl Icahn, initially known as a corporate raider, initiated his career as a Wall Street stockbroker. Establishing Icahn & Co. in 1968, he progressively acquired controlling interests in public companies [18]. His most notable feat was the hostile takeover of TWA in 1985, subsequently splitting it up and selling off its parts [18]. Icahn built his empire by identifying undervalued companies relative to their stock prices. Currently estimated to be personally worth \$20 billion, Carl's son, Brett Icahn, joined his father's business in 2002 as an investment analyst. Brett now holds various positions in many of Carl Icahn's ventures. In 2011, the hedge fund Brett manages with business partner David Schechter earned a 50% return. Consequently, in 2012, Carl entrusted Brett with \$3 billion to manage [18].

Rupert Murdoch/James Murdoch: News Corp: The two Adelaide, Australia, newspapers inherited by Rupert Murdoch at the age of 22 laid the foundation for a media conglomerate that now encompasses 120 publications, including the Wall Street Journal, a cable network featuring the Fox channels, publishing company HarperCollins, and the 21st Century Fox movie studio [18]. Valued at more than \$13 billion, Rupert Murdoch has long been involved in placing his son James in key management positions within his companies [18]. Currently, James, aged 43, serves as the chief operating officer of 21st Century Fox. James is credited with sparking his father's interest in the internet and took over News Corp's internet operations in 1996. Both Murdochs were implicated in the illegal phone-hacking scandal at the British News of the World, which was ultimately shut down. Despite this, James recently paid \$30 million to purchase his dad's old Beverly Hills home [18].

Warren Buffett/Howard Buffett: Berkshire Hathaway: Regarded as the most successful investor of the 20th century, Warren Buffett is the visionary behind Berkshire Hathaway, a diversified holding company with businesses across various industries [18]. The shares in the company, currently valued at more than \$200,000, are the most expensive of any public Class A stock. While Warren has been actively managing his diverse holdings, his son and heir apparent, Howard Graham Buffett, aged 60, has been involved in farming, philanthropy, and serving as a volunteer deputy sheriff. Howard, also a former executive, is designated to assume a non-executive role as the head of the enterprise when his father passes away. In other words, he will not make decisions about company management but will ensure the culture and values of Berkshire Hathaway remain robust [18].

Ralph Roberts/Brian Roberts: Comcast: Ralph Roberts' acquisition of a 1,200-subscriber cable television system in Tupelo, Miss., in 1963 marked the inception of Comcast Corporation, now the nation's largest video, high-speed

internet, and phone provider [18]. Currently serving as founder and chairman emeritus of the board at the company he founded, the 95-year-old Ralph is more actively involved in community service. Meanwhile, his son Brian Roberts has assumed the role of chairman and CEO. Joining Comcast right after college, Brian was later appointed president in 1990 when the company's revenues were \$657 million. Since then, they have grown more than ten times that amount [18].

Conceptual Framework: The conceptual framework for this study is firmly rooted in the proverbial belief that "fire begets ash but sometimes lions birth jackals," [14], encapsulating the traditional understanding of leadership succession based on inherited traits within business and political contexts. This framework delves into the intersection of this belief with fixed mindset, growth mindset, and behavioral leadership theories, significantly influencing grooming and succession practices.

In the realm of business leadership, the Great Man and Trait theories are often linked with a fixed mindset, where leaders believe that their inherent qualities will effortlessly transfer to their children, ensuring their success in managing the organization. However, confronted by a high rate of business failures attributed to the lack of succession preparation, many leaders transition to a growth mindset to sustain their businesses. This shift prompts leaders to groom their children, emphasizing continuous learning and adaptability for long-term success. The grooming process involves mentoring and training from various functional heads, aligning seamlessly with the characteristics of behavioral leadership theory.

Similarly, within the political landscape, the belief that "fire begets ash but sometimes lions birth jackals" significantly influences succession practices, where leaders prioritize familial ties and inherited traits in grooming successors. However, the political scene, markedly distinct from the ownership dynamics of business, presents a complex environment where leaders lack the luxury of time to intricately groom a child to assume the leadership mantle. Here, the intricate reality unfolds with thousands, if not millions, feeling entitled to the leadership position, constantly eyeing the leader's seat, and intricately scheming to oust the incumbent.

Leaders, often falling short in delivering on promises or performing effectively, intricately adopt autocratic or authoritarian leadership styles, seeking to intricately control every aspect to avoid forceful ousting. In instances where such an autocratic leader intricately believes in their unparalleled superiority and the rightness of their path, their behavioral characteristics intricately align with the fixed mindset theory. It is not a matter of an inability to change

but rather an intricate conviction that they are inherently superior, possessing all-encompassing wisdom and qualities, leaving scant room for improvement.

Additionally, these leaders intricately subscribe to the Great Man and Trait theories, holding onto the intricate belief that they are all in all. Much like business leaders, they intricately cling to the notion that the apple does not fall far from the tree – a child born of their loins will inherently exhibit akin leadership characteristics. The intricate presumption often leans towards the first male child inheriting the lion's share of charisma, leadership abilities, or wisdom. However, in instances where the lion begets a jackal, and the eldest son is deemed lacking in the "all in all" qualities such as leadership and charisma of the father, the ashes from the remnant of fire are identified to take over. This intricate process extends to scouting for other children of the leader or, in extreme cases, adopting children or mentees who intricately mirror the leader's behaviors. These individuals are meticulously scouted to be molded, adopting the father's leadership characteristics to seamlessly carry on the intricate work of the leader.

Despite these challenges, a discernible shift in political succession practices is evident, mirroring the business environment's approach. Political leaders are increasingly incorporating growth mindset characteristics by preparing their children from a young age to develop attributes consistent with behavioral leadership theory. This entails exposing them to diverse experiences and grooming them over time to acquire essential leadership skills, mitigating concerns of nepotism, and enhancing succession preparedness.

Overall, the conceptual framework elucidates how the belief that "fire begets ash but sometimes lions birth jackals" intersects with Great Man, Trait, and behavioral leadership theories, fixed mindset, and growth mindset theories, shaping leadership succession practices in both business and political realms. It underscores the evolving nature of succession planning and the intricate interplay between mindset orientations and leadership approaches in preparing future leaders for the complexities of dynamic environments.

Results and Findings

Thematic Analysis Results: Common Characteristics among Various Political Leaders

The succession and grooming of political leaders exhibit intriguing patterns across diverse nations. Several common characteristics emerge from the narratives of political leaders assuming power in the footsteps of their predecessors.

Dynastic Succession: A prevalent theme is the existence of dynastic succession, where political power is transferred within a family. In instances like Chad, Togo, Gabon, Ghana, and Kenya, sons succeeded their fathers, inheriting political legacies that spanned decades. This dynastic trend suggests a systemic perpetuation of power within certain familial lines.

Educational Privileges and Professional Training: Many leaders received elite education and professional training, often abroad. The leaders in Togo, Gabon, Ghana, and Botswana were educated internationally, gaining qualifications that likely contributed to their leadership grooming. For example, Ian Khama of Botswana, a qualified pilot, received military honors and held significant roles in the Botswana Defence Force.

Early Engagement in Governance: The grooming process often involves early involvement in governance-related roles. Leaders like Faure Gnassingbé (Togo), Ali Bongo Ondimba (Gabon), and Nana Akufo-Addo (Ghana) were appointed to governmental positions before assuming the presidency. These experiences likely provided them with insights and skills crucial for effective leadership.

Military Background: Military involvement, either as a background or a formal part of training, is noticeable in the political trajectories of leaders like Joseph Kabila (DRC), Ian Khama (Botswana), and Mahamat Idriss Déby Itno (Chad). Military experience, in some cases, preceded their political leadership, highlighting the significance of military credentials in leadership grooming.

Supportive Networks and Political Alliances: The support of influential figures within political parties played a role in grooming leaders. Nana Akufo-Addo's connection to the founding fathers of Ghana, Ian Khama's alliance with key political figures in Botswana, and Navinchandra Ramgoolam's leadership within the Labour Party all exemplify the importance of political networks in grooming potential leaders.

Adaptation to Changing Times: While some leaders directly followed in their fathers' footsteps, others, like Uhuru Kenyatta (Kenya) and Navinchandra Ramgoolam (Mauritius), adapted to changing political landscapes. These leaders navigated shifting political scenarios and developed strategies to secure electoral mandates, showcasing the ability to adapt and resonate with evolving public sentiments.

Inherited Political Ideologies: The leaders often inherited or championed political ideologies associated with their predecessors. Nana Akufo-Addo (Ghana) embraced the ideology of his uncle JB Danquah, a founding father of Ghana. This reflects a continuation of established political values within families.

Public Image and Perception: Leaders groomed for succession often cultivate specific public images. In the cases of Faure Gnassingbé (Togo) and Ali Bongo Ondimba (Gabon), the process involved overcoming skepticism and international criticism to legitimize their roles as successors.

Thematic Analysis Results: Identifying Common Characteristics among Business/Organizational Leaders

The succession and grooming of leaders in the business and organizational realm reveal compelling patterns and shared characteristics that contribute to the continuity and success of these entities. Examining notable examples provides insights into the commonalities among these leaders and their successors.

Family Legacy and Succession: Many business leaders follow a familial succession model, with the founder grooming a family member to take over the reins. Examples include Abigail Johnson succeeding her father Ned Johnson at Fidelity Investments, Nell Newman taking charge of Newman's Own after her father Paul Newman, and Brian Roberts assuming leadership from his father Ralph Roberts at Comcast.

Education and Professional Development: A consistent theme is the emphasis on education and professional development. Leaders often acquire advanced degrees, such as an MBA from prestigious institutions like Harvard Business School (Abigail Johnson). This educational background equips them with the knowledge and skills needed to navigate the complexities of the business world.

Involvement in the Business from an Early Stage: Successors frequently start their careers within the family business at an early stage. Abigail Johnson began as an analyst at Fidelity Investments, and Nell Newman was involved in the creation of Newman's Own Organics. This early engagement allows successors to gain hands-on experience and a deep understanding of the business.

Financial Acumen and Risk Management: Business leaders commonly exhibit strong financial acumen and strategic risk management. Ned Johnson of Fidelity Investments was known as a risk-taker, while his daughter Abigail Johnson is described as more pragmatic. This balance of risk-taking and pragmatism contributes to the sustained success of the business.

Diversification and Expansion: Successful leaders often diversify their business portfolios and expand into new markets or product lines. Paul Newman and A.E. Hotchner expanded Newman's Own beyond salad dressings, and Warren Buffett diversified Berkshire Hathaway's holdings across various industries. This strategic diversification enhances the resilience of the business.

Philanthropic Orientation: Several leaders integrate philanthropy into their business models. Newman's Own, for instance, was established with the goal of generating income for charitable donations. This philanthropic orientation not only contributes to social responsibility but also shapes the organizational culture.

Technological Innovation and Adaptation: Leaders like Rupert Murdoch and Warren Buffett have shown a

commitment to technological innovation and adaptation. James Murdoch played a crucial role in News Corp.'s internet operations, while Warren Buffett's son, Howard Buffett, is expected to uphold Berkshire Hathaway's values in a rapidly changing business landscape.

Leadership Continuity Planning: A deliberate approach to leadership continuity planning is evident in companies like Berkshire Hathaway, where Warren Buffett's son, Howard Buffett, has been identified as the heir apparent. This ensures a seamless transition while preserving the organizational culture.

These shared characteristics underscore the importance of a holistic approach to leadership grooming, combining education, experience, values, and strategic foresight. The interplay of these elements contributes to the enduring success of businesses and organizations led by these individuals and their successors.

Top of Form

Findings from Comparative Analysis: Shared Characteristics among Political and Business Leaders

While political and business leaders operate in distinct spheres, certain characteristics are shared between them, showcasing the universal traits that contribute to effective leadership. Examining examples from both realms reveals these commonalities:

Family Legacy and Succession: *Political Leaders:* Succession in political leadership often follows a familial pattern, where family members are groomed to take over. Examples include Mahamat Idriss Déby Itno in Chad and Faure Gnassingbé in Togo.

- *Business Leaders:* Family succession is also prevalent in business, as seen in cases like Abigail Johnson at Fidelity Investments and Brian Roberts at Comcast.

Education and Professional Development:

- *Political Leaders:* Educational backgrounds play a crucial role in political leadership. Nana Akufo-Addo of Ghana, for example, attended prestigious schools in the United Kingdom.
- *Business Leaders:* Similarly, business leaders often have advanced degrees and educational achievements. Abigail Johnson earned an MBA from Harvard Business School.

Involvement in Early Stages:

- *Political Leaders:* Leaders frequently start their political careers at an early stage. Joseph Kabila of the Democratic Republic of Congo was part of a rebel group before assuming the presidency.
- *Business Leaders:* In the business world, successors

often begin their careers within the family business or organization, gaining early exposure and experience.

Diversification and Adaptation:

- *Political Leaders:* Leaders in politics may diversify their leadership approaches based on evolving circumstances. The adaptation of leadership styles aligns with the changing political landscape.
- *Business Leaders:* Similarly, business leaders like Rupert Murdoch adapt to new challenges, as seen in James Murdoch's involvement in News Corp.'s internet operations.

Leadership Continuity Planning:

- *Political Leaders:* Political leaders engage in succession planning, ensuring a smooth transition. The grooming of successors, as in the case of Mahamat Idriss Déby Itno and Faure Gnassingbé, reflects this continuity planning.
- *Business Leaders:* Similarly, business leaders plan for leadership continuity, designating heirs or successors. This is evident in Warren Buffett's plan for Howard Buffett at Berkshire Hathaway.

These common characteristics highlight that effective leadership shares foundational traits, whether in the political or business realm. Traits such as education, early involvement, strategic planning, and adaptability contribute to the success and sustainability of leadership in both arenas.

Discussion

The examination of leadership succession, drawing insights from traditional theories such as Great Man, Trait Theory, and Fixed Mindset, reveals compelling commonalities and a subsequent paradigm shift towards a more behavioral leadership approach. This research discussion explores the interplay of diversified strategies, educational pursuits, and early involvement in the grooming process, suggesting a nuanced blend of fixed and growth mindsets among political and business leaders.

Diversification and Adaptation: A Behavioral Shift

Leaders across political and business domains display a compelling need for diversification and adaptation in their leadership approaches, aligning with the principles of behavioral leadership [1]. For instance, political leaders like Nana Akufo-Addo demonstrate a commitment to diverse educational experiences, attending prestigious schools in the United Kingdom, indicative of a strategic move towards adaptability [12]. Similarly, business leaders such as Rupert Murdoch and James Murdoch showcase adaptability by venturing into new challenges, reflecting a behavioral approach that emphasizes learned behaviors and responses

in ever-evolving circumstances [12].

Educational Backgrounds and Growth Mindset: Fostering Adaptability

Educational backgrounds play a pivotal role in shaping leadership mindsets, with a particular emphasis on fostering a growth mindset. Political leaders like Nana Akufo-Addo, through exposure to prestigious institutions, exemplify a commitment to continuous learning and adaptability [12]. This aligns with the tenets of growth mindset, emphasizing the belief that leadership skills can be cultivated and refined over time [2]. Business leaders, too, reinforce this notion, as seen in Abigail Johnson's pursuit of an MBA from Harvard Business School, reflecting a commitment to education and growth [12].

Early Involvement and Learning: A Behavioral Emphasis

Early involvement in political and business careers emerges as a shared characteristic among successful leaders, indicative of a behavioral emphasis on the development of skills over time. Joseph Kabila's experience as part of a rebel group before assuming the presidency underscores the importance of early exposure and experiential learning in shaping leadership styles [12]. Similarly, successors in the business world often commence their careers within family organizations, gaining early exposure and experience, reinforcing the behavioral theory's assertion that leadership is a set of learned behaviors [10].

Mindset Theories and Leadership Styles: A Dynamic Interplay

Fixed mindset characteristics, inherent in traditional leadership theories, may perpetuate authoritarian leadership styles rooted in natural abilities [2,10]. In contrast, a growth mindset, aligned with Behavioral Theory, emphasizes that leadership skills are acquired behaviors, fostering adaptability and openness to diverse perspectives [10]. This dynamic interplay between mindset theories and leadership styles underscores a departure from rigid leadership ideologies.

Shift Towards Behavioral Leadership: Grooming and Nuanced Realities

The grooming process, often associated with the notion that leaders are born into their roles, reveals nuanced realities that challenge fixed mindset ideologies [10]. Despite being born into power, leaders like Kim Jong-Un undergo strategic grooming, indicating a departure from fixed mindset ideologies prevalent in Great Man and Trait theories. This

underscores a shift towards a more behavioral leadership approach, emphasizing learned behaviors and adaptability.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study delves into the intricate interplay between fixed and growth mindsets in the context of leadership succession within political and business spheres. Traditional theories such as Great Man and Trait Theory, emphasizing innate qualities, are being challenged by a discernible shift towards a behavioral leadership approach. Leaders today adopt diversified strategies, prioritize educational pursuits, and engage in early involvement in grooming processes. Diversification and adaptation emerge as pivotal aspects of this behavioral shift, reflecting leaders' commitment to diverse experiences and adaptability to changing circumstances. Educational backgrounds play a crucial role in fostering a growth mindset, with leaders demonstrating a dedication to continuous learning and skill refinement. Early involvement in careers underscores a behavioral emphasis on skill development over time, challenging fixed mindset ideologies.

The dynamic interplay between mindset theories and leadership styles reveals a nuanced landscape. While fixed mindset characteristics may perpetuate authoritarian leadership styles, a growth mindset fosters adaptability and openness to diverse perspectives [19]. This nuanced understanding calls for a blended approach in contemporary leadership succession, incorporating both fixed and growth mindsets. In summary, effective leadership in today's dynamic world requires a comprehensive understanding that integrates elements of both fixed and growth mindsets. This research underscores the evolving nature of leadership succession practices and the need for leaders to navigate challenges with resilience and forward-thinking approaches.

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