



## Mediating effect of Entrepreneurial Orientation on the influence of Mentoring, Training, and Successor Competence on Family Businesses' Survival in Southwest, Nigeria

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### ABSTRACT

The study investigates the mediating effect of the influence of mentoring, training, and successor competence on FBs' survival in Southwest Nigeria. The sampling method used was purposive, while closed-ended questionnaires were sent to 360 respondents to collect information. A total of 300 completed questionnaires were completed and returned to researchers. The results of SEM reveal that training and EO are positively and significantly associated with FB survival. Results further reveal that mentoring and successor competence have not significantly influenced FBs' survival. There is evidence that EO mediates fully between mentoring and FB survival, but not between training and FB survival, and partially mediates successor competence and FB survival. This means EO is a platform to influence the mentoring and successor competence that drive the sustainability and growth of FB. This development is sending a positive signal to family businesses that after the founder's death, the successors will be able to make FBs more productive. Therefore, for the smooth operation of FB, successors should be mentored and foster family partnerships.



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## INTRODUCTION

The contribution of family businesses (FB) to sustainable development in terms of job creation, wealth creation, and poverty reduction has been recognized by economists, entrepreneurs, researchers, and policymakers around the world (Sajuyigbe et al., 2016; Alves & Gama, 2020; Katare et al., 2021; Oyeladun, 2020; Ghamloush, 2021). Kerstin et al (2014). Kerstin et al (2014) show that FBs play an important role in relation to the dynamism and strength, long-term stability, and sustainability of European economies. Similarly, Bernard (2013) also notes that

FBs contribute over 82% of India's employment and accounts for 60% of GDP. Alves and Gama (2020) also confirm that FBs create about 85% of jobs in Portugal and account for about 65% of the GDP. According to Sajuyigbe (2016), FBs create about 90% of jobs in Nigeria and contribute about 85% of the GDP.

Recently, FBs have been hit by a deluge of poor succession strategies associated with the COVID-19 surge (Aremu & Lawal, 2023). According to Bernard (2013), many FBs are collapsing due to poor succession strategies, and other FBs may be on the brink of failure due to the devastation caused by COVID-19 (Saan et al., 2013). Aremu and Lawal (2023) note that several FBs across the globe appear to suffer from "founders' syndrome," with few having a transition strategy. When a family member assumes responsibility based primarily on inheritance and heritage rather than skills and competence, it can lead to several managerial issues. Orole (2020) laments that FBs find it difficult and very challenging to have a successful succession when the business is transferred to the next generation. Many times the succession is not successful and results in a failed business having a decline in its profitability or efficiency. Thus, the business suffers because of an unsuccessful succession (Ghamloush, 2021). The surveys in the U.S. evident that about 30% of FBs are passed on to the next generation, and only 13% of these enterprises remain in family ownership through three generations (Alves & Gama, 2020). In the same direction, Sajuyigbe et al. (2016) showcase that about 11% of FBs survive to be third-generation enterprises, and 6% of these are fourth-generation businesses in Australia. Okeke (2021) also laments that about 10% of FBs survive to be second-generation enterprises, and 2% of these are third-generation businesses in Nigeria.

This unpalatable scenario has forced founders of FBs to devise strategies for the FBs to survive amid global competition. Entrepreneurial orientation is the successful strategy that makes FBBs pass from one generation to another generation after the demise of funders. Entrepreneurial orientation is the process of doing something new and taking advantage of opportunities not available to any organization. Previous studies attest that entrepreneurial orientation is one of the germane survival strategies (Zehir et al., 2018; Rashad, 2018; Olubiyi ET AL., 2019). FBS with a high degree of entrepreneurial orientation is more likely to be industry pioneers and more likely to actively experiment with new forms of knowledge resources to explore new growth paths (Okangi, 2019; Sahban, & Syahchari, 2019). As a result, FBs are open to change and ready to respond proactively to external market changes (Linton, 2019). In addition to entrepreneurship, successor education level, successor competence, and mentoring are recognized succession strategies associated with FBs worldwide. Sajuyigbe et al. (2016) noted that successor education level, successor competence, and mentoring were predictors of FBs' survival. A study by Aremu and Lawal (2023) confirms that mentoring is a powerful succession planning that has a significant impact on FB survival. Orole (2020) also confirms that succession education level and succession ability are predictors of FBs' survival.

Existing research has explored the impact of succession planning on FBs' survival and the factors that contribute to the failure of succession planning in both developed and emerging Nations (Sajuyigbe et al., 2016; Aremu & Lawal, 2023; Alves & Gama, 2020; Katare et al., 2021; Oyeladun, 2020; Ghamloush, 2021). No studies have examined the mediating effects of entrepreneurial orientation on the relationship between the level of education of the successor, successor capability, and FBs' survival. This current study fills the gaps identified in the entrepreneurship literature by examining the intermediary effects of entrepreneurial orientation

on the relationship between the level of education of the successor, successor capability, and FBs' survival.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Family systems theory can be traced back to Kerr and Bowen (1988) with the goal of influencing the behavior of successors towards the continuation of FBs. This theory focused on key factors such as family member beliefs, family member roles, family member dominance, family member limitations, and boundaries between family members and FBs. In this theory, FB only exists if only one or more members of the family or families have material ownership and material obligations to the general welfare of the FBs (Oyeladun, 2020). According to Karaevli and Yurtoglu (2021), family system theory assumes that the family unit seeks to maintain emotional balance and a consistent way of working. Both rational and emotional responses to development occur within the family system. The theory analyses how the influence family members have on each other affects the entire organization (Alves & Gama, 2020). According to Sajuyigbe et al. (2016), family systems theory explains why founders should pay attention to succession planning, including entrepreneurial orientation, mentoring, training, and the ability of successors to advance the company's vision after the founder's death. Sindambiwe (2020) found that entrepreneurial orientation, successor education level, and succession ability are succession strategies that influence the family's interest in continuing FBs. In the same light, Orole (2020) argues that mentoring, training and entrepreneurial guidance are sacred to FBs' survival. Similarly, Ofobruku and Nwakoby (2015) prove that succession planning is the only tool to influence succession behavior for the survival of FBs. This theory, therefore, suggests that succession planning should be the platform for FBs to gain global relevance and remain competitive in the face of fierce competition.

## **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT**

### **Training**

High levels of education significantly impact succession because successors can raise the productivity of the enterprise (Ahrens *et al.*, 2015; Jones *et al.*, 2018). It may involve leadership training, entrepreneurship education, and technical expertise (Wahjono *et al.*, 2014). The successor's knowledge and abilities are the foundational competencies for implementing innovative initiatives which can drive a firm's profitability (Alshanty & Emeagwali, 2019). A good succession plan is dependent on the processes of information internalization and social interaction. The successor's active participation in running the business is a crucial factor. This improves the successor's comprehension of the business and societal norms (Duh, 2014). The training of a successor before assuming leadership in a family-run enterprise is more or less emphasized in every research study conducted worldwide. Ghee et al., (2015) show that training improves decision-making and problem-solving skills, and helps workers to cope with stress, tension, and frustration. Previous studies have found a significant positive relationship between training and FBs' survival. For example, a study on succession training and the impact on FBs' survival in Kenya conducted by Neubauer (2003) showed that succession training was an important determinant of FBs' survival. In another study, Saan, Boating, and Kamwine (2013) show that education is a follow-up strategy for FBs' survival in Ghana. Maryam, Sahar, and Meisa (2014) also confirm that level of education of successor is a prerequisite for FBs' survival

in Iran. In the same realization, Dingliana (2013) proposes that training has the greatest impact on FBs' survival. Hence, the following hypothesis emerged:

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Training has no significant association with FBs' survival

## **Mentoring**

Mentoring is the conscious sharing of information from an expert with some expertise in a field to an inexperienced individual, called a mentee, who is interested in learning more about that field (Arogundade, 2011). Noe et al., (2002) define a mentor as someone who is respected because of age, experience, expertise, or higher status. A mentor is someone who supports the development of others, both on a personal and professional level, by imparting wisdom and knowledge gained over time (Arogundade, 2011). The process of providing the knowledge and expertise needed to improve others and be successful in some field is called mentoring. According to Okurame (2008), mentoring includes practices often planned and approved by leaders to help employees develop to improve their company's competitiveness. In a family business, an employee could be a close friend, a child of the owner or manager, or someone outside who takes over the running of the business. In FBs, the mentor-successor relationship is critical to the continued success and survival of FBs (Neubauer, 2003). Sajuyigbe et al. (2016) affirm that a mentor-successor relationship should be implemented and maintained to foster FBs continuity and growth. A study conducted in India by Muriithi, et al. (2016) shows that mentoring is a key factor in promoting FBs' survival and growth. Another study conducted in Nairobi by Mugo, Minja, and Njanja (2015) shows that mentoring is the driving force behind FBs' survival and prosperity. Similarly, Karanja (2012) confirms that mentoring is an indicator of FBs' success in Kenya. Similarly, Moha, Zarinah, and Hashim (2011) show a significant association between mentoring and FBs' survival in Malaysia. A study conducted in Indonesia by Sentot et al., (2014) is consistent with previous studies that mentoring has a significant impact on FBs' survival and growth. Therefore, the following hypothesis is formulated:

**H<sub>2</sub>:** Mentoring is significant associated with FBs' survival

## **Successor Competence**

Successor competencies have become a key factor in the sustainability of FB around the world. Successor competencies such as entrepreneurial skills, knowledge, talents, behavior patterns, and codified principles and interests are crucial for FBs' survival (Sajuyigbe et al., 2016; Wang & Shibayama, 2022). Rosa (2019) describes successor competence as the willingness to take risks, the passion for high performance, and the ability to scan the environment for FB to succeed. According to Oyeladun (2020), the development of a set of successor competencies by EO is important to FBs leadership. Existing research shows that developing a set of capabilities for succession is just a panacea for the complexities of the business environment (Alshanty & Emeagwali, 2019; Mugo et al., 2015; Noe et al., 2002). Succession capabilities allow FB to remain competitive and grow stronger. This is due to the successor's stress resilience, emotional intelligence, and ability to understand the surrounding environment (Karaevli & Yurtoglu, 2021). Resource-based view theory proposes that FBs gain a competitive advantage by differentiating themselves from competitors through succession capabilities that are difficult to imitate (Alshanty & Emeagwali, 2019). In the same direction, empirical studies confirmed that successor competencies such as stress resilience, emotional intelligence, and ability to understand the surrounding environment have a significant effect on FBs' survival and growth

(Muriithi et al., 2016; Mugo et al., 2015; Noe et al., 2002). Hence, the following hypothesis emerged:

**H<sub>3</sub>:** Successor competence is significantly related to the FBs' survival

### **Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO) As a Mediator**

EO can be treated as a dynamic intangible asset that contributes to sustainable competitive advantage for higher returns. Piirala (2012) confirms that EO has become one of the most popular research areas in Entrepreneurship. The effects of EO on FB survival have been discussed in various studies. Therefore, FBs can benefit from adopting an EO (Cserhádi & Szabó, 2014). According to Wang (2008), EO increases the performance and survival of FBs by finding and seizing opportunities with optimal utilization of available resources. Similarly, Lee and Lim (2009) demonstrate that EO has become a hallmark of FBs' survival and high performance. Wales (2016) also states that EO represents management's focus on finding new opportunities for growth in FBs. Sajuyigbe et al (2016) note that EO is pertinent for the sustainability of FBs as it prepares the replacement candidate for taking over as soon as the founder is gone. Furthermore, many studies have found that EO is significantly associated with FB survival and performance (Covin & Miller, 2014; Jiang et al., 2018; Wales, 2016). Razzaq (2017) shows that EO helps FBs achieve sustainability. Existing research finds that EO is a platform where mentorship, educational level, and successor competence drive FB survival and growth (Oyeladun, 2020; Onyekwena & Kekeruche, 2020; Orole, 2020). Existing research finds that EO is a platform where mentorship, educational level, and successor competence drive FB survival and growth (Oyeladun, 2020; Onyekwena & Kekeruche, 2020; Orole, 2020). According to Al et al . (2015), EO allows room for leadership-successor relationships, training, and succession competence to drive FBs' survival and growth. Similarly, Sajuyigbe et al. (2016) state that EO is the wheel that drives leadership-succession relationships, training, succession competence, and FBs' sustainability. Hence, the following hypotheses are proposed:

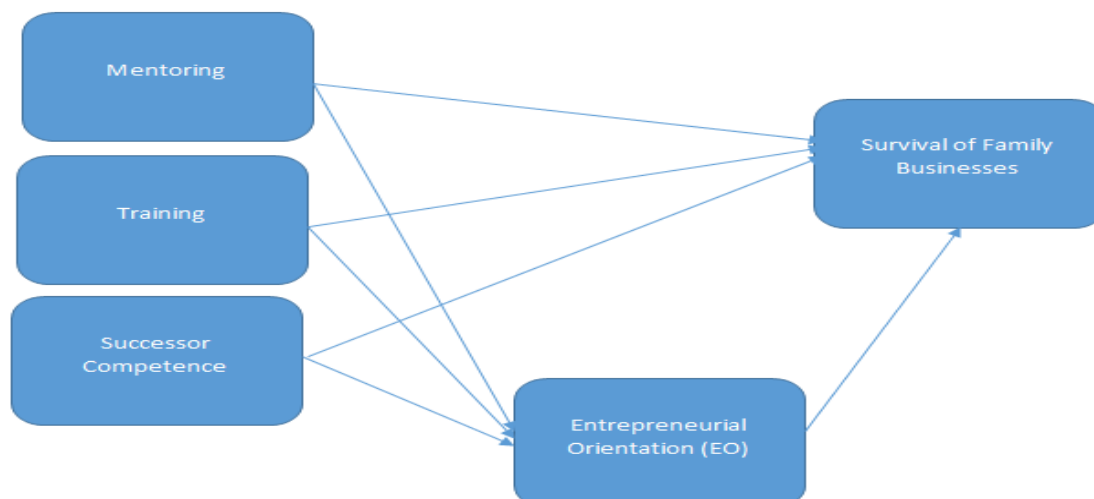
**H<sub>4</sub>:** EO is significantly associated with FBs' survival.

**H<sub>5</sub>:** EO mediates between mentoring and FBs' survival

**H<sub>6</sub>:** EO mediates between training and FBs' survival

**H<sub>7</sub>:** EO mediates between capability and FBs' survival

### **Conceptual Framework for the study**



**Figure 1: Conceptual Model**

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study conducted quantitative research, focusing on the family businesses that have been operation for at least 10 years and managed by at least one the family members in Southwest of Nigeria. The sampling method used was purposive, while closed ended questionnaires were sent to 360 respondents to collect information. A total of 300 completed questionnaires were completed and returned to researchers. EO, mentoring, training, successor competence scales and FBs' survival scale were anchored on a 5-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree) for all study instruments. The Mentoring Scale (MTS) consists of 5 items such as 'the involvement of successors is of paramount importance to our business operations, we promote family partnerships, for the smooth running of the company, we always appoint a family member as one of our directors, our organization takes into consideration the career development of our successors, and family ties and networks are essential to our organization'. The Training Scale (TRS) consists of 5 items such as "our organization provides quality education for family members, the family training approach is very good in our organization, our organization regularly sends family members to business seminars and workshops, our organization has a high level of family induction into business education, and family members are constantly developing their technical/managerial skills within our organization. The Successor Competence scale (SCS) consists of 5 items such as 'willingness to take risks for succession and passion for the best performance is great, the successor who drives the company at the top level has a very high mental strength, the emotional ability to work with workers to achieve sustainability is great, the flexible ability of the successor to understand the business environment is very large, and successor logistics performance reliability for customer acquisition and retention is very high. The Entrepreneurial Orientation Scale (EOS) consists of 6 items such as 'we constantly contrast calculated risks with new opportunities, our organization is constantly investing in new and thriving markets, our organization goes into business without sufficient resources, our organization turns down businesses that may fail, our organization uses management techniques to identify and explore new opportunities and our organization is innovation-oriented by seizing opportunities to introduce new products and services'. The FB's Survival Scale (FBS) consists of 5 items such as 'all family members are aligned with the organization's vision for the future, the organization enables individual families to participate in decisions that move the company forward, the family is grateful for the existence of the organization, the family cares about the company and its future existence, and younger families are passionate about FB.

### **Validity of the Research Instruments**

The scales used were validated by a group of experts from the School of Entrepreneurship Studies, Landmark University, Omu-Aran. Their constructive criticism, advice, and suggestions are incorporated.

### **Reliability of the Research Instrument**

Eigenvalues of principal components, Kaiser-Meier-Olkin (KMO), percentage of variance, and Cronbach's alpha were used for internal consistency confidence tests (see Table 2). Structural Equation Model (SEM) was used for the data analysis with the aid of STATA 15 software.

**Table 2: Reliability Test of the Instruments**

variable		Cronbach's alpha	KMO	Eigenvalue of the principal Component	% of the variance
<b>MT Scale-Cronbach Alpha ( MTS = 0.8129)</b>			<b>0.8074</b>	<b>2.9878</b>	<b>81.22%</b>
MTS Q 1	The involvement of successors is of paramount importance to our business operations	<b>0.7994</b>			
MTS Q 2	We promote family partnerships, for the smooth running of the company	<b>0.9879</b>			
MTS Q3	We always appoint a family member as one of our directors	<b>0.7799</b>			
MTS Q 4	Our organization takes into consideration the career development of our successors	<b>0.8061</b>			
MTS Q 5	family ties and networks are essential to our organization	<b>0.8032</b>			
<b>TR Scale - Cronbach Alpha – (TRS= 0.8241)</b>			<b>0.8190</b>	<b>2.9768</b>	<b>79.85%</b>
TRSQ1	Our organization provides quality education for family members. , , ,	<b>0.787</b>			
TRSQ2	The family training approach is very good in our organization	<b>0.8127</b>			
TRSQ3	Our organization regularly sends family members to business seminars and workshops	<b>0.8089</b>			
TRSQ 4	Our organization has a high level of family induction into business education	<b>0.81382</b>			
TRSQ 5	Family members are constantly developing their technical/managerial skills within our organization.	<b>0.7985</b>			
<b>SCS Scale- Cronbach Alpha – (SCS = 0.8347)</b>			<b>0.825</b>	<b>2.790</b>	<b>80.21%</b>
SCS Q 1	Willingness to take risks for succession and passion for the best performance is great.	<b>0.8213</b>			
SCSQ2	The successor who drives the	<b>0.7872</b>			

	company at the top level has a very high mental strength				
<b>SCSQ3</b>	The emotional ability to work with workers to achieve sustainability is great	<b>0.8183</b>			
<b>SCSQ 4</b>	The flexible ability of the successor to understand the business environment is very large	<b>0.7919</b>			
<b>SCSQ 5</b>	Successor logistics performance reliability for customer acquisition and retention is very high.	<b>0.8198</b>			
<b>EOS Scale - Cronbach Alpha – (EOS = 0.8358)</b>			<b>0.8272</b>	<b>3.1098</b>	<b>83.32%</b>
<b>EOSQ1</b>	We constantly contrast calculated risks with new opportunities.	<b>0.8244</b>			
<b>EOSQ2</b>	Our organization is constantly investing in new and thriving markets.	<b>0.8237</b>			
<b>EOSQ3</b>	Our organization goes into business without sufficient resources	<b>0.7998</b>			
<b>EOSQ4</b>	Our organization turns down businesses that may fail.	<b>0.8127</b>			
<b>EOSQ5</b>	Our organization uses management techniques to identify and explore new opportunities.	<b>0.8197</b>			
<b>EOSQ6</b>	Our organization is innovation-oriented by seizing opportunities to introduce new products and services.	<b>0.8451</b>			
<b>FBS Scale- Cronbach Alpha – (FBS = 0.8325)</b>			<b>0.8210</b>	<b>3.213</b>	<b>82.27%</b>
<b>FBSQ1</b>	All family members are aligned with the organization's vision for the future.	<b>0.8154</b>			
<b>FBSQ 2</b>	The organization enables individual families to participate in decisions that move the company forward	<b>0.8179</b>			
<b>FBSQ 3</b>	The family is grateful for the existence of the organization	<b>0.8203</b>			
<b>FBSQ 4</b>	The family cares about the company and its future existence	<b>0.8261</b>			
<b>FBSQ 5</b>	Younger families are passionate about FB.	<b>0.8301</b>			



Table 2 above shows that each factor loading is greater than 0.5. Therefore, model measurements are reliable for analysis.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

*Table 3: Analysis of Structural Equation Modelling*

<b>Direct Model</b>	beta-value	t-value	p-value	95% Conf. Interval	
FBS <- MTS	-.0176797	-0.21	0.837	-.1856089	.1502495
FBS <- TRS	.2915165	3.62	0.000	.1338803	.4491527
FBS <- SCS	.0847409	1.02	0.309	-.0785061	.2479879
FBS <-OEC	.4551792	5.68	0.000	.2982426	.6121157
Constant	1.48709	2.50	0.012	.3225146	2.651665
<b>Indirect Model</b>	beta-value	t-value	p-value	95% Conf. Interval	
FBS <-EOC <- MTS	.2055795	3.95	0.000	.1036527	.3075064
FBS <-EOC <-TRS	.0690357	1.75	0.081	-.008394	.1464653
FBS <-EOC<- SCS	.1170366	2.97	0.003	.0398635	.1942097

Table 3 shows the relationship between mentoring, training, succession skills, entrepreneurial orientation, and family firm survival in the direct model. A beta value of -.0176797 and a t-value of -0.21 indicate that mentoring is inversely related to FBs' survival. The p-value of 0.837 further explains that the relationship is not significant. This means that in Nigerian family businesses, the relationship between leader and successor is still in its infancy. This may be the reason for Sajuyigbe et al. (2016) complained that most FBs in Nigeria die shortly after the death of their founders due to the lack of mentoring. This study contradicts studies conducted in Nairobi (Mugo et al., 2015), Indonesia (Sentot et al., 2014), Kenya (Karanja, 2012) and Malaysia (Moha et al., 2011)., that mentor -successor relationship is a very powerful tool for family's continued strength and influences FB growth. Therefore, **H<sub>1</sub>** is not confirmed.

The results also show that training (TRS) is positively associated with FB survival, with a t-value of 3.62. A p-value of 0.000 indicates that training is significantly associated with FB survival at the 5% significance level. This means that after the founder's death, the successor will be able to make FB more productive. This development is sending a positive signal to family businesses in Nigeria. The study concurs with the studies conducted in Ghana (Saan et al., 2013) and Iran (Maryam et al., 2014) that training has the greatest impact on FBs' survival. Hence, **H<sub>2</sub>** is supported.

Evidence showcases that successor competence has a positive association with FBs' survival with a beta-value of .0847409. A p-value of 0.0309 and t-value of 1.02 further explain that the association is not significant. This implies that successor competencies such as entrepreneurial skills, knowledge, talents, behavior patterns, and codified principles had not significantly influenced FB survival in Nigeria. Therefore, **H<sub>3</sub>** is not confirmed

Furthermore, it was revealed that EO is significantly associated with FBs' survival with a t-value of 5.68 and p-value of 0.000. This indicates that EO has become a hallmark of FBs' survival and high performance in Nigeria. The study aligns with Ali et al. (2015) that implementation of EO increases the performance and survival of FBs by finding and seizing opportunities with optimal utilization of available resources. In another study, Wales (2016) states that EO represents

management's focus on finding new opportunities for growth in FBs. Sajuyigbe et al (2016) also attest that EO is pertinent for the sustainability of FBs as it prepares the replacement candidate for taking over as soon as the founder is gone. Therefore, **H<sub>4</sub>** is confirmed.

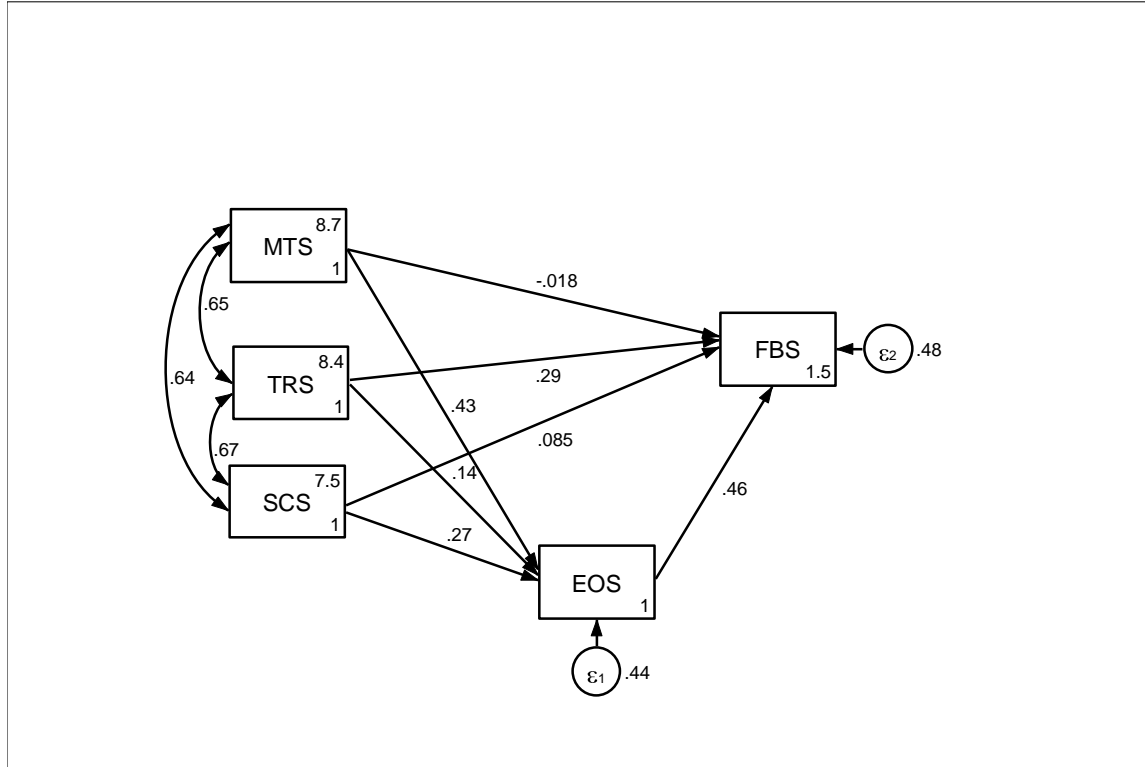


Figure 1: Structural Equation Modelling

Table 3 shows the mediating effects of EO on the relationship between education, succession competence, and FB survival. Using standardized coefficients, a t-value of -0.21 and a p-value of 0.837 indicate that mentoring is not a predictor of FB survival, although the t-value changed from 0.837 to 3.95 shortly after the introduction of EO. , with a b value of -0.21 to 0.000. This suggests that EO perfectly mediates between mentoring and FB survival. This means that EO is a platform to influence mentoring that drives the sustainability and growth of FB (Oyeladun, 2020; Onyekwena & Kekeruche, 2020; Orole, 2020). Therefore, **H<sub>5</sub>** is supported.

A t-value of 3.62 and a p-value of 0.00 indicated that training was a predictor of FB survival, but when EO was introduced, the t-value decreased from 3.62 to 1.75 and the p-value increased from 0.000 to 0.0801. This connotes that EO is not a predictor. The implication of this result is that EO does not mediate between FB training and FB survival. Therefore, **H<sub>6</sub>** is not supported.

Moreover, when EO was introduced, the t-value changed from 5.68 to 2.97 and the p-value from 0.000 to 0.003, suggesting that succession competence ability and EO are predictors of FB survival (see Table 4). This indicates that EO partially mediates succession competence and FB survival. Hence, **H<sub>7</sub>** is partially supported.

These results are consistent with the guideline of Baron and Kenny (2003) that partial mediation occurs when the independent variable is a predictor and the mediator is also a predictor. Perfect

mediation occurs when the independent variable is not a predictor and the mediator is a predictor. Mediation does not occur if the independent variable is not a predictor and the mediator is not a predictor.

## **CONCLUSION**

The study investigates the mediating effect of the influence of mentoring, training, and successor competence on FBs' survival in Southwest Nigeria. The sampling method used was purposive, while closed-ended questionnaires were sent to 360 respondents to collect information. A total of 300 completed questionnaires were completed and returned to researchers. The results of SEM reveal that training and EO are positively and significantly associated with FB survival. This indicates that training and EO have become hallmarks of FBs' survival and high performance in Nigeria. The implication of these findings is that the implementation of entrepreneurial training and entrepreneurial orientation increases the performance and survival of FBs by finding and seizing opportunities with optimal utilization of available resources. The study aligns with Wales (2016) that entrepreneurial training and EO represent management's focus on finding new opportunities for growth in FBs. This development is sending a positive signal to family businesses that after the founder's death, the successors will be able to make FBs more productive.

Results further reveal that mentoring and successor competence have not significantly influenced FBs' survival. This implies that the successor-mentor relationship is still in its infancy in Nigeria compare with the data from Nairobi (Mugo et al., 2015), Indonesia (Sentot et al., 2014), Kenya (Karanja, 2012) and Maylasia (Moha et al., 2011) where mentor -successor relationship is a very powerful tool for family businesses sustainability. There is evidence that EO mediates fully between mentoring and FB survival, but not between training and FB survival, and partially mediates successor competence and FB survival. This means EO is a platform to influence the mentoring and successor competence that drive the sustainability and growth of FB.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following recommendations are derived from the results of this study.

1. For the smooth operation of FB, successors should be mentored and foster family partnerships.
2. Career development of successors should be considered. This allows the continuity of the family business after the founder's death.
3. Successors must undergo training to further develop their technical/management skills within FB.
4. Entrepreneurial orientation should be considered so that FB can use management techniques to identify and explore new opportunities.
5. Successors must be mentally, emotionally, and flexibly aware of the business environment and work with workers to achieve sustainability

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