

# Talent Mobility and Leadership Development in the Dangote Group of Companies, Lagos: A Conceptual Review

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**Abstract-** *This article examines how talent mobility may foster leadership development within the Dangote Group of Companies, one of Africa's largest diversified conglomerates. The article adopts a qualitative conceptual review approach and synthesises evidence from the strategic human resource management (SHRM), talent management, and leadership development literature to develop a context-specific framework for understanding internal mobility as a leadership development strategy. Drawing on Experiential Learning Theory (Kolb, 1984), the Resource-Based View (Barney, 1991), and Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1964), the article identifies four major themes: experiential leadership development, succession planning and leadership continuity, knowledge transfer and organisational learning, and contextual barriers to talent mobility. The synthesis suggests that talent mobility practices such as job rotation, cross-functional assignments, cross-business-unit transfers, and geographical postings consistently contribute to leadership capacity development in large and diversified organisations. The review further indicates that contextual factors including hierarchical organisational cultures, talent hoarding, limited HR analytics capability, and infrastructural constraints may hinder the effective implementation of talent mobility initiatives within emerging economies. The article contributes to the literature by extending discussions of talent mobility and leadership development beyond their dominant Western settings to the relatively underexplored context of African conglomerates. It concludes with synthesis-based recommendations for HR practitioners and senior executives seeking to strengthen leadership pipelines through internal talent mobility.*

**Index Terms -** *Career Mobility, Conceptual Review, Dangote Group, Experiential Learning, Job Rotation, Leadership Development, Strategic HRM, Succession Planning, Talent Mobility.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

In the current business landscape of increasing change and accelerating technological innovations that characterises it in addition to increasing organisational complexities; global competitive and market pressure; organisational change; competitive strategies; external environmental dynamics; increasing demands on organisational performance; and increasing rates of globalisation in which the contemporary business system operates today; there is increasing concern for leaders to manage changes, develop organisational capacity, and maintain business performance that are associated with organisational complexities, change, competitive business strategies, external environmental dynamics, and rapid technological innovation which have always influenced global competitive advantage (Adeleye, 2020). Thus there has been a growing interest in talent mobility in recent times as one major driver for leadership development within organisations; however, for huge conglomerates that operate in diverse industrial sectors, markets, and geographical areas such as the case of Dangote Group of Companies which produces cement, sugar, flour, salt, pasta, beverages, real estates, oil and gas etc; its capability in Leadership is of strategic concern (Adeleye, 2020). This has led to a focal concern on leadership development in strategic HRM.

Talent Mobility Talent Mobility in the recent past has been acclaimed as a dominant tool for organisations to groom future leaders by deploying them into various jobs or business units to gain more experience and expertise within the organisation.

According to Cappelli and Keller (2014), it is the “planned movement of employees between jobs or organizations as a tool for both their career development and to provide skills” (p. 1232). Different from traditional approaches to career planning, talent mobility focuses on moving employees, their skills, knowledge and experiences across various assignments including, across business units, geographies, functions or projects as they may exist within organisations to fulfill current and future needs (Berger & Spears, 2011; Van Den Berg & Van Der Stoep, 2015). The argument is that, for any leadership capacity within any organisations to develop sustainably, it needs to pass through experiences that make it resilient rather than just having formal classroom training alone (McCall, et al., 1988; Day, et al., 2014).

In an emergent economy such as Nigeria; where cost-effective expatriates and expensive foreign and external recruitment of leaders are not a sustainable option, strategic use of talent mobility is the only logical approach to grow and build leadership within Nigerian large conglomerates that do not have ‘readily-available, internal, highly-developed leadership’ to manage its operations.

Although there is a burgeoning number of literature on talent mobility for leadership development in some parts of world like USA, Europe and others where conditions of service and context are different to that of Africa/Nigeria, much less is known regarding the application of talent mobility for leadership development in emerging market like Nigeria large conglomerates, and in this context there exist an observable research gap. Given these conditions, this research article will explore and examine the influence and contribution of talent mobility for leadership development within Dangote Group, as a conglomerate operating within Nigeria. The central research question guiding this article is:

What role does talent mobility play in leadership development within large African conglomerates such as the Dangote Group? To address this question, the study pursues the following objectives:

- i. To evaluate how existing theories explain the relationship between talent mobility and leadership development.
- ii. To examine evidence from previous studies concerning the contribution of talent mobility to leadership development.
- iii. To identify contextual factors and challenges affecting the implementation of talent mobility within the Dangote Group and similar organisations operating in emerging economies.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Concept and Evolution of Talent Mobility

The traditional view of talent mobility was that of a more purely operational or transactional process, largely driven by staffing requirements. Classical HR models were characterized by strong, fixed job specifications, departmental isolation and a career path where a person tended to have a vertical progression within a narrow occupational area (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996). Such structures may have worked reasonably well during more stable times, but not in modern organizations struggling with high rates of technological advancement, globalization, and market competition.

In response to the needs of contemporary organizations, HRM has adapted to more fluid and learning-centric approaches (Cappelli & Keller, 2014).

Within the framework of modern strategic HR, internal mobility is seen as important to align the work force’s human capital with organizations’ rapidly changing priorities. Organizations now employ these models to strategically deploy talent among jobs, functions, business units, projects, and geographical locations. For organizations with a highly diverse range of units-such as the Dangote Group-talent Mobility offers a wide array of developmental opportunities that cross sectoral and geographical divides, thus circumventing the costly necessity for external hires. The strategic significance of such mobility has strong support in various resource based-view literature that explains the achievement of sustainable competitive advantage

based on possession of valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable resources (Barney, 1991).

Internal mobility facilitates the accumulation of firm specific human capital as an intangible asset, through combinations of unique skills, networks and organizational knowledge.

From human capital theory perspective, talent mobility is another form of investing on the organization's human capital as suggested by Becker (1964) that investments in employee human capital will improve worker's productivity and consequently the organizational performance; also many other empirical evidence confirmed the advantage of a strong internal labor market in terms of high employees' retention rate, better organizational performance and stronger leadership pipeline (Bidwell & Keller, 2014).

#### B. Leadership Development and Experiential Learning

In recent years the leadership development research has become increasingly critical of formal training delivery methods (for the main part, classroom-based) and increasingly advocates experiential learning as the most effective approach for developing leadership capability. Research consistently shows that, although classroom training is valuable in building conceptual awareness, leadership competencies are mainly gained through experience in complex, uncertain and responsible situations (Day et al., 2014). In support, leadership development models now tend to focus on learning-through-practice, learning-through-reflection and learning-through exposure to the harsh.

Kolb's experiential learning theory, 1984 provided the original academic impetus to this paper.

According to Kolb, when individuals are exposed to activities, the following four-stage learning cycle of concrete experience, reflection, abstract conceptualisation and active experimentation occurs: For leadership, the link between experiential learning theory and how leaders gain most value through experience across diverse situations such as rotational postings, functional transfer postings and geographical assignments are perhaps more critical.

Day et al., (2014) argue more persuasively than for formal training that executives learn best from their experience; in particularly challenging job assignments rather than purely classroom learning (McCall et al., 1988). Job rotation, functional transfer, geographical assignments Job rotation (the assignment of executives to a variety of positions within different functional departments of an organisation), cross-functional assignments (the movement of executives across different functional groups to undertake specific projects) and geographical postings (the movement of executives across subsidiaries of the same firm but geographically removed, for example across Nigeria and Africa) are powerful applications of experiential learning theory for developing leadership. Given the extensive network of subsidiaries within the Dangote Group, talent mobility could potentially provide employees with opportunities for rotational assignments, cross-functional exposure, and cross-business-unit experiences that may accelerate leadership development and organisational learning. The ability to undertake assignments across Dangote Group's business units (cement, sugar, flour and petroleum) help an employee to gain systemic thinking ability and understanding of interdependencies among units.

Similarly, assignments to a variety of geographically distributed locations of Dangote Group businesses across Africa facilitate the development of pan-African mindset, cultural intelligence and adaptation-essential attributes in increasingly diverse and international organisations. Leadership development is more effective when it is designed as part of the business, rather than an add on (Day et al., 2014).

#### C. Four Dimensions of Talent Mobility

Based on the strategic HRM literature, it has been identified that there are four dimensions of talent mobility which are particularly pertinent to the Dangote Group situation below. Job rotation: Planned movement of employees from one job to another in a series of roles within the same or a similar business unit. Job rotation has long been regarded as a basic means to develop the breadth of technical skills, reduce functional fixation and ensure flexibility and

responsiveness in managerial repertoire (McCall et al., 1988).

Within Dangote Group, organised mobility via rotation programmes in operational functions may be deployed in developing the varied, multi-domain knowledge necessary to be successful at the most senior levels.

Cross-business-unit mobility: the move of individuals between separate subsidiary firms or operating units; such as moving from Dangote Cement to Dangote Sugar Refinery, or from Dangote Industries to Dangote Oil Refinery. Such talent mobility may be particularly important in a highly diversified conglomerate such as the Dangote Group; allowing for development of cross-sectoral, enterprise-wide knowledge and the integrative reasoning of successful top leaders (Collings et al., 2015). Geographical mobility: employees relocating from one country to another within the organisation's operating scope (Adeleye, 2020). With operations within Nigeria, the Group can exploit cross-border, intra African movements of personnel to cultivate the pan-African, cross-cultural and context adaptability skills necessary for regional leadership (Adeleye, 2020).

Career-based mobility: It pertains to wider, in lateral or diagonal movements by employees to experience new functional areas, and not solely through vertical career trajectories.

This reflects the concept of the 'boundaryless' or 'portfolio' careers where employees develop their skills in varied assignments through lateral and vertical movements in their pursuit of career goals and increasing expertise (Arthur and Rousseau, 1996).

#### D. Talent Mobility and Leadership Outcomes

While research has begun to establish an empirical link, there's evidence for the relationship between internal talent mobility and effective leadership. Internal mobility cultivates leaders' broad experience, equipping them with traits such as a strategic focus, collaborative tendency, and a propensity for managing change (Dragoni, Park,

Soltis, & Forte-Trammell, 2014). By experiencing various departments or functional areas, leaders build skills that enable them to incorporate various viewpoints while assignments such as rotational ones foster greater resilience in changing circumstances.

Moreover, in leadership pipeline development, the ability to move high-potential personnel across several key positions has become integral to assessing their capacity, addressing development needs and positioning employees for future executive roles (Rothwell, 2010).

Internal movement to this effect mitigates the need to recruit outsiders with limited understanding of the company culture. In effect, mobility ensures leaders with holistic viewpoints fit the high leadership positions required within such a complex and multi-faceted conglomerate. Last but not least, the benefits of a mobility system extend to knowledge transfer and organisation learning as those that shuttle among divisions act as "boundary spanners", carrying with them organisational norms, novelties and latent information across the company (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). That ultimately enhances organisational coordination, prevents wasteful redundancy and promotes coordinated movement of strategy across various business ventures.

For instance, within Nigeria Babarinde, Omoyele, Lanre-Babalola, and Majekodunmi (2021) indicate that well orchestrated HR practices and sustainable business outcomes are synergistic and directly related.

#### E. Gaps in Existing Research

Globally there is considerable attention devoted to talent mobility and leadership development but a paucity of empirical study in African conglomerates. A preponderance of evidence comes from western countries with a range of institutional characteristics of relative stability, more developed HR systems and labor markets. The relevance of this to large Nigerian conglomerates like the Dangote Group is often ambiguous.

Institutional weaknesses, cultural influences on hierarchy and seniority, resource scarcity, and

restricted HR analytical capability, among other contextual variables remain in many cases underdeveloped in talent mobility research (Adeleye, 2020).

In many large founder-led conglomerates operating within emerging economies, organisational culture, leadership structures, and informal succession practices may influence the effectiveness of talent mobility initiatives and leadership development programmes. Contemporary literature on the practice of leadership development (Collings et al, 2019; Dries, 2013), and talent management offers substantial insights, but a focus on how talent mobility and experiential forms of learning interrelates within the specific context of the African conglomerate remains restricted. The intention of this chapter is to provide a concise synthesis of current theories and empirical insights in a format relevant to the Dangote Group context and like-organisations.

### III. METHODOLOGY

The review adopts a structured narrative literature review design supported by thematic synthesis. The approach emphasises transparency in literature selection through clearly defined search strategies, inclusion criteria, and source evaluation procedures while allowing interpretive integration of theoretical and empirical insights. This approach is particularly suitable for management and leadership studies where contextual complexity and conceptual diversity often limit the applicability of formal meta-analytic techniques (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006). Rather than seeking statistical aggregation of findings, the review aims to synthesise existing knowledge and generate contextually relevant theoretical insights regarding talent mobility and leadership development within African conglomerates.

The article thus contributes to knowledge as a conceptual piece of research rather than as primary empirical research. The structured literature review design employed here integrates characteristics from both systematic review and narrative synthesis. Systematic reviews are used for their rigour, transparency and replicability in defining inclusion

and exclusion criteria for literature retrieval; narrative synthesis is employed for interpretative integration of findings (Tranfield et al., 2003). This mixed method design of systematic review supplemented with narrative synthesis is considered suitable given that in management literature, issues of methodology and context are often too complex to facilitate any attempt at meta-analysis (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006). Data sources comprise peer reviewed journal articles, academic books and reputable industry/policy reports from 1991 to 2024.

Major scholarly databases (Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar, JSTOR) were searched using search terms in combination such as 'talent mobility' and 'leadership development', 'internal mobility' and 'succession planning', 'job rotation' and 'leadership competencies', 'experiential learning' and 'HRM', 'talent management' and 'Africa', and 'Dangote Group' and 'human resource management'. Our inclusion criteria were defined by publications focused on talent mobility, leadership development, strategic HRM and emerging economies, especially for large African conglomerates. We deliberately excluded non peer reviewed materials, for instance anecdotal sources, to enhance the trustworthiness of the presented synthesis of findings (Booth et al., 2016).

The analytical process undertaken was thematic analysis – a qualitatively focused method of analyzing data which allows for the identification of patterns, relationships and concepts across diverse pieces of work (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Texts were analyzed, coded, and synthesized into thematic concepts in relation to experiential leadership development, succession planning, knowledge transfer, and impediments to talent mobility, particularly in relation to the Dangote Group. The method was well-suited for our conceptual review as it can lead to the enrichment of theories and the synthesis of information from across disciplines (Nowell et al., 2017).

We acknowledge, as with any conceptual review, the study's limitations in establishing causalities or quantifying the extent of any effect; further detail on these limitations can be found in Section V.

Therefore, the research should be viewed as developing theoretically grounded proposals that require further empirical testing within the context of Dangote Group and similar firms.

#### IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

##### A. Thematic Findings

Thematic analysis of the literature under review brought to the fore four pervasive themes on the

significance of talent mobility in leadership development of big conglomerates like Dangote Group: experiential leadership development, succession planning and leadership continuity, knowledge transfer and organisational learning and contextual and organisational barriers. Table 1 offers a organised synopsis of these themes, mechanisms, leadership outcomes and major representative sources.

Table 1: Thematic Summary — Talent Mobility and Leadership Development in the Dangote Group

| Theme                                          | Key Mechanisms                                                                                                                                                       | Leadership Outcomes                                                                                                                                  | Illustrative Sources                                                        |
|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Experiential Leadership Development            | Job rotation, cross-functional assignments, project-based postings across Dangote subsidiaries; exposure to novel roles, industries, and operational contexts        | Enhanced strategic thinking, adaptability, decision-making under uncertainty, problem-solving, and cross-functional integration                      | Kolb (1984); McCall et al. (1988); Day et al. (2014); Dragoni et al. (2014) |
| Succession Planning and Leadership Continuity  | Systematic rotation of high-potential employees through critical senior roles across Dangote Group's cement, sugar, refining, and other subsidiaries                 | Robust internal leadership pipeline, reduced succession risk, improved readiness for executive positions, lowered dependence on external recruitment | Rothwell (2010); Collings et al. (2015); Bidwell & Keller (2014)            |
| Knowledge Transfer and Organisational Learning | Mobile employees as boundary-spanners, transferring tacit knowledge, best practices, and innovations across Dangote's diversified business units                     | Improved inter-unit coordination, reduction of operational redundancy, enhanced innovation capacity, and stronger strategic alignment                | Nonaka & Takeuchi (1995); Cappelli & Keller (2014); Adeleye (2020)          |
| Contextual and Organisational Barriers         | Hierarchical norms, talent hoarding, founder-driven culture, limited HR analytics capability, and resource constraints within the Nigerian institutional environment | Resistance to lateral moves, constrained mobility pool, under-realisation of developmental benefits, and potential career-stagnation perceptions     | Fitzgerald (2014); Adeleye (2020); Arthur & Rousseau (1996)                 |

First theme; experiential leadership development, the most pronounced avenue through which talent mobility fuels the acquisition of leadership capacity. Following Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle, the assignments and projects of a rotational nature, and the moves across business areas typical of those undertaken by moving talent within different companies and subsidiary firms of Dangote, will provide employees with a variety of experiences that

build capabilities associated with higher order problem-solving, adaptation, and strategic thinking. Much of the literature points to the power of varied, complex experiences with high accountability (rather than purely training and instruction) in developing leadership competencies much more rapidly (McCall et al., 1988; Dragoni et al., 2014). Moreover, due to the sheer diversity of industries the Dangote group operates in - such as, cement, refining, flour milling,

oil & gas, telecommunications, to mention just a few-provides ample natural scope for such types of experiential learning.

Second theme: succession planning and leadership continuity; it is a process of identifying, preparing, and supporting individuals for succession. By moving emerging leaders systematically through varied jobs and locations, firms like the Dangote Group create pipelines of future executives ready to step into available positions, thereby mitigating some risk of leadership succession (Rothwell, 2010; Collings et al., 2015). This is highly salient in context such as Nigeria where it may be too resource-intensive and risky to conduct any considerable external hiring of senior executives that will be needed given the complexity of a conglomerate of Dangote Group's magnitude.

Third theme: knowledge transfer and organisational learning a conduit. It shows that employees with varied cross-unit/company experience help organisations with organizational learning and coordinated work, as well as sharing expertise across its varied business units of operations like cement, sugar, refinery, oil & gas, telcoms, and so on. This perspective stems from the field of organization learning where information flows among members of an organization are important for ongoing competitiveness (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Cappelli & Keller, 2014).

Fourth theme: contextual and organisational barriers contextual- organisational/environmental challenges can be inhibitors of the adoption of talent mobility within firms like Dangote. There are cultural expectations that can hinder lateral or cross functional moves, and these norms often exist in organisations on the continent to a certain extent. Many an African workplace has some form of cultural norm that encourages employees to see success in terms of promotion through the ranks, rather than mobility along horizontally or transversely (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996). These barriers often come in the form of the reluctance on the part of some managers in organizations such as Dangote Group to part with top performing employees to be moved to another segment in order

to prevent the other segment from poaching their talent (Fitzgerald, 2014); Inadequate HR Analytics in emerging economies (Adeleye, 2020).

## B. Discussion

The findings extend existing leadership development literature and confirm that talent mobility can be an experiential learning vehicle for large conglomerates. According to the RBV, mobility to internal positions contributes to firm-specific human capital creation in so far as individuals build idiosyncratic stocks of know-ledge, skills, and relationships which competitors cannot duplicate (Barney, 1991). Moreover, the human capital literature highlights that the returns from employee develop-ment are significant as investments in employee human capital enhance worker productivity and firm performance (Becker, 1964).

Talent mobility facilitates the development of high-level skills needed to achieve executive levels (i.e., strategic thinking, adaptability, integrative problem-solving) by moving employees across a variety of jobs, functions, and business units in a wide group like the Dangote Group (Day et al., 2014).

For example, talent mobility for the Dangote Group is especially relevant in the current structural, organizational, institutional, and economic context. Because the Dangote Group is one of the largest conglomerates in Nigeria and one of the biggest in Africa with potential succession planning and leadership pipeline challenges, in addition to a scarcity of qualified, international, talented external labor in the required numbers, internal mobility provides an opportunity to cultivate leaders with in-depth knowledge of the organisation culture, values, operating dynamics, or specific operating procedures (Adeleye, 2020). As individuals move across different subsidiaries of the group (e.g., Dangote Cement, Dangote Sugar, Dangote Industries, Dangote Oil Refinery, etc.) as a component of mobility (transfers) or development Rothwell (2010), senior-level executives can successfully build and groom a pipeline of leaders while reducing potential executive skill and leadership gap risks (Collings et al., 2015). Furthermore, these findings show that mobility success at the Dangote Group is culturally and

organizationally bounded due to its African-context-specific cultural context.

As a conceptual proposition, talent mobility within large African conglomerates may be constrained by hierarchical organisational structures, managerial resistance to employee transfers, and concerns regarding the loss of high-performing personnel to other units. Such challenges have been identified in the broader talent-management literature and warrant further empirical investigation within the Dangote Group context (Cappelli and Keller, 2014).

This article thus reveals the need for robust change management strategies, career-transparency programs, and strong leadership commitment to support talent mobility initiatives and encourage participation (McCauley & McCall, 2014). This article, in theoretical terms, extends the debate on talent mobility away from developed, western countries, to consider specific, contextually relevant situations encountered by large conglomerates operating in Africa. In spite of the vast amount of scholarship on talent mobility in North America and Europe, a number of studies have shown that the efficacy of the different approaches to mobility relies not only on design characteristics, but also on macro- (economic, institutional and social) and micro (cultural) organizational factors that influence workers attitudes and behaviour as well as management decisions, and the effectiveness of talent mobility in the context of the Dangote Group (Bidwell & Keller, 2014).

To that extent, the study suggests the value of taking contextual adaptation approaches when testing management-related theories that were traditionally developed in stable and developed markets. The practical implications of the findings for the Dangote Group are numerous. First, because of the natural structuring of its diverse portfolio of businesses as inherent operational units, the Dangote Group can leverage a “natural lab” for talent mobility if it institutes aligned and integrated talent management systems that focus on how mobilities may occur strategically; defines clear eligibility requirements for these developmental mobility exercises; designs robust mentorship, coaching, and on-job learning for

personnel undergoing mobilities, and systematically deploys HR analytics tools and methods to assess how skills are acquired as a result of these experiences and what results the individual's performance is yielding (Cappelli & Keller, 2014; McCauley & McCall, 2014).

Developing an organizational culture that encourages and rewards both learning and information sharing is key in order to overcome resistance.

Secondly, tying mobility programs with talent management (including succession) programs would lead to ensuring continuous pipeline of executive-level personnel across the complex operations of the Dangote Group.

## V. IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND FUTURE RESEARCH

### A. Theoretical Implications

This article makes several contributions to the theoretical literature on talent mobility and leadership development. First, it extends experiential learning theory (Kolb, 1984) and the RBV (Barney, 1991) into the under-explored context of African conglomerates, demonstrating that these frameworks retain analytical relevance but require contextual adaptation to accommodate institutional, cultural, and structural factors specific to emerging economies. Second, the four-dimensional conceptualisation of talent mobility encompassing job rotation, cross-business-unit mobility, geographical mobility, and career-based mobility offers a more granular and practically grounded typology than those typically employed in the existing literature. Third, by integrating the succession planning, knowledge transfer, and organisational learning perspectives within a single thematic framework, the article advances understanding of the multiple pathways through which mobility contributes to leadership development.

### B. Practical Implications

For HR practitioners and senior leadership at the Dangote Group and comparable African conglomerates, the findings suggest several actionable recommendations. Organisations should formalise mobility pathways by establishing

structured rotation programmes with explicit developmental objectives, clear eligibility criteria, and defined timeframes. These programmes should be linked explicitly to succession planning processes to ensure that mobility serves the organisation's long-term leadership continuity objectives. HR leaders should also invest in analytics capabilities that allow the tracking of employee developmental trajectories, identification of mobility-ready talent, and evaluation of mobility outcomes over time. Addressing cultural barriers particularly hierarchical resistance to lateral moves and managerial talent hoarding requires consistent messaging from senior leadership and the development of incentive structures that reward managers for releasing and developing talent rather than retaining it within individual units.

#### C. Limitations

This study is subject to several limitations that should be acknowledged. As a conceptual review, it relies on secondary literature and theoretical analysis, which constrains the ability to establish causal relationships or quantify the magnitude of talent mobility's effects on specific leadership outcomes within the Dangote Group. While the review incorporates studies relevant to emerging economies, primary empirical data from the Dangote Group and Nigerian conglomerates remain limited in the published literature, which means that the thematic framework proposed here requires validation through future field-based research. Additionally, the article focuses specifically on the Dangote Group as an illustrative case, which may limit the generalisability of certain contextual observations to other African conglomerates with different ownership structures, institutional environments, or sectoral profiles. The cross-sectional nature of the conceptual review also means that dynamic or longitudinal aspects of talent mobility and leadership development such as how mobility effects evolve over an employee's career cannot be fully captured.

#### D. Directions for Future Research

The limitations identified above highlight several productive directions for future empirical research. Qualitative field studies combining semi-structured interviews with HR practitioners, senior executives, and mobile employees at the Dangote Group would

provide primary evidence to validate, refine, or challenge the thematic framework developed here. Quantitative survey-based research examining the relationship between specific mobility dimensions and leadership outcome measures including competency acquisition, succession readiness, and promotion rates would enable more precise estimation of mobility's developmental impact. Longitudinal designs tracking employees through multiple mobility cycles over time would shed important light on the cumulative effects of diverse work experience on leadership trajectory. Comparative studies across African conglomerates in different national contexts such as Nigeria, Kenya, South Africa, and Ghana would further illuminate how institutional and cultural factors moderate the effectiveness of talent mobility initiatives. Finally, future research might explore the role of digital HR platforms and workforce analytics in facilitating more agile and data-driven approaches to talent mobility in large African organisations.

### VI. CONCLUSION

This article has demonstrated that talent mobility is a critical and strategically significant mechanism for leadership development in the Dangote Group of Companies and large conglomerates operating in emerging economies such as Nigeria. Through four principal pathways experiential learning, succession planning and leadership continuity, knowledge transfer and organisational learning, and the navigation of contextual and organisational barriers internal mobility strengthens leadership capacity, enhances firm-specific human capital, and contributes to organisational resilience.

The study makes a conceptual contribution by contextualising established theories of experiential learning, resource-based human capital, and strategic HRM within the specific and under-researched terrain of African conglomerates. By doing so, it demonstrates both the relevance and the limits of Western-derived frameworks when applied to organisations such as the Dangote Group, underscoring the need for context-sensitive theoretical adaptation. Practically, the article offers evidence-based guidance for HR practitioners and

senior leaders at the Dangote Group and comparable organisations seeking sustainable leadership development strategies that leverage internal talent rather than depending excessively on external recruitment or expatriate solutions.

The findings are explicitly framed as theoretically grounded propositions derived from conceptual synthesis, and the article actively encourages future researchers to adopt primary empirical designs including surveys, interviews, and longitudinal studies to test, refine, and extend these propositions within the Dangote Group and other large African conglomerates. In doing so, this article seeks not only to advance scholarly understanding of talent mobility as a leadership development tool in Africa but also to contribute to the broader agenda of developing context-sensitive HRM theory and practice in emerging economies.

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