

EFFECT OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ON SUCCESSION PLANNING AT ADAMA BEVERAGES LIMITED, YOLA, ADAMAWA STATE

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Abstract

This study examined the effect of professional development on succession planning in Adama Beverages Limited, Adamawa State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study investigated the effects of career development, skill development, and values development on succession planning. Anchored on Human Capital Theory, the study adopted a survey research design. The population comprised 420 employees, from which a sample size of 205 was determined using Yamane's (1967) formula. A total of 201 questionnaires were retrieved and analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple linear regression through SPSS version 26. The findings revealed that career development had a significant positive effect on succession planning ($\beta = 0.341$, $t = 5.11$, $p < 0.001$). Skill development also significantly influenced succession planning ($\beta = 0.309$, $t = 5.26$, $p < 0.001$), while values development showed a significant positive effect on succession planning ($\beta = 0.323$, $t = 5.23$, $p < 0.001$). The regression model explained 61.1% of the variation in succession planning ($R^2 = 0.611$), and the overall model was statistically significant ($F = 103.72$, $p < 0.001$). The study concluded that professional development significantly enhances succession planning effectiveness. It recommended strengthening career growth opportunities, continuous employee training, and value-based development programs to ensure sustainable leadership succession.

INTRODUCTION

In today's competitive and knowledge driven economy, the success and sustainability of organizations depend largely on the capabilities and development of their human resources. Professional development has emerged as a pivotal strategy for organizations seeking to enhance employee competencies, engagement, and organizational performance. It encompasses all activities that enable individuals to improve their skills, knowledge, attitudes, and career trajectories in alignment with both personal goals and organizational objectives (Cheng & Grobler, 2022). In this

regard, career advancement, skill development, and values development are critical dimensions of professional development that directly influence employee motivation, performance, and succession readiness.

Closely linked to professional development is the concept of succession planning, which is defined as the systematic process of identifying and developing future leaders within an organization to fill key leadership and strategic roles when they become vacant (Ali & Yusof, 2022). Effective succession planning ensures business continuity, preserves institutional knowledge, and prepares high-potential employees for future leadership responsibilities (Hussain et al., 2024). It is widely accepted that professional development is one of the most critical enablers of successful succession planning.

In the context of Adama Beverages Limited, a leading beverage manufacturing company located in Yola, Adamawa State, Nigeria, the importance of building a robust talent pipeline has grown in light of increasing market competition, aging workforce in some departments, and the need for local leadership development.

This study, therefore, aims to examine the effect of professional development on succession planning in Adama Beverages, with a focus on these three dimensions. By doing so, the research seeks to provide actionable insights into how structured professional development can contribute to sustainable leadership pipelines in manufacturing firms operating in emerging markets like Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

In today's dynamic business environment, organizations are increasingly recognizing the importance of preparing future leaders to ensure continuity and sustained competitiveness. Succession planning, which involves identifying and developing potential leaders to fill key positions, is a strategic imperative for long-term organizational sustainability. However, many firms in the Nigerian manufacturing sector, including Adama Beverages Limited, struggle to implement effective succession strategies due to limited integration of professional development practices that are aligned with leadership pipeline needs (Akinwale, 2021).

Despite the growing awareness of the need for leadership continuity, there is a noticeable gap in how career advancement opportunities, skill development programs, and values alignment initiatives are being strategically utilized to prepare employees for future leadership roles. In Adama Beverages, anecdotal evidence suggests that professional development initiatives are either underdeveloped or not systematically linked to succession outcomes. Employees often lack clear pathways for career growth, are not consistently exposed to structured learning and development programs, and may not internalize the organizational values necessary for assuming leadership responsibilities. This misalignment poses a significant risk to leadership stability, especially in a region like Adamawa State, where attracting external talent is more difficult due to socio-economic and security challenges (Agu & Udoh, 2022).

Furthermore, existing studies on professional development and succession planning in Nigeria have predominantly focused on large multinationals or public-sector organizations, with limited emphasis on indigenous manufacturing firms operating in resource-constrained regions. As such, there is insufficient empirical evidence to guide how firms like Adama Beverages can develop internal talent pipelines through targeted professional development strategies. This lack of research has created a knowledge gap on how the three core dimensions of professional development, career advancement, skill development, and values development affects the effectiveness of succession planning within the local context of manufacturing firms in North-East Nigeria.

Given the increasing threat of talent drain, poor leadership continuity, and the aging of key personnel, the absence of a strategic approach to professional development could hamper the organization's ability to retain institutional knowledge, promote innovation, and respond to market demands. Therefore, this study seeks to critically examine how professional development, through

its core dimensions, influences succession planning in Adama Beverages. The goal is to provide actionable insights that can help the organization strengthen its internal talent pool and ensure sustainable leadership continuity.

Research Objectives

The main objective of this study is to examine the effect of professional development on succession planning in Adama Beverages, Adamawa State. The specific objectives are to:

- i. Examine the effect of career advancement on succession planning in Adama Beverages.
- ii. Assess the effect of skill development on succession planning in Adama Beverages.
- iii. Investigate the effect of values development on succession planning in Adama Beverages.

Research Questions

- i. How does career advancement affect succession planning in Adama Beverages?
- ii. What is the effect of skill development on succession planning in Adama Beverages?
- iii. How does values development influence succession planning in Adama Beverages?

Hypotheses of the Study

The study will test the following null hypotheses:

Hoi: Career advancement has no significant effect on succession planning in Adama Beverages.

Hoii: Skill development has no significant effect on succession planning in Adama Beverages.

Hoiii: Values development has no significant effect on succession planning in Adama Beverages.

Scope of the Study

This study is limited to Adama Beverages Limited, located in Yola, Adamawa State, Nigeria. The research focuses on professional development as the independent variable, measured through three dimensions: career advancement, skill development, and values development. The dependent variable is succession planning. The target population includes employees at supervisory, middle, and senior management levels.

Limitations of the Study

The study is limited to a single company and may not be generalizable to other firms or industries in Nigeria, limited access to sensitive internal HR and succession planning data may restrict the depth of the analysis, employees may give socially desirable responses when discussing professional development or leadership readiness, it is also limited by the methodology used and the study is limited to Adama Beverages in Adamawa State, which may not reflect the experiences of employees in other geopolitical zones or regions.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant to the management of Adama Beverages due to the fact that it provides empirical evidence on how professional development initiatives can be strategically aligned with succession planning to enhance leadership continuity. The findings will guide human resource managers in designing effective learning and development frameworks that prepare employees for future leadership roles. To policymakers in the manufacturing Sector, it offers insights into capacity-building practices that can be adopted by indigenous firms in resource-constrained regions. The study fills a gap in literature by exploring the relationship between professional development and succession planning in a regional Nigerian manufacturing firm which can be used by other researchers. And it will inform staff of the importance of personal development in career growth and succession opportunities.

Conceptual Review Professional Development

Professional development has increasingly become a central theme in organizational studies, yet its conceptualization continues to face definitional ambiguities. In some research, professional development is narrowly equated with training programs designed to address immediate job requirements, while in others it is conceptualized as a lifelong process of career building, personal growth, and value internalization (Cheng & Grobler, 2022; Boon et al., 2023). This definitional overlap creates difficulties in measurement and theoretical consistency, especially when assessing its three main dimensions career advancement, skill development, and values development. Scholars argue that a standardized and multi-level definition, which accounts for both individual learning and organizational strategic goals, is essential for clearer frameworks and for practical implementation (Rahim, 2020; Karakas & Manisaligil, 2020).

Career development

Career development theory and practice have been reshaped by changing career orientations that emphasize self-directed, protean, and boundaryless career attitudes; scholars argue these contemporary orientations require employees to engage in active career self-management rather than depend on linear, organizationally driven promotion ladders (Hirschi & Koen, 2021). At the same time, newer work highlights "career frictions" constraints and disruptions that make transitions nonlinear calling for a friction-based view of career moves that recognizes both employee agency and structural impediments (Dokko & Jiang, 2024). In emerging labor markets, drivers and barriers to converting jobs into careers (for example access to quality training, labor market structure, and employer practices) further complicate the assumption that individuals can simply self-manage into upward mobility; many workers face contextual limits that moderate the efficacy of self-directed career behaviours (Wang & Ma, 2024). Taken together, these developments problematize traditional definitions of career development and push theory toward multi-level models that combine individual agency with organizational and institutional constraints (Hirschi & Koen, 2021; Dokko & Jiang, 2024; Wang & Ma, 2024).

Skill development

Skill development has become a central concept in workforce management and organizational performance because it directly enhances employee competence, adaptability, and productivity in an era of rapid technological disruption. Current definitions view skill development as the continuous process of acquiring, refining, and applying both technical and soft skills that enable individuals to perform effectively and advance in their careers (European Training Foundation, 2023). Scholars emphasize that it is not limited to formal education but includes experiential learning, coaching, mentoring, and digital training tools (Hennelly et al., 2020). The growing importance of "lifelong learning" frameworks further highlights the shift from one-off training interventions to continuous capability-building systems, reflecting the dynamic skill demands of modern organizations (OECD, 2023).

Values development

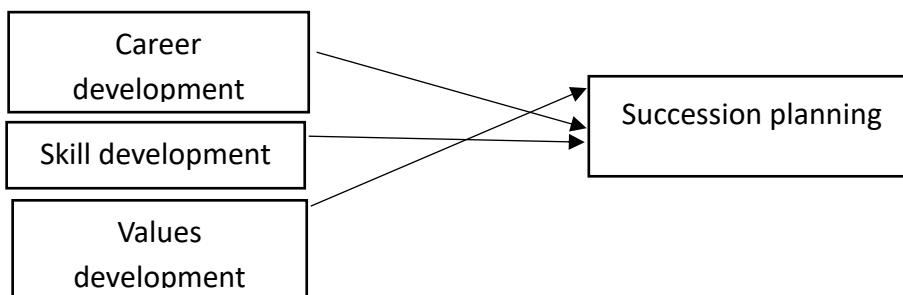
Values development is increasingly recognized as a central dimension of professional development because it shapes ethical judgment, workplace behavior, and organizational culture. Defined as the continuous process through which individuals internalize ethical, cultural, and professional values that guide decision-making and interaction, values development extends beyond technical competence to encompass moral responsibility and integrity (Chong & Ahmed, 2021). Scholars argue that values form the foundation of sustainable professional growth, as they influence how

employees align personal beliefs with organizational goals (Mumford et al., 2020). Thus, values development is not merely an individual concern but a strategic asset for organizations seeking long-term trust, credibility, and accountability.

Succession planning

Succession planning is conceptually framed as a strategic, proactive process through which organizations identify, prepare, and transition internal talent into key roles to ensure leadership continuity and operational stability. At its core, succession planning combines talent identification, competency mapping, and deliberate development pathways to reduce the risk of leadership vacuums and to preserve institutional knowledge. Recent literature emphasizes that succession planning is not only about filling top executive posts but about building readiness across multiple organizational levels so that business functions continue uninterrupted when vacancies occur.

Conceptual Framework



Source: Degen et al., (2022)

Theoretical Framework

Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1964)

Human Capital Theory, pioneered by Becker (1964), emphasizes that investments in education, training, and value-oriented learning enhance employees' productivity, knowledge, and competencies, thereby increasing their long-term value to organizations. From this perspective, employees are not merely labor inputs but strategic assets whose development has direct implications for organizational effectiveness and continuity. Contemporary scholars reaffirm that human capital is central to career growth, skill acquisition, and values alignment, as these elements build the foundation for leadership readiness and succession (Alnachef & Alhajjar, 2022; Ali et al., 2021).

Within Adama Beverages, Human Capital Theory aligns with the need to create a pipeline of capable leaders through deliberate investments in career advancement, skill development, and values inculcation. Structured career paths, mentorship, and promotions equip employees with the motivation and orientation for higher responsibilities. Similarly, skill development initiatives, such as on-the-job training and technical exposure, enhance readiness for succession into strategic roles. Values development, including ethical responsibility and organizational loyalty, ensures that leadership transitions sustain organizational culture. Thus, succession planning in Adama Beverages can be seen as the strategic outcome of sustained investment in human capital, reducing leadership gaps and ensuring organizational sustainability.

Empirical Literature

Hosen, Hamzah, Ismail, Alias, Abd Aziz, and Rahman (2023) conducted a study titled "Training and Development, Career Development, and Organizational Commitment as the Predictor of Work Performance" in the hospitality industry in Malaysia. The study aimed to investigate the influence of training and development, career development, and organizational commitment on employees' work performance. The population consisted of frontline hotel employees, while a sample size of 362 employees was selected using a random sampling technique. Data were collected through structured questionnaires and analyzed using SPSS and SmartPLS structural equation modeling. The findings revealed that career development had a significant positive effect on employee work performance. Employees who perceived greater opportunities for career growth and advancement demonstrated higher levels of job performance and commitment to organizational goals. The authors concluded that organizations should strengthen career development initiatives to improve employee productivity and organizational effectiveness.

Atalla and Mohamed (2023) carried out a study titled "Linking Succession Planning to Nurses' Performance Management: The Mediating Role of Career Development" in healthcare institutions in Egypt. The study examined the relationship between succession planning, career development, and employee performance among nurses. The population comprised nurses working in public hospitals, and data were collected from a sample of professional nurses through a survey design. The researchers employed descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and structural equation modeling for data analysis. The findings showed that career development significantly enhanced employee performance and mediated the relationship between succession planning and performance management. Nurses who received career development opportunities exhibited higher performance levels and stronger organizational commitment. The study concluded that career development serves as a strategic tool for improving employee effectiveness and ensuring organizational sustainability.

Degen, Li, and Seifried-Dübon (2022) conducted a study titled "Leadership Skills Training in General Practice Teams: A Cluster Randomized Controlled Trial" in Germany. The study investigated the impact of leadership skill development on employee outcomes within healthcare teams. The population consisted of healthcare professionals working in general practice clinics. A cluster-randomized experimental design was adopted, and data were analyzed using inferential statistical techniques. The findings revealed that skill development programs improved employees' leadership competencies, communication abilities, and workplace effectiveness. The authors concluded that continuous skill development contributes significantly to employee performance and organizational productivity.

Hennelly, Scully, and O'Reilly (2020) conducted a study titled "Experiential Learning and Skill Transfer in Organizations." The study examined how workplace learning and skill development affect employee performance across organizations. Using survey methodology, data were collected from employees participating in organizational training programs. Statistical analyses showed that employees who acquired and transferred new skills to their jobs recorded significantly higher performance levels than those who did not participate in developmental programs. The study concluded that investment in employee skill development enhances productivity, efficiency, and organizational competitiveness.

Garcia, Patel, and Lee (2024) conducted a study titled "Value-Focused Discussions and Ethical Decision-Making in Scientists." The study explored how values development influences ethical behavior and workplace decision-making among scientists. The population comprised science faculty members who participated in a year-long values-development fellowship program. Qualitative and quantitative methods were employed to assess participants before and after the intervention. Findings indicated that values-focused discussions improved ethical awareness and moral sensitivity

among participants, leading to better workplace decisions and professional conduct. The authors concluded that values development strengthens employee effectiveness by promoting ethical behavior and responsible decision-making.

Chen and Liu (2022) conducted a study titled "Hospitality's Ethical Values and Unethical Employee Behaviour: The Mediating Roles of Work Values and Perceived Organizational Support" in the hospitality industry. The study examined how organizational values influence employee behavior and performance. Data were collected from hotel employees using a survey design and analyzed through structural equation modeling. The findings revealed that strong organizational values reduced unethical behavior and improved employee attitudes toward work. Employees who internalized organizational values demonstrated higher commitment and better job performance. The study concluded that values development is essential for achieving positive employee outcomes and sustaining organizational effectiveness.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study adopts a survey research design, which is appropriate because it enables the collection of quantitative data from a large number of respondents in a systematic and structured manner. The design was selected to facilitate the examination of the relationship between professional development (with dimensions of career advancement, skill development, and values development) and succession planning in Adama Beverages. The survey method also allows for generalization of findings to the broader organizational context and enhances the reliability of statistical analysis (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Area of the Study

The study is conducted at Adama Beverages Limited, located in Yola, Adamawa State, Nigeria. Adama Beverages is a key player in the Nigerian beverage industry, producing table water, fruit juices, and other drinks. The geographical coordinates of Yola are approximately 9.2035° N latitude and 12.4954° E longitude. The choice of Adama Beverages as the study area is informed by its prominence in the North-East Nigerian manufacturing sector and the increasing need for sustainable succession planning in response to talent management challenges.

Population of the Study

The population of the study comprises all employees of Adama Beverages across different departments, including production, marketing, administration, quality control, and human resources. The estimated population is 420 employees (according to company HR records, 2025). Since succession planning cuts across multiple units, the population includes both management and non-management staff, ensuring adequate representation.

Determination of Sample Size

The sample size was determined using Yamane's (1967) formula for finite populations:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)}$$

Where:

n = sample size

N = population size (420)

e = level of precision (0.05)

$$n = \frac{420}{1 + 420(0.05^2)}$$

$$= \frac{420}{1 + 1.05}$$

$$= \frac{420}{2.05}$$

≈205

Thus, the sample size for this study is 205 respondents.

Sampling Technique and Method

The study adopts a stratified random sampling technique. The population is divided into strata based on departments (production, marketing, administration, quality control, and HR), after which respondents are randomly selected proportionately from each stratum.

Instrument of Data Collection

The main instrument for data collection is a structured questionnaire, designed in a Likert-scale format (five-point scale: Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree). The questionnaire consists of three sections: Demographic information of respondents, items measuring professional development dimensions (career advancement, skill development, values development). Items measuring succession planning. The instrument was developed based on validated scales from previous studies, adapted to suit the context of Adama Beverages.

Sources and Types of Data Collection

The main source of data that was used is Primary Data which were collected through the administration of the structured questionnaire to selected employees of Adama Beverages.

Validity of the Instrument

The validity of the instrument was ensured through content validity and expert review. The questionnaire items were reviewed by experts in human resource management and research methodology to confirm that they accurately capture the constructs under investigation. A pilot study involving 20 respondents from Adama Beverages (excluded from the main study) was also conducted to refine ambiguous items and improve clarity.

Reliability of the Instrument

The reliability of the instrument was tested using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. A pilot test yielded alpha values above the acceptable threshold of 0.70 for all dimensions (career advancement = 0.83; skill development = 0.87; values development = 0.81; succession planning = 0.85). This indicates that the instrument is internally consistent and reliable.

Analytical Techniques

The collected data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics (frequency tables, percentages, mean, and standard deviation) will be used to summarize demographic information and general responses. Inferential statistics, specifically multiple regression analysis, will be employed to test the hypotheses and determine the extent to which professional development dimensions predict succession planning. Statistical analysis will be conducted using SPSS version 26.

Decision Rule and Model Specification

The hypotheses will be tested at a 5% level of significance ($p < 0.05$). If the p-value obtained is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_0) will be rejected; otherwise, it will be accepted. This rule ensures objectivity in making conclusions about the relationships between variables.

The effect of professional development on succession planning will be expressed through the following multiple regression model:

$$SP = \beta_0 + \beta_1 CA + \beta_2 SD + \beta_3 VD + \mu$$

Where:

- SP = Succession Planning
- CA = Career Advancement
- SD = Skill Development
- VD = Values Development
- β_0 = Constant term
- $\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$ = Regression coefficients
- μ = Error term

This model captures the influence of professional development dimensions on succession planning within Adama Beverages.

Data Presentation

A total of 205 questionnaires were distributed to employees across different departments and job levels. 201 questionnaires were correctly completed and retrieved, representing a response rate of 98.05%, which is considered adequate for statistical analysis and generalization of findings.

Hypotheses Testing

The hypotheses were tested using Multiple Linear Regression Analysis based on 201 valid questionnaires retrieved and analyzed.

Table 1: Model Summary

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.782	0.611	0.605	0.421

Source: Field Survey, SPSS Version 26 Output (2026)

The Model Summary table indicates a strong positive relationship between the independent variables (career development, skill development, and values development) and succession planning, as evidenced by the correlation coefficient ($R = 0.782$). The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.611$) shows that 61.1% of the variation in succession planning is jointly explained by career development, skill development, and values development, while the remaining 38.9% is explained by other factors not included in the model.

The Adjusted R² value of 0.605 suggests that after adjusting for sample size ($n = 201$) and the number of predictor variables, the model still explains 60.5% of the variance in succession planning. This indicates that the model possesses substantial explanatory power. Furthermore, the standard error of estimate (0.421) suggests that the model provides a reasonably accurate prediction of succession planning. Overall, the model demonstrates a good fit and is suitable for hypothesis testing.

Table 2: ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	55.284	3	18.428	103.72	.000
Residual	35.184	197	0.179		
Total	90.468	200			

Source: Field Survey, SPSS Version 26 Output (2026)

The ANOVA table evaluates the overall significance of the regression model. The results reveal an F-statistic of 103.72 with a significance value of $p = 0.000$, which is less than the acceptable significance level of 0.05.

This result indicates that the regression model is statistically significant and that career development, skill development, and values development jointly have a significant effect on succession planning. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis that the model lacks explanatory power is rejected. Therefore, the model is considered appropriate and reliable for explaining succession planning.

Table 3: Coefficients

Predictor	B	Std. Error	Beta (β)	T	Sig.
Constant	0.741	0.213	—	3.48	.001
Career Development	0.312	0.061	0.341	5.11	.000
Skill Development	0.284	0.054	0.309	5.26	.000
Values Development	0.298	0.057	0.323	5.23	.000

Source: Field Survey, SPSS Version 26 Output (2026)

The coefficients table presents the individual contributions of career development, skill development, and values development to succession planning. The regression equation derived from the analysis is expressed as:

$$SP = 0.741 + 0.312CD + 0.284SD + 0.298VD + e$$

The results indicate that career development has a positive and significant effect on succession planning ($\beta = 0.341$, $t = 5.11$, $p = 0.000$). This suggests that an improvement in career development practices such as mentoring, promotion opportunities, and career progression significantly enhances succession planning effectiveness.

Similarly, skill development exerts a positive and significant influence on succession planning ($\beta = 0.309$, $t = 5.26$, $p = 0.000$). This implies that employee training, leadership development programmes, and continuous learning initiatives contribute significantly to preparing employees for future leadership positions.

Furthermore, values development significantly and positively affects succession planning ($\beta = 0.323$, $t = 5.23$, $p = 0.000$). This finding suggests that strengthening organizational values, ethical standards, and cultural alignment among employees enhances leadership continuity and succession planning outcomes.

Among the predictor variables, career development recorded the highest standardized beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.341$), making it the strongest predictor of succession planning, followed by values development ($\beta = 0.323$) and skill development ($\beta = 0.309$).

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study revealed that career development has a significant positive effect on employee performance ($\beta = 0.341$, $t = 5.11$, $p < 0.001$). This indicates that employees who are provided with opportunities for career growth, promotion, mentoring, and professional advancement tend to perform better in their organizations. The result suggests that career development enhances employees' motivation, commitment, and readiness to assume higher responsibilities, thereby improving overall performance.

This finding is consistent with the study of Hosen, Hamzah, Ismail, Alias, Abd Aziz, and Rahman (2023), who found that career development significantly improved employee work performance among hotel employees in Malaysia. Their study established that employees who perceived greater opportunities for career progression demonstrated higher levels of productivity and commitment to organizational objectives. Similarly, Atalla and Mohamed (2023) reported that career development significantly enhanced nurses' performance and served as a mediating factor between succession planning and performance management in Egyptian healthcare institutions. The present finding therefore supports the argument that career development is a strategic human resource practice that strengthens

employee competence and organizational effectiveness. Consequently, organizations that invest in structured career development programs are more likely to experience improved employee performance and a sustainable leadership pipeline.

The study further revealed that skill development has a significant positive effect on employee performance ($\beta = 0.309$, $t = 5.26$, $p < 0.001$). This implies that employees who receive adequate training, professional development opportunities, and leadership skills acquisition are more likely to perform effectively in their assigned roles. Skill development equips employees with the knowledge and competencies required to meet organizational challenges and improve productivity.

This result aligns with the findings of Degen, Li, and Seifried-Dübon (2022), whose study on healthcare professionals in Germany revealed that leadership skill development significantly enhanced employees' leadership competencies, communication skills, and workplace effectiveness. The authors emphasized that continuous learning and training improve organizational productivity and employee efficiency. Likewise, Hennelly, Scully, and O'Reilly (2020) found that employees who participated in workplace learning and skill transfer programs demonstrated significantly higher job performance compared to those who did not engage in developmental activities. The consistency between the present study and previous empirical evidence reinforces the importance of investing in employee training and skill acquisition initiatives. Therefore, organizations seeking to improve employee performance should prioritize continuous skill development programs as part of their human resource development strategies.

The findings also showed that values development has a significant positive effect on employee performance ($\beta = 0.323$, $t = 5.23$, $p < 0.001$). This suggests that promoting ethical values, organizational culture, integrity, and shared beliefs among employees contributes positively to their performance. Employees who align with organizational values tend to exhibit stronger commitment, responsible behavior, and greater dedication to organizational goals.

This finding corroborates the study of Garcia, Patel, and Lee (2024), who found that values-focused discussions enhanced ethical awareness and moral sensitivity among scientists, resulting in improved workplace decision-making and professional conduct. Their study concluded that values development strengthens employee effectiveness by encouraging ethical behavior and responsible actions. The result is also in agreement with Chen and Liu (2022), who reported that strong organizational values reduced unethical behavior and significantly improved employee attitudes and performance in the hospitality industry. Their findings showed that employees who internalized organizational values exhibited higher commitment and better job outcomes. The present study therefore confirms that values development is an essential determinant of employee performance because it fosters ethical conduct, organizational loyalty, and a positive work environment. Organizations that cultivate strong ethical values and promote value-based leadership are likely to achieve superior employee and organizational performance.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that effective succession planning is strongly dependent on the robustness of professional development practices within an organization. Career development provides employees with clear growth pathways and motivation to aspire to leadership roles; skill development equips them with the technical and managerial competencies required for higher responsibilities; while values development ensures ethical leadership and alignment with organizational culture. The significant influence of all three dimensions demonstrates that succession planning cannot be achieved in isolation but must be integrated into a comprehensive professional development framework. Consequently, organizations that neglect structured professional development risk leadership gaps, reduced employee commitment, and long-term instability.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- i. Management should establish transparent career progression frameworks that clearly define promotion criteria, mentoring arrangements, and leadership pathways to support succession planning.
- ii. Organizations should invest consistently in training programs focused on technical, managerial, and leadership skills to prepare employees for future leadership roles.
- iii. Ethical behavior, organizational values, teamwork, and accountability should be deliberately incorporated into professional development initiatives to build value-driven leaders.

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