

**SUCCESSION PLANNING STRATEGY ON PERFORMANCE OF
HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY IN NAKURU COUNTY, KENYA**

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DECLARATION AND APPROVAL

Declaration

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for the award of a degree in this or any other university.

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DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to my wife, Eunice Wanjohi,, my daughters, Jennelle, Danette, and Tirzah for their whose unwavering support throughout this journey



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ADR	Average Daily Rate
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
CVI	Content Validity Index
GHRM	Green Human Resource Management
GRS	Green Recruitment and Selection
HR	Human Resources
HRA	Hotel and Restaurant Authority
HRM	Human Resource Management
KAHC	Kenya Association of Hotel Keepers and Caterers
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation
RBV	Resource-Based View
RevPAR	Revenue Per Available Room
SCCT	Social Cognitive Career Theory
SMEs	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
VRIN	Valuable, Rare, Inimitable, Non-substitutable

ABSTRACT

This study examined succession planning within Nakuru County's hospitality sector, aiming to bridge a notable research gap by exploring how human resource planning, career development initiatives, and employee performance appraisal affect industry outcomes. It emphasized the need for enhanced succession strategies to bolster future performance in light of the sector's intense competition, economic volatility, and rapid technological change. Guided by the Resource-Based View, Social Cognitive Career Theory, and Goal-Setting Theory, the research established a strong theoretical foundation to analyze succession dynamics in this setting. Using a descriptive survey approach, the study targeted 480 employees across registered hospitality firms in Nakuru County. A proportionate stratified random sample of 218 participants ensured representation from all establishment types. Structured questionnaires served as the data collection instrument, with content validity confirmed via a validity index and reliability assessed through Cronbach's alpha, adhering to rigorous methodological standards. The analysis incorporated both descriptive statistics (frequencies, means, standard deviations) and inferential methods (correlation and multiple regression) to assess how succession planning practices influence organizational performance. This comprehensive approach provided a detailed view of the impact of various succession planning elements on the hospitality industry's success. The findings revealed a strong positive correlation between human resource planning and succession strategy ($r = 0.671$, $p < 0.01$), with career development practices demonstrating a similarly significant relationship ($r = 0.664$, $p < 0.01$). Employee performance appraisal showed a moderate yet meaningful correlation with succession planning ($r = 0.521$, $p < 0.05$). Ultimately, the study concluded that effective succession planning strategies play a pivotal role in enhancing the performance of hospitality firms in Nakuru County. In light of these insights, it recommended the adoption of more robust succession planning frameworks to support future industry growth.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Succession planning, as emphasized by Owusu-Acheampong et al. (2024), is a critical strategic process that organizations employ to identify and develop potential future leaders. This systematic approach, according to Susilo and Winarto (2023), aims to build a robust pipeline of talent, ensuring leadership continuity and maintaining organizational stability. Al Awadhi and Muslim (2023) argue that the primary purpose of succession planning is to mitigate risks associated with unexpected departures and retirements. According to Khosa (2023), adopting a forward-looking strategy helps organizations minimize operational interruptions while also promoting an environment where ongoing learning and employee development are encouraged.

The importance of succession planning extends beyond mere risk mitigation, as highlighted by Kifordu (2024) in their study of family businesses in Nigeria. Warui and Karanja (2024) emphasize that by identifying and nurturing high-potential employees, companies can ensure their future leaders are well-prepared to tackle emerging challenges. Hassan et al. (2023) point out that this forward-thinking approach allows organizations to maintain a competitive edge in rapidly evolving markets. Moreover, as observed by Mwamanda (2023) in the context of public colleges in Tanzania, succession planning contributes significantly to employee engagement and retention by providing clear career paths and development opportunities.

The timing of succession planning is a critical factor in its effectiveness, as noted by Mwamkuu et al. (2024) in their study of the health sector in Taita Taveta County. Rather than being a reactive measure, Mutungi et al. (2024) argue that succession planning should be an ongoing, integral part of an organization's strategic planning process.

Sigauke (2023), in their analysis of hotel brands in Zimbabwe, emphasizes that organizations should initiate succession planning well in advance of anticipated leadership changes. This foresight, as observed by Ozoani (2023) in the context of family-owned hotels in Southeast Nigeria, is particularly crucial in family-owned businesses, where succession planning should start years before the current generation plans to retire.

Effective succession planning encompasses several key human resource practices, as outlined by Valencia and Pratama (2024) in their study of family businesses. Arenhart et al. (2023) note that human resource planning practices form the foundation of succession planning by aligning workforce planning with the organization's strategic goals. López-Gamero et al. (2024) emphasize the importance of conducting thorough assessments of current and future talent needs. Martorell Cunill et al. (2024) highlight the significance of identifying critical positions that are essential for the organization's success. These practices, according to Santa et al. (2023), ensure that the organization has a clear understanding of its talent landscape and can make informed decisions about talent development and placement.

Career development practices play a pivotal role in succession planning, as observed by Langgat et al. (2023) in their study of Malaysian hotels. Al-Sabi et al. (2023) suggest implementing mentoring programs that pair high-potential employees with experienced leaders. Jaaffar et al. (2023) advocate for organizing job rotations that expose employees to different aspects of the business. Akaa et al. (2024) emphasize the importance of creating leadership development initiatives designed to prepare promising individuals for future roles. These practices, as noted by Ifeoma et al. (2024) in their study of family-owned businesses in Southeast Nigeria, not only enhance the skills and knowledge of

potential successors but also demonstrate the organization's commitment to internal talent development.

Employee performance appraisal is another crucial component of succession planning, as highlighted by Omae et al. (2024) in their study of Evangelical Churches in Nairobi. Mzera (2024) emphasizes that regular and comprehensive performance evaluations help identify high-performing individuals who demonstrate the potential for larger responsibilities. These assessments, according to Owusu-Acheampong et al. (2024), offer a structured way to evaluate an employee's strengths, areas for improvement, and alignment with the organization's values and goals. By integrating performance appraisal data with succession planning, Susilo and Winarto (2023) argue that organizations can make more informed decisions about talent development and placement in critical roles.

The implementation of succession planning requires a structured approach, as outlined by Al Awadhi and Muslim (2023) in their review of UAE public sector practices. Khosa (2023) emphasizes the importance of gaining commitment from top leadership and aligning succession planning with the overall business strategy. This alignment, as noted by Kifordu (2024), ensures that succession planning efforts are not conducted in isolation but are integrated with the organization's long-term objectives. Warui and Karanja (2024) suggest that the next step involves identifying critical positions within the organization and defining the competencies required for success in these roles. Hassan et al. (2023) recommend creating detailed job profiles and competency frameworks that serve as benchmarks for assessing and developing potential successors.

Following the identification of critical roles, Mwamanda (2023) suggests conducting a thorough assessment of the current talent pool to identify potential successors and skill gaps. Mwamkuu et al. (2024) propose using various tools and techniques, such as 360-degree feedback and competency-based interviews. Based on this evaluation, Mutungi et

al. (2024) recommend creating individualized development plans for high-potential employees. These plans, as suggested by Sigauke (2023), may include a combination of formal training programs, stretch assignments, and exposure to strategic decision-making processes. Ozoani (2023) emphasizes the importance of regular review and adjustment of succession plans to ensure their relevance and effectiveness in the face of changing organizational needs and market conditions.

The hospitality industry, characterized by high turnover rates and a dynamic business environment, has a particularly pressing need for effective succession planning. Valencia and Pratama (2024) note that in this sector, succession planning serves as a critical driver of organizational performance by ensuring continuity in leadership and maintaining service quality standards. Arenhart et al. (2023) observe that hotels and other hospitality businesses rely heavily on the skills and experience of their management teams to deliver exceptional guest experiences. By implementing robust succession planning practices, López-Gamero et al. (2024) argue that these organizations can cultivate a pool of talented leaders who understand the nuances of the industry and are prepared to take on key roles when needed.

Succession planning in the hospitality industry can significantly impact various aspects of organizational performance, as highlighted by Martorell Cunill et al. (2024) in their analysis of hotel growth strategies. Santa et al. (2023) note that it contributes to improved employee retention by providing clear career paths and development opportunities. Langgat et al. (2023) emphasize that effective succession planning ensures hotels maintain consistent service quality and operational efficiency even during leadership transitions. Al-Sabi et al. (2023) argue that this continuity is essential for maintaining guest satisfaction and loyalty, which directly impacts the hotel's financial performance. Furthermore, Jaaffar et al. (2023) suggest that succession planning can drive innovation

and adaptability within hospitality organizations by cultivating leaders who are prepared to navigate industry changes and implement new strategies.

Despite its importance, succession planning in the hospitality industry faces several challenges, as observed by Akaa et al. (2024) in their study of family businesses in Nigeria. Ifeoma et al. (2024) highlight the industry's high turnover rate as a significant hurdle, making it difficult to retain high-potential employees long enough to groom them for leadership positions. The seasonal nature of many hospitality businesses, as noted by Omae et al. (2024), also complicates long-term talent development efforts. Mzera (2024) points out that the rapid pace of change in the industry, driven by technological advancements and shifting consumer preferences, requires succession plans to be highly flexible and regularly updated. Owusu-Acheampong et al. (2024) emphasize the challenge of balancing the need for industry-specific knowledge with the benefits of bringing in fresh perspectives from outside the organization.

In summary, succession planning plays a crucial role in securing leadership continuity, sustaining stable operations, and enhancing long-term organizational effectiveness. Within the hospitality sector—where guest experience and service standards are critical—Susilo and Winarto (2023) highlight succession planning as a key factor in achieving a competitive edge. Al Awadhi and Muslim (2023) further propose that adopting robust succession strategies helps hospitality firms develop strong leadership frameworks that can adapt to industry shifts and foster innovation. Despite certain obstacles, Khosa (2023) underscores that the advantages—such as better performance, higher staff retention, and long-term viability—make succession planning indispensable for modern hospitality organizations. As the sector continues to transform, Kifordu (2024) affirms that companies that focus on well-executed succession initiatives will be better equipped to succeed in an increasingly fast-paced and competitive environment.

1.1.1 Performance Metrics in the Hospitality Industry

Performance in the hospitality industry is a multifaceted concept encompassing service delivery, financial outcomes, and operational efficiency. Arenhart et al. (2023) emphasize that performance extends beyond financial results to include guest experiences and long-term relationships. López-Gamero et al. (2024) note the intrinsic link between performance and meeting guest expectations while maintaining profitability. Performance metrics in this sector play a crucial role in decision-making and strategic planning, helping managers identify areas for improvement and allocate resources effectively (Martorell Cunill et al., 2024).

In the hospitality sector, essential financial indicators such as Revenue Per Available Room (RevPAR), Average Daily Rate (ADR), and Occupancy Rate offer valuable insights into a property's economic performance and the effectiveness of its asset utilization (Arenhart et al., 2023). Beyond financials, the industry employs operational and customer-centric metrics. López-Gamero et al. (2024) highlight the importance of customer satisfaction measures in assessing service quality and loyalty. Langgat et al. (2023) emphasize the growing relevance of sustainability-related metrics, such as energy consumption per occupied room, reflecting the increasing focus on environmental performance.

Employee-related metrics are critical given the industry's reliance on human capital. Jaaffar et al. (2023) discuss the significance of employee satisfaction and engagement measures in assessing human resource management effectiveness. The digital era has introduced new metrics related to online reputation and digital marketing effectiveness, which López-Gamero et al. (2024) argue should be integrated with traditional indicators for a comprehensive view of market position and customer engagement. An integrated approach to performance measurement is crucial, as argued by Arenhart et al. (2023),

allowing for a nuanced understanding of performance drivers and improvement areas. López-Gamero et al. (2024) suggest that advanced analytics can help managers derive actionable insights from the complex interplay of various metrics, particularly when considering the relationship between sustainability practices and overall hotel performance.

In essence, performance metrics in the hospitality industry span financial, operational, customer-centric, employee-related, and digital indicators, reflecting the sector's complex nature. As highlighted by Martorell Cunill et al. (2024) and Langgat et al. (2023), the effective use of these metrics is crucial for strategic decision-making and continuous improvement in an increasingly competitive market. As the industry evolves, particularly in response to technological advancements and changing consumer expectations, hospitality businesses must remain adaptable in their approach to performance measurement and management.

1.1.2 The Hospitality Sector in Kenya

The hospitality industry refers to the act of providing generous and friendly reception and entertainment to guests, visitors, or strangers. While traditionally understood in terms of this welcoming function, modern interpretations also consider both its tangible aspects—like food, lodging, and amenities—and intangible elements such as customer satisfaction and service experience. Some scholars further elaborate on the industry by examining its key participants, the reciprocal benefits generated, and its influence on both societal wellbeing and economic development. Hospitality is a vast domain within the service sector, encompassing diverse activities such as dining services, accommodations, and event management. King (2015) draws a distinction between private hospitality—personal gestures of hosting within the home—and commercial hospitality, which involves services like meals, lodging, and entertainment offered for monetary gain.

Although tourism is often treated as a standalone industry, it is fundamentally linked to commercial hospitality. Since gaining independence, Kenya has consistently relied on the tourism and hospitality sector as a major source of foreign exchange.

Globally, the hospitality sector ranks among the fastest-growing industries, benefiting significantly from increased globalization. However, rapid growth also brings substantial challenges. These include heightened competition, economic uncertainties, technological disruptions, marketing constraints, and challenges in cost control. The sector's performance is closely tied to both national and global economic trends. For instance, during economic downturns, business travel tends to decline, leading to lower occupancy rates and reduced revenue in hospitality establishments. It's not only national economies but also international economic conditions that influence the sector's financial stability. To remain competitive and sustainable, hospitality businesses must stay attuned to global developments and embrace technological advancements, ensuring they adapt swiftly to the fast-evolving landscape.

1.1.3 Companies in the Hospitality Industry in Kenya

Kenya's hospitality sector has witnessed significant expansion and growing competition, largely fueled by the increasing presence of both longstanding and newly launched hotels. Although hospitality establishments are located throughout the country, Nairobi and Mombasa remain the primary urban centers with the highest density of hotel infrastructure, favored by both local and international tourists. Nairobi has emerged as a major player on the global hospitality stage, drawing substantial financial investment and welcoming several internationally recognized brands such as Best Western, Country Lodge with Novotel and Ibis, Accor, Carlson Rezidor with Radisson Blu and Park Inn, DUSIT, easy Hotel, and Villa Rosa Kempinski. Currently, there are eleven new hotel projects in different phases of development in the capital, expected to bring an additional

1,469 rooms into the market. This rapid expansion ranks Kenya as the fifth most appealing destination for international hotel chains in Africa (Africa Pipeline Survey, W Hospitality, 2020). As a result, the hospitality and tourism industry has experienced a faster recovery and growth rate compared to other sectors like agriculture and mining.

The Kenya Association of Hotel Keepers and Caterers (KAHC), founded in 1944, serves as the central body representing hotels, lodges, restaurants, exclusive clubs, and airline catering companies across the country. The association plays an essential role in promoting the interests of its members through advocacy, industry support, and capacity building. Additionally, the Hotel and Restaurant Authority (HRA) is tasked with overseeing the classification and compliance of hospitality businesses. Its mandate includes ensuring service providers meet established quality benchmarks and adhere to regulatory standards. This dual oversight from KAHC and HRA supports consistency, accountability, and service excellence within Kenya's growing hospitality industry.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The hospitality industry in Kenya faces numerous performance challenges, including intense competition, economic fluctuations, and rapid technological changes (Hassan et al., 2023; Mzera, 2024). These dynamics necessitate effective management strategies to maintain and improve organizational performance. Succession planning has emerged as a critical factor in ensuring long-term organizational success and stability, particularly in the face of leadership transitions. While several studies have examined succession planning in various sectors in Kenya, such as technical education (Hassan et al., 2023), health services (Mwamkuu et al., 2024), SMEs (Mzera, 2024), and religious institutions (Omae et al., 2024), there is a notable gap in research focusing specifically on the hospitality industry. These existing studies, while valuable, do not address the unique

challenges and needs of the hospitality sector in Kenya. The hospitality industry, being a significant contributor to Kenya's economy, requires tailored succession planning strategies that consider its specific operational context, seasonal fluctuations, and customer-centric nature. Furthermore, the rapid growth of the hospitality sector in Kenya, particularly in urban areas like Nakuru County, underscores the need for effective succession planning to ensure continuity and sustained performance. This research seeks to bridge an existing knowledge gap by exploring how succession planning strategies affect the operational success of the hospitality sector in Nakuru County, Kenya. It will specifically analyze the role of human resource planning, career advancement initiatives, and employee evaluation processes in shaping industry performance. By concentrating on these essential components, the study aims to offer actionable insights that could strengthen the long-term viability and competitiveness of hospitality enterprises in the region. Furthermore, the study aspires to expand the relatively scarce literature on succession planning within Kenya's hospitality context, thereby providing a foundation for more informed policy-making and business strategy. The outcomes could also be relevant for succession planning efforts across other service-based sectors in Kenya and in comparable emerging markets.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

To establish the influence of succession planning strategy on performance of the hospitality industry in Nakuru County, Kenya.

1.4 Research Objectives

- i. To determine the extent to which human resource planning practices influence performance of the hospitality industry in Nakuru County, Kenya.
- ii. To assess how career development practices influence performance of the hospitality industry in Nakuru County, Kenya.

- iii. To examine the impact of employee performance appraisal on performance of the hospitality industry in Nakuru County, Kenya.

1.5 Research Questions

- i. To what extent do human resource planning strategies influence performance of the hospitality industry in Nakuru County, Kenya?
- ii. How do career development strategies influence performance of the hospitality industry in Nakuru County, Kenya?
- iii. What is the impact of employee performance appraisal strategies on performance of the hospitality industry in Nakuru County, Kenya?

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study on succession planning in the hospitality industry of Nakuru County, Kenya, will benefit several stakeholders. Primarily, hotel managers and owners will gain valuable insights into effective succession planning strategies. By understanding the relationship between succession planning and organizational performance, they can implement more robust human resource practices, leading to improved business continuity and long-term sustainability. This knowledge will enable them to develop customized, proactive career development plans for talented individuals, ensuring smooth transitions during leadership changes and minimizing disruptions to operations.

Employees in the hospitality industry will also benefit significantly from this research. The study's findings will help create clearer career progression paths and development opportunities aligned with organizational culture. This clarity can lead to increased job satisfaction, improved motivation, and higher retention rates among skilled staff. Additionally, potential employees will have a better understanding of how organizations

in the sector support career growth, making informed decisions about their employment choices.

Furthermore, this study will contribute to the broader academic and professional community interested in hospitality management and human resource practices. Academics and learners in related disciplines will benefit from a deeper understanding of the unique issues and prospects surrounding succession planning within Kenya's hospitality industry. Additionally, policymakers and industry bodies can apply the study's outcomes to create more practical policies and standards, ultimately enhancing the efficiency and competitiveness of hospitality enterprises in Nakuru County and other regions.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The objective of this research was to assess how succession planning strategies impact the performance of the hospitality sector in Nakuru County, Kenya. The study was localized within Nakuru County, and data collection involved the use of structured questionnaires distributed to selected participants. The investigation took place over a period spanning from January 2018 to March 2025.

1.8 Assumptions of the Study

The study assumed that respondents provided honest and truthful responses to all questions. It expected that all questionnaires were returned and that external factors, such as weather conditions remained constant throughout the research process. These assumptions were necessary to ensure the validity and reliability of the data collected.

1.9 Limitations of the Study

This study faced several challenges that impacted its execution and results. Firstly, time constraints on the part of managers in the hospitality industry limited their availability

and depth of participation. To mitigate this, the researcher offered flexible scheduling options and used efficient data collection methods, such as leaving questionnaires for managers to fill the questionnaires at their convenience and collected them after a reasonable agreed period.

Another potential limitation was the geographical focus on Nakuru County, which limited the generalizability of findings to other regions or the entire country. To mitigate this, the researcher carefully selected a diverse sample of hotels within Nakuru County, ensuring representation of various sizes and types of establishments. The studies also acknowledged this limitation in its conclusions and suggest areas for future research to expand the scope.

Lastly, the study faced challenges in accessing comprehensive performance data from hotels, as some establishments considered this information sensitive. To address this, the researcher used a carefully designed survey questions that allowed participants to provide meaningful insights without compromising their privacy or competitive position. The study also offered to share aggregated, anonymized results with participating hotels as an incentive for more open participation.

1.10 Delimitation of the Study

This study was delimited to selected hotels in Nakuru County, Kenya. Nakuru, being the fourth largest city in Kenya, offering a significant concentration of hospitality establishments, making it an ideal location for this research. The focus on Nakuru County allowed for a more manageable scope while still provided diverse range of hotel types and sizes. This delimitation helped ensure that the study was conducted within the available time and resource constraints. By concentrating on this specific geographical area, the researcher developed a deeper understanding of the local context and its unique challenges in succession planning. While this approach limited the generalizability of

findings to other regions, it provided valuable insights into succession planning practices in a key urban center of Kenya's hospitality industry. The study's findings will serve as a foundation for future research that may expand to other regions or make comparisons between different counties in Kenya



1.11 Operational Definition of Key Terms

Succession Planning: It involves recognizing critical leadership roles within an organization and preparing employees to effectively take over those positions in the future.

Organization Performance: Analysis of organizational goals and objectives, measured through financial and non-financial metrics.

Human Resource Planning: A continuous and structured approach aimed at maximizing the effective utilization of an organization's workforce.

Career Development: The process by which individuals manage their careers within and between organizations.

Performance Appraisal: An organization's structured assessment process used to measure employee performance and identify areas for training, advancement, and other development opportunities.

Hospitality: The act or practice of being hospitable, involving activities such as restaurants, lodging, and events planning .

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of scholarly literature related to the study, concentrating on four central themes and their influence on the performance of the hospitality industry: succession planning, strategies for human resource planning, career advancement programs, and approaches to evaluating employee performance. It also explores the theoretical underpinnings and conceptual model that inform the research, concluding with a synthesis of the main insights drawn from the literature reviewed.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory

The Resource-Based View (RBV), first proposed by Wernerfelt in 1984 and further developed by Barney in 1991, provides a useful framework for examining how human resource planning influences performance within the hospitality sector (Wernerfelt, 1984; Barney, 1991). According to RBV, an organization's ability to sustain a competitive edge relies heavily on its distinct internal assets and capabilities, particularly intangible ones like human capital (Wright et al., 2021). The theory categorizes resources as both tangible and intangible elements under the control of a firm, used to craft and execute effective strategies—human capital being a central focus within the HR context (Barney, 1991). To achieve sustainable competitive advantage, resources must align with the VRIN framework—meaning they are Valuable, Rare, difficult to Imitate, and Non-substitutable. Beyond just resources, the theory also emphasizes capabilities, which refer to an organization's ability to effectively integrate and adjust internal and external strengths in response to changing conditions (Teece et al., 2019). Strategic alignment

ensuring that an organization's internal strengths match opportunities in its external environment is another key component of the RBV model (Wright et al., 2021).

Within this framework, human resource planning is positioned as a strategic function aimed at cultivating a workforce characterized by VRIN traits. Efficient HR planning ensures the right talent is acquired, developed, and positioned effectively within the organization (Boxall & Purcell, 2021). This synchronization between talent management and overall business strategy is essential to maintaining a long-term competitive position, particularly in the rapidly evolving hospitality landscape. RBV underscores the need to build human capital that is uniquely tailored to an organization's needs making it difficult for rivals to replicate. For example, in Nakuru County's hospitality industry, this might mean investing in local professionals with in-depth cultural understanding and top-tier customer service skills that align with the expectations of visitors and business clients (Nyberg et al., 2024).

The RBV theory is instrumental in explaining how human resource planning affects the performance of hospitality enterprises in Nakuru County. It suggests that by nurturing distinctive and strategically valuable employee competencies, businesses can set themselves apart and outperform competitors. This approach to HR goes beyond staffing needs, focusing instead on shaping a talent pool that becomes a strategic asset. In the context of Nakuru, this could involve collaborations with regional academic institutions for customized training programs, proactive succession planning to safeguard leadership continuity, and the creation of a strong employer image to draw and retain high-potential professionals in the hospitality sector.

Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT)

Developed by Robert W. Lent, Steven D. Brown, and Gail Hackett in 1994, Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) presents a comprehensive framework for understanding how individuals develop their careers and how these processes influence organizational effectiveness. Drawing on Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, SCCT highlights the reciprocal relationships between personal characteristics, actions, and environmental factors in guiding career development (Bandura, 1986; Lent et al., 1994). It explores how individuals cultivate career interests, make occupational choices, and attain professional goals through continuous interaction with these elements.

At the core of Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) are several foundational concepts. One of these is self-efficacy, referring to an individual's belief in their capability to successfully carry out specific tasks (Bandura, 1986). Another essential element is outcome expectations, which involve how a person anticipates the results of particular behaviors or actions (Lent et al., 1994). Additionally, the theory emphasizes the role of personal goals—defined as one's commitment to achieving particular tasks or objectives—as a driving force in career-related decision-making (Lent et al., 1994). SCCT further accounts for contextual supports and obstacles, which include external factors that either enable or constrain career progress (Lent et al., 2000). Learning experiences, such as direct task engagement, observation of others, encouragement, and emotional states, significantly shape both self-efficacy and outcome expectations (Lent et al., 1994). The theory posits that career preferences emerge when individuals feel competent and believe their actions will lead to meaningful outcomes, with these interests, in turn, influencing their career paths and job performance (Brown & Lent, 2019). Within hospitality settings, SCCT highlights how targeted career development can boost motivation, performance, and staff engagement. Structured learning, exposure to

progressive responsibilities, and access to mentorship are among the ways organizations can enhance self-belief and vocational commitment (Tims et al., 2019).

SCCT serves as a valuable lens for evaluating how career development influences hospitality industry outcomes in Nakuru County. By leveraging the relationships between self-efficacy, expected outcomes, and environmental elements, employers can design development strategies that resonate with employee motivations. For instance, pairing less experienced workers with seasoned mentors can provide vital guidance, reinforce confidence, and establish professional aspirations. Establishing transparent career growth pathways can also help staff visualize long-term goals and connect their roles to larger achievements. Furthermore, proactively addressing barriers such as limited upskilling opportunities or challenges in maintaining work-life balance can foster a more inclusive and growth-oriented workplace. These interventions not only support individual advancement but also drive organizational improvements in staff retention, service delivery, and overall business performance in the regional hospitality sector.

Goal-Setting Theory

Originally developed by Edwin A. Locke in the late 1960s and further advanced in the 1990s with Gary Latham, Goal-Setting Theory provides valuable insights into how performance evaluation systems affect overall organizational performance (Locke & Latham, 2022). This theory proposes that when employees are given clearly defined and challenging objectives, their performance tends to improve compared to when goals are vague or too easily attainable a concept particularly applicable to managing performance in the hospitality industry (Locke & Latham, 2020).

Several fundamental elements form the foundation of Goal-Setting Theory. One such element is goal specificity, referring to the clarity and precision with which goals are

articulated (Locke & Latham, 2022). Another key aspect is goal difficulty, which addresses the level of challenge posed by the goal (Locke & Latham, 2020). Goal commitment how invested or determined an employee is to achieve the set objective is also crucial (Klein et al., 2019). Feedback mechanisms are essential, as they provide ongoing insights into progress and enable necessary adjustments (Locke & Latham, 2002). Additionally, self-efficacy, or an individual's belief in their capacity to meet a goal, is drawn from Bandura's work (1997). Task complexity, which captures how intricate or demanding a task is, serves as a moderating factor in determining how goals affect performance outcomes (Wood et al., 1987).

The theory outlines four primary pathways through which goals influence performance: they focus attention and effort on relevant tasks, increase motivation by energizing individuals, enhance persistence, and encourage the acquisition and use of skills or strategies needed to achieve results (Locke & Latham, 2022). Feedback plays a pivotal role in sustaining motivation and facilitating progress through goal refinement (Neubert, 2018). In the context of employee evaluations, Goal-Setting Theory supports the establishment of specific and demanding but realistic objectives, supported by consistent feedback and sufficient resources (Latham & Locke, 2022). This strategy fosters higher levels of motivation and performance, ultimately benefiting the organization.

Goal-Setting Theory provides a practical structure for analyzing how performance appraisals impact the effectiveness of hospitality operations in Nakuru County. By integrating goal-setting principles into appraisal systems, hospitality firms can enhance individual and organizational outcomes. For example, hotel managers could collaborate with staff to set focused and ambitious targets related to guest satisfaction, operational efficiency, or revenue generation. Including regular performance reviews would allow for continuous improvement and course correction. The theory also highlights the

importance of equipping employees with appropriate training and tools, paving the way for more strategic and effective employee development (Latham & Locke, 2022). Aligning personal performance objectives with broader organizational aims enables appraisal systems to function as drivers of excellence across all levels, ultimately boosting performance in Nakuru County's hospitality sector.

2.3 Empirical Literature

Human Resource Planning and Hotel Performance

Recent academic efforts have examined the correlation between human resource planning practices and different facets of hotel performance, offering useful perspectives but also underscoring notable research voids. Nwapi et al. (2024), for instance, conducted a survey-based study in Owerri, Nigeria, targeting 124 front-line hotel employees from two establishments. Their findings revealed strong positive correlations between recruitment planning and customer patronage ($r = 0.969, p < 0.05$), as well as between training efforts and guest satisfaction ($r = 0.97, p < 0.05$). The study followed a likely positivist framework, employed the Taro Yamane sampling method, and used simple percentage calculations alongside Pearson's correlation coefficient for analysis. Despite its contributions, the research did not explore the broader impact of HR planning on overall hotel performance in Nakuru County, Kenya. It focused narrowly on customer behavior and had notable limitations such as a confined geographic scope, a small sample size, absence of control variables, and a potential for common method bias—factors that compromise the generalizability and depth of the study.

A more in-depth analysis was conducted by Papademetriou et al. (2023), who assessed the role of sustainable HRM strategies in shaping customer satisfaction, service quality, and organizational performance in hotels within Cyprus's inner cities. Using a cross-sectional design, they surveyed 430 individuals and applied PLS-SEM and the Relative

Importance Index for analysis. Their results revealed strong connections between customer satisfaction and institutional performance ($r = 0.981$, $p < 0.001$), as well as significant effects of HRM strategies on customer satisfaction ($\beta = 0.905$, $p < 0.001$), and of service quality on satisfaction ($\beta = 0.907$, $p < 0.001$). However, this research does not directly inform the objective of assessing HR planning's effect on hotel performance in Nakuru County. Its geographical and cultural context presents potential biases, and the use of a cross-sectional method limits any causal inferences. Thus, while statistically robust, its relevance to Kenya's hospitality industry remains limited.

In a separate study, Chin et al. (2023) examined sustainable HRM and its contribution to sustaining employee performance in Malaysian 4- and 5-star hotels. Their sample of 280 executives was analyzed using PLS-SEM, and findings highlighted that training and development significantly influenced task-related performance ($\beta = 0.195$, $p < 0.01$), while employee involvement had a notable effect on both task ($\beta = 0.218$, $p < 0.01$) and relational performance ($\beta = 0.416$, $p < 0.001$). Interestingly, employment security had no statistically significant effect. Despite offering critical insights, the study's emphasis on luxury hotels and sustainable HRM, coupled with its Malaysian context, narrows its applicability to broader hotel categories and the Kenyan environment. Moreover, the cross-sectional design and potential respondent bias further constrain the applicability of its conclusions to the research objective at hand.

Another study by Adeyefa et al. (2023) investigated how green HRM strategies impact staff retention within Nigerian hotels. Utilizing SEM and RII methods, they analyzed data from 430 lower-level hotel staff. Green Recruitment and Selection (GRS) emerged as the most influential practice (RII = 0.901), with most green HRM components showing positive effects on retention ($\beta = 0.121$ to 0.330 , $p < 0.05$), except for Green Pay and Reward, which lacked significance ($\beta = 0.095$, $p > 0.05$). While relevant to human capital

management, this study's focus on Nigeria, its specific concentration on eco-friendly HR policies, and its limited scope around employee retention rather than overall performance diminishes its direct relevance to the Kenyan hospitality landscape. Issues such as sampling bias and reliance on cross-sectional data further affect the study's applicability and robustness.

Victor (2024) carried out a study in Port Harcourt, Nigeria, evaluating the effects of HR planning elements—such as demand forecasting, supply forecasting, and job analysis—on operational effectiveness in four-star hotels. Surveying 248 senior staff across 62 properties, the study confirmed a significant positive impact of HR planning on performance, although it did not present specific correlation coefficients. The methodology relied on census sampling and employed both descriptive and regression techniques for analysis. While more aligned with this research's goal, Victor's work is still limited by its exclusive focus on one Nigerian city and specific hotel category. Critics have noted a lack of detailed statistical backing and the risk of common method bias, which weakens the study's reliability and relevance to Kenya's diverse hospitality environment.

In summary, while these studies provide varying degrees of insight into the effect of HR planning on hotel operations, none directly address the full scope of this research's objective—specifically, the influence of comprehensive HR planning practices on overall hospitality performance in Nakuru County, Kenya. The diversity of contexts, focus areas, and research designs limits the transferability of their findings. To bridge these gaps, future investigations should focus on localized, broad-spectrum research in Kenya, involving diverse hotel categories and applying longitudinal methods to better capture causal relationships. Such efforts would generate more contextually relevant findings for

stakeholders and inform more effective HR planning strategies within the local hospitality sector.

Career Development Practices and Performance

Arema et al. (2023) carried out a descriptive survey to investigate the relationship between career progression and employee performance within selected branches of Eat N Go Limited in Lagos State, Nigeria. Drawing a sample of 150 from a population of 245 staff using purposive, stratified, and systematic random sampling techniques, the study reported strong positive correlations between career advancement and employee performance ($r = 0.943$, $p > 0.05$), as well as between mentoring initiatives and employee performance ($r = 0.844$, $p > 0.05$). These findings highlight the significance of structured career development programs in boosting staff output within the fast-food sector. The researchers recommended implementing transparent and inclusive development initiatives, with greater managerial involvement in guiding staff career trajectories. Nonetheless, the focus on one fast-food enterprise and a singular geographical area in Nigeria limits its broader applicability, particularly when considering the hospitality context in different regions such as Kenya. Additionally, the research examined only two aspects—career progression and mentoring—leaving out a broader range of career development dimensions.

In a separate investigation, Hosen et al. (2024) analyzed how training, career growth, and organizational commitment influence job performance in the hotel sector of Bangladesh. From a total workforce of 6,000 hotel staff, a sample of 362 was randomly selected. The results showed that career development had a direct and substantial influence on work outcomes ($\beta = 0.736$, $p < 0.05$) and acted as a mediator between job satisfaction and performance ($\beta = 0.666$, $p < 0.05$). The structural equation model accounted for 21% of the variance in employee performance ($R^2 = 0.21$), underscoring career development as a

pivotal factor. The study concluded that targeted development initiatives equip employees with necessary skills, thereby enhancing productivity. Despite its value, the study's focus on Bangladesh and its incorporation of organizational commitment as a mediating factor limit its direct relevance to Kenya's hospitality environment. Furthermore, reliance on self-reported data may have introduced response bias.

Poernamasasi and Hapzi (2023) examined how career advancement, workplace culture, and leadership styles impact employee performance. Although specific methodological details and statistical outputs were not disclosed, the findings indicated a positive link between career development and employee outcomes. The study emphasized aligning personal growth needs with organizational objectives and identified various developmental tools such as mentoring, training, job rotation, enrichment, and formal education. Despite its contributions, the lack of methodological transparency and data specificity limits the reliability of its findings. Moreover, since it does not focus exclusively on the hospitality sector or the Kenyan context, its application to the current study objective remains limited.

Jamaludin et al. (2024) explored the influence of compensation and the mediating effect of career development on job satisfaction and employee performance in luxury hotels in Karawang Regency, Indonesia. The quantitative study included 274 non-managerial staff, sampled from a larger population of 1,323 using accidental sampling. Their findings demonstrated that career development significantly boosts employee performance ($\beta = 0.736, p < 0.05$) and mediates the job satisfaction-performance relationship ($\beta = 0.666, p < 0.05$). These results point to the critical role of structured development paths and skill-building initiatives in enhancing employee output. While the study offers valuable insights, its focus on compensation and satisfaction, Indonesian context, and use of non-

random sampling could limit the generalizability of the results to the Kenyan hospitality industry.

A local perspective is offered by Musyoki et al. (2024), who conducted an explanatory-descriptive study on how career-related environmental factors shape development opportunities for staff in star-rated hotels in Nairobi City County, Kenya. Out of a population of 3,114, 341 participants were sampled through purposive, stratified, and systematic random methods. Findings showed that a career orientation environment negatively impacted employee development ($\beta = -0.482, p < 0.05$), while goodwill from management positively influenced it ($\beta = 0.542, p < 0.05$). Interestingly, teamwork exhibited a negative but statistically insignificant influence ($\beta = -0.215, p > 0.05$). The model explained 21% of the variation in career development ($R^2 = 0.21$). While the research is geographically relevant, its focus on Nairobi and its examination of broader career environment factors rather than specific development practices leaves a gap in addressing the situation in Nakuru County (Musyoki et al., 2024).

Rusby and Hamzah (2019) concluded that both career development and organizational culture significantly enhance employee performance. However, due to limited methodological clarity and absence of specific statistical data, assessing the validity and generalizability of these findings is difficult. While the study supports the general notion that career development contributes to better employee outcomes, the lack of industry-specific focus and geographical context weakens its relevance to Kenya's hospitality sector.

Similarly, Paila et al. (2023) noted a positive and significant influence of career development, organizational culture, and leadership on staff performance. Despite this, the lack of detailed methodology and data hinders a thorough evaluation of the research's

reliability. The study's general scope and lack of contextual alignment with Kenya's hospitality sector further limit its applicability.

In summary, the body of literature consistently affirms the importance of career development in driving employee performance. However, the diverse contexts, varying methodological quality, and inconsistent focus on hospitality or Kenyan settings highlight the need for a dedicated investigation within Nakuru County. A study that comprehensively explores career development practices in the hospitality industry of this specific region could address existing gaps and offer more targeted recommendations for industry stakeholders.

Employee Performance Appraisal and Performance

Siraj and Hågen (2023) conducted an in-depth mixed-methods investigation into performance management systems within Ethiopian small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). By integrating an extensive literature review with primary and secondary quantitative data, the study utilized linear regression analysis to assess the impact of appraisal mechanisms. Their results indicated a strong positive influence of performance appraisals on employee performance ($\beta = 0.748$, $p < 0.001$), with appraisal methodology ($\beta = 0.870$) and feedback mechanisms ($\beta = 0.877$) showing the most significant effects. These findings emphasize the importance of carefully designed performance evaluation systems and structured feedback in enhancing staff output. Despite its strong empirical approach, the study's setting in Ethiopian SMEs, rather than the hospitality industry in Nakuru County, Kenya, limits its direct relevance. The performance metrics assessed were general and not specific to the operational demands of the hospitality sector. Moreover, the study did not account for local socio-economic and cultural dynamics in Nakuru, and its reliance on self-reported data may introduce bias.

In a 2023 study, Rufino investigated how the quality of performance evaluations and the metrics used in those assessments relate to job satisfaction among employees in the Philippine banking industry. Employing a descriptive-correlational methodology, the research utilized Pearson correlation and regression techniques to analyze survey responses. Findings indicated a strong positive relationship between high-quality performance appraisals and employee satisfaction ($r = 0.597, p < 0.001$), as well as a moderate positive link between evaluation metrics and satisfaction levels ($r = 0.383, p < 0.001$). While the findings demonstrate the influence of well-executed appraisal practices on employee attitudes, the study is situated in the banking sector under a different regulatory and cultural context. Additionally, its focus on job satisfaction rather than performance outcomes specific to the hospitality industry makes it less applicable to the Kenyan context, particularly Nakuru County. The study also relies heavily on self-reported measures, which may compromise data accuracy.

In a related study, Dhanabhakym and Fahad (2023) explored how performance evaluation systems influence employee morale within the private banking industry in India. Their findings indicated a strong positive effect ($\beta = 0.833, p < 0.001$), reinforcing the idea that well-implemented performance reviews can substantially elevate staff morale and motivation. However, the study is limited by its focus on the banking sector and its geographic setting in Kerala, India. Its emphasis on morale, while insightful, does not translate directly into the organizational performance metrics relevant to hospitality operations in Nakuru. Furthermore, its relatively narrow geographic and industry scope, combined with potential single-source bias, restricts its broader applicability.

Nwokeocha (2024) provided a qualitative literature review focused on the strategic role of performance appraisal techniques in promoting organizational growth. Synthesizing evidence from various sectors, the study concluded that performance evaluations support

employee development, skills enhancement, and overall organizational effectiveness. However, the absence of empirical data, especially within the hospitality industry, limits the practical implications of the study for the current research context. Additionally, the study's generalized approach makes it difficult to apply the findings to the specific challenges and performance indicators relevant to hospitality businesses in Nakuru County.

In a different setting, Mohammed and Istvan (2023) analyzed how performance evaluation frameworks relate to organizational commitment in Gaza's electricity distribution sector. Their quantitative research revealed a meaningful positive association ($\beta = 0.354$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that well-organized appraisal systems can enhance employee dedication to the organization. While these findings are valuable, the study's setting in the public utilities sector, which operates under different operational and regulatory frameworks than hospitality, limits the generalizability of its outcomes. The study does not address specific performance outcomes, and its single-case focus and potential cultural bias further reduce its applicability to Nakuru's hospitality sector.

Similarly, Swidan, Ali, and Al Tahitah (2023) examined the influence of appraisal systems on organizational commitment in the same context as Mohammed and Istvan. Their analysis, using structural equation modeling, confirmed a significant positive effect (standardized regression weight = 0.748). Although methodologically strong, the research is constrained by its focus on the electricity sector in Gaza and its overlap with previously published work. The lack of direct attention to hospitality-specific performance indicators and contextual differences between Gaza and Nakuru County weakens its relevance.

A more contextually relevant study was conducted by Wanjiru and Odenyo (2024) in Gishu County, Kenya, exploring the impact of performance appraisal techniques on employee performance in a water and sanitation company. Using a descriptive design and

multiple linear regression analysis, the study found that Management by Objectives ($\beta = 0.401$, $p < 0.001$) and 360-degree evaluation methods ($\beta = 0.437$, $p < 0.001$) had a significant impact on staff performance. While the study shares the same national context, its focus on the utilities sector and Gishu County means that its findings cannot be seamlessly generalized to Nakuru's hospitality sector. Moreover, its analysis of general employee performance, rather than hospitality-specific performance indicators, creates a gap in relevance. Potential biases from self-reported data and the narrow organizational scope also limit its overall applicability.

In summary, while the reviewed studies consistently affirm the importance of performance appraisal systems in improving various employee outcomes—ranging from morale and satisfaction to commitment and general performance—they do not directly examine the hospitality industry in Nakuru County, Kenya. The diversity of study contexts, sectors, and outcome measures, along with methodological limitations such as small sample sizes, narrow geographic focus, and reliance on self-reporting, limit the generalizability of their findings. There remains a critical need for focused, context-specific research that examines how performance appraisal practices impact measurable organizational performance within the hospitality industry of Nakuru County. Such research should incorporate industry-relevant metrics, consider local socio-economic dynamics, and employ robust empirical methodologies to provide actionable insights for both practitioners and policymakers.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

Independent Variables

Dependent Variables

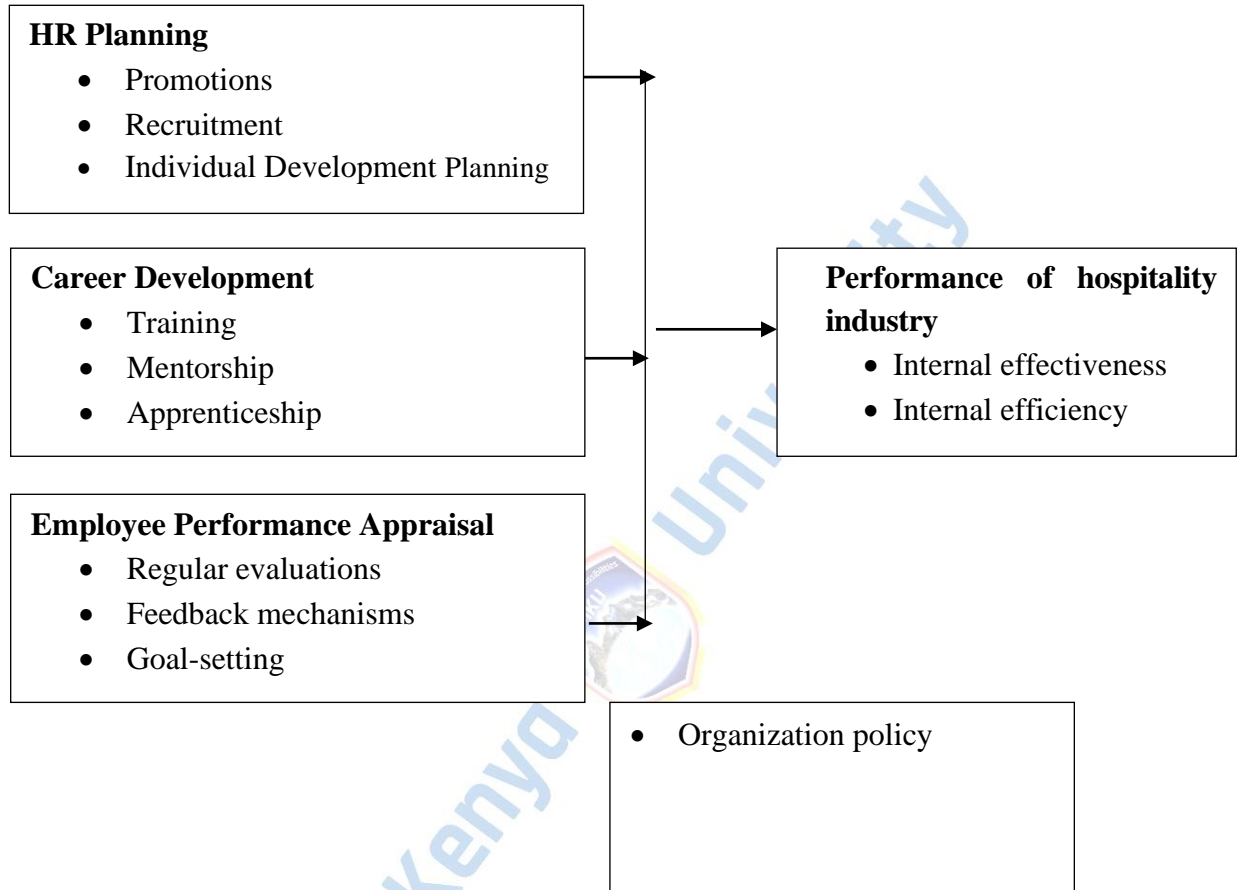


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework emphasizes that implementing an effective succession planning strategy can significantly reduce the adverse effects of staff turnover by ensuring a pipeline of well-prepared individuals ready to step into critical organizational roles. This readiness minimizes disruptions when vacancies arise due to promotions, resignations, retirements, transfers, or unforeseen events such as death. The primary goal of succession planning is to establish a reliable system that ensures leadership continuity and minimizes performance gaps during transitional periods. In contrast, inadequate or poorly executed human resource planning can lead to substantial operational

inefficiencies, elevated training costs, and potential financial setbacks. A well-structured succession plan identifies key employees with leadership potential, providing them with the necessary training and development opportunities so they are equipped to assume higher responsibilities when the need arises. This forward-thinking approach ensures that organizational leadership remains resilient and agile, even in times of change.

Career progression within organizations must also be understood in the broader context of organizational structure and societal influences. Opportunities for career advancement are often shaped not only by individual ambition and capability but also by the positions available within the institution and external labor market dynamics. As the modern workplace grows more complex and less predictable, individuals are expected to take increased responsibility for managing their own career paths. Yet, at the same time, they remain subject to organizational frameworks that can either enable or constrain their growth. Therefore, career development is a dynamic interplay between individual agency and organizational systems. Employee performance appraisal, as a critical component of human resource development, is typically guided by specific, measurable objectives established at the outset of the appraisal period. These objectives serve as performance benchmarks, and the organization plays a crucial role in providing the necessary tools, guidance, and training required for employees to achieve their goals. Through this approach, performance evaluations become not just an assessment tool, but a supportive mechanism for professional development and organizational alignment.

2.5 Recap of Literature Review

Research examining human resource planning in relation to hotel performance reveals a consistently positive influence of various HR practices across diverse national contexts. For instance, Nwapi et al. (2024) and Papademetriou et al. (2023) each reported strong links between HR planning and customer-centric outcomes, focusing on hotel settings in

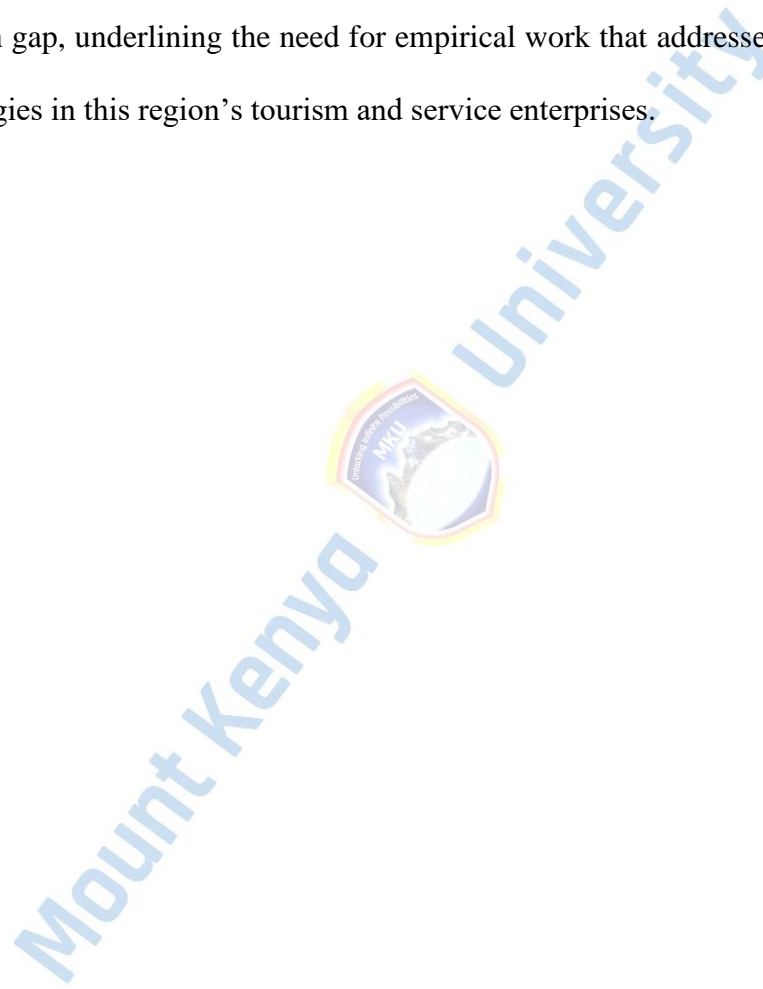
Nigeria and Cyprus, respectively. In Malaysia, Chin et al. (2023) emphasized the substantial impact of training and employee involvement on sustainable hotel performance. Similarly, Adeyefa et al. (2023) found green human resource practices to be particularly effective in retaining hotel employees in the Nigerian context, reinforcing the value of environmentally aligned HR strategies. Meanwhile, Victor (2024) identified broad correlations between various HR initiatives and the operational effectiveness of four-star hotels in Nigeria. Despite these consistent findings, the studies vary significantly in their thematic focus, methodological rigor, and performance indicators, ranging from customer satisfaction to staff productivity and retention. Most importantly, these investigations have not explored the Kenyan hospitality landscape, especially in Nakuru County. This gap points to the need for localized research to determine whether such HR planning models produce similar results in Kenya's hospitality industry, given its unique socio-economic conditions and workforce dynamics.

When it comes to career development strategies and their impact on performance, studies across different sectors and regions consistently affirm a positive relationship. Aremo et al. (2023) and Hosen et al. (2024), working within the Nigerian fast-food and Bangladeshi hotel industries, respectively, reported strong statistical relationships linking structured career progression efforts with enhanced employee performance. Likewise, Jamaludin et al. (2024) echoed these findings within the Indonesian hotel sector, demonstrating that career development mechanisms play a crucial role in improving worker output. Poernamasasi and Hapzi (2023) went further to break down career development into specific components—such as mentorship, job rotation, and professional training—that were identified as key performance enhancers. Interestingly, Musyoki et al. (2024), in their Kenyan-based research focused on Nairobi, presented a more nuanced analysis. Their findings revealed both positive and negative associations,

indicating that certain aspects of career development may have varied effects depending on organizational context and implementation quality. Additional studies by Rusby and Hamzah (2019) and Paila et al. (2023) also support the importance of career development, though they lacked detailed statistical support and broader contextual analysis. Overall, while the body of literature supports the value of career development in improving employee outcomes, most studies emphasize individual-level performance and pay limited attention to broader organizational metrics. Furthermore, with only one study situated in Kenya—and none in Nakuru County—there remains a noticeable void in the literature addressing how career development practices operate within the specific local dynamics of this important hospitality hub.

On the subject of employee performance appraisal and its correlation with organizational outcomes, the available literature provides compelling evidence of its effectiveness across different cultural and industrial environments. Siraj and Hågen (2023), in their work on Ethiopian SMEs, highlighted a robust relationship between structured appraisal systems and employee productivity. Similarly, Rufino (2023) identified positive connections between the quality of performance appraisals and job satisfaction in the Philippine banking sector. In the Indian context, Dhanabhakya and Fahad (2023) found a strong positive effect of appraisal mechanisms on employee morale, underscoring the motivational power of constructive evaluations. Studies conducted in Gaza by Mohammed and Istvan (2023), and Swidan, Ali, and Al Tahitah (2023), both confirmed that effective appraisal systems contribute positively to organizational commitment, though the intensity of these relationships differed slightly. Wanjiru and Odenyo (2024), offering a Kenyan perspective, revealed that targeted appraisal techniques—such as Management by Objectives and 360-degree evaluations—significantly improved staff performance in a county water utility. Despite the encouraging outcomes reported across

these studies, there is considerable variation in the focus of each: some target emotional and attitudinal outcomes like morale and commitment, while others assess tangible performance results. This diversity complicates direct comparisons and limits cross-contextual applicability. Moreover, only Wanjiru and Odenyo's research is based in Kenya, and it does not pertain to the hospitality sector. The absence of focused studies on performance appraisals within Nakuru County's hospitality industry further illustrates a critical research gap, underlining the need for empirical work that addresses performance appraisal strategies in this region's tourism and service enterprises.



CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter details the methodology adopted for examining how succession planning strategies influence the performance of the hospitality industry in Nakuru County, Kenya. It outlines the research design selected for its relevance to the study objectives, along with a description of the target population and the sampling methods employed to ensure representative participation. The development and deployment of data collection instruments are also discussed, including how these tools were structured, administered, and refined through a pilot study. Measures taken to establish the validity and reliability of these instruments are explained, highlighting efforts to maintain data quality and consistency. Furthermore, the chapter explains the procedures followed during data collection and describes the statistical techniques used to analyze the collected data, ensuring that the study's findings are both credible and robust.

3.2 Research Design

Creswell and Creswell (2021) describe research design as a structured framework that aligns all components of a study to effectively answer the central research question. It functions as a roadmap for how data will be gathered, measured, and analyzed. In this study, a descriptive survey design was utilized to support the research process. This approach is particularly effective for exploring and understanding phenomena as they exist in real-world settings, making it possible to collect data on participants' views, behaviors, and attributes (Yin, 2020). The descriptive survey method was selected for its suitability in capturing detailed insights into succession planning strategies and their perceived effects on organizational performance within the hospitality sector. By facilitating the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data, this design supported a

well-rounded exploration of the research topic. Its applicability was especially relevant in the context of this study, as it enabled data gathering from a diverse and sizable sample drawn from multiple hospitality businesses across Nakuru County, thereby increasing the relevance and generalizability of the study’s findings.

3.2 Target Population

As defined by Taherdoost (2020), a target population encompasses the complete set of individuals or entities that a researcher aims to study and from which they intend to draw generalized conclusions. Clearly identifying this population is essential, as it shapes the breadth of the research and plays a key role in ensuring the accuracy and relevance of the results. In this particular study, the target population included all staff members employed in officially registered hospitality establishments located within Nakuru County, Kenya. This group comprised both managerial personnel and general employees across various roles within the hospitality sector. The distribution of the target population is as follows:

Table 0.1: Target Population Distribution

Name Of Hospitality Firm (Strata)	Population Targeted
Town Hotels	165
Vacation Hotels	67
Villas	53
Tented Camps	61
Motels	63
Lodges	71
Total	480

Source: Tourism Regulatory Authority Registry, (2024)

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

Sampling refers to the process of selecting a representative portion from a larger population, aiming to mirror the population's overall characteristics accurately (Martínez-Mesa et al., 2022). The precision of this selection process is crucial, as it affects the generalizability of the findings and the strength of the study's conclusions. For this research, the sample size was determined using Yamane's (1967) formula—an approach that remains widely utilized in modern academic research (Singh & Masuku, 2021).

$$n = N / (1 + N(e)^2)$$

Where: n = sample size N = population size (480) e = margin of error (assumed as 0.05 for this study)

$$\text{Calculating: } n = 480 / (1 + 480(0.05)^2) = 218$$

To achieve statistical reliability, the study set out to gather responses from at least 218 individuals, ensuring a representative sample with a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5%.

The sampling approach adopted was proportionate stratified random sampling. This method involves segmenting the population into distinct, internally similar groups (strata) based on shared attributes and then selecting participants from each group in proportion to their presence in the total population (Taherdoost, 2020). In this case, hospitality establishments were categorized into groups such as town hotels, vacation resorts, villas, tented camps, motels, and lodges, with participants drawn accordingly from each category. The sample size for each stratum was calculated using the following formula:

$$n_h = (N_h / N) * n$$

Where: n_h = sample size for stratum h N_h = population size for stratum h N = total population size n = total sample size. Applying this formula to our strata, we get the following proportionate stratified sample:

Table 0.2: Proportionate Stratified Sample

Hospitality Firm Strata	Population (N _h)	Calculation	Sample Size (n _h)
Town Hotels	165	$(165/480) * 218$	75
Vacation Hotels	67	$(67/480) * 218$	30
Villas	53	$(53/480) * 218$	24
Tented Camps	61	$(61/480) * 218$	28
Motels	63	$(63/480) * 218$	29
Lodges	71	$(71/480) * 218$	32
Total	480		218

Source: Tourism Regulatory Authority Registry, (2024)

Participants within each identified stratum were selected using simple random sampling. This method ensured that every individual in a particular subgroup had an equal probability of being chosen, which helped minimize selection bias and enhanced the overall accuracy and representativeness of the sample (Elfil & Negida, 2019).

The use of proportionate stratified random sampling brought multiple benefits to this study. It guaranteed that all segments of the population were fairly represented, which was particularly important given the wide variety of hospitality entities involved. This sampling strategy also helped reduce sampling error, leading to more accurate estimations of population characteristics. Moreover, it facilitated meaningful comparisons

across different categories of hospitality establishments, offering deeper insights into how succession planning approaches might differ by establishment type (Hair et al., 2019).

3.5 Data Collection Research Instruments

Structured questionnaires served as the primary tool for gathering data in this research. These questionnaires featured a mix of both closed-ended and open-ended questions, enabling the collection of quantifiable data as well as richer, more detailed responses. For the closed-ended items, the study utilized a Likert scale format—a widely recognized psychometric approach used to gauge individual opinions and attitudes (Joshi et al., 2022). Specifically, a 5-point Likert scale was adopted, with response options ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

The inclusion of Likert scale items brought multiple advantages to the research process. First, they offered a consistent and systematic method for assessing perceptions and attitudes, which supported robust statistical analysis (DeVellis, 2023). Second, the scale's gradation allowed participants to express varying degrees of agreement or disagreement, capturing more subtle distinctions than binary responses could offer. Lastly, the simplicity and clarity of the scale made it user-friendly for respondents, which likely contributed to higher participation rates (Taherdoost, 2020).

3.6 Pilot Testing

Pilot testing refers to a preliminary trial conducted on a small scale prior to the main research, aimed at evaluating the practicality, dependability, and accuracy of the data collection tools (Leon et al., 2021). It plays a vital role in uncovering any weaknesses in the research design or instruments, enabling the researcher to make necessary improvements before rolling out the full study. In this investigation, the pilot test

involved 22 respondents—about 10% of the intended sample size—selected from hospitality businesses located in an adjacent county. The exercise was instrumental in examining whether the questionnaire items were easily understood, determining the average time participants needed to complete the survey, identifying any operational challenges that could arise during data collection, and generating initial data to test the reliability and validity of the instruments used.

3.7 Validity of Instruments

Validity refers to the degree to which a research tool effectively captures the concept it is meant to measure (Cimpian, 2021). Establishing validity is essential to ensure the trustworthiness and relevance of the study's outcomes. In this research, content validity was prioritized as the method for validating the data collection instrument. This was assessed using the Content Validity Index (CVI), a widely accepted technique for evaluating how well each item aligns with the study's objectives. Two experts in the field evaluated the questionnaire to determine the appropriateness of each item. They used a four-point scale, where 4 indicated "very relevant," 3 "quite relevant," 2 "somewhat relevant," and 1 "not relevant." The Content Validity Index (CVI) was calculated by dividing the total number of items both experts rated as either 3 or 4 by the overall number of items in the questionnaire.

Only items that achieved a CVI score of 0.78 or higher were retained, indicating strong content validity (Zamanzadeh et al., 2019).

3.8 Reliability of Instruments

Reliability refers to the extent to which a research instrument consistently produces stable and repeatable results across different occasions and settings (Taber, 2018). Ensuring reliability is fundamental for generating dependable and replicable data in a study. In this research, the reliability of the quantitative tool—the questionnaire—was evaluated using

Cronbach's alpha coefficient. This statistical measure was applied to each individual scale within the instrument to determine the degree of internal consistency. A Cronbach's alpha value of 0.7 or above was deemed satisfactory, signifying that the instrument demonstrated an acceptable level of reliability (Ursachi et al., 2020).

3.9 Data Collection Procedures

Prior to initiating the data collection process, the researcher secured all the required approvals. The first step involved obtaining ethical clearance from the Institutional Review Board at Mount Kenya University. Subsequently, a research permit was requested from the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI), in accordance with Kenyan legal requirements governing research activities (Leavy, 2022). After receiving the necessary authorizations, the researcher implemented a drop-and-collect strategy for distributing the questionnaires. This approach entailed personally delivering the survey forms to participants and arranging to retrieve them after a mutually agreed period (Bryman & Bell, 2022).

The drop-and-collect technique provided numerous benefits for this study. It allowed respondents the flexibility to complete the questionnaires at their own pace, which contributed to a higher response rate than is typically observed with mailed surveys. Additionally, the method gave the researcher a chance to explain the purpose of the study and clarify any queries from participants, likely improving the quality and accuracy of responses (Yin, 2020). Once the questionnaires were delivered, participants were briefed on the study's aims, and informed consent was obtained. The researcher returned after two days to collect the completed forms. To ensure data quality, spot checks were conducted on-site to confirm completeness, and any identified issues were addressed immediately.

3.10 Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis techniques refer to the systematic approaches used to process and make sense of the information gathered in a study, ultimately guiding the researcher in answering the research questions (Hair et al., 2019). Selecting the right analytical methods is essential, as it influences the ability to draw accurate and meaningful conclusions from the raw data. In this research, both descriptive and inferential statistical methods were utilized. Descriptive statistics—such as frequencies, averages, and standard deviations—were applied to summarize the dataset and to offer a general understanding of succession planning practices and perceived levels of organizational performance.

For inferential analysis, correlation techniques were used to explore the nature and strength of the relationships between different succession planning approaches and organizational performance metrics. The correlation coefficient (r) provided insight into both the magnitude and direction of these associations. To further evaluate the influence of succession planning strategies on performance outcomes, multiple regression analysis was performed. This included assessing the coefficient of determination (R^2), which indicated the percentage of variance in organizational performance accounted for by the succession planning variables. The overall fit of the regression model was tested using analysis of variance (ANOVA), with the F-statistic determining whether the model significantly explained the data patterns. Additionally, t-tests were applied to evaluate the statistical significance of each predictor within the model. Beta coefficients were used to determine the relative contribution of each succession planning strategy in forecasting organizational performance outcomes.

The regression model took the form: $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \varepsilon$, where Y presented organizational performance, X_1 , X_2 , and X_3 are different succession planning strategies, β_0 is the constant, β_1 , β_2 , and β_3 are the coefficients, and ε is the error term.

All statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS software, with a significance level of 0.05 used for hypothesis testing.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

Observing ethical standards in research is essential to safeguard participants' rights, ensure their well-being, uphold research integrity, and enhance the trustworthiness of study outcomes (Leavy, 2022). In this study, strict ethical protocols were followed throughout the research process. Approval to carry out the study was obtained from the postgraduate school of Mount Kenya University following clearance from the institution's Ethical Review Committee. Participation was entirely voluntary, and informed consent was requested from each respondent before involvement in the study. During the consent process, participants were clearly informed about the purpose of the research. To maintain privacy and confidentiality, no identifying personal information was collected from the respondents. Additionally, the study posed minimal to no risk to participants, as the questions presented were general in nature and did not touch on sensitive or personal issues.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a detailed account of the data analysis, interpretation, and presentation of the results obtained from the study. It aligns the key findings with the stated research objectives and offers conclusions and recommendations based on the insights derived from the data.

4.1 Response Rate

According to the data presented in Table 4.1, a total of 218 questionnaires were issued to participants. Out of these, 180 were successfully returned, although 38 of the returned questionnaires were found to be incomplete. This resulted in an effective response rate of 82.4%. Such a high rate of participation from various respondent categories contributes significantly to the dependability and validity of the study's outcomes. As emphasized by Nulty (2021), achieving a response rate above 70% is considered adequate for ensuring that survey results are representative of the broader population.

Table 4.1: Response Rate Summary

Total No of questionnaire issued out	Total No of returned questionnaires	Number of incomplete Questionnaires		Response Rate
218	180	38	4	82.4%

Source: Researcher (2025)

4.2 Reliability Results

This section presents the reliability results of the research instruments, evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha. Reliability testing ensures that the data collection tools consistently measure the intended variables across different respondents.

4.3 Reliability Results

This section presents the reliability results of the research instruments, evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha. Reliability testing ensures that the data collection tools consistently measure the intended variables across different respondents.

Table 4.2: Reliability Results

	No. of Items	Cronbach Alpha Coefficient
Human resource planning	18	.820
Career development	18	.727
Employee performance appraisal	18	.784

Source: Field Data, (2025)

The reliability outcomes, as illustrated in Table 4.2, indicate a high degree of internal consistency among all key variables assessed in the study. Each construct recorded a Cronbach's Alpha value exceeding the commonly accepted minimum of 0.7, confirming the reliability of the measurement tools. Specifically, the construct for human resource planning showed a strong reliability score of 0.820, while employee performance appraisal followed with a coefficient of 0.784. Career development also demonstrated acceptable reliability, with a value of 0.727. These results affirm that the instruments utilized in the study were effective in consistently measuring the intended variables. As noted by Tavakol and Dennick (2021), Cronbach's Alpha values ranging from 0.7 to 0.9 signify strong internal consistency, supporting the dependability of the data collected.

4.4 Respondents Background

This section presents the demographic profile of the respondents, covering key attributes such as gender, age, length of service within the organization, and highest level of education attained. Understanding these characteristics is essential for gaining a clearer

picture of the participant group, as they contribute to assessing the credibility and richness of the data collected. These factors may also influence the perspectives shared by respondents, offering more contextually informed insights.

4.4.1 Percentage Response by Gender

This section presents the gender distribution of respondents involved in the study. The gender composition of the participants provides insights into the diversity and inclusivity of the perspectives gathered from individuals involved in succession planning strategy on performance of the hospitality industry in Nakuru County, Kenya.

Table 4.3: Distribution by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	75	41.7%
Female	105	58.3%
Total	180	100.0%

Source: Researcher (2024)

The gender distribution of respondents in this study shows that 41.7% were males and 58.3% were females, suggesting a slight female dominance among the participants. This distribution reflects the typical gender roles and participation in hospitality industry, where women may be more prevalent in human resourcing planning and employee performance roles, while men may participate more in career development strategy on succession planning on performance of the hospitality industry in Nakuru County, Kenya.

4.4.2 Age of the Respondents

The study also determined the age of respondents' ages engaged in hospitality industry. The findings are displayed in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Age of the Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
20-29 years	7	4
30-39 years	45	25
40-49 years	80	44
50-59 years	43	24
Above 60 years	5	3
Total	180	100

Source: Field Data (2024)

Table 4.4 illustrates the age distribution of respondents, revealing that the majority (44%) were within the 40-49 years' age bracket, indicating this as the most represented age group in the study. The 30-39 years category follows with 25%, while 24% are aged 50-59 years, showing significant participation from middle-aged individuals. Younger respondents aged 20-29 years comprise 4%, and those above 60 years represent 3%, indicating relatively lower engagement in hospitality industry from these age groups.

4.4.3 Number of Years in the Organization

This section examines the work experience of the respondents involved in the study, shedding light on the breadth and depth of their professional backgrounds in hospitality industry. The analysis explores the range of experience across different roles within the hospitality industry, providing insights into how their experience may influence the performance of the hospitality industry in Nakuru County, Kenya.

Table 4.5: Number of Years in the Organization

Category	Frequency	Percent %
Less than 2 Years	43	23.9%
2-5 Years	52	28.9%
6-10 Years	34	18.9%
More than 10 Years	51	28.3%
Total	180	100%

Source: Field Data (2024)

Table 4.5 presents the distribution of respondents based on number of years in the organization. A significant portion, 28.9%, reported having between 2-5 years and more than 10 years of work experience reported at 28.3 %, indicating a wealth of experience within the respondents. Meanwhile, 23.9% of respondents had less than 2 years of work experience, while 18.9% had between 6-10 years. This distribution suggests a balanced representation of respondents with varying levels of experience, providing diverse insights into the performance of hospitality industry. The mix of experience levels allows for a comprehensive understanding of the succession planning strategy on performance of the hospitality industry in Nakuru County, Kenya.

4.5.4 Highest Level of Education

This section examines the educational qualifications of the respondents involved in the study, highlighting the diversity of academic backgrounds among those engaged in the hospitality industry in Nakuru County, Kenya. The educational qualifications of the respondents are essential for understanding how varying levels of expertise and knowledge may influence succession planning strategy on overall performance of the hospitality industry.

Table 4.6: Distribution of Respondents as Per Highest Academic Level

Category	Frequency	Percent %
Certificate	26	14.4%
Diploma	45	25.0%
Undergraduate degree	75	41.7%
Masters	28	15.6%
PhD	6	3.3%
Total	180	100%

Source: Researcher (2024)

Table 4.6 illustrates the academic qualifications of the respondents involved in the study, revealing a diverse educational background among the participants. The largest proportion of respondents, 41.7%, held undergraduate degree qualifications, followed by 25 % with diploma. A notable 15.6% of respondents had masters, while 14.4% held certificates and the minority 3.3% had PhD. This distribution suggests that the majority of participants possess higher educational qualifications, with a solid representation of individuals capable of offering advanced insights into the succession planning strategy on overall performance of the hospitality industry.

The presence of participants with postgraduate qualifications implies that succession planning strategy issues are likely to be well-understood by a significant portion of the sample, adding credibility to the findings regarding hospitality industry. Furthermore, the mix of certificate and diploma holders suggests that practical, on-the-ground insights from individuals with more technical or hands-on roles are also well-represented. The diversity in academic qualifications enriches the data, ensuring that the perspectives gathered reflect a broad spectrum of expertise relevant to the performance of the hospitality industry.

4.5.5 Preferred Succession Plan Practice

This section examines the preferred succession plan in the hospitality industry in Nakuru County, Kenya. The succession plan practices are essential for understanding how varying succession practices may influence succession planning strategy on overall performance of the hospitality industry.

Table 4.7: Distribution of Preferred Succession Plan Practice

Category	Frequency	Percent %
Promotion from within	71	39.4%
Outsourcing	65	36.1%
Advertisements	44	24.5%
Total	180	100%

Source: Researcher (2024)

Table 4.7 illustrates the preferred succession plan practice involved in the study, revealing a diverse succession plan practices among the participants. The largest proportion of respondents, 39.4%, preferred promotion from within, followed by 36.1% preferring outsourcing. A notable 24.5% of respondents preferred advertisement. This distribution suggests that the majority of participants preferred promotion from within into the succession planning strategy on overall performance of the hospitality industry.

4.6 Human Resource Planning Strategies on Performance of the Hospitality Industry

This section presents the descriptive statistics on the, based on responses gathered using a 5-point Likert scale. The scale ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). where 5=strongly Agree, 4=Agree, 3=Undecided, 2=Disagree and 1=strongly disagree.

Table 4.8: Human Resource Planning Strategies on Performance of the Hospitality Industry

Statements	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
In my organization, career paths are pre-established through structured job hierarchies, with progression typically being vertical and forward-moving.	12.4%	40%	20.7%	13.8%	13.1%	2.65	0.975
Succession planning involves charting a defined path within the organization that leads to promotions or increased responsibilities as expertise is gained.	2.4%	0%	31%	61.9%	4.8%	3.67	0.683
I actively seek work assignments that provide opportunities to gain new knowledge or skills.	0%	0%	47.6%	25%	27.4%	3.80	0.847
I am encouraged to collaborate across different departments and engage with colleagues outside my immediate team.	0%	0%	16.7%	76.2%	7.1%	3.90	0.481
The work environment supports interactions and collaboration with individuals from external organizations.	1.2%	9.5%	19%	70.2%	0%	3.58	0.715
I feel motivated and energized when facing new tasks or unfamiliar work environments.	0%	4.8%	23.8%	38.1%	33.3%	4.00	0.878
I regularly assess my skillset and competencies with my supervisor to determine how they align with job requirements.	0%	4.8%	23.8%	40.5%	31%	3.98	0.864
My supervisor and I work together to identify areas of strength, weakness, and training needs for career development.	0%	0%	16.7%	33.3%	50%	4.33	0.750
My Individual Development Plan is co-created with my supervisor, guided by performance outcomes, and aligned with the organization's mission and objectives.	3.6%	6%	21.4%	69%	0%	3.56	0.766
We review the development plan annually and evaluate my progress toward career goals at regular	0%	0%	20.2%	79.8%	0%	3.80	0.404

intervals.							
The organization supports career development by aligning its objectives with employees' personal and professional growth aspirations.	0%	0%	47.6%	25%	27.4%	3.67	0.847
My organization provides clear development strategies, outlines future career paths, and identifies the skills required for key roles.	0%	0%	9.4%	55.6%	35.0%	3.68	0.657
I receive consistent support from my organization to pursue learning opportunities, even if they are outside the scope of my current role.	0%	0%	25.6%	47%	27.4%	3.43	0.634
I am confident in my ability to acquire and enhance skills relevant to my career, even in areas I haven't previously explored.	0%	5%	11.1%	66.2%	17.7%	3.70	0.791
To strengthen my positioning in succession planning, I seek constructive feedback from peers and managers and welcome coaching opportunities.	0%	4.8%	26.2%	33.3%	35.7%	4.00	0.905
My involvement in diverse development programs in the past contributes to my current belief in my ability to continue growing professionally.	0%	4%	33.6%	36.4%	26.0%	3.61	0.747
Observing the success of peers in similar roles enhances my own confidence in developing relevant skills.	0%	6%	10.1%	46.7%	37.2%	3.76	0.571
I consistently aim for ambitious career goals, implement strategies to reach them, and commit significant effort to their achievement.	3.2%	7.5%	18.1%	61.1%	10%	3.62	0.723
						3.89	0.710

Source: Researcher (2024)

The analysis of succession planning strategies and their influence on the performance of the hospitality industry revealed several key findings. As illustrated in Table 4.1, a significant number of participants agreed that career progression within their organizations followed a clearly defined path, typically structured through established job hierarchies. This linear and upward approach to succession planning was supported by a mean score of 2.65 and a standard deviation of 0.975, suggesting that structured career paths are perceived as fundamental components of succession efforts in the hospitality sector. Furthermore, respondents indicated that organizations retained control over succession planning and development activities, reflected in a mean of 3.06 and standard deviation of 0.981.

The study also found that succession planning within the organizational framework was designed to facilitate advancement through increased responsibility based on growing expertise, as indicated by a mean score of 3.67 and a standard deviation of 0.683. A large portion of the participants (mean = 3.80, SD = 0.847) expressed that they actively sought assignments that provided opportunities for learning and development. Additionally, a majority (76.2%) reported being encouraged to engage with departments outside their own, promoting cross-functional collaboration (mean = 3.90, SD = 0.481). Similarly, 70.2% stated that their work environment supported interaction beyond their organization, with a mean of 3.58 and a standard deviation of 0.715. Respondents also showed strong enthusiasm for new roles and challenges, with a mean of 4.00 and a standard deviation of 0.878.

Employees noted that they regularly collaborated with their supervisors to evaluate their current skill sets against job requirements (mean = 3.98, SD = 0.864). They also engaged in identifying areas of strength and needed improvements, alongside relevant training opportunities to further their careers (mean = 4.33, SD = 0.750). Approximately 69% of

the respondents strongly agreed that their personal development plans were jointly formulated with supervisors, aligned with organizational goals (mean = 3.56, SD = 0.766). A substantial 79.8% confirmed that these plans were reviewed annually and periodically assessed for progress, with a mean of 3.80 and a standard deviation of 0.404. Additionally, 52.4% of respondents felt that their organizations effectively aligned institutional goals with employees' personal and professional aspirations, supporting overall career growth (mean = 3.67, SD = 0.847). A further 74.4% agreed that management was proactive in supporting career development by endorsing training requests, even when such development was not directly related to current job roles (mean = 3.43, SD = 0.634). Moreover, 83.9% of participants believed they were capable of enhancing their job-related skills independently of previous development experiences (mean = 3.70, SD = 0.791).

Regarding employee initiative in career development, 70% agreed they actively sought feedback from supervisors and colleagues to improve both technical and interpersonal capabilities, and were open to coaching (mean = 4.00, SD = 0.905). Furthermore, 62.4% reported that past participation in varied developmental activities significantly contributed to their current confidence and ability to pursue career growth (mean = 3.61, SD = 0.747). Observational learning also played a role; 73.9% of employees noted that seeing their peers successfully execute similar tasks strengthened their own confidence (mean = 3.76, SD = 0.571). Additionally, 71.1% indicated they set ambitious career goals, employed strategic planning, and exerted extra effort to achieve these targets (mean = 3.62, SD = 0.723). The overall perception of human resource planning as a driver of performance in the hospitality industry was rated positively, with a composite mean of 3.89 and a standard deviation of 0.710.

These findings are consistent with research by Papademetriou et al. (2023), who examined sustainable HR practices in Cypriot urban hotels. Their study found a strong association between customer satisfaction and institutional success, further confirming the positive role HR strategies play in service quality and overall performance. Similarly, Chin et al. (2023) explored sustainable HR practices in Malaysia’s luxury hotel segment, demonstrating that while several HR initiatives contributed to performance, employment security measures showed no significant influence. In summary, these studies reinforce the significance of strategic human resource planning in enhancing various dimensions of organizational performance within the hospitality sector.

4.7 Training and Career Development Practices Influence Performance of the Hospitality Industry

This section presents the descriptive statistics on the influence of career development practices influence performance of the hospitality industry in Nakuru County, Kenya.

Table 4.9: Descriptive Statistics for Influence of Career Development Practices

Statements	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
The organization collaborates with individual employees to evaluate training requirements and align them with succession planning efforts.	3.6%	6%	4.8%	32.1%	53.5%	4.26	1.043
Equal access to training is encouraged across the organization through the implementation of succession-related development programs.	8.3%	1.2%	4.8%	27.4%	58.3%	4.23	1.173
My supervisor and I jointly develop and regularly revise	6%	3.6%	22.6	31%	36.8%	3.89	1.130

my training and development plan, informed by performance review outcomes.			%					
I undergo training based on the needs identified in my personalized development plan.	4.8%	3.6%	16.7%	39.3%	35.6%	3.98	1.053	
The organization offers training sessions focused on the significance of succession planning and related career development topics.	3.6%	3.6%	19%	67.8%	6%	3.69	0.791	
My organization delivers training opportunities that extend beyond immediate job roles and support long-term, strategic growth.	1.2%	6%	29.8%	51.2%	11.8%	3.67	0.812	
I have taken part in workshops focused on succession planning, crafting individual development plans, and other relevant career topics.	0%	1.2%	39.3%	58.3%	1.2%	3.60	0.540	
The organization schedules job rotations periodically as a tool for effective succession planning.	0%	1.2%	40.5%	56%	2.4%	3.60	0.562	
Outcomes of training programs are assessed to determine their impact and relevance to succession planning objectives.	0%	0%	13%	81%	6%	3.93	0.433	
I actively choose training and educational opportunities that align with succession planning goals.	0%	1.2%	16.7%	69%	13.1%	3.94	0.588	
I determine my learning needs and goals, adopt appropriate learning strategies, and engage in development activities that strengthen my succession planning prospects.	2.4%	0%	31%	61.9%	4.8%	3.67	0.683	

Source: Researcher (2024)

The analysis revealed a strong collaboration between organizations and individual employees in identifying training needs for succession planning, with 85.6% agreement (mean = 4.26, SD = 1.043). Additionally, an impressive 95.7% of respondents agreed that equal access to training opportunities is promoted via succession planning initiatives (mean = 4.23, SD = 1.173). In most cases (67.8%), employee training and development plans were co-developed by supervisors and employees and updated following performance appraisals (mean = 3.89, SD = 1.130). Furthermore, 74.9% of participants confirmed they received training aligned with their development plan's identified needs (mean = 3.98, SD = 1.053).

Training programs covering the importance of succession planning and career-related topics were supported by 73.8% of the respondents (mean = 3.69, SD = 0.791). A similar proportion (73%) acknowledged that their organizations offered learning opportunities beyond current roles, emphasizing long-term strategic development (mean = 3.67, SD = 0.812). Around 59.5% had attended workshops on succession planning and individual career development (mean = 3.60, SD = 0.540), while 57.4% agreed their organization provided periodic job rotations as part of succession planning (mean = 3.60, SD = 0.562). Evaluation of training outcomes and their relevance to succession planning received overwhelming support (94% agreement, mean = 3.93, SD = 0.433), and 82.1% of respondents said they chose training opportunities aligned with succession goals (mean = 3.94, SD = 0.588). Lastly, 66.7% confirmed they personally identified their learning objectives, selected development strategies, and engaged in activities designed to enhance their future roles (mean = 3.67, SD = 0.683). Collectively, career development practices were seen as significantly influencing performance in Nakuru

County’s hospitality industry, with a composite mean of 3.87 and a standard deviation of 0.811.

These findings align with those of Aremo et al. (2023), where career advancement initiatives in Lagos’s Eat N Go Limited showed strong positive effects on employee performance, emphasizing the need for transparent and inclusive development programs. Similarly, Hosen et al. (2024) observed that career development and training significantly improved work performance in Bangladeshi hotels. In the Indonesian context, Jamaludin et al. (2024) highlighted that clear career pathways and skill-building opportunities—boosted by salary satisfaction—enhanced both employee performance and job satisfaction in star-rated hotels.

4.8 Performance Appraisal Strategy Practices Influence Performance of the Hospitality Industry

This section outlines the descriptive analysis of how performance appraisal strategies impact the performance of the hospitality sector in Nakuru County, Kenya. Respondents evaluated five opinion-based items using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Table 4.10: Descriptive Statistics for Influence of Practices Performance Appraisal Strategy

Statements	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
My job performance is reviewed annually by both my immediate supervisor and members of senior management.	7.1%	1.2%	3.6%	40.5%	47.6%	4.20	1.084
Following the appraisal, my supervisor provides feedback, which helps uncover issues in my job performance and their root causes.	8.3%	0%	3.6%	26.2%	61.9%	4.33	1.144

To enhance my performance, appraisal outcomes are used to pinpoint training needs and career development opportunities, which are incorporated into my personal development plan.	3.6%	0%	25%	42.9%	28.5%	3.93	0.929
Appraisal findings help address any gaps in the succession planning process, prompting adjustments to my development plan as needed.	7.1%	0%	28.6%	25%	39.3%	3.89	1.151
The results of my performance appraisal influence key compensation decisions such as salary increments, promotions, and succession planning considerations.	7.1%	4.8%	25%	39.3%	23.8%	3.68	1.110
My job performance is reviewed annually by both my immediate supervisor and members of senior management.						3.87	1.038

The data presented in Table 4.10 reflects participant views on how performance appraisal practices impact the performance of the hospitality industry in Nakuru County, Kenya. The results indicate that 88.1% of respondents agreed that their performance is evaluated annually by both direct supervisors and senior management levels (mean = 4.20, SD = 1.084). Likewise, 88.1% affirmed that post-appraisal feedback is provided to identify job performance issues and their root causes (mean = 4.33, SD = 1.144). Additionally, 71.4% agreed that appraisal outcomes are used to determine training and development needs, which are subsequently included in individual development plans (mean = 3.93, SD = 0.929). Moreover, 64.3% reported that appraisal results are utilized to rectify deviations in succession planning and adjust development plans accordingly (mean = 3.89, SD = 1.151). A total of 63.1% concurred that appraisal outcomes influence annual compensation decisions, including salary increases, promotions, and succession planning (mean = 3.68, SD = 1.110). Overall, these appraisal practices were perceived to

positively affect industry performance in Nakuru County, with a composite mean score of 3.87 and a composite standard deviation of 1.038.

These findings align with existing studies: Siraj and Hågen (2023) observed significant effects of appraisal systems on employee performance in Ethiopian SMEs; Rufino (2023) reported positive links between appraisal quality and job satisfaction in Philippine banks; Dhanabhakym and Fahad (2023) highlighted strong correlations between appraisal systems and employee morale in Indian banking; Mohammed and Istvan (2023) and Swidan et al. (2023) documented positive appraisal impacts on organizational commitment in Gaza’s electricity sector; and Wanjiru and Odenyo (2024) identified significant associations between appraisal techniques and employee performance in a Kenyan water utility.

4.9 Succession Planning and Performance of the Hospitality Industry

This section presents the descriptive statistics on succession planning and performance of the hospitality industry the Nakuru County, Kenya. Participants responded to eight opinion-based statements using a five-point Likert scale, where 1 indicated strong disagreement and 5 indicated strong agreement.

Table 4.11: Descriptive Statistics on Succession Planning and Performance of the Hospitality Industry

Statements	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
Our organization is effectively progressing toward accomplishing its goals.	3.6%	4.8%	22.9%	39.8%	28.9%	3.86	1.014
The organization consistently meets the targets set in its succession planning initiatives.	7.1%	1.2%	16.7%	40.5%	34.5%	3.94	1.101
Human resources are efficiently utilized in our	7.1%	7.1%	15.5%	40.5%	29.8%	3.79	1.162

organization to achieve the best possible outcomes in succession planning.							
Our organization has always implemented succession plan activities in a timely manner	7.1%	1.2%	23.8%	67.9%	0%	3.52	0.843
Our organization utilizes its financial resources for optimal succession plan outcomes	7.1%	1.2%	19%	72.6%	0%	3.57	0.840
Employee performance appraisal in your organization favor succession planning	0%	5.8%	25.2%	32.3%	36.7%	4.00	0.915
Career development practices in your organization favor succession planning	3.6%	0%	25%	42.9%	28.5%	3.93	0.929
Human resource planning practices in your organization favors succession planning?	0%	2%	18.2%	69.8%	10%	3.79	0.824
Composite mean and composite SD						3.67	0.801

The data in Table 4.12 reflects how succession planning practices are perceived to influence the performance of the hospitality industry in Nakuru County. A substantial 68.7% of respondents agreed that their organization is moving in the right direction toward meeting its objectives, with a mean of 3.86 and a standard deviation of 1.014. Moreover, 75% indicated that their organization consistently achieves its succession plan goals (mean = 3.94, SD = 1.101). Additionally, 70.3% affirmed that human resources are effectively deployed to support succession planning outcomes (mean = 3.79, SD = 1.162), and 67.9% agreed that succession planning activities are implemented on schedule (mean = 3.52, SD = 0.843). The findings further revealed that 72.6% believed financial resources are well-utilized for succession outcomes (mean = 3.57, SD = 0.840), and 69.0% felt that performance appraisal processes favor succession planning (mean = 3.80, SD = 0.915). Career development practices were also seen as supportive,

with respondents registering a mean of 3.93 (SD = 0.929). Finally, 79.8% agreed that human resource planning supports succession outcomes (mean = 3.79, SD = 0.824). Overall, the composite mean of 3.67 and standard deviation of 0.801 suggest that succession planning is viewed as having a positive and meaningful impact on the performance of hospitality firms in Nakuru County.

4.10 Diagnostic Tests

4.10.1 Test for Autocorrelation

A test for autocorrelation examines whether residuals in a regression model are correlated over time, violating the assumption of independence. Detecting autocorrelation is crucial as it can affect the accuracy of statistical inferences. Testing for autocorrelation was essential to determine whether residuals in the regression model were correlated over time, which would violate the assumption of independence. Autocorrelation can distort standard errors, leading to unreliable hypothesis testing and incorrect inferences about the significance of predictor variables. Identifying and addressing autocorrelation ensures that the model produces unbiased and efficient estimates, enhancing the credibility of the study's findings.

Table 4.12: Test for Autocorrelation

lags(<i>p</i>)	chi2	df	Prob>chi2
1	2.214	1	0.5101

Source: Researcher (2024)

The analysis in Table 4.12 presents the results of the autocorrelation test, where the chi-square value is 2.214 with 1 degree of freedom and a p-value of 0.5201. Since the p-value exceeds the conventional threshold of 0.05, the findings indicate that there is no statistically significant autocorrelation within the dataset. In relation to this study, which explores the impact of succession planning strategies on the performance of hospitality

businesses in Nakuru County, Kenya, the absence of autocorrelation implies that the residuals in the regression model are independently distributed. This independence of residuals is a critical assumption in regression analysis, as any violation, such as autocorrelation, could compromise the accuracy and validity of the model's estimations. Therefore, the result supports the robustness and credibility of the model used in this study.

Table 4.13: Heteroscedasticity

Breusch-Pagan/Cook-Weisberg test for heteroscedasticity		
chi2(1)	=	0.414
Prob>chi2	=	0.785

Table 4.13 displays the results from the Breusch-Pagan / Cook-Weisberg test for heteroscedasticity, revealing a chi-square statistic of 0.414 with 1 degree of freedom and a p-value of 0.785. Given that this p-value is above the conventional 0.05 significance level, there is no statistical evidence to suggest the presence of heteroscedasticity in the dataset. This outcome suggests that the residuals have a constant variance across all values of the independent variables. Within the framework of this research, which examines how succession planning strategies impact the performance of the hospitality sector in Nakuru County, Kenya, the absence of heteroscedasticity supports the reliability of the regression analysis. It confirms that the model meets the assumption of homoscedasticity, thereby enhancing the credibility and consistency of the parameter estimates.

4.10.2 Multicollinearity

Multicollinearity arises when two or more independent variables in a regression model exhibit a strong linear relationship, which can result in inflated standard errors and

unreliable estimates of regression coefficients. This issue can obscure the individual effect of each predictor on the outcome variable, making it challenging to assess their actual influence. In this study, multicollinearity was evaluated using two diagnostic tools: the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and tolerance values. VIF indicates the extent to which the variance of a regression coefficient is increased due to the presence of multicollinearity among predictors. In contrast, tolerance, which is the inverse of VIF, shows the proportion of a variable's variance that is not accounted for by the other independent variables in the model. These tests were employed to ensure the stability and reliability of the regression estimates.

Table 4.14: Multicollinearity Test

Collinearity Statistics		
Variables	Tolerance	VIF
Succession planning	0.822	1.011
Human resource planning practices	0.811	1.311
Career development practices	0.931	1.322
Employee performance appraisal	0.838	1.353

Source: Researcher (2024)

The results of the multicollinearity diagnostics, detailed in Table 4.14, present Tolerance values between 0.811 and 0.931 alongside VIF scores ranging from 1.011 to 1.353. Since Tolerance values exceed the accepted minimum of 0.1 and all VIFs fall well below the traditional cutoff of 10, it is clear that multicollinearity is not present within the model. This confirms that the predictor variables—namely succession planning, human resource planning practices, career development practices, and employee performance appraisal—operate independently without strong intercorrelations. As a result, the regression coefficient estimates are considered stable and trustworthy, clearly reflecting the distinct

impact each variable has on the effect of succession planning strategy on hospitality industry performance in Nakuru County, Kenya.

4.11 Correlation Results

Table 4.15 displays the correlation matrix used to explore how different variables—such as human resource planning practices, career development initiatives, employee performance appraisal, and the succession planning strategy—are related to overall performance in the hospitality industry in Nakuru County, Kenya. The primary goal was to measure the strength and direction of the relationships among these key indicators, offering insight into how each strategy interacts with others in shaping industry performance outcomes.

Table 4.15: Correlation Results

		Performance of the hospitality industry	Human resource planning practices	Career development practices	Employee performance appraisal
Performance of the hospitality industry	Pearson Correlation	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
Human resource planning practices	Pearson Correlation	.671**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000			
Career development practices	Pearson Correlation	.664*	.403	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.367		
Employee performance appraisal	Pearson Correlation	.521**	.344	.345	1

Sig. (2- .000 .377 .336
tailed)

*.Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**.Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

c. List wise N=218

Source: Researcher (2024)

The correlation results in Table 4.15 shows several significant relationships between the key variables influencing the succession planning strategy on performance of the hospitality industry in Nakuru County, Kenya. The variable " performance of the hospitality industry " has a strong positive correlation with human resource planning practices ($r = 0.671$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that well-established human resource planning practices are closely linked to succession planning strategy. Career development practices also shows a significant positive correlation with succession planning strategy ($r = 0.664$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that effective career development practices influences successful succession planning strategy on performance of the hospitality industry.

Employee performance appraisal is moderately correlated with succession planning strategy with coefficients of 0.521 ($p < 0.05$). This implies that employee performance appraisal are important for succession planning strategy on performance of the hospitality industry but they are not as strongly related as human resource planning practices or career development practices. The results collectively indicate that elements such as workforce planning, employee development initiatives, and appraisal systems play a significant role in shaping the effectiveness of succession planning strategies and, in turn, affect the performance of hospitality enterprises in Nakuru County, Kenya. These findings underscore the interconnectedness of these human resource practices with strategic succession planning and organizational outcomes.

4.12 Regression Results

Table 4.16 presents the summary statistics for the regression model.

Table 4.16: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.674 ^a	.604	.411	.4362

a. Predictors:(Constant), human resource planning practices, career development practices, employee performance appraisal,

Source: Researcher (2024)

Table 4.17 provides a comprehensive summary of the regression model examining the extent to which human resource planning practices, career development initiatives, and employee performance appraisal contribute to succession planning strategy and overall organizational performance in the hospitality sector within Nakuru County, Kenya. The model reports an R value of 0.674, signifying a moderate to strong positive relationship between the independent variables—namely HR planning, career development, and performance appraisal—and the dependent variable, which is the performance of hospitality establishments. This suggests that improvements in these HR strategies are closely associated with enhanced organizational outcomes.

Furthermore, the R Square value stands at 0.604, indicating that approximately 60.4% of the variability in performance outcomes among hospitality businesses can be attributed to the combined influence of the predictor variables. This level of explanatory power underlines the strategic role these HR components play in fostering effective succession planning and sustaining competitive performance. However, the remaining 39.6% of variance implies that other unexamined factors—such as leadership style, market competition, technological adoption, or customer service strategies—may also

significantly impact performance and should be explored in future studies.

The Adjusted R Square value of 0.411 provides a refined estimate by accounting for the number of predictors and the sample size, ensuring that the model's explanatory power is not inflated. Even with these adjustments, the model still explains over 41% of the variance in performance, reinforcing the conclusion that these succession planning strategies are meaningful contributors to organizational success.

Table 4.17: Analysis of Variance

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	93.722	1	93.722	122.413	.000 ^b
	Residual	89.132	217	.451		
	Total	182.854	218			

a. Dependent Variable:

b. Predictors: (Constant), human resource planning practices, career development practices, employee performance appraisal,.

Table 4.17 displays the ANOVA summary for the regression analysis examining how human resource planning practices, career development practices, and employee performance appraisal influence the performance of the hospitality industry in Nakuru County, Kenya. The Regression Sum of Squares (SSR), valued at 93.722, represents the portion of performance variation explained by these predictor variables. In contrast, the Residual Sum of Squares (SSE) is 89.132, highlighting the variation not covered by the model—suggesting other factors may also affect performance outcomes. The Total Sum of Squares (SST), standing at 182.854, reflects the overall variance in performance, encompassing both explained and unexplained components.

The model's statistical adequacy is further confirmed by an F-statistic of 122.413, paired with a p-value of 0.000, which is well below the conventional threshold of 0.05. This

indicates that, together, the three independent variables significantly predict hospitality industry performance in Nakuru County. Hence, the regression model is a reliable fit and successfully captures the collective impact of HR planning, career development, and performance appraisal on organizational performance.

Table 4.18: Regression Coefficients

Model	Un-standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.674	0.449		1.018	0.000
Human resource planning practices	.633	0.461	.491	1.132	0.001
Career development practices	.622	0.420	.363	1.109	0.001
Employee performance appraisal	.592	0.343	.326	1.033	0.000

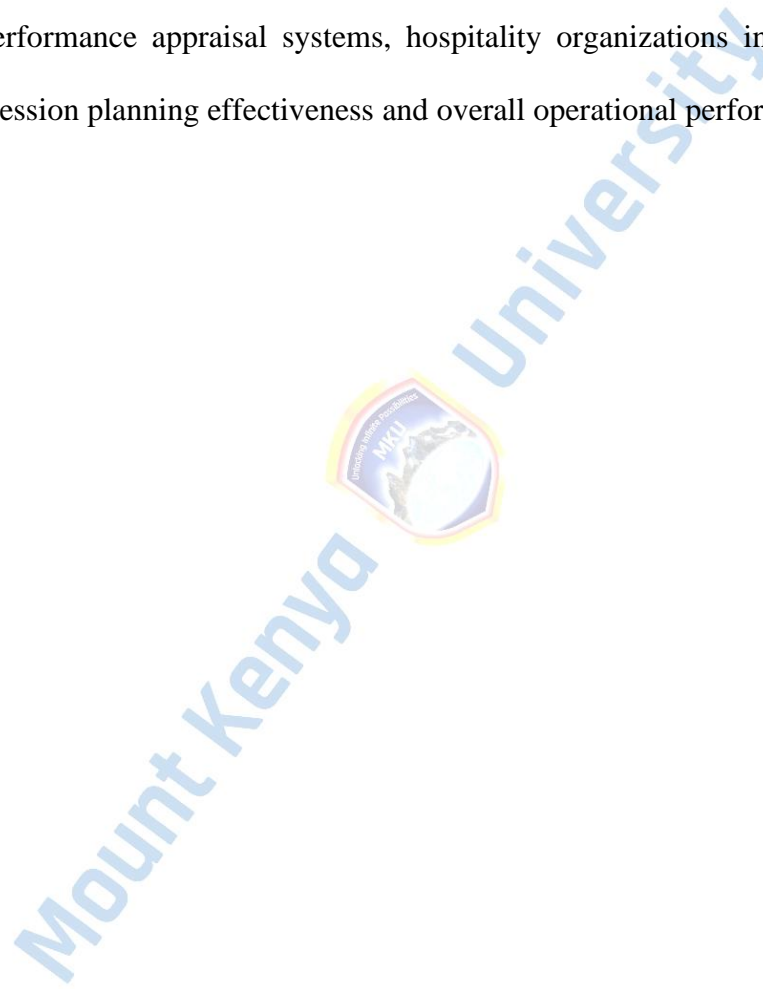
Source: Research Findings (2024)

The regression formula can be expressed as:

$$\text{Performance of the hospitality industry (Y)} = 0.674 + 0.633X_1 + 0.622X_2 + 0.592X_3 + \epsilon$$

Table 4.18 displays the regression outcomes that quantify the effects of human resource planning practices, career development initiatives, and employee performance appraisals on the performance of the hospitality industry in Nakuru County. The intercept (0.674) indicates the baseline level of performance when all independent variables are held at zero. Examining the unstandardized coefficients reveals that human resource planning practices have the most pronounced positive impact (B = 0.633), implying that a one-unit increase in HR planning corresponds to a 0.633-unit rise in performance. Career development practices follow closely in importance (B = 0.622), underscoring their essential contribution, while employee performance appraisal also shows a meaningful

positive effect ($B = 0.592$). The standardized beta coefficients contextualize these findings: human resource planning has the highest relative influence ($Beta = 0.491$), followed by career development ($Beta = 0.363$) and performance appraisal ($Beta = 0.326$). Each predictor is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), confirming the relevance of these variables in forecasting hospitality performance. These results strongly suggest that by reinforcing human resource planning, enhancing career development programs, and refining performance appraisal systems, hospitality organizations in Nakuru can boost their succession planning effectiveness and overall operational performance.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the study's findings, conclusions made and the research recommendations.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The primary focus of this study was to investigate how succession planning strategies influence the performance of the hospitality sector in Nakuru County, Kenya. Specifically, the research sought to evaluate three main objectives: first, to assess the role of human resource planning practices; second, to explore the influence of career development initiatives; and third, to examine the effect of employee performance appraisal on industry performance. These research aims were structured to offer a deeper understanding of how succession planning mechanisms contribute to organizational outcomes within the hospitality industry (Creswell & Creswell, 2021).

5.2.1 Human Resource Planning Strategies on Performance of the Hospitality Industry in Nakuru County, Kenya

The study found that human resource planning strategies were largely perceived as effective by hospitality industry employees in Nakuru County. A significant number agreed that career paths were clearly mapped through hierarchical job structures and linked to succession planning (mean = 2.65). Organizations appeared to maintain control over succession planning and development processes (mean = 3.06), with management establishing structured pathways within organizational systems (mean = 3.67). Employees frequently sought assignments that offered new learning opportunities (mean = 3.80), were encouraged to collaborate across departments (mean = 3.90), and

had chances to interact with external organizations (mean = 3.58). Many respondents also reported feeling energized by new work experiences (mean = 4.00).

Further, supervision played a central role in maintaining alignment with job requirements—employees often engaged with their supervisors to evaluate competencies (mean = 3.98) and identify strengths, weaknesses, and development needs (mean = 4.33). Together, employers and employees collaboratively developed individual development plans consistent with organizational goals (mean = 3.56), which were reviewed annually to monitor goal progress (mean = 3.80). The organization's mission and objectives were generally aligned with staff career goals (mean = 3.67), and employees felt supported in acquiring new skills for career development (mean = 3.43).

Most participants believed they could independently enhance their career-related competencies (mean = 3.70). They actively sought feedback on technical and interpersonal capabilities to position themselves better for succession planning, and were open to coaching (mean = 4.00). Prior engagement in diverse developmental activities boosted their self-efficacy (mean = 3.61), and observing peers successfully perform similar roles further strengthened their confidence (mean = 3.76). Additionally, employees commonly set ambitious career goals, implemented strategic plans, and directed effort toward achieving those goals (mean = 3.62). Overall, the combined human resource planning strategies received a composite mean score of 3.89, confirming their effectiveness in enhancing performance within the hospitality industry in Nakuru County.

5.2.2 Career Development Practices Influence Performance of the Hospitality Industry in Nakuru County

The analysis revealed that career development practices significantly impact hospitality industry performance in Nakuru County. Employees strongly agreed (mean = 4.26) that their organizations collaborate with them to identify training needs and incorporate these into succession plans. Equal access to training opportunities was also highly affirmed (mean = 4.23), indicating a fair and inclusive system. Supervisors and employees jointly developed training and development plans that were updated based on appraisal results (mean = 3.89), and staff received training tailored to identified needs (mean = 3.98). Organizations provided training on succession planning and career-related topics (mean = 3.69) and offered long-term developmental learning opportunities beyond an employee's current role (mean = 3.67). Participation in workshops focused on succession planning was notable (mean = 3.60), and periodic job rotations were used as a succession planning tool (mean = 3.60). Training outcomes were evaluated concerning their relevance to succession planning (mean = 3.93), and staff selected learning opportunities aligned with succession objectives (mean = 3.94). Employees also actively identified their own learning goals, chose appropriate strategies, and engaged in learning activities to enhance their succession readiness (mean = 3.67). Overall, the composite mean score of 3.87 underscores the strong positive influence of career development initiatives on hospitality performance in Nakuru County.

5.2.3 Appraisal Strategy Practices Influence Performance of the Hospitality Industry in Nakuru County

The study revealed that career development efforts significantly influenced performance in Nakuru County's hospitality industry through structured employee appraisal practices. Annually, employee performance reviews are conducted by both direct supervisors and senior management (mean = 4.20). These evaluations are followed by feedback sessions, enabling employees to identify performance issues and their root causes (mean = 4.33).

The outcomes of these appraisals inform training needs and development plans tailored to individual employees (mean = 3.93). Appraisal results are also used to adjust deviations in succession planning and update development plans accordingly (mean = 3.89). Furthermore, the appraisal process plays a critical role in determining annual rewards, including salary increases, promotions, and placement within the succession plan framework (mean = 3.68). Overall, with a composite mean of 3.87, these appraisal-based strategies are viewed as instrumental in enhancing hospitality industry performance in Nakuru County, Kenya.

5.2.4 Succession Planning Strategy and Performance of the Hospitality Industry in Nakuru County, Kenya

The analysis shows that succession planning strategies have a notably positive effect on the performance of hospitality businesses in Nakuru County. Respondents felt that the organization was on the right trajectory toward meeting its objectives (mean = 3.86) and consistently achieved key succession planning goals (mean = 3.94). The deployment of human resources to support succession planning was considered effective (mean = 3.79), and succession plan activities were generally implemented promptly (mean = 3.52). Efforts to allocate financial resources toward successful succession outcomes were also noted (mean = 3.57), and employee performance appraisals were viewed as aligned with succession planning efforts (mean = 3.80). These findings highlight the integral role succession planning plays in enhancing organizational performance within the hospitality sector.

The study's findings underscore the positive relationship between succession planning and the performance of the hospitality industry, as evidenced by a composite mean of 3.67 and a standard deviation of 0.801. Notably, career development practices emerged as a strong supporting factor for succession planning, with a mean score of 3.93 and a standard deviation of 0.929, indicating that structured growth opportunities for employees are integral to effective succession strategies. Human resource planning also played a vital role, as reflected by a mean score of 3.79 and a standard deviation of 0.824, highlighting the importance of aligning workforce strategies with long-term organizational goals.

Additionally, performance appraisal systems were perceived to be instrumental in advancing succession planning. A significant proportion of respondents (69.0%) agreed that performance reviews supported succession efforts, as shown by a mean of 3.80 and a standard deviation of 0.915. These results collectively point to the effectiveness of combining career development, human resource planning, and performance evaluation as key drivers of successful succession planning, which in turn positively influences the overall performance of the hospitality sector in Nakuru County.

5.2.5 Inferential Statistics

Inferential analysis confirmed that human resource planning practices, career development initiatives, and employee performance appraisals play significant roles in enhancing performance within the hospitality sector. Correlation analysis revealed strong, positive associations: HR planning practices correlated at $r = 0.671$ ($p < 0.01$), career development at $r = 0.664$ ($p < 0.01$), and performance appraisal at $r = 0.521$ ($p < 0.01$), indicating that improvements in these areas are strongly linked to better industry performance. Regression results further showed that 60.4% of the variance in hospitality performance could be attributed to these three factors. Of these, HR planning had the

most profound effect ($B = 0.633$, $p < 0.05$), followed closely by career development ($B = 0.622$, $p < 0.01$) and employee performance appraisal ($B = 0.592$, $p < 0.01$). All predictors were statistically significant, reinforcing their combined importance in driving performance improvements.

5.3 Conclusion

The study concluded that succession planning strategies have been largely effective in enhancing performance within Nakuru County's hospitality sector, largely driven by robust human resource planning, intentional career development, and structured performance appraisals. These three key practices ensured that succession goals were consistently met. Nevertheless, aligning the organization's objectives with individual employees' career aspirations and professional development proved to be a challenge. This gap highlights the necessity for stronger, more comprehensive succession planning strategies to bolster future performance and sustainability in the hospitality industry.

5.4 Recommendations

The study's recommendations are as follows;

- i. Future succession plans should place greater emphasis on human resource planning strategies which are value driven and self-efficiency.
- ii. Training and development programmers should focus more on promoting equal training opportunity for all employees in the succession planning. The organizations should select training and learning opportunities that are compatible with succession planning.
- iii. Organization should carry performance appraisal the results of the performance appraisal are used to identify training needs and development opportunities also correct the deviations that might occur in succession planning progress.

5.5 Recommendations for Further Studies

More research on the following topics is suggested by the researcher;

Future studies should focus on more succession strategies which are geared towards identifying potential successors and also identify the best succession practice. This will contribute to the limited body of knowledge on succession planning in Kenya's hospitality sector, potentially informing policy decisions and industry practices thus enhancing the competitiveness and sustainability of hospitality businesses in Kenya and abroad.



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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Questionnaire For General Staff

Succession Planning Strategy on performance of Hospitality Industry in County

Government of Nakuru, Kenya.

Dear respondent

I am currently pursuing a Master's degree in Business Administration with a specialization in Strategic Management at Mount Kenya University. As part of the program requirements, I am undertaking a research project on the aforementioned topic. The information you provide will be treated with strict confidentiality and used solely for academic purposes related to this study. Your participation is greatly valued and appreciated.

Respondent background		
A	Gender	Male Female
B	Age	[1]20 – 29 [2] 30 – 39 [3] 40 – 49 [4] 50 – 59 [5]60–Above
C	Number of years in the organization	[1]Les than2 [2]2 – 5 [3]5-10 [4]10 and above
D	Highest Level of Education	Certificate Diploma Degree Masters PHD Others(Specify).....
E	Preferred succession practice	Promotion from within [Outsourcing Advertisements

Section B: Success on planning Strategies

Indicate with a tick (√) your positions on the following statements where 5=strongly Agree, 4=Agree, 3=Undecided, 2=Disagree and 1=strongly disagree

	Statements	5	4	3	2	1
1	In my organization, career paths are clearly defined through job hierarchies, and progression typically follows a linear, upward trajectory.					
3	The organization takes full responsibility for managing succession planning and employee development.					
4	Scheduled training sessions and job rotation programs serve as the primary tools for executing succession planning.					
5	Succession planning involves mapping a professional path within the organization that leads to promotions or increased responsibilities as one gains expertise.					
	I actively pursue job assignments that offer opportunities to acquire new knowledge and skills.					
6	I am supported in working beyond the boundaries of my department and engaging with colleagues across various departments.					
7	The organization provides opportunities for me to collaborate with individuals from different organizations.					
8	I feel motivated and invigorated when faced with new tasks or unfamiliar work environments.					
9	My supervisor and I collaboratively evaluate my current skillset and competencies in relation to my job requirements.					
	Together with my supervisor, I identify my strengths and areas for improvement, along with suitable development opportunities to support my career growth.					
10	The Individual Development Plan we create aligns with the organization's mission and goals, and is informed by our assessments.					
11	We conduct an annual review of the Individual Development Plan and regularly check on my progress toward achieving career objectives.					
12	The organization integrates its mission and strategic goals with individual career aspirations to promote both internal and external career development.					
13	It transparently shares its development strategies, outlines future career paths, and specifies the competencies needed for critical roles.					
14	In my organization, career progression is structured through defined job hierarchies, typically following a straightforward, upward path.					
15	The organization assumes full accountability for succession planning and supporting employee development.					
16	I receive consistent support from my organization to pursue career development through skill acquisition, with training requests approved—even when not directly tied to my current role.					
	I am confident in my ability to learn new skills and acquire					

	knowledge that aligns with my career goals.					
17	I believe I can enhance and develop career-related skills, even if they weren't addressed in previous development activities.					
18	To better position myself for succession opportunities, I actively seek feedback on my personal and technical skills from colleagues and managers, and I am open to coaching.					
19	My involvement in various development programs in the past strengthens my belief in my ability to continue developing professionally.					
20	Observing peers succeed in tasks similar to mine positively influences my own confidence in skill development.					
21	I regularly set ambitious career goals, employ strategic planning, and exert effort to achieve them.					
22	The organization collaborates with employees to evaluate training needs and integrates these needs into succession planning efforts.					
	Equal access to training opportunities is promoted, ensuring implementation of training plans related to succession planning.					
24	My supervisor and I jointly create and regularly update my development plan, using performance evaluations as a guide.					
25	I participate in training based on the needs identified in my personal development plan.					
26	The organization provides training sessions focused on succession planning and other career-relevant topics.					
27	It offers developmental programs that go beyond immediate job requirements, focusing on long-term strategic growth.					
28	I have previously attended workshops on succession planning, creating development plans, and similar career-building topics.					
29	My organization implements structured job rotation as part of its succession planning initiatives.					
30	Training programs are assessed based on their effectiveness and contribution to succession planning.					
31	I choose training and development opportunities that align with succession planning goals.					
32	I identify my learning needs and goals, select appropriate learning methods, and participate in programs that enhance my succession planning prospects.					
33	My performance is evaluated annually by my direct supervisor along with input from top management.					
34	Post-evaluation, I receive constructive feedback from my supervisor, which helps identify performance gaps and their root causes.					
	Evaluation outcomes guide the identification of training needs and influence the updates made to my development plan.					
35	Any misalignment with succession planning objectives revealed during performance reviews prompts revisions in my development plan.					
36	My performance appraisal results influence key outcomes such as					

	annual pay raises, promotions, and succession planning decisions.					
37						
38	In my organization, career progression is structured through defined job hierarchies, typically following a straightforward, upward path.					
39	The organization assumes full accountability for succession planning and supporting employee development.					

Section C: Succession Planning and Organization Performance

Indicate with a tick(✓) your positions on the following statements where 5=Strongly Agree, 4=Agree, 3=Undecided, 2=Disagree And 1=Strongly Disagree

	Statement	5	4	3	2	1
21.	Our organization is progressing effectively toward meeting its strategic goals.					
22	The organization consistently meets its succession planning objectives.					
23	We make optimal use of human resources to achieve effective succession planning outcomes.					
24	Succession planning initiatives are always implemented within appropriate timelines.					
25	The organization efficiently allocates financial resources to support successful succession planning.					
26	The employee performance appraisal system in our organization supports succession planning efforts.					
26	Career development initiatives within the organization are aligned with and support succession planning.					
26	Human resource planning in our organization is structured to facilitate effective succession planning.					

The end

Thank you for taking Part In this Study

Appendix II: MKU Authorization Letter



DIRECTORATE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

MBA/42192/2016

28th October, 2024

National Commission for Science Technology & Innovation (NACOSTI)
Off Waiyaki Way, Upper Kabete,
P.O Box 30623- 00100
NAIROBI, KENYA

Dear Sir/Madam,

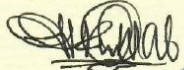
RE: GACHIE PETER WANJOHI - REGISTRATION NO. MBA/42192/2016

The purpose of this letter is to introduce the above named student who is pursuing **Master of Business Administration** in the department of **Accounting and Finance** in the school of **Business and Economics**.

The title of the research is "**Analysis of Succession Planning Strategy on Performance of Hospitality Industry in County Government of Nakuru, Kenya.**" It has been cleared by the University's Ethics Review Committee (Certificate attached) and now has to proceed to the field to collect data between **November, 2024 and January, 2025**.

Any assistance accorded to the student will be highly appreciated.

Thank you.

For 
Dr. Samuel M. Karanga, Ph.D.
Director, Graduate Studies
Enc.

Mount Kenya University
011-254-342-01000, THIKA
Office of the Director
Graduate Studies

Appendix III: ERC Authorization Letter



REF: MKU/ISERC/4525
TO: GACHIE PETER WANJOHI

Date: 28 October 2024

REG: MBA/42192/2016

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: ANALYSIS OF SUCCESSION PLANNING STRATEGY ON PERFORMANCE OF HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY IN COUNTY GOVERNEMENT OF NAKURU, KENYA

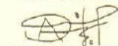
This is to inform you that **Mount Kenya University** has reviewed and approved your above research proposal. Your application approval number is **3247**. The approval period is **28/10/2024 - 27/10/2025**.

This approval is subject to compliance with the following requirements:

- i. Only approved documents including informed consents, study instruments, MTA will be used
- ii. All changes including amendments, deviations and violations are submitted for review and approval by **Mount Kenya University**
- iii. Death and life-threatening problems and serious adverse events or unexpected adverse events whether related or unrelated to the study must be reported to **Mount Kenya University** within 72 hours of notification
- iv. Any changes, anticipated or otherwise that may increase the risks or affect the safety or welfare of study participants and others or affect the integrity of the research must be reported to **Mount Kenya University** within 72 hours
- v. Clearance for export of biological specimens must be obtained from relevant institutions
- vi. Submission of a request for renewal of approval at least 60 days prior to expiry of the approval period. Attach a comprehensive progress report to support the renewal
- vii. Submission of an executive summary report within 90 days upon completion of the study to **Mount Kenya University**

Prior to commencing your study, you will be expected to obtain a research license from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) (<https://research-portal.nacosti.go.ke>) and also obtain other clearances needed.






Yours sincerely,



Dr. Alfred Owino, PhD
Chairman, Mount Kenya University ISERC





Appendix IV: NACOSTI Research Permit

 <p>REPUBLIC OF KENYA</p>	 <p>NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION</p>
Ref No: 766016	Date of Issue: 08/November/2024
RESEARCH LICENSE	
	
<p>This is to Certify that Mr. Peter-Wanjohi Gachie of Mount Kenya University, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Nakuru on the topic: SUCCESSION PLANNING STRATEGY ON PERFORMANCE OF HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY IN COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF NAKURU, KENYA for the period ending : 08/November/2025.</p>	
License No: NACOSTI/P/24/41962	
766016	
Applicant Identification Number	Director General
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION	
Verification QR Code	
	
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See overleaf for conditions	

PLAGIARISM REPORT

GACHIE PETER WANJOHI

**SUCCESSION PLANNING STRATEGY ON PERFORMANCE OF
HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY IN NAKURU COUNTY, KENYA**

 MBA 2025
 MASTERS
 Mount Kenya University

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