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Original Article

### A Mixed Methods Analysis of the Moderating Role of Organisational Culture in the Relationship between Succession Planning Practices and Hotel Survivability

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#### Keywords:

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Succession planning is vital for hotel survivability, yet its effectiveness may depend on organisational culture. This study examined how organisational culture moderates the relationship between succession planning practices and hotel survivability in Western Uganda. A convergent mixed methods design was used, combining quantitative data from 200 functional-level hotel managers analysed via Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with qualitative insights from 10 in-depth interviews with upper managers. Moderation analysis showed that formal, rigid cultures significantly weakened the positive effect of succession planning on survivability ( $\beta = -0.144$ ,  $t = 2.757$ ,  $p = 0.006$ ,  $f^2 = 0.034$ ,  $VIF = 1.141$ ). The 95% BCa confidence interval ( $-0.249$  to  $-0.043$ ) confirmed this interaction. The model explained 35.8% of the variance in survivability ( $R^2 = 0.358$ ,  $Q^2 = 0.331$ ) with an acceptable fit (SRMR = 0.139, RMSE = 0.831, MAE = 0.689). Qualitative findings revealed that norms emphasising career development, leadership qualities, internal growth, and performance expectations can either constrain or strengthen employee readiness and motivation, shaping succession planning effectiveness. The study underscores the need for adaptive, inclusive, and development-oriented cultures to translate leadership development and internal promotion into sustainable outcomes. This research contributes new evidence on the cultural dynamics of succession planning in emerging economies and recommends aligning planning with cultural transformation to ensure leadership continuity and resilience.

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## INTRODUCTION

Succession planning has emerged as a critical strategy for sustaining organisational performance, ensuring leadership continuity and, consequently, survivability, particularly in sectors that are highly reliant on human capital, such as the hospitality industry. In hotels, the departure of experienced leaders can disrupt service delivery, weaken internal systems, and compromise guest satisfaction (Han, 2022). Succession planning enables organisations to proactively identify and prepare individuals to fill key leadership roles, thereby securing their future (Rothwell, 2010).

In the context of Sub-Saharan Africa and Uganda in particular, many hotels face challenges related to leadership continuity due to informal management structures, limited internal training, and cultural biases in promotion practices. Although formal succession planning is widely recognised as essential, its adoption in the hotel industry remains disappointingly low, limiting its potential to bolster long-term survivability. Organizational culture defined as the shared assumptions, values, and beliefs that shape how people make decisions and perform roles (Hattangadi, 2020; Schein & Schein, 2016), and which is reflected in how managers lead and how daily work routines are carried out (Bwonya *et al.*, 2020; Gilstrap & Hart, 2020), may be the missing link that influences whether succession planning succeeds or fails. For instance,

Umesi (2022) highlights the necessity for hotels to implement structured succession planning to enhance service quality, leadership continuity, and overall organisational resilience, yet little is known about how organisational culture actually moderates the link between succession planning and hotel survivability in Uganda's diverse hospitality sector. Understanding this dynamic is crucial for designing succession strategies that are both culturally responsive and operationally effective.

## Statement of the Problem

Despite rising recognition of succession planning's role in organisational survivability, many Ugandan businesses, including town hotels, remain hesitant to implement formal succession practices (Waako & Korir, 2024; PwC, 2021; Kakuru, 2017). These practices, such as mentorship, internal promotion, and skills development, remain underexplored, especially in the context of hotel settings where resources and strategic planning capacity may be limited. The lack of clarity on how such practices function and how cultural and organisational dynamics influence them presents a gap in both theory and practice. This study, therefore, seeks to investigate the succession planning practices, rather than formal plans, that contribute to leadership continuity and the survivability of hotels in Western Uganda.

## Purpose of the Study

This study investigates the moderating role of organisational culture on succession planning practices and hotel survivability in Western Ugandan hotels, aiming to improve leadership continuity and survivability.

## Objectives of the Study

- To examine how organisational culture moderates the relationship between succession planning and hotel survivability.
- To explore qualitative perceptions of how organisational culture influences the effectiveness of succession planning.
- To recommend culturally aligned strategies for enhancing succession planning outcomes in town hotels in Western Uganda.

## Research Hypothesis

The following hypotheses were tested

H0: Organisational culture does not moderate the relationship between succession planning practices and hotel survivability.

## Research Question

- How does organisational culture moderate the relationship between succession planning practices and the survivability of town hotels in Western Uganda?
- In what ways does organisational culture shape the effectiveness of succession planning in town hotels in Western Uganda?
- What culturally aligned strategies can strengthen the effectiveness of succession planning in enhancing the survivability of town hotels in Western Uganda?

## Significance of the Study

This study addresses a gap in hospitality literature by testing succession planning practices, skill development, mentorship, and internal promotion,

highlighting culture's moderating role, and providing strategies for hotel managers and policymakers.

## Scope of the Study

This study was conducted in town hotels in Fort Portal Tourism city, Mbarara city, Hoima city, and Kabale town of the Western region of Uganda, focusing on succession planning practices, specifically skill development, mentorship, and internal promotion, as exogenous variables. Organisational culture was examined as a moderator between succession planning practices and hotel survivability. Guided by Dynamic Capability Theory, Tournament Theory, and the Integrated Succession-Leadership Development Model, the research provided a multidimensional view of leadership continuity in hospitality. Conducted between 2024 and 2025, it used a mixed-methods design to combine statistical analysis with interpretive insights.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

This section explores succession planning practices in hospitality, their significance, and their role in leadership continuity, while also examining organisational culture's influence on succession planning and hotel survivability.

### Succession Planning in the Hospitality Sector

Succession planning is the deliberate and strategic process of identifying, developing, and preparing individuals to assume key leadership roles when vacancies occur (Rothwell, 2010). Given the dynamic and service-oriented character of the hospitality sector, where leadership change can disrupt operations and impact service quality, succession planning is essential (Han, 2022; Obiwuru, 2016). Studies show that succession planning improves organisational continuity, preserves institutional memory, and builds a pipeline of capable leaders (Umesi, 2022; Rothwell *et al.*, 2015). However, in many developing contexts, succession practices remain informal and

reactive (Waako & Korir, 2024; PwC, 2021), which undermines survivability. Effective succession planning in hospitality ensures continuity in service delivery, maintains operational stability, and fosters strategic agility (Han, 2022; Obiwuru, 2016).

Succession planning practices in this study are operationalised through key activities: skills development, mentorship, and internal promotion. Skills development equips high-potential staff with both technical competencies and soft skills such as communication and conflict resolution necessary for future leadership roles (Prabhu *et al.*, 2024). Mentorship plays a critical role in transferring tacit knowledge, nurturing leadership behaviours, and socialising junior staff into organisational values and standards (Edeh *et al.*, 2024). Mentorship in hospitality fosters confident leaders, while internal promotion boosts motivation, retention, and leadership continuity by promoting employees familiar with the hotel's systems, culture, and clientele (Bozer *et al.*, 2015). However, these practices are often underfunded, unstructured, or unevenly applied in developing contexts, limiting their effectiveness (Obiwuru, 2016). Embedding these practices within a formal succession framework is essential for building resilient leadership pipelines.

### Conceptualizing and Classifying Organizational Culture

Organisational culture is the internal structure of an organisation, shaped by shared beliefs, values, and assumptions, influencing decision-making, norms, and behaviours (Tadesse Bogale & Debela, 2024; Schein, 2004; Gutterman, 2023), and guiding organisational work and adaptation over time (Dettling, 2023). In hospitality, hierarchical, control-oriented cultures significantly impact leadership grooming and succession, with organisational culture ranging from tight to loose, promoting autonomy and flexibility (Tadesse Bogale & Debela, 2024). Organisations may shift cultural tightness in response to changing

objectives, indicating that no single cultural style is universally optimal.

However, rigid bureaucratic cultures in hierarchical contexts may encourage efficiency but may impede innovation and responsiveness (Basir *et al.*, 2011; Mai, 2016; Bogale & Debela, 2024). Meanwhile, hierarchical cultures reward conformity and tenure over initiative, potentially limiting talent development and leadership renewal. Raub (2008) found in Swiss hotels that "helping" behaviours were common, but "voice" behaviours, such as offering suggestions, were less frequent and diminished under centralised, structured organisations.

The Competing Values Framework (Cameron *et al.*, 2022; Cameron & Quinn, 2011) identifies four culture types: hierarchy (control and stability), market (results-oriented), clan (collaboration), and adhocracy (innovation and adaptability). Meta-analyses reveal that clan and adhocracy cultures improve employee attitudes and organisational outcomes, while hierarchical cultures may struggle with adaptability and customer responsiveness (Bogale & Debela, 2024).

Aligning organisational culture with strategic and environmental demands is crucial for performance, morale, and innovation. Misalignment can lead to resistance and reduced effectiveness.

### Hotel Survivability

Hotel survivability refers to a hotel's ability to endure market volatility, operational risks, and external shocks, encompassing operational continuity, financial resilience, adaptability, and leadership stability (El Korch, 2022; Melián-Alzola *et al.*, 2020). Azzaz & Elshaer (2024) and Seoki Lee *et al.* (2024) emphasise leadership resilience and behaviours as critical components of survivability. Sahoo (2025) argued that resilience requires integrating financial stability, operational adaptability, and digital transformation strategies, reflecting a structural and strategic approach rather than reactive management.

Mpobusingye (2023) identified cohesion, robust governance, and proactive succession planning as pillars for business resilience. Melián-Alzola *et al.* (2020) highlighted strategic clarity and openness to change as crucial for adaptability and sustained performance. El-Said (2024) documented crisis-driven innovation in global hotel chains during the pandemic, showing how innovation and stakeholder strategies supported recovery and transformation.

Espino-Rodríguez and Berdejo-Fariña (2023) found that overcoming resistance and leveraging customer feedback fostered gastronomic innovation in Spanish hotels, linking service innovation to financial and non-financial performance. Noel (2022) showed that hotels with simpler layouts and fewer group services adapted better to pandemic restrictions, underscoring operational flexibility's role in crisis management.

Satpathy *et al.* (2025) highlighted digital transformation, financing access, and circular economy practices as key MSME resilience factors post-COVID-19, recommending digital literacy and supportive policies for stability. Edeh *et al.* (2024) and Nikolskaya *et al.* (2021) stressed organisational learning as vital for anticipating crises in emerging markets. Dryglas *et al.* (2024) suggested that high hotel growth is facilitated by employee, leadership, and corporate social responsibility resilience, while low growth can be mitigated by strategically combining these factors. Organizational Culture as a Moderating Variable

Organisational culture critically influences the effectiveness of succession planning. Mehrtak *et al.* (2017) found in Iran's Ministry of Health that factors such as job security, trust, and politicisation affect succession at the director, personnel, and system levels, with poor culture hindering institutionalisation. Okoh *et al.* (2021) demonstrated in Nigerian family-run schools that structured succession planning moderated inherited leadership norms, supporting survival through competence-based successor selection. Wandia (2024) showed that talent retention positively impacted

performance in Kenyan family retail businesses, underscoring internal human capital's value.

However, existing research rarely focuses on hotels in African emerging markets or integrates culture with succession practices (skills development, mentorship, internal promotion) in a holistic model. This study fills this gap by investigating Ugandan town hotels, examining how organisational culture interacts with succession planning to influence survivability under resource constraints. The study extends theory and offers actionable strategies for managers and policymakers in the region.

### Theoretical Underpinning

This study draws on Teece's (2007) framework of dynamic capabilities, which defines them as a firm's ability to integrate, build, and reconfigure internal competencies to address rapidly changing environments. Since its inception as a conceptual framework focused on resource reconfiguration, the theory has matured into a comprehensive, systems-based strategic approach that integrates leadership, learning, routines, ecosystem orchestration, and digital transformation.

Consistent with this framework, succession planning is interpreted as a dynamic process embedded within the organisation's broader capacity to sense, adapt, and transform. Teece (2018) further conceptualised dynamic capabilities as a practical management function, emphasising the role of leadership in coordinating resources, strategy, practices, and structures to form a cohesive organisational system capable of systemic change.

Within the context of this study's hotel setting, *sensing* refers to the ability to identify emerging leadership gaps, recognise staff potential, and respond to evolving labour market conditions. *Transforming* entails reconfiguring cultural norms, leadership models, and succession management processes to align with future leadership needs, thereby ensuring continuity and competitive resilience.



Guided by the Integrated Succession Planning and Leadership Development Model (Groves, 2007), succession planning practices manifested through skill development, mentorship, and internal promotion are conceptualised as dynamic capabilities. These practices enable hotels to continually renew their leadership capacity, aligning collective knowledge, skills, abilities, health, and other personal qualities of staff with evolving strategic needs while addressing staff turnover. Embedded in daily operations, they are vital for identifying, preparing, and transitioning future leaders from within the organisation.

## METHODOLOGY

This study employed a convergent concurrent mixed methods design to address the research questions and hypotheses. This approach allowed the quantitative data to reveal the strength and direction of relationships, while the qualitative data provided deeper explanations and insights behind the quantitative results (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2015).

### Population and Sample

The study population comprised 40 town hotels in Western Uganda, selected from the cities of Mbarara, Fort Portal, Hoima, and Kabale. This region was chosen for its diverse hotel industry, encompassing luxury, mid-range, and budget establishments, many of which are locally owned and characterised by informal governance, succession practices (Waako & Korir, 2024; PwC, 2021, 2023; Kakuru, 2017), and an underdeveloped organisational culture (Aketch *et al.*, 2017). These conditions often result in leadership vacuums and operational disruptions following leadership exits.

The quantitative study focused on hotel functional managers, with a sample size of 200. The qualitative strand included 10 participants, including general managers and hotel owners, a sample size consistent with methodological recommendations (Hennink & Kaiser, 2022; Polit & Beck, 2013).

## Research Instruments and Constructs

Measurement scales were adapted from validated sources aligned with the study constructs. A five-point Likert-type scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) was used in the questionnaire, which comprised six sections. The first section collected demographic and hotel-specific data, while the second section assessed succession planning practices, organisational culture, and hotel survivability.

Specifically, sensing items were drawn from Nieves & Haller (2014), and transformation (reconfiguration) items from Fainshmidt & Frazier (2017) and Wilden *et al.* (2013), ensuring comprehensive coverage of dynamic capabilities. Succession planning was operationalised through skill development (Akani, 2015; Pila *et al.*, 2016), mentorship (Tsoulouhas *et al.*, 2007; Groves, 2007), and internal promotion (DeVaro & Morita, 2013; Sørensen, 2017; DeVaro & Morita, 2019). Organisational culture was measured using bureaucratic, supportive, and innovative culture scales adapted from Wallach (1983). Employing these established scales strengthened construct validity and aligned measurement with the theoretical framework.

### Data Collection Procedures

Quantitative data were collected through self-administered questionnaires distributed to executive-level managers, assistant managers, and functional managers. A total of 240 questionnaires were distributed to accommodate potential non-response (Glenn, 1992), yielding 200 valid responses included in the analysis.

Qualitative data were gathered via semi-structured interviews with the 10 purposively selected participants. The interview guide focused on exploring how organisational culture influences the relationship between succession planning practices and hotel survivability. Probing and follow-up questions enabled the collection of rich, nuanced data, with flexibility to explore emergent themes.

### Quantitative Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analysed using SPSS version 27 and SmartPLS version 4. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was selected for its suitability in estimating complex models, including moderation effects. Measurement model assessment included indicator reliability, internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability), convergent validity (average variance extracted), and discriminant validity (HTMT criterion). Structural model evaluation tested hypothesised relationships and moderation effects, following guidelines by Hair *et al.* (2021).

### Qualitative Data Analysis

Interviews were transcribed verbatim and analysed thematically following established qualitative protocols (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The transcripts were repeatedly read to gain familiarity, then coded to identify recurring patterns related to succession planning, cultural values, and survivability. Codes were grouped into themes such as *Leadership Quality*, encompassing attributes like ethical conduct, communication, and empathy essential to hotel survivability. Another theme, *Career Development*, captured organisational practices promoting internal promotions and professional growth aligned with cultural values.

Themes were refined through iterative review to ensure coherence and relevance to research questions. Representative quotes were selected and organised in a thematic table to support findings and enhance credibility. Transparency in coding and theme development enhanced dependability.

Member checking with participants, peer debriefing by an experienced qualitative researcher, reflexive journaling, triangulation across methods, and external expert review contributed to credibility, confirmability, and transferability of findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; McLeod, 2024; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

### RESULTS

This section presents findings from both the quantitative and qualitative strands of the study, integrated to address the research objectives comprehensively. Quantitative results, derived from Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), provide statistical evidence on the moderating effect of organisational culture in the relationship between succession planning practices and hotel survivability. Qualitative insights, generated through thematic analysis of interview data, complement and deepen the interpretation of these statistical patterns. The mixed methods approach offers depth in understanding the influence of organisational culture in the succession planning practices–hotel survivability link.

#### Response Rate

Out of the 240 questionnaires distributed to hotel leaders, a total of 200 were completed and returned, yielding a response rate of 83.3%. This high response rate enhances the reliability and generalizability of the study findings within the sampled hotel context.

#### Background Characteristics (Demographics)

The study sampled 200 hotel employees, with a fairly balanced gender distribution (54% male, 46% female). The majority were aged between 25 and 35 years (51.5%), followed by those 25 years and below (23.5%). Most respondents were married (54%), while singles comprised 44.5%. Regarding work experience, 30.5% had served between 7–10 years, with 27% having less than 3 years of service. In terms of education, nearly half held diplomas (47%), followed by bachelor's degree holders (30%). Roles varied, with heads of department being the largest group (36%), followed by upper managers and supervisors (15.5% each). A detailed table with background characteristics of respondents is provided in Appendix A.

### Pre-Analysis Procedures

Before conducting the measurement and structural model assessments using PLS-SEM, preliminary data screening was carried out to ensure the dataset was suitable for analysis. This included examining missing values, identifying outliers, and checking for issues related to data distribution, such as skewness and kurtosis, given the non-parametric nature of PLS-SEM. Multicollinearity among indicators was also assessed to confirm that the constructs were distinct. Descriptive statistics were computed to summarise respondents' demographic characteristics and provide an initial overview of the data set.

### Descriptive Statistics and Data Screening

All required fields were checked for completeness to reduce the risk of bias from missing data, thereby ensuring a fully usable dataset and enhancing validity and reliability (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Boxplots and descriptive statistics assessed outliers across the main constructs. Following initial non-normality, Log10 transformations were applied to improve data distribution. Most constructs showed symmetric distributions with a few mild outliers, particularly in skill development, mentorship, internal promotion, succession planning, and

survivability. Notably, cases 28, 111, and 200 appeared as mild outliers but remained within acceptable bounds. As PLS-SEM is robust to minor data irregularities (Hair *et al.*, 2021; Kock, 2015), all outliers were retained for analysis without modification.

Descriptive statistics for succession planning practices (skill development, mentorship, career development, internal promotion), organisational culture, and hotel survivability using a 5-point Likert scale are shown in Table 1. Mean scores ranged from 3.78 to 4.08, indicating generally high agreement across constructs. Organisational culture had the highest mean ( $M = 4.08$ ,  $SD = 0.54$ ), followed by mentorship ( $M = 3.89$ ,  $SD = 0.54$ ) and hotel survivability ( $M = 3.87$ ,  $SD = 0.50$ ). Standard deviations (0.49–0.56) indicated moderate variability, with the least variation in succession planning practices.

Skewness values were all negative (−0.615 to −0.811), suggesting a tendency toward higher ratings, while kurtosis values (0.046 to 1.838) indicated slightly peaked but approximately normal distributions. The Shapiro-Wilk test after log<sub>10</sub> transformation confirmed normality assumptions (all  $p > 0.05$ ), supporting suitability for PLS-SEM analysis.

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Study Constructs**

Construct	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	Shapiro-Wilk p-value
Succession Planning	3.78	0.56	-0.615	0.046	0.129
Skill Development	—	—	—	—	0.274
Mentorship Career Development	3.89	0.54	-0.730	0.782	0.091
Internal Promotion	—	—	—	—	0.632
Organizational Culture	4.08	0.54	-0.811	1.838	0.115
Survivability of Hotels	3.87	0.50	-0.728	1.030	0.606

**Note:** Skill Development and Internal Promotion values are aggregated under Succession Planning

### Measurement Model Assessment

Before testing structural relationships, the reliability and validity of the measurement model were evaluated to ensure accurate and consistent construct measurement.

### Reliability and Convergent Validity

Cronbach's alpha values ranged from 0.771 to 0.795, exceeding the acceptable threshold of 0.70 (George & Mallery, 2003). Composite reliability ranged from 0.734 to 0.800, and Average Variance



Extracted (AVE) values ranged from 0.516 to 0.570, confirming convergent validity (Ahmad, 2016; Jain & Chetty, 2021). Results are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Reliability and Convergent Validity of Constructs**

Construct	Cronbach $\alpha$	Composite Reliability	AVE
Skills Development	0.793	0.734	0.516
Mentorship Career Development	0.776	0.782	0.545
Internal Promotion	0.795	0.800	0.570
Organizational Culture	0.789	0.790	0.559
Survivability of Hotels	0.771	0.771	0.533

### **Indicator Reliability**

Items with loadings below 0.50 were removed to improve model fit. The revised model retained three

indicators per construct, each loading  $\geq 0.60$  (preferred  $\geq 0.70$ ). Table 3 shows the outer loadings of retained indicators.

**Table 3: Outer Loadings of Retained Indicators**

Construct	Code	Indicator Description	Loading
Skills Development	SPSDT5	Staff meetings organised	0.718
	SPSDT6	Tasks delegated to juniors	0.813
	SPSDT7	Off-site training offered	0.708
Mentorship	SPMEN2	Network with hotel leaders	0.812
	SPMEN3	Maintain professional relationships	0.732
	SPMEN5	Connections for financial support	0.664
Internal Promotion	SPIPP1	Promotion linked to salary	0.710
	SPIPP2	Complimentary meals for managers	0.786
	SPIPP3	Discounted hotel services	0.759
Organizational Culture	OCBC1	SOPs emphasized	0.680
	OCBC2	Clear authority chain	0.776
	OCBC3	Task prioritization	0.700
Survivability	SSES1	Scan for opportunities	0.754
	STRF1	Update goal strategies	0.700
	STRF3	Revise task execution	0.735

**Note:** Values  $\geq 0.70$  preferred for reliability

### **Discriminant Validity**

Discriminant validity was confirmed using the Fornell–Larcker criterion and the Heterotrait-

Monotrait (HTMT) ratio, with all inter-construct correlations below 0.90. See Table 4.

**Table 4: Discriminant Validity (Fornell-Larcker Criterion & HTMT Ratios)**

Constructs	1	2	3	4	5
1. Skill Development	.748	.563	.395	.393	.525
2. Mentorship Career Development	.533	.739	.574	.362	.513
3. Internal Promotion HR Planning	.437	.590	.718	.344	.369
4. Organisational Culture	.383	.363	.327	.755	.666
5. Survivability of Hotels	.510	.505	.359	.650	.730

**Note:** Values on the lower diagonal are Fornell-Larcker criterion; upper diagonal values are HTMT ratios

### Baseline Measurement Model Fit

The refined measurement model demonstrated excellent fit (Table 5):

**Table 5: Model Fit Statistics**

Fit Index	Value	Criterion	Interpretation
CMIN/DF	1.283	< 3	Excellent fit
RMSEA	0.038	< 0.05	Close model fit
CFI	0.979	> 0.90	Excellent fit
TLI	0.973	> 0.90	Excellent fit
GFI	0.936	> 0.90	Good fit
SRMR	0.050	< 0.08	Acceptable fit

Though  $\chi^2$  was marginally significant ( $p = 0.045$ ), this is acceptable given the large sample size.

### Baseline Structural Model Results

The structural model explained 53.5% of the variance in hotel survivability ( $R^2 = 0.535$ ), indicating strong explanatory power. Organisational culture alone accounted for 19.2% of variation in survivability ( $R^2 = 0.192$ ), indicating a moderate contribution according to Cohen (1988).

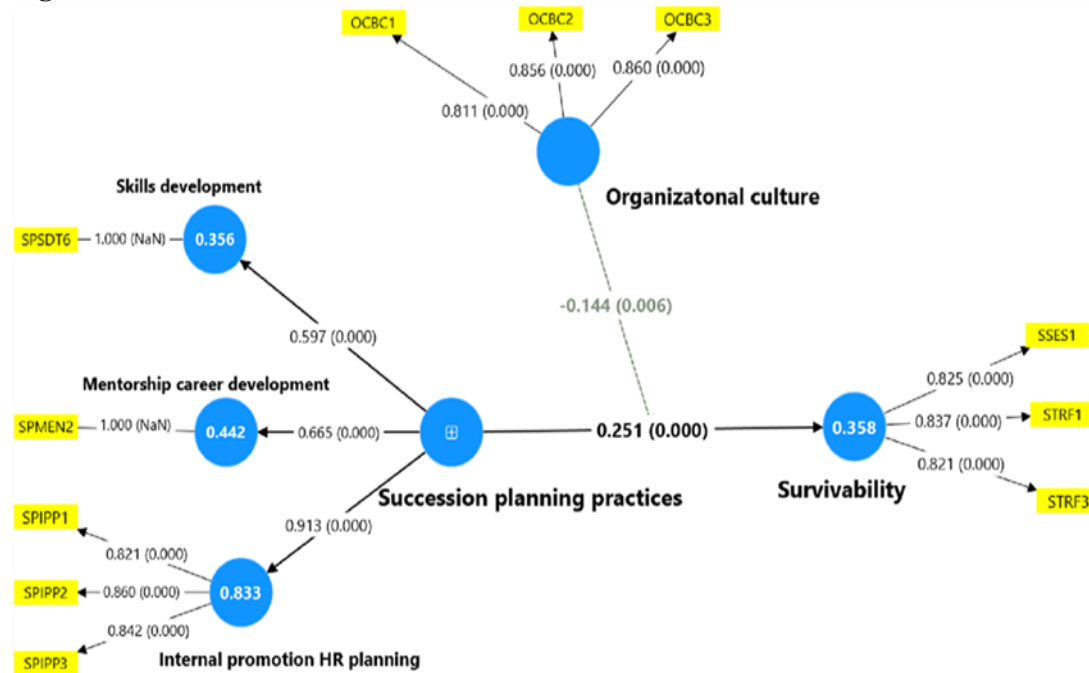
### Moderation Analysis

Moderation analysis examined whether organisational culture influences the strength or direction of the succession planning–survivability

relationship. Collinearity diagnostics showed acceptable levels ( $VIF = 1.141$ ), ruling out multicollinearity concerns.

The interaction term (succession planning  $\times$  organisational culture) yielded a significant and negative effect ( $\beta = -0.144$ ,  $p = 0.006$ ; 95% BCa CI =  $[-0.249, -0.043]$ ), with a small effect size ( $f^2 = 0.034$ ). This indicates that strong organisational cultures may dampen the positive influence of succession planning on survivability.

The moderation model is illustrated in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: Moderation Model****Predictive Validity and Model Performance**

The structural model's predictive validity was assessed using cross-validated redundancy values and fit indices like SRMR and NFI to evaluate its

predictive capability for endogenous constructs. The table presents the model's predictive relevance ( $Q^2$  values) and fit indices (e.g., SRMR, NFI), providing evidence of its predictive accuracy and performance.

**Table 6: Predictive Validity and Model Performance**

Metric	Value	Interpretation
$f^2$	0.034	Small effect
$R^2$	0.358	Moderate explanatory power
Adjusted $R^2$	0.348	Consistent with $R^2$
$Q^2_{\text{predict}}$	<b>0.331</b>	<b>Predictive relevance</b>
SRMR	0.139	Higher than ideal but tolerable given complexity
RMSE	0.831	Acceptable predictive error
MAE	0.689	Acceptable predictive error

While the SRMR for the moderation model was elevated (0.139), other indices supported model relevance:  $R^2 = 0.358$ ; Adjusted  $R^2 = 0.348$ ;  $Q^2_{\text{predict}} = 0.331$ . Henseler et al. (2014) argued that SRMR thresholds should be interpreted flexibly in complex PLS models.

**Hypothesis Testing Summary**

A PLS-SEM path analysis was conducted to investigate the moderating effect of organisational

culture on the relationship between succession planning and hotel survivability.

**Table 7: Hypothesis Testing Result**

Pathway	$\beta$	T-Stat	p-value	95% BC CI
Organisational Culture $\times$ Succession Planning $\rightarrow$ Survivability	-0.144	2.757	0.006	[-0.249, -0.043]

The study found a small negative effect of organisational culture on the relationship between succession planning practices and hotel survivability ( $\beta = -0.144$ ,  $t = 2.757$ ,  $p = 0.006$ ), suggesting a possible cultural misfit in the implementation of these practices, potentially hindering strategic continuity efforts.

### Qualitative Insights into the Influence of Organisational Ethos on Succession Planning and Hotel Survivability

The study reveals that organisational culture, particularly career development and leadership qualities, significantly impacts hotel succession planning and survivability, promoting internal growth and ethical leadership.

#### Career Development:

Hotels that prioritise internal advancement improve retention, morale, and succession readiness, as they are seen as practical and culturally valued. Internal advancement was emphasised by one respondent:

*“We prefer having heads of departments advancing from within, because they understand how things operate”* (R2), underscoring the importance of institutional knowledge and cultural fit in succession planning.

Neglecting career growth was viewed as detrimental to both staff and organisational stability. Respondent R3 cautioned,

*“A manager who never considers advancement for employees risks losing talented and motivated staff to competitors.”*

Clear promotion pathways were strongly linked to retention and morale. As R5 observed,

*“Opportunity for advancement boosts employee morale and helps retain high-value talent.”*

R3 further added,

*“Employees are more likely to stay long-term when they perceive a clear pathway.”*

Career development is a strategic cultural pillar that ensures leadership continuity and organisational stability, fostering long-term commitment and adaptability, and better positioning hotels for challenges and transitions.

#### Leadership Qualities

The study emphasised the importance of leadership behaviours and values in fostering a positive organisational culture, including trustworthiness, empathy, adaptability, and strategic vision.

As R1 explained, *“Managers need to be trustworthy, respectful, and capable of managing diverse teams,”* emphasising that integrity and mutual respect form the foundation of effective leadership culture. R4 emphasised the importance of a broader strategic outlook: *“An ideal leader in a hotel setting should exhibit empathy, adaptability, and strategic vision.”* Leaders with these traits can emotionally support their teams, navigate change, and align operations with evolving business needs, which are crucial for succession and survivability. Innovation and psychological safety also emerged as critical leadership traits contributing to a resilient culture.

R7 shared,

*“When leaders ensure that employees feel safe to express their ideas and be creative, it fosters innovation, allowing brainstorming and problem-solving to flourish.”*

This kind of open environment enables creativity and adaptive thinking, positioning the hotel to thrive even amid uncertainty. Leaders who encourage such

cultures not only prepare successors effectively but also ensure the organisation remains innovative and future-ready.

**Table 8: Integration of Results**

	Illustrative Quote(s)	Insight	Integration status
<b>Quantitative Findings</b>			
Significant positive effect on hotel survivability ( $\beta = 1.250, p = .004$ ).		Confirms culture as central to survivability	
<b>Theme Career Development:</b>	The hotel's long-term survival is threatened by "inadequate employee readiness and non-commitment to continuous learning systems, progression, growth support, and non-inclusive leadership."	<i>“Opportunity for advancement boosts morale and helps retain high-value talent.”</i>	Adds operational depth to the culture concept
<b>Leadership Qualities:</b>	Flexibility, trustworthiness, respect, integrity, and team management skills are crucial for smooth leadership transitions and hotel survivability.	<i>“An ideal leader in a hotel setting should exhibit empathy, adaptability, and strategic vision.”</i>	Highlights behaviours and values as essential in shaping a positive organisational culture that nurtures future leaders and supports continuity
			Convergence /Extension

## DISCUSSION

The quantitative results demonstrated that organisational culture negatively moderates the relationship between succession planning and hotel survivability. The qualitative findings deepened this understanding by revealing that Career development and leadership qualities are interlinked cultural drivers that, when aligned, can significantly strengthen succession planning efforts.

The finding points to a complex interplay where entrenched cultural norms may undermine leadership development efforts (Arun *et al.*, 2020). Although succession planning typically enhances survivability by promoting leadership continuity

(Rothwell, 2010), its effectiveness depends heavily on supportive cultural environments that value flexibility, inclusion, and ongoing learning (Ding & Hong, 2025). In rigid or hierarchical cultures, such initiatives may be perceived as threats, limiting their effect.

Career development emerged as a critical enabler, with well-established systems for mentoring, internal promotion, and leadership training that contribute significantly to survivability (Soegiarto *et al.*, 2024). This supports Teece's (2018) view that dynamic capabilities such as environmental sensing, resource reconfiguration, and continuous learning are central to survivability. Similarly, the findings by Edeh *et al.* (2024) emphasise that organisational



learning is not merely a support function but a strategic enabler of career development, succession planning, and adaptive culture. In hotels, where service excellence depends on people, a learning-driven culture enhances internal mobility, successor readiness, and agility, which are key pillars for survivability in dynamic hospitality environments.

Leadership qualities like empathy, trustworthiness, and problem-solving must be nurtured and culturally embedded to align succession efforts with strategic goals. Organisational culture deeply influences how leadership qualities affect the link between succession planning and business survivability. Literature supports that cultures emphasising ethical leadership, trust, respect, and integrity enhance the legitimacy of succession decisions and reinforce continuity in leadership transitions (Nwuke *et al.*, 2020). Embedding emotional intelligence, such as empathy and psychological safety, into culture fosters relational trust, which facilitates smooth leadership transitions (Dekom *et al.*, 2024). Cultures that nurture strategic thinking, encouraging visionary and adaptable leaders, align succession with long-term goals, and bolster firm resilience (Dekom *et al.*, 2024).

Similarly, inclusive leadership cultures, which embrace diversity in successor selection, widen the leadership pipeline and enhance organisational trust and survival outcomes (Adadevoh *et al.*, 2024). Cultures promoting empowerment through innovation, collaboration, and inclusive development help prepare future leaders internally, lowering dependency on external hires (Maroga *et al.*, 2024; Adadevoh *et al.*, 2024). While the literature largely affirms the positive role of leadership qualities embedded in culture, some caution that overly rigid cultures may stifle diverse talent and hinder innovation (Nwuke *et al.*, 2020).

## CONCLUSIONS

This study demonstrates that organisational culture plays a critical moderating role in the effectiveness of succession planning within hotels. Specifically,

formal, hierarchical, and rule-bound cultures weaken the positive impact of succession planning on hotel survivability by limiting career development opportunities and promoting narrow leadership qualities. The absence of continuous learning systems, unclear career pathways, and failure to demonstrate key leadership traits such as flexibility, trustworthiness, empathy, and integrity hinder the development of a robust internal leadership pipeline. Consequently, these cultural constraints undermine leadership continuity and threaten the long-term sustainability of hotels in Uganda's hospitality sector.

## Implications

### *For theory:*

This research validates the moderating effect of organisational culture on succession planning outcomes in hospitality settings. It reveals that formal cultural norms can interfere with succession planning, emphasising the importance of recognising and addressing intangible factors for long-term hotel survivability.

### *For Practice:*

Hotel managers must foster a culture that supports career growth and diverse leadership qualities, reforming rigid hierarchies to foster inclusivity, trust, and continuous learning for effective succession planning and competitive market longevity. The study recommends implementation of inclusive career development programs, promoting a broad set of leadership qualities, engaging in organisational culture change programs, connecting emerging leaders with experienced managers, and regularly monitoring and evaluating succession practices to improve effectiveness and hotel survivability, while reducing rigidity and hierarchy.

## Contribution

This study provides new empirical evidence that organisational culture in the Western Uganda hotel

sector can significantly impact the succession planning-survivability relationship, challenging the conventional belief of culture as beneficial.

Additionally, the study emphasises the significance of combining career development, leadership qualities, and cultural alignment in succession planning to create resilient organisations that can adapt to market conditions.

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## APPENDIX

<b>Skills Development Succession Planning Process</b>		SD(1)	D(2)	MA(3)	A(4)	SA(5)
<b>SPSDT5</b>	We organise staff development meetings.					
<b>SPSDT6</b>	We delegate task-related responsibilities to juniors.					
<b>SPSDT7</b>	We offer staff specialised training programs off-premise					
<b><i>Mentorship Career development</i></b>		SD(1)	D(2)	M A(3)	A(4)	SA(5)
<b>SPMEN2</b>	I establish connections with hotel professionals and experienced leaders.					
<b>SPMEN3</b>	I know people who can assist in improving the operations of the hotel.					
<b>SPMEN5</b>	I possess connections that can help secure financial resources.					
<b>Internal Promotion (IP)</b>		SD(1)	D(2)	A(3)	A(4)	SA(5)
<b>Fairness and equity</b>						
<b>SPIPE1</b>	The hotel follows guidelines to promote employees.					
<b>SPIPE2</b>	Hotel employees are given equal opportunities for advancement.					
<b>SPIPE3</b>	Employees are promoted on the basis of seniority.					
<b>Pay</b>						
<b>SPIPP1</b>	Promotion at this hotel comes with better salaries.					
<b>SPIPP2</b>	Managers are eligible for complementary meals.					
<b>SPIPP3</b>	Managers receive discounted rates for hotel services.					

## SECTION C: ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

This section is designed to capture the extent to which each of the items listed is characteristic of your hotel. Please evaluate the statement by ticking in the box the number that best suits your response.

<b>Organisational culture (O)</b>		SD(1)	D(2)	NS(3)	A(4)	SA(5)
<b>(Innovative, Bureaucratic, Supportive)</b>						
<b>Bureaucratic</b>						
<b>OCBC1</b>	This hotel emphasises standard operating procedures.					
<b>OCBC2</b>	This hotel has a chain of command with clear levels of authority.					
<b>OCBC3</b>	Departmental tasks are listed in order of importance.					

## SECTION D: SURVIVABILITY

This section is to assess the Survivability of your hotel. Please evaluate the statement by ticking in the box with the number that best suits your response.

		SD(1)	D(2)	A(3)	A(4)	SA(5)
<b>Sensing (SSES), Transforming (STRF)</b>						



Sensing										
SSES1	We scan the external environment to identify new business opportunities									
Transforming					SD(1)	D(2)	A(3)	A(4)	SA(5)	
STRF1	We renew ways of achieving our goals									
STRF2	We update the steps involved in the execution of tasks.									