

Research Article

A Study on the Impact of Succession Planning on Skill Enhancement in Higher Education Institutions

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of succession planning on skills development in higher education institutions. The primary objective of the study was to examine the effect of succession planning on the career development of teaching and non-teaching staff. The study was descriptive and analytical in nature, and primary and secondary data were used. Primary data was collected from 48 teaching staff and 22 non-teaching staff of 10 higher education institutions of Palghar district using structured questionnaire by adopting convenience sampling method. The data collected were analysed using frequency analysis, percentage analysis, mean and standard deviation. The research findings show that succession planning has a positive impact on professional skills, leadership development, communication skills, confidence, and overall employee performance. The study observed that the staff development and institutional progress in higher education institutions were significantly boosted by powerful succession planning and skill enhancement efforts.

Keywords: Succession Planning, Skill Enhancement, Higher Education Institutions

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INTRODUCTION

Colleges and universities play an important role in society, as they provide people with knowledge, develop their work skills, and help them find jobs. Such institutions demand competent teachers and trained non-teaching staff to uphold high academic standards and to function effectively. Many firms, however, have a difficult time when employees with long tenure retire, transfer or leave. If no properly trained successors existed, leadership failures and operational issues could exist even in the finest of institutions. Therefore, schools and universities should train their students for future jobs and leadership positions.

Succession planning is an important aspect of personnel management, helping organisations to identify and develop the people who can fill key positions in the future. It's a systematic way of preparing people for their roles through training, mentoring and opportunities for professional growth. Succession planning can assist institutions to ensure continuity in leadership and organisational stability. It also allows for building internal talent rather than relying on external hiring.

Succession planning in colleges and universities is very important for the enhancement of professional skills of the academic and non-academic staff. Employees who take part in development programmes learn new knowledge and enhance their decision-making, leadership and communication skills. Opportunities of this sort make the employee strive to improve his performance and to prepare for the more and more important posts in the institution. Succession planning contributes to staff development and institutional performance.

Succession planning enables organizations to build a robust pipeline of skilled and talented people who can take on leadership positions in the future. Investing in staff training creates a culture of learning and professional development in organisations. Dessler (2017) suggests that organisations that systematically train and prepare their personnel are better

positioned to meet future challenges and organisational changes.

Succession planning has more recently become an important strategy for companies to secure their long-term survival. It supports colleges and universities in developing highly trained employees who can effectively perform academic and administrative functions in higher education. Thus, the significance of succession planning in the professional development of employees and the overall progress of higher education institutions must be understood by conducting research on the impact of succession planning on skill development.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. Rothwell (2010) said that succession planning is an important way for businesses to get their employees ready for future leadership roles. In higher education institutions, succession planning helps to identify talented educators and staff, and gives them the opportunity to develop new skills, mentorship and career progression. When organizations invest in the skill development of their employees, the latter improve their job performance and can take on more responsibilities. Succession planning develops employees in leadership, decision-making, and organizational management. Ongoing learning and development programs can help employees improve their job performance and confidence. This is to ensure that there are capable people within the institutions that can take leadership roles when the need arises. Thus, succession planning is important for the improvement of staff' professional competencies and stability of higher education institutions.
2. Garman and Glawe (2004) studied organizational succession planning and defined it as a systematic process of identifying and developing future leaders. Succession planning helps higher education institutions by offering faculty and staff professional development opportunities through advancement opportunities. These opportunities include mentoring, leadership workshops, training programs and professional development initiatives. Such exercises improve the communication, leadership and problem-solving skills of employees. The research found that employees are more motivated if they know there are opportunities for promotion in the company. This leads to greater staff commitment and efficiency in their work. Effective succession planning means organizations have the right people ready to step into key roles of the future.
3. According to Kesler (2002), succession planning is an important component of talent management in an organization. The report stressed that organizations should concentrate on developing the skills of employees to equip them for future leadership roles. Succession planning in higher education institutions encourages faculty and administrative personnel to partake in training programs and activities to develop their leadership capabilities. These programs help employees improve their knowledge of the job, their instructional abilities and their managerial skills. When employees are given opportunities to learn and grow, they feel more confident to take on new responsibilities. The study revealed that succession planning helps to maintain stable leadership in schools and helps to ensure the continuous availability of qualified people to critical positions . This is important to create a stable and effective learning environment to support continuous professional development and maintain leadership.
4. Hargreaves and Fink (2006) talked about how important it is for schools to have leaders who can stay in their jobs for a long time. The writers stressed the importance of succession planning for educational institutions to identify future leaders. Succession planning in schools is vital for teachers and administrators to enhance their competencies by training, collaborating and assuming leadership roles. These exercises improve their skills in management, instruction and interpersonal communication. The study found that strong leadership in schools was necessary for long-term success. Succession planning builds stability by getting employees ready for future positions. In this way, institutions can keep functioning well even with changes in leadership.
5. Conger and Fulmer (2003) point out that succession planning is an important management tool that helps companies to identify and develop new leaders. Succession planning in higher education institutions is the process of identifying and developing competent individuals to fill potential leadership positions. Professional development programs can help employees enhance their decision-making, leadership, and communication skills. "In addition, succession planning makes the organization a learning and development environment," the writers emphasized. Personnel development will motivate them to use their abilities better to contribute to the growth of the institution. Thus, succession planning helps in the development of staff and the overall effectiveness of higher education institutions.

Statement of the Problem

1. Colleges and universities need highly qualified educators and support staff to ensure that education is delivered effectively and at a high standard. But many colleges and universities do not have systematic succession planning strategies that help to improve professional skills of individuals. This can lead to loss of talent and hinder the overall growth of the firm. Therefore, it is important to investigate the importance of succession planning in improving the professional competences of instructional and non-instructional staff in higher education institutions.
2. Succession planning represents an important aspect of human resources management that ensures institutional continuity and leadership stability. Many colleges and universities, despite its importance, do not adequately focus on systematic succession planning. This can create leadership gaps that can hinder the growth of instructional and

non-instructional staff alike. There is need to investigate the importance of succession planning in institutions of higher education.

Objectives of the Study

1. To analyze the role of succession planning in enhancing the professional skills of teaching and non-teaching staff.
2. To examine the importance of succession planning in higher education institutions
3. To understand the review of literature in the related areas

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is descriptive and analytical in nature. The aim of the study is to analyze the impact of succession planning on skill development in higher education institutions.

Sample Size

The research includes 15 higher education institutions in Palghar district which are selected as sample units by the convenience sampling methodology. The study population consisted of 48 teaching staff and 22 non-teaching staff of the colleges affiliated to University of Mumbai.

Data Collection and Analysis

The data was collected through a standard questionnaire on succession planning and skill development in higher education institutions. The data collected were analyzed through frequency analysis, percentage analysis, mean and standard deviation to accurately interpret the results.

FINDINGS OF FREQUENCY ANALYSIS (Teaching Staff)

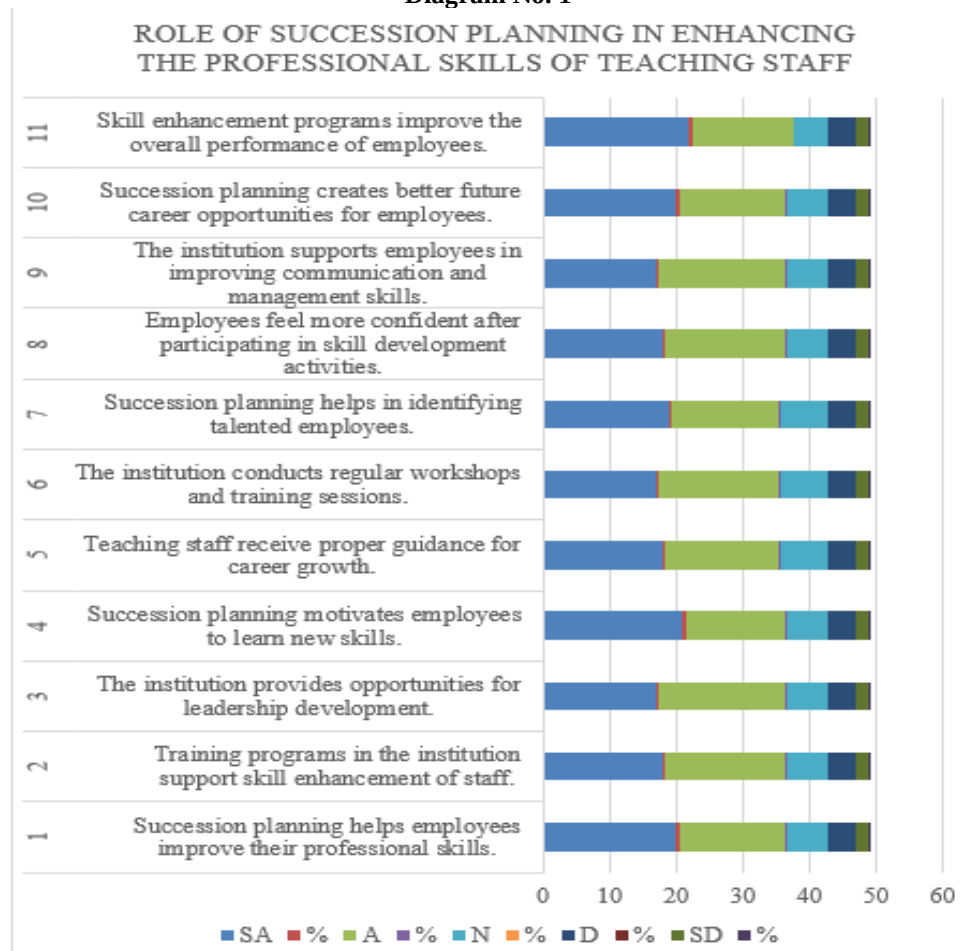
Table No. 1

ROLE OF SUCCESSION PLANNING IN ENHANCING THE PROFESSIONAL SKILLS OF TEACHING STAFF											
Sr. No.	Questions	SA	%	A	%	N	%	D	%	SD	%
1	Succession planning helps employees improve their professional skills.	20	42%	16	33%	6	13%	4	8%	2	4%
2	Training programs in the institution support skill enhancement of staff.	18	38%	18	38%	6	13%	4	8%	2	4%
3	The institution provides opportunities for leadership development.	17	35%	19	40%	6	13%	4	8%	2	4%
4	Succession planning motivates employees to learn new skills.	21	44%	15	31%	6	13%	4	8%	2	4%
5	Teaching staff receive proper guidance for career growth.	18	38%	17	35%	7	15%	4	8%	2	4%
6	The institution conducts regular workshops and training sessions.	17	35%	18	38%	7	15%	4	8%	2	4%
7	Succession planning helps in identifying talented employees.	19	40%	16	33%	7	15%	4	8%	2	4%

8	Employees feel more confident after participating in skill development activities.	18	38%	18	38%	6	13%	4	8%	2	4%
9	The institution supports employees in improving communication and management skills.	17	35%	19	40%	6	13%	4	8%	2	4%
10	Succession planning creates better future career opportunities for employees.	20	42%	16	33%	6	13%	4	8%	2	4%
11	Skill enhancement programs improve the overall performance of employees.	22	46%	15	31%	5	10%	4	8%	2	4%

Source: Research Compilation

Diagram No. 1



Source: Researcher Compilation

Analysis and Interpretation:

The study suggests that succession planning is a major contributor to the professional competencies of faculty in higher education institutions. Around 42% of the respondents strongly agreed and 33% agreed that succession planning improves the professional skills of employees. Also, 38% strongly agreed and 38% agreed that the institution's training programmes allow for staff skill development. The data suggest institutions are focusing on professional development, through organized

training and educator succession plans.

The results indicate that institutions are vehicles for leadership development and facilitate the skills acquisition by personnel. Around 35% of respondents strongly agreed and 40% agreed that the school offers opportunities for growth in leadership. Likewise, 44% strongly agreed and 31% agreed that succession planning motivates people to acquire new skills. This means that succession planning improves the knowledge, skills and preparedness of the teaching staff for future roles.

The findings of the study highlight the importance of career counselling and professional development programmes for teachers. Around 38% of respondents strongly agreed and 35% agreed that teaching staff are given enough support for professional development. Likewise, 35% strongly agreed and 38% agreed that institutions often conduct workshops and training sessions for personnel. The data suggest that institutions are working on competencies and career development of their employees through continuous learning efforts. The results indicate that succession planning is enabling organisations to identify skilled people and boost employee confidence.

About 40% of respondents strongly agreed and 33% agreed that succession planning helps in finding outstanding workers within the organisation. Similarly, 38% strongly agreed and 38% agreed that employees feel more confident after attending skill development events. This means that training and succession plan increases the confidence and performance of employees.

FINDINGS OF FREQUENCY ANALYSIS (Non-Teaching Staff)

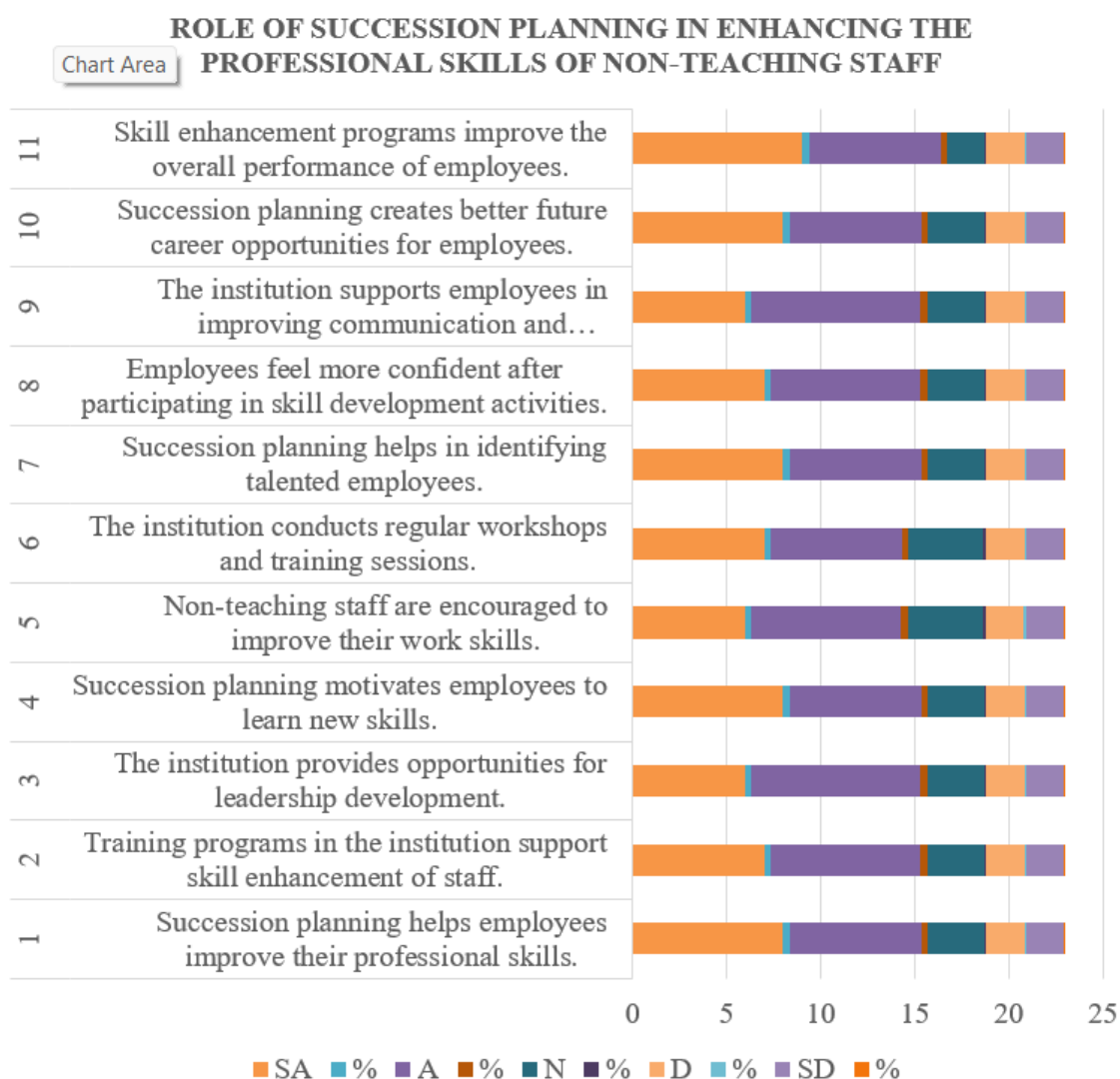
Table No. 2

ROLE OF SUCCESSION PLANNING IN ENHANCING THE PROFESSIONAL SKILLS OF NON-TEACHING STAFF											
Sr. No.	Questions	SA	%	A	%	N	%	D	%	SD	%
1	Succession planning helps employees improve their professional skills.	8	36%	7	32%	3	14%	2	9%	2	9%
2	Training programs in the institution support skill enhancement of staff.	7	32%	8	36%	3	14%	2	9%	2	9%
3	The institution provides opportunities for leadership development.	6	27%	9	41%	3	14%	2	9%	2	9%
4	Succession planning motivates employees to learn new skills.	8	36%	7	32%	3	14%	2	9%	2	9%
5	Non-teaching staff are encouraged to improve their work skills.	6	27%	8	36%	4	18%	2	9%	2	9%
6	The institution conducts regular workshops and training sessions.	7	32%	7	32%	4	18%	2	9%	2	9%
7	Succession planning helps in identifying talented employees.	8	36%	7	32%	3	14%	2	9%	2	9%

8	Employees feel more confident after participating in skill development activities.	7	32%	8	36%	3	14%	2	9%	2	9%
9	The institution supports employees in improving communication and management skills.	6	27%	9	41%	3	14%	2	9%	2	9%
10	Succession planning creates better future career opportunities for employees.	8	36%	7	32%	3	14%	2	9%	2	9%
11	Skill enhancement programs improve the overall performance of employees.	9	41%	7	32%	2	9%	2	9%	2	9%

Source: Research Compilation

Diagram No.2



Analysis and Interpretation:

The study found that succession planning significantly improves the professional competencies of non-teaching staff of higher education institutions. About 36% of respondents strongly agreed and 32% believed succession planning improves employees' professional skills. Similarly, 32% strongly agreed and 36% agreed that the organisation's training programmes contribute to personnel skills development. The results suggest that organisations should give high priority to professional development and training activities for non-teaching staff.

The findings suggest that institutions provide opportunities for leadership development and motivate the employees to develop new skills. 27% of respondents strongly agreed and 41% agreed that the school provides opportunity for leadership growth. Similarly, 36% strongly agreed and 32% agreed that succession planning motivates people to learn new skills. This shows that succession planning encourages non-teaching staff to develop their skills and prepare themselves for future roles. The report recommends that non-teaching staff should strengthen their professional capacities and participate in training activities. 27% of respondents strongly agreed and 36% agreed that non-teaching personnel are motivated to upgrade their professional skills. Further, 32% of people strongly agreed and 32% agreed that institutions do workshops and training sessions for staff often. The data show that institutions are working to improve the skills and efficiency of non-teaching personnel through continuous learning initiatives.

Comments suggest that succession planning increases employee confidence and helps in identifying talent. About 36% of the respondents strongly agreed and 32% agreed that succession planning helps in identifying talented employees within the institution. Also, 32% strongly agree, and 36% agree that employees gain increased confidence after participating in skill development events. The implication is that training and development programs increase employees' confidence and work performance.

The study shows that institutions help employees in improving their communication and management skills. Some 27% of respondents strongly agreed with this statement and 41% agreed. Similarly, 36% strongly agreed and 32% agreed that succession planning improves future career opportunities for employees. Results show that succession planning improves communication, develops managers and supports long term career development of non-teaching staff.

The study shows that skill development programs help in improving the overall performance of employees. Around 41% of the respondents strongly agreed and 32% agreed that skill enhancement programmes were in favour of employee performance. The research clearly indicates that succession planning positively affects the professional development, confidence, communication skills and job performance of non-teaching staff in higher educational institutions.

FINDINGS OF DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS (Teaching)

Table No. 3

ROLE OF SUCCESSION PLANNING IN ENHANCING THE PROFESSIONAL SKILLS OF TEACHING STAFF						
Sr. No.	Questions	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
1	Succession planning helps employees improve their professional skills.	48	1	5	4	1.12
2	Training programs in the institution support skill enhancement of staff.	48	1	5	3.96	1.1
3	The institution provides opportunities for leadership development.	48	1	5	3.94	1.09
4	Succession planning motivates employees to learn new skills.	48	1	5	4.02	1.13

5	Teaching staff receive proper guidance for career growth.	48	1	5	3.94	1.11
6	The institution conducts regular workshops and training sessions.	48	1	5	3.92	1.1
7	Succession planning helps in identifying talented employees.	48	1	5	3.96	1.12
8	Employees feel more confident after participating in skill development activities.	48	1	5	3.96	1.1
9	The institution supports employees in improving communication and management skills.	48	1	5	3.94	1.09
10	Succession planning creates better future career opportunities for employees.	48	1	5	4	1.12
11	Skill enhancement programs improve the overall performance of employees.	48	1	5	4.06	1.13

Source: Research Compilation

Analysis and Interpretation:

The analysis showed that the skill enhancement programs contribute to the overall performance of the teaching personnel with the highest mean score (mean = 4.06, SD = 1.13). This demonstrates that a majority of respondents believe that training and development programmes contribute to the improvement of staff efficiency and work effectiveness. Succession planning encourages employees to gain new skills (Mean = 4.02, SD = 1.13). Succession planning enables employees to improve their professional skills (Mean = 4.00, SD = 1.12). Further, succession planning improves the future career opportunities for the employees (Mean = 4.00, SD = 1.12). The data suggest that succession planning promotes the ongoing learning, career advancement, and professional development of educators.

The findings showed that the training programs of the institution are beneficial in developing the staff skills (mean = 3.96, SD = 1.10). Succession planning helps in the identification of capable persons (Mean = 3.96, SD = 1.12) as the employees feel more confident after their participation in skill development programs (Mean = 3.96, SD = 1.10). The standard deviation values are relatively low, suggesting that the respondents have similar views as to the positive effect of training and succession planning to increase confidence and identify suitable candidates for future roles.

Leadership development and institutional assistance were identified as important factors in the development of professional skills. The university provides opportunities for leadership development (mean = 3.94, SD = 1.09). Teaching personnel have enough advice for professional development (mean = 3.94, SD = 1.11). Organizations help employees to improve their communication and management skills (Mean = 3.94, SD = 1.09). Likewise. The findings indicate that higher education institutions are concentrating on the development of leadership skills, communication skills and managerial competence of faculty members through succession planning efforts.

The study highlights the importance of workshops and training sessions for the development of staff. Institutions offering regular workshops and training sessions scored a significant mean score (mean=3.92, SD=1.10), meaning respondents consider these programs valuable for professional development. The moderate standard deviations for all statements suggest

that the teaching staff largely share similar views regarding the importance of succession planning and skill development activities.

The analysis clearly shows that succession planning has a positive effect on the professional development, leadership skills, communication skills, confidence and performance of faculty members in higher education institutions. The results suggest that good succession planning practices assist organizations to develop educated and capable people for future academic and administrative positions.

FINDINGS OF DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS (Non-Teaching)

Table No. 4

ROLE OF SUCCESSION PLANNING IN ENHANCING THE PROFESSIONAL SKILLS OF TEACHING STAFF						
Sr. No.	Questions	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
1	Succession planning helps employees improve their professional skills.	22	1	5	3.77	1.28
2	Training programs in the institution support skill enhancement of staff.	22	1	5	3.73	1.25
3	The institution provides opportunities for leadership development.	22	1	5	3.68	1.22
4	Succession planning motivates employees to learn new skills.	22	1	5	3.77	1.28
5	Non-teaching staff are encouraged to improve their work skills.	22	1	5	3.64	1.23
6	The institution conducts regular workshops and training sessions.	22	1	5	3.68	1.26
7	Succession planning helps in identifying talented employees.	22	1	5	3.77	1.28
8	Employees feel more confident after participating in skill development activities.	22	1	5	3.73	1.25

9	The institution supports employees in improving communication and management skills.	22	1	5	3.68	1.22
10	Succession planning creates better future career opportunities for employees.	22	1	5	3.77	1.28
11	Skill enhancement programs improve the overall performance of employees.	22	1	5	3.86	1.29

Source: Research Compilation

Analysis and Interpretation:

The study shows that skill development programs increase the overall effectiveness of non-teaching personnel with the highest mean score (mean = 3.86, SD = 1.29). This implies that most of the respondents viewed training and development initiatives as positive to staff productivity and performance. Succession planning improves the professional skills of the employees (mean = 3.77, SD = 1.28) and motivates the employees to gain new competencies (mean = 3.77, SD = 1.28). Similarly, succession planning improves employees' future career opportunities (mean = 3.77, SD = 1.28). These data suggest that succession planning supports professional development, education and career advancement for non-teaching staff.

The study revealed that the institution's training programs were effective in improving the staff's skills (mean = 3.73, SD = 1.25). Employees are more confident after doing skill development activities (mean = 3.73, SD = 1.25). Thus, it can be stated that training programs not only raise confidence but also work efficiency. Succession planning allows for the identification of talented personnel (mean = 3.77, SD = 1.28), and this is indicative that institutions value the importance of recognizing capable people for future roles and the growth of the institution.

It was felt that professional skills could be enhanced through the development of leadership and institutional support. The institution provides leadership development opportunities and supports personnel in improving communication and management skills (mean = 3.68, SD = 1.22). Similarly, institutions regularly conduct workshops and training sessions (mean = 3.68, SD = 1.26) which are helpful in growth of personnel and performance enhancement. The results indicate that higher education institutions are making efforts to improve managerial, leadership and communication skills among their non-teaching staff.

The lowest mean score (mean = 3.64, SD = 1.23) was recorded on the statement that non-teaching staff should be supported to improve their work abilities, but this still indicates agreement from the respondents. This suggests that institutions should consider providing more support and development for non-teaching staff. The low standard deviation values for all assertions indicate that respondents are in agreement that succession planning is beneficial for the development of professional skills. The study clearly shows that succession planning is helping in the professional development, self-confidence, communication skills, leadership qualities and overall job performance of non-teaching staff in higher education institutions. The findings demonstrate the importance of training programs, workshops, career development initiatives and succession planning in enhancing staff competencies and organizational effectiveness.

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

The study investigated the impact of succession planning on skill development among teaching and non-teaching staff in higher education institutions. The study clearly shows the positive impact of succession planning on professional development, leadership development, confidence building, communication skills and overall staff effectiveness. Both teaching and non-teaching staff agreed that succession planning encourages people to acquire new skills and fosters better career opportunities within institutions.

The study's research indicated that training programs, workshops, leadership development activities, and career counseling enhance employees' professional competencies and job efficiency. Levels of agreement on the efficacy of succession planning and skill development initiatives were slightly higher among teaching personnel than non-teaching personnel.

Results also show that institutions are attempting to locate gifted employees and prepare them for future academic and administrative positions.

The research proves that good succession planning procedures significantly enhance the professional skills of staff in higher education institutions. Continuous training, leadership development and employee development programs are important to improve institutional performance and ensure long term organizational success.

The study also recommends that institutions of higher education should strengthen succession planning by means of regular training programmes, workshops and leadership development activities for academic and non-academic staff. Institutions should provide equal opportunities for career development, communication skills improvement and management training for all staff. The importance of motivating non-teaching personnel and their engagement in initiatives on skill development must be underlined. Organizations must always be scouting for talent and provide proper mentorship for future leaders. Continuous professional development activities and enabling institutional policies may increase employees' confidence, work performance and overall institutional effectiveness.

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