



## Assessing the influence of succession planning on long-term success in selected organizations in Arusha City, Tanzania

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**Recommended Reference:** Kipara, J. K. (2026). Assessing the influence of succession planning on long-term success in selected organizations in Arusha City, Tanzania. *African Quarterly Social Science Review*, 3(1), 89–97.

<https://doi.org/10.51867/AQSSR.3.1.8>

### ABSTRACT

This study assessed the influence of succession planning practices on long-term organizational success in Arusha City, Tanzania. The study adopted a cross-sectional research design, comprising 375 respondents in Arusha City. The sampling techniques used were stratified and purposive sampling techniques to obtain a diverse representative sample. The study utilized a closed-ended questionnaire to collect data from the respondents. The collected data were analyzed descriptively and inferentially by means of SPSS Version 26.0 software. The study was guided by the resource-based view and human capital theories; the findings revealed that 201 (53.6%) of the respondents perceived low implementation of succession planning. Findings further indicate a moderately strong positive relationship ( $R = 0.552$ ), with succession planning accounting for 30.4% of the variance in organizational success. Regression analysis showed a significant positive effect ( $\beta = 0.521, p < .001$ ), indicating that effective succession planning fosters leadership continuity, career advancement, and the attainment of organizational objectives. This study concludes that succession planning practices are low in surveyed organizations. Based on these findings, this study recommends that organizations should develop good succession planning practices, develop leaders, and provide mentorship programs to realize long-term organizational success.

**Keywords:** Leadership Development, Leadership Continuity, Organizational Success, Succession Planning

### I. INTRODUCTION

Globally, succession planning has gained attention in the field of human resource management because it is the determinant for organizational success in various aspects, including leadership continuity and developing staff talents (Groves, 2007; Rothwell, 2010). Organizations with well-established succession planning practices demonstrate greater adaptability, institutional resilience, and leadership stability that are essential for their long-term success. Through adhering to succession planning practices, employees' talents are Organizational Success identified, enhancing effective mentorship and coaching, and preparing future leaders, leading to a reduction of risks associated with unexpected leadership changes.

Indeed, organizations that lack effective succession planning are likely to face leadership challenges, reduced organizational performance, and failure to meet the pre-set vision and mission (Thakur, 2022). Thus, succession planning is an essential aspect of practice that can influence organizational performance and sustainability. In the African context, effective implementation of succession planning is a challenge because of inadequate of skilled personnel, inadequate leadership development programs, and a high dependency on an individual's ability to lead (Owusu-Acheampong et al., 2024).

The long-term organizational success reflects the capacity of an organization to be in achievement in its pre-set strategic goals, maintain daily operational stability, and continued growth over a period of time (Batoool et al., 2022). It encompasses the organization's ability to maintain smoothness of organizational day to day operations that may include leadership continuity, innovation, employee motivation, and overall organizational resilience. Long-term success depends not only on financial performance but also on leadership effectiveness, talent retention, and the ability to adapt to overhanging environments (Maroga et al., 2024). In this regard, embracing succession planning practices acts as a driver of reaching long-term success by building internal capacity and reducing disruptions associated with leadership alterations (Ugoani, 2020).

Like other countries in the world, organizations in Tanzania are increasingly acknowledging the significance of effective implementation of succession planning practices for enhancing performance and service provision. However, studies like Mohamed (2022) and Urassa (2024) have shown that organizations in Tanzania have no clear succession planning practices. This has led to leadership challenges, weak talent retention, and a loss of expertise when competent/senior leaders exit from an organization (Kpinpuo et al., 2023; Wangari et al., 2023). Furthermore, studies



also revealed few organizations in Tanzania incorporate succession planning practices to enhance organizational performance for continued growth.

Moreover, available studies based on assessing challenges facing effective implementation of succession planning in organizations (Muhoho, 2014), factors that influence effective implementation of succession planning in small and medium enterprises (Magasi, 2016), assessed the implementation of succession planning and performance of family-owned small and medium enterprises (Kiwia et al., 2020), and succession planning practices among selected government authorities (Urassa, 2024). Therefore, the current study aimed to assess the influence of succession planning on long-term organizational success in Tanzania. The findings have implications for policymakers, managers, and HR practitioners because they provide evidence-based insights on the effect of proper adherence to succession planning practices on the success of an organization. This is because it highlights the extent proper use of succession planning can empower staff with leadership skills through in-service development. Additionally, it highlights the rationale of mentorship and internal talent management to foster the continued functioning of an organization.

### 1.1 Statement of the Problem

Succession planning is increasingly being recognized as a critical human resource management practice that ensures healthy leadership continuity, talent development, and sustainable organizational performance in both public and private sectors. Despite this recognition, evidence suggests that many organizations in Tanzania, including public institutions, face persistent challenges in effectively implementing succession planning frameworks. Over 45% of public organizations in Tanzania lack formal succession plans, resulting in leadership gaps (Ndunguru, 2018).

While previous studies (Kiwia et al., 2020; Iribagiza, 2025; Asande et al., 2023; Alheet, 2025) have identified effects, roles, and impacts of succession planning practices, there is limited empirical evidence on how these practices influence long-term organizational success in the Tanzanian context. Therefore, this study assessed the influence of succession planning practices on long-term organizational success.

### 1.2 Research Objectives

- i. To examine the extent to which succession planning practices are implemented in Arusha City.
- ii. To investigate the influence of succession planning on long-term organizational success in Arusha City

### 1.3 Research Questions

- i. To what extent do succession planning practices implemented in Arusha City?
- ii. What is the influence of succession planning on long-term organizational success in Arusha City?

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Theoretical Review

This study was grounded in the Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory (Barney, 1991) and the Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1964). The RBV Theory views that, to maximize organizational success, leaders need to utilize the available resources. The resources among others, include identifying and developing staff's talents because this could drive innovation and leadership growth for personal and organizational benefits. The RBV theory describes that the effective implementation of succession planning practices helps organizations identify, nurture, and retain future leaders who function as potential resources.

On the other hand, Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1964), which emphasizes investing in training and professional development to optimize employees' productivity and organizational success. The Human Capital Theory states that employees' knowledge and skills represent a form of wealth that produces long-term success for individuals and organizations. In this study, the theory supports the assertion that succession planning is an investment in human capital because it focuses on pre-planning in various aspects including in-service training, mentorship and coaching prepare future leaders. Initiatives like mentoring employees and providing leadership skills are likely to strengthen organizational operations, leading to long-term success. The use of these theories is essential because the RBV theory expounds the significance of human resources as a source of viable advantage, while the Human Capital Theory concerns how succession planning helps human resources to attain intended organizational objectives.

### 2.2 Empirical Review

Mehrabani and Mohamad (2021) investigated factors that influence the effective implementation of succession planning in Iran. The study adopted a qualitative research approach where interview as a data collection method was employed to collect data in private banks. The findings revealed that succession planning was highly influenced by several factors including creating a positive vision, organizational cultures, training, and management, among others.

However, the findings by Mehrabani and Mohamad (2021) were subjective because they heavily relied on single data collection tools.

In Jordan, Alheet (2025) assessed the role of corporate governance and succession planning in the sustainability of the family-owned businesses. The main purpose of the study was to identify corporate governance and succession planning roles and their contributions to the survival of the surveyed enterprises. The findings revealed the existence of good corporate governance and succession planning practices. Additionally, the succession planning practices had a positive effect on enterprises' growth because they ensured enterprises' sustainability.

Kpinpuo et al. (2023) in Ghana investigated succession planning practices and knowledge of management officials in selected organizations. The study employed a qualitative research approach where a total of 60 participants were interviewed. The findings revealed low implementation of succession planning and limited knowledge among the participants in selected organizations. These findings suggest that effective succession planning practices were not implemented effectively, as evidenced by poor organizational performance.

Asande et al. (2023) investigated the effect of procurement planning on organizational performance in Kenya. The study employed a quantitative research approach, utilizing a cross-sectional design. Data were collected through a questionnaire from the 35 respondents. Guided by the system theory, the study revealed that procurement planning had a positive effect on procurement function performance. The study recommends proper planning of procurement operations, as this could lead to effective functioning of the organizational performance. In fact, the study by Asande et al. (2023) has provided the insights that have implications for the procurement practitioners, but its limitation resides in the use of a small sample size ( $N=35$ ) that could limit generalization to other contexts.

Iribagiza (2025) investigated the effect of program planning practices on program performance in Rwanda. The study was conducted using a mixed-methods research approach, involving a questionnaire and an interview as data collection instruments. The findings from the 97 participants revealed that project planning practices contributed to program performance in the surveyed area. These findings suggest that effective planning could be associated with success.

Kiwiwa et al. (2020) investigated the impact of succession planning practices on the performance of family-owned small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Tanzanian contexts. The study utilized a cross-sectional research design, involving a total of 219 respondents. They used only an open-ended questionnaire to gather data. The findings revealed the presence of succession planning in SMEs. The study further revealed differences in business operations. In the same vein, Magasi (2016) investigated factors that influence the effective implementation of SMEs. The study involved 25 SMEs, where a total of 104 participated in the study. The findings found that higher age of SMEs' leaders was among the influencing factors for succession planning. Additionally, the level of education affected the preparation of successors in the surveyed area. The findings by Magasi (2016) suggest that to effectively implement succession planning, there must be prior-existing conditions. Based on the reviewed empirical studies, none of them investigated the influence of succession planning on long-term organizational success. Therefore, this study filled the identified research gap by assessing the influence of succession planning practices on long-term organizational success.

### III. METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a quantitative research approach where a cross-sectional research design was employed to assess the influence of succession planning on long-term organizational success in Arusha City, Tanzania. The choice of this area was due to its rapid economic growth and strategic importance as a hub for tourism, trade, and regional cooperation compared to other regions in Tanzania (United Republic of Tanzania [URT], 2019). This could provide a variety of contexts for assessing succession planning practices. Additionally, there is a workforce mobility of employees that could lead to obtaining comprehensive findings. Out of 6000 target population, 375 respondents were selected from five areas: Arusha City Council, Tanzania Environmental Conservation Society, CRDB Bank, NMB Bank, and St. Augustine University of Tanzania. The study sample comprised employees from the aforementioned five areas to obtain comprehensive insights into the problem. The Yamane formula was used to compute the study sample as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

$n$  = Sample size,

$N$  = Total number of accessible population (6,000),

$e$  = Sampling error ( $e = 0.05$ )

$n = 375$

The data collection was through a closed-ended questionnaire, distributed to respondents selected through stratified random and purposive sampling techniques. Stratified sampling was used because the respondents were grouped based on organization type and leadership position. The purposive sampling techniques were also used to obtain respondents (managers) who could provide relevant information about the leadership roles.



The collected data were analyzed by means of SPSS version 26.0, where descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations) and inferential statistics (simple linear regression) were computed. Before analysis, all assumptions, including linearity, normality, multicollinearity, and homoscedasticity, were tested and satisfied. To ensure the validity and reliability, the questionnaire was developed by the researcher based on existing literature on succession planning practices and reviewed by three experts in the Department of Human Resource Management at the Institute of Accountancy Arusha. Then it was piloted with 100 respondents who did not participate in the actual study. Additionally, the final instrument had a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.85, confirming high internal consistency for the use (Creswell, 2018).

#### IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

##### 4.1 Characteristics of the Respondents

This study comprised 375 respondents, 210 (56%) male and 165 (44%) female. The majority of respondents (42%) were aged from 31 to 41 years, followed by 28% (42–52) years, and 30% (20–30) years. In terms of educational qualification, 180 (48%) held a bachelor’s degree, 120 (32%) a diploma, and 75 (20%) a postgraduate degree. Furthermore, 160 (43%) respondents had 5 to 10 years of work experience, 125 (33%) had 11 to 16 years, and 90 (24%) had less than 5 years of work experience. Moreover, this study involved respondents with a mix of managerial and non-managerial staff to obtain comprehensive insights and representation of sampled organizations in Arusha City. The demographic information is shown in Table 1.

**Table 1**  
*Demographic Information of Respondents*

Variable/Aspect	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	210	56
	Female	165	44
Age	20–30 years	112	30
	31–41 years	158	42
	42–52 years	105	28
Educational Qualification	Diploma	120	32
	Bachelor’s degree	180	48
	Postgraduate degree	75	20
Work Experience	Less than 5 years	90	24
	5–10 years	160	43
	11–16 years	125	33

##### 4.1.1 Level of Succession Planning Practices

The first objective of this study was to examine the extent to which succession planning practices are implemented in Arusha City. Before computing the level of succession planning practices of an individual item, the overall level of succession planning was computed. The findings revealed that a majority of respondents, 201 (53.6%), perceived the succession planning practices in their organizations as being at a low level. The findings for each item are shown in Table 2. Note: N = 375, SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N= Neutral, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree, Std= Standard Deviation, and Int = Interpretation.

The findings indicates that the overall mean scores for succession planning practices were 2.48. The items whose mean scores are below the overall mean score imply low-level implementation of the succession planning practices. Whereas, mean scores above the overall mean score suggest high implementation of the particular succession planning practices. Based on Table 1 revealed low implementation was revealed in the items of HR responsiveness to change, knowledge dissemination, coaching, and top management commitment, received. Furthermore, this study revealed high implementation in the areas of systems for replacing senior staff, leadership mentoring, talent development programs, and recognition of dormant talent.

The findings suggest that, despite the existence of leadership practices, overall, the implementation of succession planning practices in selected organizations was low. Inability to provide mentorship, coaching, and not developing employees' talents suggests that employees are not prepared for future leadership roles. The present findings support the previous findings by Owolabi and Adeosun (2021), who reported in a Nigerian context that leaders did not support employee career development, which led to failure in preparing leaders. In fact, the absence of career development among employees demotivates employees professional growth, leading to failure to achieve the organizational mission and vision (Olayo, 2019). However, the current study’s findings contradict the findings by Batool et al. (2022), who revealed a high level of succession planning practices in Pakistan. That study found that selected



organizations demonstrated effective commitment to employee development, career progression, and greater alignment with long-term goals of the organizations.

**Table 2**  
*Succession Planning Practices*

S/N	Statement	SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	Mean	Std.	Int
1	The HR keeps in step with changes and ensures the right people are readily available to the organization	25.6 (96)	34.9(131)	20.0(75)	12.0(45)	7.5(28)	2.41	1.2	Low level
2	There is good knowledge dissemination in the organization	25.3 (95)	37.6(141)	21.1(79)	11.2(42)	4.8(18)	2.33	1.12	Low level
3	There exists a system of replacement for senior departing management	25.0(93)	30.0(113)	22.0(83)	15.0(56)	8.0(30)	2.51	1.24	High level
4	The organization provides adequate coaching to develop future leaders	25.3(95)	36.0(135)	18.7(70)	13.3(50)	6.7(25)	2.40	1.19	Low level
5	Leaders in my organization actively mentor and prepare potential successors	24.0(90)	34.7(130)	17.3(65)	14.7(55)	9.3 (35)	2.51	1.26	High level
6	The organization provides learning and training opportunities that are futuristic and tied to strategic development goals	25.7(96)	33.3(125)	19.7(74)	13.3(50)	8.0(30)	2.45	1.23	Low level
7	There is a program set aside for talent development, and it has been implemented	22.3(84)	30.7(115)	21.3(80)	15.0(56)	10.7(40)	2.61	1.28	High level
8	The management is committed to encouraging new talent	27.2(102)	36.8(138)	18.9(71)	10.4(39)	6.7 (25)	2.33	1.17	Low level
9	Talent in the organization lies dormant due to poor talent management systems	17.6(66)	27.2(102)	25.6(96)	18.7(70)	10.9(41)	2.79	1.25	High level
<b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>							2.48		

**4.1.2 Long-Term Organizational Success**

The second objective of this study was to assess the influence of succession planning on long-term organizational success. Before assessing the influence of these variables, the level of long-term organizational success was computed. The findings are indicated in Table 3.

The findings indicate a low level of long-term organizational success, low success/performance among selected organizations. The items that had a high rate were: encouraging creativity and innovation ( $M = 2.70$ ), providing in-service training opportunities ( $M = 2.74$ ), and effective utilization of resources ( $M = 2.67$ ). Conversely, there were low perceptions in the items: employee involvement in planning ( $M = 2.27$ ), career progression and mentorship ( $M = 2.40$ ), and transparency and accountability ( $M = 2.49$ ), suggesting weaknesses in participatory management and organizational development practices.



**Table 3.**  
*The Level of Long-Term Organizational Success (N=375)*

S/N	Statement	SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	Mean	Std.	Int
1	My organization allocates and utilizes available resources	20.0 (75)	28.3 (106)	25.9 (97)	16.8 (63)	9.1 (34)	2.67	1.18	High level
2	My organization has a budget to achieve its pre-set plans	23.2 (87)	33.1 (124)	22.1 (83)	14.1 (53)	7.5 (28)	2.50	1.17	Low level
3	My organization has a well-defined career progression and mentorship programs	24.5 (92)	31.7 (119)	21.9 (82)	13.6 (51)	8.3 (31)	2.40	1.21	Low level
4	My employer engages employees in planning organizational activities	19.7 (74)	29.3 (110)	24.3 (91)	17.6 (66)	9.1 (34)	2.27	1.23	Low level
5	The organization maintains transparency and accountability in its daily activities	17.9 (67)	25.6 (96)	26.9 (101)	19.7 (74)	9.9 (37)	2.49	1.22	Low level
6	My organization manages succession and leadership continuity	21.1 (79)	28.0 (105)	23.5 (88)	17.9 (67)	9.5 (36)	2.66	1.19	High level
7	The organization has a long-term succession planning	24.0 (90)	30.9 (116)	22.1 (83)	14.9 (56)	8.0 (30)	2.51	1.20	Low level
8	The organization encourages me to be creative and innovative	20.3 (76)	27.5 (103)	24.5 (92)	18.1 (68)	9.6 (36)	2.70	1.21	High level
9	I am encouraged to upgrade my skills through in-service training	18.9 (71)	26.7 (100)	25.6 (96)	19.5 (73)	9.3 (35)	2.74	1.18	High level
<b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>							<b>2.55</b>		

Furthermore, the simple linear regression was computed to assess the influence of succession planning on longer-term organizational success. The dependent variable was long-term organizational success, measured using nine items with a five-point Likert scale, from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). A simple linear regression analysis was suitable because it was capable of predicting the effect of succession planning on organizational success. The model was first used to identify the suitability of the study model. The results for the model summary are in Table 4.

**Table 4**  
*Model Summary*

Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.552	0.304	0.302	0.48762

The correlation coefficient ( $R = 0.552$ ) suggests a moderate strong positive relationship between succession planning practices and long-term organizational success. The coefficient of determination ( $R^2 = 0.304$ ) indicates that succession planning practices explain approximately 30.4% of the variance in long-term organizational success. The adjusted  $R^2$  (0.302) authorizes that this study has a good model or the model fits well.

**Table 5**  
*ANOVA<sup>a</sup>*

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	11.041	1	11.041	46.38	0.000
Residual	25.254	373	0.238		
<b>Total</b>	<b>36.295</b>	<b>374</b>			

<sup>a</sup>Dependent Variable: Long-term Organizational Success  
Predictor: Succession Planning

The Analysis of variance (ANOVA) revealed that the regression model is statistically significant,  $F(1, 373) = 46.38, p < .001$ . This implies that this model significantly predicts long-term organizational success and that succession planning has an effect on the dependent variable (long-term organizational success).

**Table 6**  
*Regression Coefficients<sup>a</sup>*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.642	0.152	-	10.80	0.000
Succession Planning	0.521	0.076	0.552	6.81	0.000

<sup>a</sup>Dependent Variable: Long-term Organizational Success

The regression coefficient ( $\beta = 0.521, t(373) = 6.81, p < .001$ ) shows that succession planning has a positive and significant influence on long-term organizational success. That is, a one-unit increase in succession planning was associated with an increase of 0.52 units in organizational success, provided that other factors are kept constant.

The findings of the current study revealed that the presence of effective succession planning practices significantly enhances long-term organizational success. These findings support the claim that succession planning contributes to the success of an organization. This means that succession planning leads to organizational growth/performance in terms of many aspects, including leadership continuity, developing careers and achieving mission and vision. The positive value ( $\beta = 0.521$ ) implies that organizations with strong succession planning, including identifying employees' talents, developing leaders, and mentorship are more tend to improve organizational performance/success. The current findings concur with previous findings by Ugoani (2020) in Nigeria, who found that succession planning practices strengthened leadership continuity. Correspondingly, Maroga et al. (2024) in South Africa, Susilo and Winarto (2023) in Indonesia, and Thakur (2022) in India revealed that effective succession planning positively impacts organizational performance, adaptability, and innovation. On the contrary, organizations with no succession planning practices are likely to face challenges, including leadership crises, operational disruptions, and reduced organizational performance in the long run.

## V. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 Conclusion

The main purpose study was to assess the influence of succession planning on long-term organizational success in Arusha City. The study revealed an overall low mean level of succession planning ( $M = 2.48$ ), suggesting the absence/limited succession planning practices of coaching, knowledge dissemination, and management commitment in the surveyed area. Likewise, long-term organizational success was rated low ( $M = 2.55$ ), implying that organizations did not fully achieve success. Furthermore, the analysis from the performed simple linear regression revealed that the effect of succession planning practices on long-term organizational success was significant ( $\beta = 0.521, p < .001$ ), accounting for 30.4% of the variance. These findings suggest that improving succession planning practices could enhance long-term organizational success in all aspects of its daily operations. These findings have implications because effective succession planning practices in any organization are essential for preparing leaders and warranting long-term organizational success.

### 5.2 Recommendations

Based on the current study's findings, it is recommended that organizations strengthen succession planning practices for leadership continuity and minimize intrusions that can impede management operations. Consequently, improving organizational sustainability. The Management of an organization should also enhance coaching and mentorship initiatives that capacitate leaders to prepare them for higher leadership roles. This will enable organizations to obtain proficient leaders in the future.

Additionally, organizations should promote in-service training and talent development programs for employee development. These initiatives could motivate employees in the workplace in leadership roles, thereby contributing to long-term organizational success. Also, there should be participatory management in engaging employees effectively in planning and decision-making. This could lead to transparency, accountability, and innovation, thus effective functioning of an organization. Finally, succession planning should be aligned with the strategic goals of an organization. Incorporating succession planning practices into long-term mission and vision promotes sustained growth, adaptability, and long-term organizational success.

## Declaration of Interest

The author declare that he does not have any known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

## Funding Declaration

This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

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