



## Impact of Succession Planning on Sales Force Performance under the Mediation of Human Resource Management Practices in Pakistan

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*The aim of the study was to assess the effect on sales force performance in Pakistan of succession planning through the mediation of human resources. To relate the constructs, a research model was developed in which three relations were hypothesized to be positive and significant. Data was gathered from 450 managerial-level employees in the textile sector of Pakistan. There was a cross-sectional analysis. At the personal level, an analysis unit was managed. The analysis of data was conducted through techniques such as descriptive statistics, chi-square test, correlation analysis, and regression analysis. The results of this study could be used as references for future succession planning. This study has contributed to the existing literature as it has found that there is a positive relationship between succession planning and organizational sales force performance. It has also contributed and found that human resources practices have a positive impact on the organizational sales force performance. The overall finding of this study is therefore that succession planning by human resource activities has a positive effect on the performance of the organizational sales force.*



## Introduction

Following an IPMA-HR Talent Management Benchmarking Study, four of ten public sector organizations that practice human resources will lose 20 percent or more of their retired workers over the next five years (Albalushi, et al., 2019). Sixty-five percent of all respondents said that they have no succession plan in the same survey, with 86 percent of respondents representing local/municipal governments. In addition, a Pew report found that within the next two decades 10,000 baby boomers would turn 65, bringing them closer to just the retirement line every day (Albalushi, et al., 2019).

A survey was conducted by the Centre for State and Local Government Excellence (SLGE), showing that 40% of respondents said their pension plans were delayed in light of the Great Recession. This required managers to stretch (or delay) staff and estate planning schedules. BMS Index indicates that, in only two years of growth, 51 percent of salesmen are moving on from a job. Succession planning has become a major problem for companies today and will become a massive problem for the future. Succession planning is indeed a planned initiative to identify leadership needs, to recognize employees who have strong potential, to build leadership skills for selected employees, and to choose them for highly valuable roles (Bogaert, et al., 2019).

Seventy-two percent of the businesses would have a growing association with leadership vacancies over three to five years, with 76 percent "less than optimistic" of those surveyed in their ability to work (Bogaert, et al., 2019). This study is important due to its research methodology and there are no reliable data and figures in Pakistan on how many companies follow the precise succession planning pattern.

Succession planning concentrates on future leadership development. Given the number of studies and reports and the guidelines for a bottom-line analysis by the IMPA-HR Organization, only 37 percent of the organizations of the public sector have some kind of workforce plan (Bogaert, et al., 2019). As indicated, the research context for this study is important, and in Pakistan, there have been no reliable figures and facts on how many entities follow the exact pattern for succession planning.

The main aim of this study is to find information and statistics on the exact trend of succession planning throughout the range of companies. Following questions were put forward for finding answers:

- Does Succession planning show a positive and significant association with the organization's salesforce performance?
- Is succession planning associated positively and significantly with the human resource practices of an organization?
- Does the Human resource practice have a significant positive association with the organizational salesforce performance?
- Does Human Resource Practices of an Organization Mediate the relationship between its Succession Planning and Sales force Performance?



The article focuses on succession planning associations with salesforce performance, expected sales, and human resource activities in the enterprise. Primary data was gathered through questionnaires in this report. Data was gathered from 450 management level employees working in the textiles sector at the management level. At the individual level, a cross-sectional study and an analysis unit are followed. It uses methods including descriptive statistics, t-statistics, the study of correlations, and regression. The theoretical context of the remaining study is discussed and hypotheses are formulated to verify the impact of the various variables. In addition, the data obtained from different resources can help to assess the hypotheses of the study and to determine whether research objectives are being achieved. In addition, it will help us analyze and assess the recommendation.

### **Theoretical Background**

#### **Theory of Planned Behavior**

Krueger and Carsrud (1993) adapted the theory of planned behavior, explaining the conduct of entrepreneurs and the plans of successors to take over the business. The likelihood that a behavior will happen depends on a person's intention to participate in that behavior, according to this theory. In turn, the intention is shaped by the attitudes of the person. These behaviors, which involve the belief that the results are desirable to the initiator, that the results are acceptable according to social standards of a benchmark community, and the presumption that the conduct will contribute to the desired results. That means that attitudes form intentions that in turn lead to behavior. The proposed connections between intentions, perceptions, and behaviors, are well supported in different contexts by research (Perrenoud, 2020).

#### **Succession as Planned Behavior**

The planned behavior theory specifies that the preferred results will be acceptable to the initiator, the result will be acceptable to a comparison group, and the initiator's understanding that the behavior will affect the desired results and will influence the purpose and behavior. There then has to be an initiator to succeed to be a planned behavior and the initiator has to take all three approaches to succession. Succession is widely believed to be primarily regulated by the incumbent business leader. The current President of the company is assumed to start and oversee the succession process in large part (Foster, 2019).

#### **Succession Process and Succession Planning**

The succession scheme comes from the company's decision, for two reasons, to seek succession. Firstly, succession planning practices are included in the succession process. Second, succession planning will improve the likelihood of success. Previous research tends either to deal with succession planning as a single mechanism or incorporate its dimensions in an overall measure. As noted above, this paper addresses succession planning, while it is adding to our understanding, as a long-term mechanism involving many activities and discusses the activities individually (Ali & Mehreen, 2019a).



It is proposed that in the course of succession planning the pool of possible successors should also be identified, the successor chosen and the designated successor as well as other management leaders notified of the decision taken. Some researchers add to this collection of activities the need to develop their successors and to formulate an after-session vision of the business, while others add defining the position of retiring CEO (Bills, et al., 2017).

Succession is a mechanism that involves many events that last for a long time. For the succession method, researchers use the relay race as an example and explain the sequence, timing, sequence, technique, and communication process. Their sequence definition – ensuring the successor is able and experienced to lead the company in the following process – requires both successor selection and preparation. The technique that they describe as a way to achieve succession comprises identifying the position of the retired CEO after succession and designing the company's strategy for succession. In addition, it is necessary to improve communication in business through the process of developing a strategic post-succession strategy for the organization and defining the position of the incumbent after succession (Lu, et al., 2021).

Apart from the similarities in succession practices and succession planning, the literature has long highlighted the contribution that succession planning could make to ensure succession. If the succession plan process includes the inputs of many members, it gives them a sense of ownership that enhances the possibility of a succession that is smooth and satisfactory. In addition, the plan implementation means that the process of succession will continue properly, such that the planning of the succession event is practicable before, during, and after (Perrenoud, 2020).

In short, the practices considered as elements of a succession process by researchers seem to overlap significantly with those considered as part of succession planning. Furthermore, succession planning can help to improve the likelihood of succession. Companies with strong plans of succession should then expect to participate more frequently in successful strategic planning than companies with a less clear aim (Ali & Mehreen, 2019a).

## **Literature Review and Hypothesis Development**

### **Succession Planning**

Succession planning systems are designed to assist companies in managing the talent pipeline. The objective is for managers to identify and enable the amount and quality of the organization's needs and to lead to the successful performance of their companies over time. Succession plans have been described as a standardized process that involves identifying and preparing a prospective successor for taking on a new position and that implies that the process must be repeated and consistent (Foster, 2019). Other words, including human resources management, talent management, workforce planning, and performance management, also interchangeably use this term. However, succession planning generally refers to special investment efforts at any organizational level, but especially near or at the highest level, for the highest, the most successful, or the highest potential talent.

Two aspects are achieved in the most robust succession planning frameworks. First, they have the framework and processes to understand and classify the organizational leadership potential.



Second, to encourage and promote continuing education and growth for the most talented leaders of the organization (Kiwia, et al., 2019).

### **Why Succession Planning?**

Many companies have or may know how to incorporate or implement talent management programs or succession planning. Fifty-eight percent of the total of respondents said their company had a formal or informal succession plan structure in place in a survey performed by Society for Human Resource Management. Another 26% indicated that they wanted to build one. Just 16%, however, had no intention or succession system. To this end, the literature consists of consistent results. It is estimated, for example, that between 40% and 65% of companies have succession planning processes. In a survey of more than 4,500 representatives of more than 900 organizations undertaken by Development Dimensions International, 55% indicated that they had a succession plan (Albalushi, et al., 2019).

So many events, trends, and their possible consequences lead to succession plans being taken seriously by companies. First, demographic developments in the US demonstrate the need for talent development and retention. The generation of baby booms is retiring and the future generation will be populated by significantly smaller numbers of workers. Workers aged 45 or over were rose between 1998 and 2008 from 33% to 40% of the workforce. Over the same timeframe, jobs between 25 and 44 years old declined from 51 to 44%, with a reduction of 3 million from the population projected to replace the projected 17 million retired workers. Twenty-eight percent of the samples reported feeling already the impact of these developments in a study carried out by Accenture by 251 managers around six countries and 5 major industries and 32 percent stated that they expect the effects to begin feeling in 5 years. RHR International estimated in a similar study that 50% or more of the firms surveyed were set to lose their management position (Bogaert, et al., 2019).

The second trend would be that younger employees have attitudes and beliefs that vary from their predecessors towards their employees and employers. Today there are at least three generations of employees, including X and Y. There are variations among these generations but the two seem more independent, more focused on work-life balance, more interesting and useful work, more independent and flexible, and need more instruction and training complemented with baby boomers. They also are more technologically comfortable and knowledgeable and more pessimistic or resentful of the ability of their employers to reward them and preserve them in the future (Umans, et al., 2019).

A third problem is retaining and transferring information as increasingly the competitive advantage of a company changes to employee know-how. Changes in the workforce caused by demographic dynamics, pensions, mid-career changes, and reorganizations would reduce the capacity of the companies for successful action, decision-making, performance, competitiveness, and innovation and development, which could seriously threaten the competitive advantage of one organization (Bokhari, et al., 2020).



## The Benefits of Good Succession Planning

For all these purposes, most companies are aware of the commercial sense of succession planning. Organizations understand the importance of good leadership and that strong succession practices will directly influence and improve the leadership position. The advantages include ensuring continuity of leadership, minimizing turnover, growing staff satisfaction, and enhancing company and financial performance directly or indirectly. In a study conducted among 731 manufacturing organizations, well-run companies in Europe and the United States were considerably better performing than badly managed companies with higher production, profit, and revenue growth. Several analyzes were performed on the database of over 20,000 leaders that demonstrated efficient leadership with a dramatic influence on each observable dimension, such as employee loyalty, turnover, benefit, customer satisfaction, etc. (Perrenoud & Sullivan, 2017)

One survey among 56 U.S. firms showed a 22% higher income for shareholders of those with the highest quintile talent management activities than their industry. Research has shown that businesses with low annual executive turnover rates (less than 5%) often have more formal retention/succession plans, producing substantially lower new hiring costs and lower separation costs per employee. The shareholders' wealth in companies with powerful managers and successful human resources processes, including successions, has shown to be \$41,000 higher per employee in a study of 702 companies (Hassan & Siddiqui, 2020). While there is no evidence of direct return on investment, well-designed, succession planning processes can add significant value in a variety of respects to an organization. Researchers also emphasized the need for successful managers from an organization rather than recruiting them. Recruitment should only be emphasized on lower levels, but leaders from an organization should be developed (Mihaylov & Zurbruegg, 2020).

To ensure that workers in a given organization are sufficiently qualified to further develop and replace their strategic positions within the company structure, succession planning is suggested. An organization without succession plans finds difficulty in different areas without a formal succession plan. Key positions, for example, are not filled on time, key employees are covered by external applicants, the endless turnover horror on key positions, potential substitutes are not ready and the skills are lacking, most skilled talents are not kept. These are some areas of challenge that companies face and never recognize. This is only because of the lack of organized planning (Creta & Gross, 2020).

It has been debated that Job analysis, which can serve a variety of purposes, is the foundation for most human resource departments. The recruitment, selection, direction, training, career growth, counseling, health, protection, performance management including compensation are vital to the analysis of the job. The literature also promotes the planning of successions five years before retirement. The explanation also demonstrates that the succession plan objectives of passing on information and expertise from the manager to the successor to the business, while the manager assumes that the company will continue after the leader dies or retires. Succession Planning means a decision about how and when to pass management, ownership, and power to future owners (Lu, et al., 2021).



H1: Succession planning has a significant and positive association with the organization's salesforce performance.

### **Salesforce Performance and Succession Planning**

The efficiency of the sales force is generally defined as the result of the sales individual and the marketing team. The sales force concept was extended to include additional variables and structures by researchers. It remains however a subject that is under-examined in sales, although it has become a key activity in the improvement of sales performance but lacks a robust description of the compositional elements. As several businesses face the increasingly volatile globally connected market, there remains a widespread awareness of the efficiency of their salesforce and how it can be accomplished (Bartol, et al., 2017).

Compared to other components of market research the efficacy of sales forces had little research focus. The subject of research is the salesman's behavior and the role in the efficiency of sales forces. The research into the efficiency of market forces is usually characterized by the use of a single engine, such as the design of the territory, or just a few variables, such as the position stress and the engagement of the company (Sherrer & Rezania, 2020).

In practical terms, both management including salespeople take appointing or promoting a sales management role very seriously. The promotion of management, for example, is a highly coveted incentive for many salespersons. Despite this recognized significance of the function of the sales manager to guiding the sales force to higher income and profitability, sales people's research has tended to concentrate in the field of recruiting, selection, training, management, compensation, encouragement, and the succession system itself has received little direct attention. The truth is that the behavior and characteristics of salesmen and even less of the people who run them/are only largely known to us (Sherrer & Rezania, 2020). The key issue is that while the sales force is considerably emphasized and, with notable exceptions, little research has been carried out into problems linked to sales management succession. The study aims to broaden the sales succession analysis by investigating the effect of the sequential events on post-sequential performance based on the successor characteristics and the type of sequence while monitoring pre-sequential performance. In particular, the effects of the sales succession and the successor characteristics on the productivity of the textile sales organization will be investigated (Phillips, et al., 2018).

Although the early leadership studies show the emergence of an interest in the consequences of management succession, the subject was only addressed. There were defects in these early studies. Either study includes weak checks or in sports organizations, for example, were performed that prevented broad generalization. Nonetheless, they established a rich foundation for theoretical and future research hypotheses. This early work gave rise to two opposing views on the consequences of succession. First, it argued that a shift in the administration is a disturbing event that led to a decrease in performance after succession. This was the so-called "vicious circle theory," in which the logical result of bad results – a manager's dismissal – was deemed so detrimental that it was possible that the pattern will become more pronounced and the decrease would continue (Mokhber, et al., 2017).



Second, in a research study of the changes to a plant manager in an automobile plant, evidence has been found that succession has improved efficiency. Despite the common sense that an increase in efficiency is the major driving force for a management change, no evidence was found to support the results (Umans, et al., 2020).

The third theoretical point is that a shift in management affects output little to nothing. This notion was originally offered after a reassessment of information suggested that a ceremonial act beneficial for only catharsis was the substitution of a bad boss. To reinforce this position it's been attempted to introduce to the study the dimension of the insider or outsider (Ali & Mehreen, 2019b). No association between team effectiveness and coach succession was found in the detailed study of the Coach Succession of College Basketball Teams. In research focused on baseball management, the literature continued to argue that there was evidence to support the view that seasonal successions are more likely to increase results than annual successions (Al Suwaidi, et al., 2020). Perhaps the most important conclusion is that there is a stronger relationship among pre- and post-performance variables than with any other, but no succession effect has been found for several additive factors, particularly attendance and operating budgets in a study using the Methodist Church ministers as research unit (Phillips, 2021).

The strongest recommendation for further studies to extend this specific relationship is that future studies should concentrate not just on the succession event but also explore the factors correlated with the management transition, especially the successor's skills and experience. The main focus should be on measurable relative objective management features, including age, schooling, or functional experience. Demographics are long regarded as crucial knowledge for the evaluation of customer preferences in marketing strategy and consumer science (Rahman et al., 2020).

In analysing the performance of sales persons, an overall and continuous curiosity for personal characteristics was suggested. The analysis showed that "durable" personality traits have some connection with efficiency, although the connections should be seen to be multi-determining. In practice, emphasis on fairly unbiased and non-psychological context characteristics seems to become important as it is simple to quantify directly and is readily accessible, with normal and well-known scale characteristics. Indirect measures of skills, ability, and growth are also given. Regardless of previous studies, this study will argue that the relationship between succession planning and salesforce performance needs to be evaluated (Phillips, 2021).

H2: Succession planning has a significant and positive impact on Human resource practices. Organizations should follow best practices very broadly to meet the aims described above. Literate contains a full overview of best practices and strategies and many lists. The Corporate Leadership Board and Linkage Inc. also provided descriptions of case studies of companies which provide a detailed overview of best practices. The best practices examined seem to be divided into four groups. First, those who describe the whole process of succession planning. Secondly, the identification, review, and evaluation of key talent. Thirdly, feedback and advancement, and the last is evaluation (Lu et al., 2021).





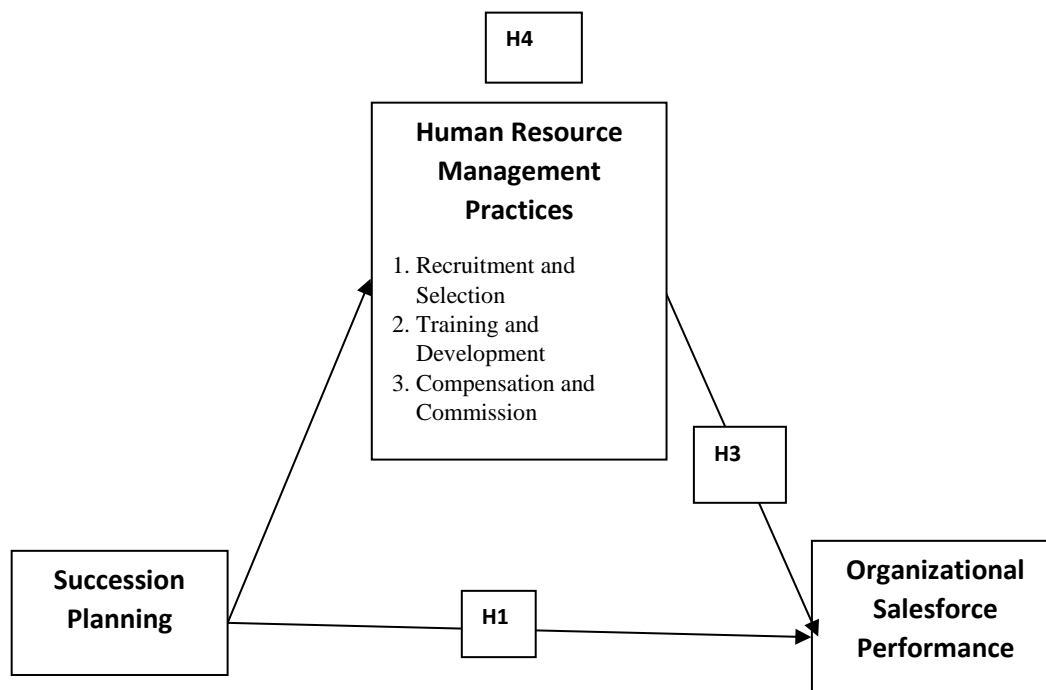
H3: The human management resource practice has a significant and positive association with organization salesforce performance

HR also recognizes the type and working conditions of the sales positions. Not everybody has identical sales positions. Almost 500 000 sales professionals in 12 benchmarked sales positions have been examined in continued research utilizing Growth-Play Chally Assessment data (Ingram, et al., 2019). The findings are convincing: A top manufacturer in a form of a sales position may not be able to maintain relationships in longer-term customer accounts, claim new account acquisition. HR also knows how different positions throughout the sales department come together to produce and attract the right types of talents (Ali & Mehreen, 2019b).

HR also affects the success of organizational salespeople by doing better in assigning the right people to the right positions. Through performing a broad-based audit, HR offers considerable value to measure whether the existing sales force has been optimally deployed. For example, some people in "hunter" roles for customer acquisition may well be better suited for "farmer" roles in account management. Online a single objective evaluation will determine the fitness and the potential for performance for each sales resource in a wide range of sales roles. The findings are used to help salespeople redeploy and plan their careers in the future, and to determine who may profit from coaching (Umans et al., 2020).

HR affects the success of organizational sales by concentrating on 'moving the core.' Sales organizations, at the detriment of mediocre performers, spend far too much time monitoring their top or bottom performers. Literature indicates that, by approaching all three in a way that pushes the centre, the largest economic rewards are obtained. A 900 sales force Growth Play study found that in general, top performers generated 52% of revenues, dependable performers generated 45% and low performers only produced 3%. Even small improvements to the reliable revenue generation of performers may have a significant impact, given that they are the main lion of the traditional sales force in several companies. Therefore, HR has an important role in efficient succession planning to evaluate and manage the best talents (Ingram, et al., 2019).

H4: The Human resource management practice mediates the relationship between succession planning and an organization's salesforce performance





## Methodology

Techniques for non-probable snowball sampling are used for the collection of personal data. The initial respondents are selected using the non-probability procedure in the snowball sampling technique, and the information provided by the first respondents is then selected by other respondents. This study takes two phases. First, the database of the textile company is collected from the stock exchange in Pakistan, and then the random sampling process is used to pick individuals from the industry (Al-Ababneh, 2020).

The survey is credible is the primary tool for data collection in this study. All potential respondents were provided with a questionnaire. The benefit of such questionnaires has been that it covers a wider geographical area, protects respondents' privacy and is suitable for researchers, and has well-structured questions (Oleskeviciene & Sliogeriene, 2020). Data was gathered from 450 managerial level employees in the textile sector of Pakistan. There will be a cross-sectional analysis. At the personal level, an analysis unit is managed. The analysis of data was conducted through techniques such as descriptive statistics, hypothesis testing, correlation analysis, and regression analysis.

Close-ended are the questionnaires distributed among employees of the textile sector of Pakistan. A well-written and organized survey is considered standardized. The same question is distributed among respondents in a similar format and feedback is continuously recorded because it increases the reliability level (Oleskeviciene & Sliogeriene, 2020).

The questionnaire consists of two segments. The first part concerns the demographic and confidential letter together with the explanation of why data was collected. The second part consists of variables instruments and their scale.

As instruments, three things are used. It covers succession planning, organizational salesforce performance, and human resource practice. 5 Likert-scale with anchor points "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" have been used for all of the variables. The succession planning instrument consists of seven items, while the organizational salesforce instrument consists of 5 items. On the other hand, the instrument on human resources has 10 items.



**Data Analysis and Discussion on Results**

**Demographics**

**Table No. 1 Respondent Profiles**

	<i>No.</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
<b><i>Gender of Respondents (N=418)</i></b>			
Male	236	56.5	56.5
Female	182	43.5	43.5
<b><i>Age</i></b>			
Less than 20 Years	68	16.3	16.3
20~29 Years	95	22.7	22.7
30~39 Years	90	21.5	21.5
40~49 Years	82	19.6	19.6
50 and Above	83	19.9	19.9
<b><i>Years of Working Experience (N=418)</i></b>			
1~5 Years	156	37.32	37.32
6~10 Years	225	53.83	91.15
11~20 Years	28	6.70	97.85
21 and Above	2	2.15	100
<b><i>Monthly Income of Respondent(N=418)</i></b>			
PKR40000-60000	210	50.24	50.24
PKR60000-100000	132	31.58	81.82
PKR40000-60000	76	18.18	100.00

**Generalized Linear Model**

The column Exp (B) constitutes one of the major differences between route 2 and route 1 result (and confidence interval). The column Exp (B) contained odds ratios representing the multiplicative variation in the odds of the independent variable being in a higher group, with the residual independent variables being kept constant. An odd ratio > 1 indicates that the dependent variable is increasingly likely to increase as an independent variable increases. In contrast, with increasing values around an independent variable, the ratio is < 1 implies declining likelihood. An add-ratio = 1 indicates no expected shift in the probability that values in an independent variable increase will be in a higher group (Civelek, 2018). For the Route-Two results, generalized linear model tests are needed in SPSS, and the results are shown below:



**Table No. 2: Goodness of Fit**

	Value	Df	Value/df
Deviance	1479.119	3619	.409
Scaled Deviance	1479.119	3619	
Pearson Chi-Square	3991.248	3619	1.103
Scaled Pearson Chi-Square	3991.248	3619	
Log Likelihood	-870.745		
Akaike's Information Criterion (AIC)	1779.489		
Finite Sample Corrected AIC (AICC)	1781.399		
Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC)	1856.164		
Consistent AIC (CAIC)	1875.164		

**Table No. 3: Parameter Estimates**

Parameter	B	Std. Error	95% Wald Confidence Interval		Hypothesis Test			Exp(B)	95% Wald Confidence Interval for Exp(B)	
			Lower	Upper	Wald Chi-Square	df	Sig.		Lower	Upper
[OSP=1.20]	-4.932	1.2283	-7.340	-2.525	16.124	1	.000	.007	.001	.080
[OSP=1.40]	-3.129	.8223	-4.740	-1.517	14.476	1	.000	.044	.009	.219
[OSP=1.60]	-2.716	.7883	-4.261	-1.171	11.868	1	.001	.066	.014	.310
[OSP=1.80]	-1.789	.7466	-3.252	-.326	5.741	1	.017	.167	.039	.722
[OSP=2.00]	-1.292	.7353	-2.733	.150	3.086	1	.079	.275	.065	1.161
[OSP=2.20]	-.965	.7307	-2.397	.467	1.744	1	.187	.381	.091	1.595
[OSP=2.40]	-.417	.7273	-1.842	1.009	.328	1	.567	.659	.158	2.742
[OSP=2.60]	.138	.7267	-1.287	1.562	.036	1	.850	1.148	.276	4.768
[OSP=2.80]	.682	.7273	-.744	2.107	.879	1	.349	1.977	.475	8.225
[OSP=3.00]	1.246	.7281	-.181	2.673	2.929	1	.087	3.477	.834	14.487



[OSP=3.20]	1.748	.7295	.318	3.177	5.741	1	.017	5.742	1.374	23.986
[OSP=3.40]	2.318	.7327	.882	3.754	10.006	1	.002	10.151	2.415	42.674
[OSP=3.60]	2.932	.7381	1.485	4.378	15.777	1	.000	18.761	4.415	79.712
[OSP=3.80]	3.763	.7518	2.289	5.236	25.052	1	.000	43.075	9.869	188.002
[OSP=4.00]	4.741	.7882	3.196	6.286	36.185	1	.000	114.571	24.444	536.999
[OSP=4.20]	5.770	.8835	4.038	7.501	42.644	1	.000	320.433	56.712	1810.506
[OSP=4.40]	6.467	1.0153	4.478	8.457	40.579	1	.000	643.848	88.019	4709.651
SP	.302	.1552	-.002	.607	3.800	1	.051	1.353	.998	1.834
HRP	.073	.1920	-.304	.449	.143	1	.705	1.075	.738	1.566
(Scale)	1 <sup>a</sup>									

The odds ratio shows that the probability of organizational sales force performance rise by a factor of 1.353 for each unit in succession planning (SP). The odds ratio also shows that the odds of organizational salesforce performance are increased by 1.075 for each unit, with Human Resource Practices (HRP). As the odds proportion is >1, this means that the organizational sales force performance is increasing likely, as Human Resources Practice (HRP) increases in terms of values (Civelek, 2018).

### Testing the Mediating Effect

To test the mediating effect of human resource management practices of organizations, the bootstrapping technique was used. Bootstrapping is a non-parametric resampling procedure that does not saddle the sampling distribution with the assumption of normality (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). The rationale behind using the bootstrapping technique in this study is because it offers higher levels of statistical potential in relation to Sobel's test (Spector & Jex, 1998). Using the bootstrap technique, firstly, the path coefficients were determined to evaluate the direct effect model (H1, H2, H3) and mediating variable (H4). In the second step, a percentile bootstrap was employed at the lower level of 2.5% and the upper level of 97.5% of the confidence interval to reach the significant estimates of the mediating effect (Williams & MacKinnon, 2008). For a mediated relationship, when the confidence interval does not contain 0 (means, both symbols are the same), this implies that the indirect effect is notably different from 0 with a confidence level of 97.5% and the mediation exists. The results of the mediating effect are presented in Table 4.



**Table No. 4: Mediation Analysis**

Hypothesis	Relationship	Std. Beta	Std. Error	t-values	p-values	Confidence Intervals	Decision
H4	SP→HRMP→SFP	0.158	0.046	3.458	0.001	0.077 0.258	Mediated

SP = Succession Planning

HRMP = Human Resource Management Practices

SFP = Sales Force Performance

H4 postulated that the human resource practice mediates the relationship between succession planning and an organization’s salesforce performance. The results shown in the indirect effect model shows that mediation occurs since ( $\beta= 0.158$ ;  $t\text{-value}=3.458$ ;  $p<0.05$ ; Lower level= $0.077$ ; Upper level= $0.258$ ). Hence, H4 is supported.

### Discussion on Research Findings

This study examined the impact of succession planning on sales force performance under the mediation of human resources in Pakistan. Different questions need to be answered. For example, does Succession planning has a positive and significant association with the organization’s salesforce performance? Is succession planning associated with human resource practices significantly and positively? Does the Human resource practice have a significant positive association with the organizational salesforce performance? There are three central objectives of this research. The first one is to study the impact of succession planning on Pakistan's organizational salesforce performance. The second one is to study the impact of succession planning in the context of Pakistan on human resources practice. The third one is to study the impact of human resources practice on the performance of the organizational sales force in Pakistan. To achieve the objectives of the study, three hypotheses based on previous researches were proposed. To check the impact of the proposed constructs, items were adopted to take a survey from people of the textile sector of Pakistan.

In several steps, the collected data were processed to convert raw data into the final result. For additional screening and preliminary testing to comply with normality assumptions, data were initially gathered was coded in SPSS. The analysis of the missing values, a 92.88% response rate, and a 100% valid response rate was found out in these preliminary tests. After preliminary analysis, descriptive analysis is done for key demographic variables with SPSS which found the appropriate representation of different groups such as male, females, marital status, age groups, and income groups. The people who participated in the study were bachelor or have a university degree qualification and were either administrators, managers, or executive officers. Taking into consideration all assertions of a multivariate normal distribution, a normal distribution testing was carried to sort the skewness and kurtosis and ended up finding that the range of skewness is one from  $-0.307$  to  $0.119$  which thus means it hasn't violated the assumption by having gone over and above  $\pm 3$ . The kurtosis of all this analysis falls between  $-0.024$  and  $0.238$ , which also indicates that the limit is not exceeding kurtosis i-e  $\pm 10$ . A



thorough discussion with planned objectives and hypotheses on statistical results is carried out in subsequent sections.

### **Theoretical Implications**

The relationships involving human resources practice (HR) and organizational performance has been the subject of researchers over the years. However, the correlation between HR practice and organizational sales personal performance is a more current issue. Researchers have provided a lot of evidence that the effects of HR activities improve the performance of the organization. However, the parallels between staff results and HR tasks are less obvious. Succession planning has become today an important issue for businesses and a massive future problem. Succession planning is a coordinated program to identify leadership requirements, recognize workers with significant potential, develop leadership skills for selected personnel and pick them for very important roles.

As indicated, the research background for this study is significant and, as many organizations follow the specific pattern of succession planning, no credible figures and data were available for Pakistan. This research has helped establish the current literature that succession planning and organizational sales force performance have a positive relationship. It has also made a significant contribution that the human resources practices have a positive influence on the organizational sales force performance. Hence, the overall contribution is that succession planning under the mediation of human resource practices has a positive influence on the organizational sales force performance.

### **Practical Implications**

The assessments and results provide a range of practical perspectives. The reason for this study was to assess the effect of succession planning on the performance of salespeople under human resources mediation in Pakistan. The study found that succession planning programs are structured to support firms in the management of the talent pipeline. The goal is for managers to identify and facilitate the quantity and quality of their needs, and overtime to achieve the success of their businesses. Organizations recognize the value of effective leadership and the impact and improvement of the leadership role on successful succession planning. The benefits include maintaining management stability, reducing turnover, increasing employee satisfaction, and improving directly/indirectly enterprise and financial efficiency.

Salespeople and the marketing team usually described the productivity of the salesforce. Additional variables, as well as structures, were added to the sales force concept by researchers. The effectiveness of sales forces has little research emphasis compared to other elements of market research. Salespeople's behavior and the role of salespeople in productivity are the subjects of research. Regardless of previous research, the relationship between succession planning and salesforce results is positive.

Human resources management works in different fields, including task management, needs planning and employee recruitment, the determination of pay and wage levels, conflict resolution, and the creation of a healthier work environment and employee safety. To make the right use, the Organization uses its control over human capital. In addition, the Department



supports the growth of workers in their general advancement through technical and organizational development. It also helps upgrade the skills and awareness of employees. Human resources management ensures a quality working life for employees. Therefore, the value of human resources management is evident in terms of organizational performance. Many firms set up and understand the need of their HR department in today's business environment.

### **Conclusion**

The study aimed to assess the effect on sales force performance in Pakistan of succession planning through the mediation of human resources. To relate the constructs, a research model has been developed in which three relations are assumed to be positive and significant. The results of this study could be used as references for future succession planning. This study has contributed to the existing literature as it has found that there is a positive relationship between succession planning and organizational sales force performance. It has also contributed and found that human resources practices have a positive impact on the performance of the organizational sales force. The overall contribution and finding are therefore that succession planning by human resource activities have a positive effect on the performance of the organizational sales force.

As a whole, this particular research has found positive links between the factors, succession planning, human resources practices, and organizational sales force performance. Human resources practice has been shown to play an important role in the positive relationship between succession planning and organizational sales force performance through key activities such as recruitment, selection, training, and development. With previous studies, the results of the study are fairly constant. It is high time to concentrate on succession planning to succeed locally and internationally and contribute to the country's development. The results will help stakeholders, policymakers, managers, and researchers develop rigorous ways to maximize the involvement of businesses in succession planning.

### **Recommendations**

Here are a few recommendations for all relevant parties, in particular, the human resource department:

Organizations need to understand how important great management is and how strong succession planning practices directly impact and improve organizational performance. The benefits include maintaining management stability, reducing turnover, increasing employee satisfaction, and improving directly/indirectly organizational and financial performance.

There also is a need for promising talents from an organization instead of recruiting them. Only lower levels of recruitment should be emphasized, but organizational leaders should be developed through succession planning. The development of customized management training programs that provide an integral, custom-made approach towards developing the skills is needed to support established succession candidates.

HRM must also review and propose suitable rewards to manage fast track stars and ensure that their performance is properly compensated. HR also needs to review and improve employee





retention programs to retain the brightest and finest. Develop monitoring systems for the management and the board to learn about performance.

Organizations should adopt best practices that have been widely established. The Best Practices that were examined appear to be grouped into four categories: (a) characterizing the entire succession planning process; (b) identifying, assessing, and evaluating key talent; (c) retroactions and developments, and (d) evaluating.

### **Limitations and Future Directions**

Despite the considerable influencing factors discussed in previous chapters, it's indeed critically crucial to acknowledge the limitations of this study which might be beneficial for future research as constraints send messages for further research and study. Only from the textile sector of Pakistan, the data was gathered using the non-probability sampling technique. For this topic, other sectors might be considered by future researchers. It is a cross-sectional study because of time limitations, longitudinal study could be carried in the future for more precision. The statistical findings show that succession planning has a direct positive relationship with the performance of the sales force, through the mediation of human resources activities. However, future research in the current theoretical model could incorporate further constructs to assess the effect of succession plans on organizational sales force performance by human resource practices. The responses received from questionnaires from different sources were, on the other hand, wholly reliant on the respondents. Independent questionnaires with large samples may be conducted in the future to improve validity and reliability.

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