

The Relationship Between Knowledge Management Systems and Leadership Preparation within Succession Plans in Learning Organizations

(A field study at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia University, Jijel)

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Abstract

This study aims to underscore the scientific and applied significance of leadership succession planning, and to examine the underlying relationship between knowledge management systems and leadership succession planning within learning organizations. To strengthen the theoretical foundation through empirical investigation, a structured questionnaire comprising four dimensions was developed to collect data from a purposive random sample of 31 participants, consisting of professors holding senior administrative positions at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia University in Jijel Province. Data analysis was conducted using statistical techniques provided by the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The findings revealed several key results, most notably:

The study findings revealed a statistically significant positive relationship between knowledge management processes and leadership succession, ranging from strong in knowledge application, moderate in knowledge sharing, to positive in knowledge acquisition. Conversely, a weak and non-statistically significant relationship was found with knowledge storage, while learning organization characteristics positively enhanced this relationship and increased leaders' readiness for succession.

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First section: The conceptual framework of the study

1. Problem statement

In the context of accelerating global cognitive shifts and deep technological transformations, knowledge has become the most strategic resource for organizational continuity and development, representing the central form of capital that distinguishes high-performing institutions from others. Organizational effectiveness is no longer evaluated primarily through financial or material assets, but increasingly through the capacity to generate knowledge, manage it efficiently, disseminate it effectively, and apply it in the pursuit of strategic objectives. Within this framework, knowledge management has emerged as a pivotal orientation in contemporary administrative thought, focusing on structuring knowledge and regulating its processes of acquisition, storage, sharing, and application in a manner that enhances organizational performance and ensures sustainable institutional excellence.

In parallel with these ongoing transformations across organizational environments, institutions are confronted with an additional and equally pressing challenge: ensuring the availability of competent, qualified, and high-performing human resources capable of sustaining leadership continuity, preserving organizational stability, and adapting

effectively to future uncertainties and changes.

The increasing integration of modern human resource practices grounded in behavioral and organizational management approaches—such as the reinforcement of participatory organizational cultures, the consolidation of organizational integration, the implementation of job rotation and mobility mechanisms, and the adoption of transformational leadership and participatory governance models, alongside structured promotion and retirement systems—has significantly reshaped human resource management paradigms. These practices are no longer limited to operational procedures; rather, they function as a strategic framework for cultivating employees' latent potential and systematically preparing them for future leadership responsibilities. This evolution has contributed to the development of a qualified human capital base capable of ensuring leadership continuity within organizations.

Within this analytical framework, there is a growing necessity to adopt structured and systematic approaches grounded in succession planning, enabling the preparation of potential leaders capable of assuming critical organizational positions at the appropriate time without disrupting operational continuity or undermining the quality of decision-making processes. In this regard, the activation of effective mechanisms for the transfer of knowledge

and experiential expertise between incumbent leaders and prospective candidates becomes increasingly central. Consequently, knowledge management systems constitute a foundational component in reinforcing the effectiveness of leadership succession programs and ensuring their long-term sustainability.

In this context, learning organizations have emerged as a suitable and enabling environment for the implementation of knowledge management practices. Such organizations are characterized by a culture that promotes continuous learning, participatory engagement, and innovation, thereby fostering favorable conditions for the development of future leaders and the consolidation of institutional performance. Nevertheless, a notable limitation persists, as the relationship between knowledge management systems and leadership preparation programs within succession planning frameworks has not yet been sufficiently explored in the academic literature, particularly within higher education institutions that operate under distinctive organizational structures and require specialized leadership competencies.

Although a considerable body of research has examined knowledge management and leadership succession planning as separate constructs, the literature remains limited regarding their integrated interaction within learning organizations, especially in Arab and Algerian contexts. It is further

observed that leadership positions in universities are often entrusted to academic staff members with varying levels of scientific expertise and heterogeneous managerial competencies, which raises critical questions about their preparedness to assume roles that demand advanced leadership capabilities, innovation-oriented thinking, and sophisticated organizational skills. This situation highlights a clear research gap that warrants systematic investigation.

Despite the strategic importance of succession planning in ensuring leadership continuity within organizations, it continues to receive limited attention in many institutions, particularly in Arab contexts, often due to the absence of a coherent strategic vision or insufficient reliance on long-term planning instruments. Considering that Algerian universities are recognized as knowledge-based learning organizations, these observations give rise to the following central research question: to what extent can knowledge management systems contribute to enhancing leadership preparation and increasing leaders' readiness within succession planning frameworks in learning organizations?

2. Study sub-questions

- What is the status of the availability and implementation of key knowledge management systems (knowledge acquisition, storage, sharing, and application) within selected administrative

practices of professors holding senior administrative positions at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the university under study?

- What are the most prominent personal and functional characteristics of professors occupying senior administrative positions within the faculty under study in the context of leadership succession planning?
- What is the level of readiness of professors nominated for administrative responsibility associated with senior leadership positions within succession planning frameworks at the faculty under study?
- Is there a statistically significant relationship between the components of knowledge management systems and the level of leadership readiness within succession planning processes?
- From the perspective of the study sample, what key practices can university management adopt to strengthen knowledge management systems?
- From the perspective of leaders occupying positions within succession frameworks, what essential capabilities should be developed among candidates to enhance their readiness for leadership succession processes?

3. Study hypotheses

3.1 General hypothesis

- There is a statistically significant relationship between the level of implementation of knowledge management

systems and the level of leadership preparation within succession planning frameworks in learning organizations.

3.2 Sub-hypotheses

- There is a statistically significant relationship between organizational knowledge acquisition and leaders' readiness for succession planning processes.
- There is a statistically significant relationship between knowledge storage and documentation systems and the enhancement of the effectiveness of leadership succession processes.
- There is a statistically significant relationship between knowledge sharing and exchange among academic staff and the acceleration of leadership preparation within succession planning frameworks.
- There is a statistically significant relationship between the application and dissemination of acquired knowledge in daily administrative practices and the effectiveness of leadership preparation programs.
- The characteristics of learning organizations (continuous learning, collective thinking, shared vision) function as a mediating variable that strengthens the relationship between knowledge management systems and leaders' readiness for succession planning.

4. Study importance

The significance of this study is grounded in a set of interrelated theoretical and

practical considerations that directly reflect the ongoing organizational and knowledge-driven transformations within higher education institutions. These aspects can be articulated as follows:

4.1. From a theoretical perspective

- The study contributes to the enrichment of scientific understanding regarding the relationship between knowledge management systems and leadership preparation within succession planning frameworks, a relationship that remains insufficiently explored within the Arab and Algerian university context in particular.
- It brings together three contemporary constructs in management and organizational behavior—knowledge management, leadership succession, and learning organizations—thereby proposing an integrated conceptual perspective that enhances analytical coherence across these domains.
- The findings may serve as a conceptual foundation for the development of theoretical models explaining how organizational knowledge contributes to the construction and sustainability of leadership capabilities over time.

4.2. From a practical perspective

- The study supports university managers and decision-makers in operationalizing knowledge management systems as a practical mechanism for preparing competent and qualified academic leaders.

- It provides higher education administrators with applied indicators concerning the readiness of current and potential leaders, while also helping to identify strengths and developmental gaps among candidates nominated for senior leadership positions alongside their academic responsibilities.
- It offers actionable recommendations for improving the design of leadership succession planning mechanisms in higher education institutions by leveraging organizational knowledge as a strategic resource for human capital development and institutional effectiveness.

5. Study objectives

This study, in its overall orientation and expected outcomes, aims to analyze and interpret the role of knowledge management systems in preparing academic leaders within succession planning frameworks in learning organizations, through the following specific objectives:

- Diagnosing the current status of the implementation of knowledge management systems (acquisition, storage, sharing, application) as administrative practices within the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia University, Jijel.
- Determining the level of readiness of academic staff to assume leadership positions within succession planning

frameworks at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.

- Analyzing and interpreting the nature of the relationship between the components of knowledge management systems and the level of leadership preparation for senior administrative roles within the faculty under study.
- Identifying the role of key characteristics of learning organizations in strengthening the relationship between knowledge management systems and leadership preparation processes.
- Anticipating and formulating practical recommendations that support university administrations in developing mechanisms for leadership preparation and ensuring the sustainability of organizational performance.

6. Operational definitions of the study concepts

6.1. Knowledge Management Systems (KMS):

In the context of this study, this term refers to the extent to which professors occupying senior administrative positions within the faculty of the university under study engage in knowledge management practices, which include the following dimensions:

- Knowledge acquisition: a systematic organizational and administrative process aimed at gathering diverse forms of new knowledge and expertise from multiple internal and external sources.

- Knowledge storage: an organizational process concerned with the preservation and structuring of knowledge in databases or digital repositories in a manner that ensures ease of retrieval and future utilization.

- Knowledge sharing: a process through which ideas, information, and experiential knowledge are exchanged among deans, department heads, and academic staff through formal meetings and available communication systems.

- Knowledge application: the utilization of acquired knowledge to enhance performance, improve learning processes, and strengthen administrative empowerment, thereby supporting more informed and effective leadership decision-making.

6.2. Learning Organization

This refers to the extent to which professors occupying senior administrative positions at Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia University in Jijel demonstrate behaviors and practices consistent with the defining attributes of a learning organization. These attributes include the presence of a shared vision and collectively defined objectives among staff members, the practice of collaborative learning and cooperative problem-solving, the promotion of systemic thinking through an understanding of the interdependence between decisions and outcomes, and an organizational orientation that supports experimentation and continuous learning.

6.3. Leadership Succession Readiness

In the context of this study, this concept refers to the degree of preparedness of professors occupying senior administrative positions at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the university under study to assume higher leadership roles within the academic succession planning framework. It is operationalized through the following indicators:

- Leadership readiness: possession of essential leadership knowledge, competencies, and behavioral capabilities.
- Knowledge and experience transfer: the extent to which prospective candidates benefit from the experiential knowledge of incumbent leaders.
- Empowerment and participation: the involvement of candidates in decision-making processes and assumption of administrative responsibilities.
- Leadership continuity: the degree of structured planning governing the systematic transition and rotation of leadership positions.

Second section: The theoretical background of the study

First requirement: The theoretical foundation of the knowledge management variable:

1. Concept of knowledge management

In 1980, during the first American conference on artificial intelligence, Edward Feigenbaum introduced the widely

cited statement that “knowledge is power.” This assertion marked a significant intellectual turning point that contributed to the emergence of a new scientific field known as Knowledge Engineering, alongside the introduction of a specialized professional role referred to as the knowledge engineer. In 1997, knowledge management emerged as an independent field of study, driven by the growing recognition of knowledge as a critical resource in the information age. This development was reflected in academic discourse and the establishment of specialized journals. During the second half of the 1990s, knowledge management became one of the most prominent and rapidly evolving areas within administrative and organizational sciences (Al-Zaher, 2009, p. 75).

A critical reading of the knowledge management literature indicates the absence of a single unified definition, due to its interdisciplinary nature, conceptual breadth, and dynamic evolution. Although knowledge-related practices have long existed within organizational settings, knowledge management is considered a relatively recent academic field. The term “knowledge management” is often attributed to Don Marchand in the early 1980s. Scholars have approached this concept from multiple perspectives, shaped by their disciplinary backgrounds and analytical orientations. Broadly, two main schools of thought can be identified in the literature (Vestscheva and Koszegi, 2005, p. 5):

- The intellectual capital perspective, which includes tacit knowledge as a central component.
- The information systems perspective, which focuses primarily on explicit knowledge (Taleb and Al-Janabi, 2009, pp. 65–66).

A review of the conceptual literature shows that the researcher, after extensive examination, identified several definitions aligned with the objectives of the study. Cross defined knowledge management (Little et al., 2002, p. 9) as a system that fosters a productive organizational environment and a learning-oriented climate that supports the generation of both individual and organizational knowledge, its accumulation, and its application in creating added organizational value.

Frappaolo and Capshaw (1999, p. 44) defined it as a set of practices and technologies designed to facilitate the efficient generation, exchange, and utilization of knowledge at the organizational level. Abu Farah (2008) described it as the explicit and systematic management of knowledge-related activities, practices, and programs within organizations (Al-Ziyadat, 2008, p. 56).

It has also been conceptualized as the creation of an enabling organizational environment that supports processes of knowledge creation, transfer, and sharing, with emphasis on establishing a supportive organizational culture reinforced by strategic leadership, ultimately aimed at

enhancing organizational performance outcomes such as customer loyalty. Knowledge management has further been described as a systematic and dynamic process concerned with explicit knowledge based on an organizational knowledge base, encompassing the creation, organization, dissemination, utilization, and exploration of knowledge (Al-Ali, Qandilji, and Al-Amri, 2006, p. 27).

Other perspectives define it as a set of organizational activities and processes that enable the generation, acquisition, selection, utilization, organization, and dissemination of knowledge, and its transformation—including data, information, experiences, attitudes, and capabilities—into products and services. It is also applied in decision-making, problem-solving, learning processes, and the development of strategic planning systems. In addition, knowledge management involves identifying and analyzing both existing and required knowledge assets and processes in a manner that supports the achievement of organizational objectives (Faraj Al-Taher, 2010, p. 93).

2. Importance of knowledge management

A critical and systematic examination of knowledge management definitions reveals a set of core implications that highlight the strategic importance of this concept in enhancing the effectiveness and development of administrative practices

within contemporary organizations, as follows:

- Contributing to the generation, development, and continuous renewal of organizational knowledge.
- Facilitating the dissemination, exchange, and transfer of experiential expertise among employees across organizational levels.
- Supporting creativity and innovation processes while enabling the creation of added organizational value.
- Enhancing the quality and reliability of decision-making processes and strengthening organizational problem-solving capabilities.
- Promoting organizational learning and reinforcing the structural and functional foundations of learning organizations.
- Ensuring the preservation, organization, and efficient utilization of organizational knowledge assets.
- Supporting strategic planning processes and strengthening competitive positioning and advantage.
- Improving overall organizational performance while increasing productivity, efficiency, and effectiveness.

3. Knowledge required by the organization

Every learning organization requires access to multiple interconnected forms of knowledge that support its operational and strategic functioning, including:

- Knowledge of technical production processes, referring to the transformation of inputs into outputs within the organizational system.
- Knowledge of raw materials, including the identification of materials used and the methods of their handling and management.

- Information related to product or service demand, which is essential for planning, forecasting, and production decision-making.

These foundational forms of knowledge are essential for the proper design and structuring of any organization, as they determine the nature of job roles, employee qualifications, task distribution, and the degree of autonomy granted within the organizational system. Accordingly, knowledge management requires the precise identification of these knowledge domains, ensuring that no critical knowledge components are overlooked or underutilized (Faraj Al-Taher, 2010, p. 42).

Second requirement: The theoretical foundation of the leadership succession variable

1. Concept of leadership succession planning

A review of the literature on leadership succession planning indicates that it is a relatively recent construct within modern management thought, although its conceptual foundations can be traced back to the early twentieth century. It was implicitly referenced in the works of Henri Fayol, particularly through his emphasis on ensuring leadership continuity as a fundamental principle of organizational sustainability. Early practical applications of succession planning were primarily observed within family-owned enterprises, where it was implemented through the preparation of a qualified successor to assume leadership roles and maintain organizational continuity.

Jack Welch, former CEO of General Electric, emphasized the strategic importance of succession planning in corporate leadership. He stated nine years

prior to his retirement: “From now on, choosing my successor is the most important decision I will make.” (Al-Raisi, 2026, p. 54) The concept of leadership succession is conceptually derived from the broader notion of sustainability, originally developed within environmental sciences. Sustainability is defined as the capacity of societies to meet present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This idea has been adapted into the field of leadership succession, where it refers to a developmental process aimed at cultivating and retaining leadership talent in a manner that ensures continuity without causing harm to current or future organizational stakeholders (Brenda, R. Blackburn, 2015, p. 38).

Leadership succession has also been defined as a continuous and systematic planning process aimed at preparing a qualified second tier of leaders capable of assuming leadership positions when required. This is achieved through structured training and development programs, investment in employee capabilities and talents, and deliberate preparation to ensure readiness for future leadership roles (Hassan Hummam, 2022, p. 21).

Other perspectives conceptualize leadership succession as a mechanism for identifying critical leadership positions across all organizational levels, beginning with executive roles and extending to the highest leadership positions. It also involves structuring leadership roles in a manner that ensures flexibility within the succession process, while guaranteeing that leadership competencies are sufficiently broad and aligned with the organization's

overall strategic objectives (William J. Rothwell, 2010, p. 6).

Some perspectives conceptualize leadership succession planning as a set of systems, procedures, and models designed to ensure the placement of the appropriate leader in the appropriate position at the appropriate time, thereby enabling the organization to achieve its strategic objectives and meet the expectations of its stakeholders (Al-Bawardi, 2017, p. 197). Al-Dulaimi (2017) defines it as a structured organizational plan designed to prepare and qualify employees to assume leadership responsibilities at the moment a current leader exits their position, whether due to illness, transfer, retirement, promotion, or other circumstances, in a manner that ensures the continuity of work with efficiency and effectiveness (Al-Dosari, Aromogam, and Shamsi, 2023, p. 436).

2. *Characteristics of leadership succession planning*

Based on the preceding definitions, several key characteristics of leadership succession planning can be identified as follows:

- Continuous strategic process: leadership succession planning is not limited to filling leadership vacancies as they arise; rather, it is grounded in long-term, proactive planning aimed at preparing future leaders.

- Structured and institutional nature: it is typically guided by formal policies, procedures, and models that regulate the selection and preparation of future leaders in a systematic manner.

- Emphasis on development and qualification: it relies on structured training and the continuous development of individuals' knowledge, competencies, and

leadership capabilities in preparation for higher responsibilities.

- Focus on critical leadership positions: it involves identifying essential leadership roles within the organization and preparing qualified alternatives capable of assuming them when required.

- Flexibility in leadership transition: it ensures smooth and stable leadership turnover through the availability of adequately prepared individuals ready to assume various positions without operational disruption.

- Reliance on competence and merit: selection and preparation processes are based on leadership potential, demonstrated abilities, and merit-based criteria rather than arbitrary or informal selection mechanisms.

3. *Justifications for implementing leadership succession in higher education and scientific research institutions*

In higher education and scientific research institutions, leadership succession planning has evolved from an optional administrative practice into a strategic necessity, particularly in contexts where leadership positions are predominantly held by academic researchers who possess strong scientific expertise but may have limited administrative and managerial experience. A review of relevant studies indicates several key justifications for adopting such planning in these institutions, as follows:

- The restriction of certain administrative positions in Algerian universities to members of the academic staff (such as dean, head of department, deputy head of department, program coordinator, and

specialization coordinators), which limits the pool of eligible candidates.

- The limited administrative experience of some professors, attributable to their prior exclusive focus on academic and scientific research, which may affect their readiness for managerial responsibilities.

- The rotational nature of senior academic positions within universities as a mechanism for activating leadership succession, particularly in cases where previous incumbents have not demonstrated sufficient administrative effectiveness or value-added contribution.

- The identification by senior university leadership of a misalignment between the responsibilities assigned to academic administrators and the broader institutional objectives.

- The need to ensure continuity in institutional missions, maintain organizational stability, and prevent leadership gaps that may disrupt administrative functioning.

The necessity of mitigating the effects of limited administrative experience among academic leaders, many of whom come from predominantly academic backgrounds.

- Strengthening transparency and reducing arbitrary appointments by grounding leadership succession in objective criteria such as administrative competence, leadership capacity, prior performance, and evaluation outcomes, thereby limiting non-merit-based selection practices.

- Enhancing job satisfaction, reducing organizational conflict, promoting continuous improvement, and reinforcing organizational justice, which collectively contribute to a more stable and

competitively balanced institutional environment.

Third requirement: The theoretical foundation of the learning organization variable:

1. Concept of the learning organization:

The learning organization is regarded as one of the contemporary administrative concepts that has been addressed in the literature under various designations, including “knowledge-based organizations” and “thinking organizations.” The concept was first systematically articulated by Peter Senge (1990) in his seminal work *The Fifth Discipline* (1990), where he argued that organizations must develop five core disciplines to evolve into learning organizations. These disciplines include: personal mastery, mental models, shared vision, team learning, and systems thinking. Senge further emphasized that systems thinking represents the integrative core that connects and governs the interaction among the other four disciplines (Al-Khoury, Darwish, and Ghoneim, 2017, pp. 10–11).

The concept of the learning organization has been extensively examined in management and organizational literature and has increasingly attracted scholarly attention across diverse academic disciplines. Based on the reviewed literature, several conceptual approaches can be identified, as follows:

- The learning organization as an administrative philosophy: Peter (2000) conceptualizes it as an organization grounded in a coherent philosophy that emphasizes anticipating, adapting to, and responding effectively to environmental uncertainty and continuous change.

- The learning organization as an adaptive process:

Garvin (1993) defines it as an organization capable of systematically creating, acquiring, and transferring knowledge across all managerial levels, while also adapting its behavior in response to technological developments and environmental demands. Birleson (1996) describes it as an organization that establishes both structural and cultural foundations that support continuous learning and adaptive processes, with the aim of achieving organizational objectives as well as meeting the needs and aspirations of its members (Al-Salem, 2008, pp. 31–32).

Eduardo Davel and Diane Gabrielle conceptualize learning organizations as organizational models that construct their future through continuous interactive adaptation and transformation in response to environmental change. Within this framework, such organizations are capable of creating, acquiring, storing, transferring, and applying knowledge in a purposeful manner, while also transforming their behavioral patterns to generate new knowledge (Al-Bay, 2014, p. 98).

The learning organization as a learning process:

Moilanen (2001, p. 7) conceptualizes the learning organization as an entity that is consciously and systematically managed through a deliberate focus on the learning process itself. In this view, learning constitutes a core and essential element embedded within the organization's values, objectives, and vision, as well as within its day-to-day operational activities.

Similarly, Pedler (1995), in *The Learning Company*, argues that learning organizations are those that actively

establish the necessary conditions to facilitate learning processes while continuously adapting their internal structures to support such processes (Al-Salem, 2008, pp. 30–31).

Marquardt defines the learning organization as an entity that learns collectively and effectively, and continuously transforms itself by enhancing its capacity to manage and utilize knowledge, empowering individuals through learning within and beyond the organization, and leveraging technology to optimize learning and productivity (Saad Al-Ahmari, 2017, p. 20). Boydell and Pedler further describe it as a system that facilitates learning for all members and maintains the capacity for continuous transformation. Hawkins (1991) similarly defines it as organizations that support employee learning at all levels while continuously modifying their structures and practices (Al-Faroukh, 2010, p. 37).

The learning organization as a process of change: Rodéric defines it as an organization capable of learning from its environment and internal problems, and of responding appropriately to occurring changes at a faster pace than its competitors. This perspective highlights the adaptive and dynamic nature of the learning organization, emphasizing its capacity for continuous responsiveness to environmental and organizational change.

The learning organization as a process of knowledge acquisition: It is an organization that proactively acquires, generates, and transfers new knowledge, while continuously modifying its behavior based on that newly acquired knowledge and in accordance with a forward-looking

strategic vision (Al-Khalaf and Youssef, 2017, pp. 60–62).

In a closely related formulation, Garvin (1993) characterizes the learning organization as one that possesses the capacity to create or acquire knowledge, disseminate it across its members, and systematically realign its behaviors and strategic vision in accordance with that knowledge (Al-Faroukh, 2010, p. 37).

A synthesis of the above definitions indicates that the concept of the learning organization is multidimensional rather than singular in nature. It is grounded in an integrated set of components, including continuous learning, environmental adaptation, knowledge management, and organizational transformation. These conceptualizations consistently highlight that learning organizations rely on the continuous development of human capabilities and the effective utilization of knowledge to enhance performance and strengthen responsiveness to both internal and external environmental dynamics. Accordingly, learning, knowledge acquisition, and their translation into organizational practices constitute the foundational mechanisms that ensure organizational sustainability, adaptive capacity, and goal achievement within a dynamic and competitive environment.

2. *Main roles of the leader in learning organizations*

Several scholars have examined the principal roles that leaders are expected to perform within learning-oriented environments. In this regard, Cavaleri and Fearon (1996) identified three core leadership roles that correspond with the framework proposed by Senge (1990), as follows:

- The leader as designer:

In this role, the leader assumes two fundamental responsibilities. The first involves the design of guiding ideas that shape organizational governance within its social context, particularly in relation to purpose, mission, and core values. These elements represent the visible dimension of the organization's social architecture and provide a stabilizing reference point during periods of crisis and uncertainty. The second responsibility is more complex and concerns the design of organizational policies, strategies, and structural arrangements in a manner that enables teams to comprehend, internalize, and exchange knowledge, thereby fostering collective learning processes.

Through this design-oriented function, the leader seeks to achieve coherence among organizational resources and align them with the cognitive and functional frameworks of employees. This alignment allows the organization to operate as an interconnected system, both internally and in relation to its external environment. Within this perspective, the effective designer is one who understands wholes rather than isolated parts, recognizes systemic interdependencies, and establishes integrative structures that align vision, objectives, and values in a manner that produces effective learning outcomes and facilitates knowledge transfer.

- The leader as teacher:

In this role, the leader acts as a facilitator of learning by providing practical models and alternative assumptions that enable employees to acquire knowledge, develop experience, and reconstruct their understanding of organizational reality. This involves helping individuals perceive

events more accurately and interpret their underlying causes rather than their surface manifestations. Through this function, leaders contribute to expanding cognitive horizons and enabling the reconstruction of future organizational possibilities through continuous learning and reflection.

- The leader as servant:

This role is characterized by the leader's genuine commitment to serving the organization and its members, prioritizing support, guidance, and responsiveness to their needs. Within this perspective, leadership is fundamentally defined as a service-oriented practice aimed at enabling others. Accordingly, the leader does not impose ideas or enforce acceptance, as subordinates may possess insights and competencies that surpass those of the leader in certain contexts. (Saeed Al-Salem, 2008, pp. 154–155)

In addition to these roles, further leadership functions can be identified in contemporary organizations that operate within the framework of learning organizations, including the following:

- Leadership as a behavioral, managerial, social, and organizational competence, which in traditional structures was limited to a small group of individuals, but in learning organizations is increasingly distributed across a broader range of members as part of organizational development strategies.

- The leader in learning organizations is a competent and continuously learning individual whose performance has a direct impact on organizational effectiveness, goal attainment, and developmental progress, in contrast to inadequately prepared leadership that may hinder organizational adaptation and

responsiveness to technological and procedural change.

- The leader promotes a culture of teamwork, reinforces cooperative behavior, and encourages mutual support among organizational members at all levels, while simultaneously fostering autonomy, empowerment, and continuous learning within a climate characterized by trust and knowledge sharing.
- The leader anticipates and sets high yet attainable expectations regarding performance and outcomes, including quality, excellence, and rapid responsiveness to changes in both internal and external environments.
- The core essence of leadership within learning organizations lies in enhancing the organization's capacity for learning, enabling it to draw upon accumulated experience, and systematically benefiting from iterative processes of trial, reflection, and improvement.

Third section: Methodological procedures of the study

1. Research methodology

This study adopted the descriptive method due to its suitability for the nature of the topic and its alignment with the objectives of the research. This approach is primarily intended to describe the existing reality of knowledge management systems and to analyze their role in leadership preparation within succession planning processes in learning organizations. It is grounded in examining the phenomenon as it occurs in its natural context, while also focusing on interpreting the relationships among the study variables. In addition, this methodological approach allows for obtaining precise and reliable findings that

contribute to a deeper scientific, systematic, and objective understanding of the research field, as well as a more comprehensive interpretation of its underlying dimensions and interactions.

2. Study instrument and its construction:

This study relied on a questionnaire as the principal data collection instrument, given its suitability for the nature of the research and its effectiveness in measuring variables quantitatively with a high degree of precision and consistency. The questionnaire items were carefully formulated in alignment with the study objectives, ensuring that they enable the collection of structured data appropriate for statistical processing and objective interpretation of the results.

The questionnaire comprised three main dimensions: knowledge management systems, leadership succession plans, and the learning organization. The conceptual and theoretical dimensions of knowledge management systems were adopted based on the models of Nickols (1999), Lindsey (2002), and Ling (2010), in addition to drawing on established measurement scales developed by Gold et al. (2001) and Lee & Choi (2003), which contributed to the construction and refinement of the measurement items.

The learning organization scale was based on the Dimensions of the Learning Organization Questionnaire (DLOQ), originally developed by Watkins and Marsick (1997). A set of items was adapted from this scale in a manner consistent with the objectives and contextual requirements of the current study, while preserving its core conceptual structure.

Regarding the leadership succession plans scale, it was developed based on relevant

theoretical literature and measurement instruments proposed by Rothwell (2010) and Groves (2007). Several items were adapted and reformulated to ensure their compatibility with the specific objectives and analytical framework of the present study, while maintaining conceptual validity and measurement integrity.

3. Population and sample of the study:

The study population consisted of all professors occupying senior administrative positions at Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia University in Jijel. The study sample was defined as 31 individuals selected using a purposive sampling method, ensuring direct relevance to the research objectives.

The sample included all professors holding senior administrative or pedagogical responsibilities at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the same university. The targeted positions included, among others, the dean of the faculty, vice-dean, head of department, deputy head of department, program coordinator, specialization coordinator, and other similar academic and administrative responsibilities.

4. Description of the study sample:

Table No. (1): The most prominent personal and functional characteristics

Variable	Most represented category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	21	67.7%
Age	35 to 54 years	23	74.2%
Administrative position	Deputy head of department	10	32.3%
Professional experience	Less than 5 years	13	41.9%
Job rank	Lecturer (A)	17	54.8%
Number of positions held	One position	14	45.2%

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on SPSS outputs

- Description of the study sample results according to the gender variable:**

The statistical analysis of the distribution of the study sample according to the gender variable indicates that the number of male participants reached 21 individuals, representing 67.7% of the total sample, whereas the number of female participants reached 10 individuals, representing 32.3% of the total sample of 31 individuals. These results reflect a clear predominance of male representation within the faculty, which constitutes the empirical field of the study, indicating a higher presence of males

compared to females within the targeted study group. From a general analytical perspective, this observed disparity does not affect the core objectives of the study; rather, it reflects one of the structural and contextual characteristics inherent to the composition of the study sample within the investigated institutional setting.

- Description of the study sample according to the age variable:**

The results indicate that the majority of the sample members (approximately three-quarters) fall within the age category of (35–54 years), with a proportion of (74.2%). This stage is generally

characterized by professional maturity, accumulated experience, and a relatively high degree of job stability. Individuals within this age group typically demonstrate a more developed understanding of organizational environments, administrative structures, and institutional work mechanisms. They are also more frequently exposed to practices related to knowledge management systems and leadership preparation processes within academic institutions. Accordingly, their responses and evaluations of the study variables are considered highly reliable, given their professional experience, exposure to administrative responsibilities, and sustained engagement with institutional practices.

- **Description of the study sample according to the administrative position variable:**

The results presented in the above table show that the majority of the sample members occupy senior administrative positions that are directly associated with management functions and decision-making processes within the faculty. The category of deputy heads of departments ranked first, with ten respondents, representing (32.3%). This was followed by the categories of heads of departments and specialization coordinators, which were represented equally, with seven individuals in each category, corresponding to (22.6%) for each.

This distribution is primarily attributed to the nature of the study instrument design and the purposive sampling strategy adopted, which specifically targeted key actors within the organizational and pedagogical structure of the academic institution. The selection of these

categories was intentionally aligned with the research objectives, as these positions constitute the core operational and decision-making nodes within the academic structure. Holders of these positions represent a central and active link in institutional governance processes and are directly involved in academic and administrative decision-making. They are also responsible for the implementation of knowledge management mechanisms, including knowledge storage, sharing, and application, in addition to their direct involvement in leadership succession planning practices within the faculty and the broader university context.

- **Description of the study sample according to the professional experience variable:**

The results show that the largest proportion of the sample falls within the category of less than five years of professional experience, with the highest frequency recorded at 13 respondents, representing (41.9%). The second position is shared equally between the categories of (5 to 10 years) and (11 to 20 years), each comprising a notable proportion of respondents with medium to long-term professional experience.

This pattern may be explained by the increasing representation of relatively younger and less experienced personnel in administrative and pedagogical roles, reflecting recent institutional orientations toward integrating new human resources into basic administrative structures, such as deputy heads of departments and specialization coordinators. This group is generally characterized by a higher degree of adaptability, greater flexibility, and strong motivation for achievement, in

addition to a greater capacity to engage with modern technologies and digital systems. Consequently, they tend to demonstrate stronger organizational integration and a higher ability to absorb and implement knowledge management mechanisms, as well as to adapt to ongoing processes of institutional modernization and innovation.

- **Description of the study sample according to the academic rank variable:**

The results indicate that the majority of the sample members hold the academic rank of Lecturer (A), with the highest frequency recorded at 17 respondents, representing (54.8%). This is followed in second place by the rank of Lecturer (B), along with the presence of a smaller proportion of professors of higher academic ranks.

This distribution reflects a generally high academic and scientific level among the respondents, which is consistent with the nature of the leadership and administrative positions they occupy within the faculty. It also suggests that the participants possess sufficient cognitive, pedagogical, and research experience that enables them to engage meaningfully with the requirements of knowledge management systems and their organizational applications. Accordingly, this distribution enhances the credibility and analytical depth of the study findings.

Overall, the presence of advanced academic ranks within the sample indicates a considerable degree of cognitive maturity, alongside well-established scientific and pedagogical experience. This academic profile contributes to a deeper capacity to understand and assimilate the requirements of knowledge management

and its practical applications. It also supports more informed evaluations of leadership succession planning processes, grounded in a comprehensive awareness of university governance structures, administrative coordination mechanisms, and institutional organizational frameworks.

- **Description of the study sample according to the number of positions held variable:**

The results indicate that the majority of respondents had previously occupied either a single administrative position (14 respondents), representing (45.2%), or two administrative positions (11 respondents), representing (35.5%). The remaining proportion corresponds to respondents who have held multiple managerial positions across different administrative levels, reflecting a smaller segment of the sample with extended and diversified leadership experience.

The interpretation of these findings suggests the presence of two main categories within the sample. The first consists of administrators with direct and relatively limited administrative experience, while the second includes individuals with more extensive experience who have progressed through multiple leadership roles over time. This variation in administrative trajectories contributes to enriching the diversity of perspectives regarding knowledge management mechanisms and processes of organizational knowledge transfer. It also reflects the existence of a cumulative reservoir of leadership experience within the institution, which is essential for supporting succession planning processes

and strengthening leadership preparation within the academic environment.

Chapter Four: Presentation and Interpretation of Study Results

1. Normality test of the study variables:

As a preliminary methodological step prior to the presentation and analysis of the questionnaire results, the assumption of

Table No. (2): Test of normal distribution of the study variables

Test	Statistic	df	Sig
Shapiro-Wilk (Overall scale)	0.947	31	0.131

Source: Prepared by the researchers based on SPSS outputs

The results indicate that the Shapiro-Wilk test value is 0.947 with a sample size (df) of 31, and a significance level of 0.131. Since the significance value exceeds the conventional threshold of 0.05, it can be concluded that the data follow a normal distribution. This outcome justifies the use of parametric statistical tests in the analysis of the study variables and in testing the research hypotheses.

normal distribution for the study variables was examined. This procedure is essential for determining the appropriateness of subsequent statistical techniques used in hypothesis testing, particularly in guiding the selection of parametric or non-parametric methods.

2. Presentation and discussion of the study hypotheses results:

2.1 General hypothesis: stating the existence of a statistically significant relationship between the knowledge management systems variable and the leadership succession variable in learning organizations.

Table No. (3): Pearson correlation coefficient between knowledge management systems and leadership succession variable

Relationship	Pearson value	Statistical significance	Significance level (α)
Knowledge management systems variable and leadership succession variable	0.688	0.000	0.05

Significance level indicator: ** (significant at 0.01 level)

Source: Prepared by the researchers based on SPSS outputs

The results demonstrate a strong positive correlation between knowledge management systems and leadership succession within learning organizations, as indicated by a Pearson correlation coefficient of (0.688), which reflects a substantial and meaningful association between the two variables. This indicates that improvements in knowledge

management systems within the organization are associated with higher levels of readiness for leadership succession.

Furthermore, the statistical significance value of (0.000), which is lower than the adopted significance threshold of (0.05), confirms that this relationship is statistically significant and not attributable

to random variation. In addition, the presence of the double asterisk (**) indicates that the relationship remains significant even at the more stringent level of (0.01), thereby reinforcing the robustness and reliability of the statistical findings.

Based on these results, the general hypothesis stating the existence of a statistically significant relationship between knowledge management systems and leadership succession in learning organizations is supported. This finding may be interpreted as evidence that the

effectiveness of knowledge management systems plays a central and influential role in strengthening leadership development processes and ensuring continuity in leadership succession pathways within the organizational context.

2.2 Sub-hypotheses:

- First sub-hypothesis: stating the existence of a statistically significant relationship at the 0.05 significance level between knowledge acquisition processes and leadership succession in learning organizations.

Table No. (4): Pearson correlation coefficient between knowledge management processes dimension and leadership succession variable

Relationship	Pearson value	Statistical significance	Significance level (α)
Knowledge acquisition processes dimension and leadership succession variable	0.664	0.000	0.05

Significance level indicator: ** (significant at 0.01 level)

Source: Prepared by the researchers based on SPSS outputs

The results presented in the above table indicate the existence of a positive and statistically significant correlation between the knowledge acquisition processes dimension and leadership succession within learning organizations. The Pearson correlation coefficient reached (0.664), which reflects a moderate to strong relationship between the two variables, suggesting a meaningful degree of association between knowledge acquisition practices and leadership succession readiness.

This result implies that as the level of implementation and activation of knowledge acquisition processes within the organization increases, the effectiveness and readiness of leadership succession

processes also tend to improve. In other words, strengthening mechanisms related to acquiring, updating, and integrating knowledge within the institutional environment contributes positively to the development of leadership capacities and succession preparedness.

The statistical analysis further shows that the significance value reached (0.000), which is lower than the adopted significance threshold (0.05). Accordingly, the observed relationship is statistically significant and cannot be attributed to random variation. In addition, the presence of the double asterisk (**) confirms that the relationship remains significant even at the more stringent level of (0.01), thereby

reinforcing the statistical reliability and robustness of the finding.

Based on these results, the first sub-hypothesis is accepted, which posits the existence of a statistically significant relationship between knowledge acquisition processes and leadership succession in learning organizations. This finding highlights the critical role of this dimension in reinforcing leadership preparation mechanisms and ensuring continuity in leadership development within the organizational structure.

This result may be interpreted to indicate that the preparation of future academic leaders within the faculty is not exclusively dependent on accumulated administrative experience, but is also significantly influenced by the extent of access to and engagement with knowledge acquisition opportunities. These include exposure to new administrative knowledge, participation in institutional learning practices, and engagement with diverse

knowledge sources related to university governance and decision-making.

The more faculty members are involved in acquiring and updating knowledge related to higher education management and leadership practices, the greater their capacity to develop relevant competencies and prepare for future leadership responsibilities. Consequently, knowledge acquisition processes within the faculty contribute to broadening the pool of qualified human resources capable of assuming leadership roles, thereby reinforcing succession planning mechanisms and enhancing the continuity and stability of leadership transitions within the institution.

-Second sub-hypothesis: stating the existence of a statistically significant relationship between the knowledge storage processes dimension and leadership succession in learning organizations.

Table No. (5): Pearson correlation coefficient between knowledge storage processes dimension and leadership succession in learning organizations

Relationship	Pearson value	Statistical significance	Significance level (α)
Knowledge storage processes dimension and leadership succession variable	0.346	0.057	0.05

Source: Prepared by the researchers based on SPSS outputs

The results presented in the above table indicate the existence of a weak positive correlation between the knowledge storage processes dimension and leadership succession within learning organizations. The Pearson correlation coefficient reached (0.346), which reflects a weak direct relationship between the two variables, suggesting that the association

between knowledge storage practices and leadership succession is limited in strength within the studied context.

This finding implies that an increase in the level of knowledge storage practices may be associated with only a slight and relatively marginal improvement in leadership succession readiness. In other words, the influence of knowledge storage

processes on leadership succession appears to be limited when compared to other dimensions of knowledge management.

However, the statistical significance results show that the significance value reached (0.057), which exceeds the adopted significance threshold of (0.05). Accordingly, the relationship between the two variables is not statistically significant at the 0.05 level, indicating that the observed correlation cannot be generalized to the broader population and may be attributed to random statistical variation rather than a stable underlying relationship. Based on these findings, the second sub-hypothesis, which states the existence of a statistically significant relationship between knowledge storage processes and leadership succession in learning organizations at the 0.05 significance level, is rejected. This suggests that knowledge storage processes, in their current form within the studied institution, do not constitute a statistically reliable determinant of leadership succession outcomes.

This result may indicate that knowledge storage, as a technical or procedural dimension, is not sufficient on its own to influence leadership succession processes unless it is integrated with more dynamic dimensions such as knowledge acquisition and knowledge application. It also suggests that the mere presence of stored knowledge within institutional systems does not necessarily translate into leadership development outcomes unless it is actively accessed, shared, and utilized within decision-making and administrative practices.

Accordingly, the knowledge storage dimension did not demonstrate a

statistically meaningful relational contribution to the support of leadership succession within the studied context. This outcome can be interpreted in light of the nature of administrative work in university settings, where holders of structural and functional positions are required to engage continuously with emerging knowledge and updated information related to management practices, organizational processes, and decision-making requirements. Within this framework, providing structured opportunities for knowledge acquisition within the faculty contributes to expanding the cognitive and professional competencies of academic administrators, enabling them to develop a broader and more comprehensive understanding of administrative and academic dimensions, and consequently enhancing their preparedness for assuming future leadership responsibilities.

Furthermore, the accumulation of acquired knowledge extends beyond its immediate impact on the execution of current administrative duties. It also contributes to the formation of an experiential and cognitive reservoir that can be mobilized when institutions seek to identify, appoint, or prepare future leaders. In this sense, knowledge accumulation functions as a strategic asset that supports institutional continuity, ensuring that administrative processes remain stable and uninterrupted while simultaneously strengthening the effectiveness and sustainability of leadership succession mechanisms within the faculty.

-Third sub-hypothesis: stating the existence of a statistically significant relationship between the knowledge sharing and exchange processes

dimension and leadership succession in learning organizations.

Table No. (6): Pearson correlation coefficient between knowledge sharing processes dimension and leadership succession in learning organizations

Relationship	Pearson value	Statistical significance	Significance level (α)
Knowledge sharing and exchange processes dimension and leadership succession variable	0.499	0.004	0.05

Significance indicator: ** (significant at the 0.01 level)

Source: Prepared by the researchers based on SPSS outputs

The results presented in the above table indicate the existence of a moderate positive correlation between the knowledge sharing and exchange processes dimension and the leadership succession variable within learning organizations. The Pearson correlation coefficient reached (0.499), which reflects a moderately strong and meaningful positive relationship between the two variables. This finding suggests that increases in the level of knowledge sharing and exchange practices within the organization are associated with a corresponding and observable increase in leadership succession readiness.

The statistical analysis further indicates that the significance value reached (0.004), which is lower than the adopted significance threshold (0.05). Accordingly, the relationship is statistically significant, confirming that it is not the result of random variation but rather reflects a stable and interpretable association between the two variables under study. In addition, the presence of the double asterisk (**) denotes significance at the more stringent level of (0.01), which further reinforces the robustness and statistical reliability of the result.

Based on these findings, the third sub-hypothesis is accepted, which states the existence of a statistically significant relationship between knowledge sharing and exchange processes and leadership succession in learning organizations. This result underscores the importance of knowledge dissemination and interactive exchange among organizational members as a key mechanism for strengthening leadership preparation processes and ensuring continuity in leadership succession pathways.

This finding may be interpreted to indicate that the mere retention or documentation of knowledge within institutional systems is insufficient to meaningfully contribute to leadership preparation within succession planning frameworks. Although knowledge and experience may be formally stored in documents or electronic databases, their practical value in developing leadership capacities remains limited unless they are actively retrieved, circulated, and applied within organizational practices.

Within this context, leadership preparation in structural and functional positions appears to depend more heavily on direct engagement with knowledge, interactive

exchange among staff, and the practical application of experience in diverse administrative situations, rather than on passive storage mechanisms alone. Consequently, knowledge sharing and exchange emerge as critical operational processes that transform individual and collective knowledge into actionable

competencies supporting leadership continuity and institutional sustainability.

- Fourth sub-hypothesis: stating the existence of a statistically significant relationship between the knowledge application processes dimension and leadership succession in learning organization

Table No. (7): Pearson correlation coefficient between knowledge application processes dimension and leadership succession in learning organizations

Relationship	Pearson value	Statistical significance	Significance level (α)
Knowledge application processes dimension and leadership succession variable	0.707	0.000	0.05

Significance indicator: ** (significant at the 0.01 level)

Source: Prepared by the researchers based on SPSS outputs

The results presented in the table indicate the existence of a strong positive correlation between the knowledge application processes dimension and the leadership succession variable within learning organizations. The Pearson correlation coefficient reached (0.707), which reflects a strong and statistically meaningful relationship between the two variables. This indicates that higher levels of knowledge application within the organization are associated with a marked and consistent increase in leadership succession readiness.

The statistical outputs further show that the significance value reached (0.000), which is lower than the adopted significance level (0.05). This confirms that the observed relationship is statistically significant and not attributable to random variation, thereby indicating a stable and reliable association between the study variables.

Accordingly, the fourth sub-hypothesis is accepted, which posits the existence of a

statistically significant relationship between knowledge application processes and leadership succession in learning organizations. This finding highlights that knowledge application constitutes a decisive determinant in strengthening leadership readiness and ensuring continuity in leadership succession mechanisms within learning organizations. This result may be interpreted as indicating that knowledge application within the faculty represents a fundamental component in reinforcing leadership succession effectiveness. The transformation of knowledge and accumulated experience into concrete administrative and managerial practices contributes directly to the development of leadership competencies among professors occupying structural and functional positions. The more knowledge is actively applied in decision-making processes, problem-solving activities, and routine administrative responsibilities, the greater

the likelihood of preparing individuals capable of assuming leadership roles and ensuring institutional continuity.

The strong effect observed for this dimension is closely associated with the fact that knowledge application converts knowledge from a theoretical and conceptual form into practical and operational experience. This transformation enables knowledge to be embedded in day-to-day administrative practices, thereby reinforcing leadership

succession pathways and enhancing institutional capacity for sustainable leadership development.

- Fifth sub-hypothesis: stating that the characteristics of the learning organization (continuous learning, collective thinking, shared vision) represent a mediating variable that enhances the relationship between knowledge management systems and leaders' readiness for succession plans.

Table No. (8): Multiple linear regression of the effect of the mediating variable (learning organization characteristics) on strengthening the relationship between knowledge management systems and leaders' readiness for succession plans

Calculated F value: 144.61 Correlation coefficient (R): 0.955			Overall significance level (Sig): 0.000 Coefficient of determination (R²): 0.91		
Degrees of freedom (df): 30					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T value	Sig
	B	Standard Error	Beta		
Constant	0,442	0,30	/	-1,47	0,15
Knowledge Management Systems	0,07	0,12	0,04	0,57	0,56
Leadership Succession	1.18	0,98	0,98	12,32	0,00

Source: Prepared by the researchers based on SPSS outputs

The results of the multiple linear regression analysis indicate a strong overall model fit, as evidenced by the correlation coefficient (0.955) and the coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.91$), which suggests that 91% of the variance in the dependent construct is explained by the model. In addition, the calculated F value (144.61) with a significance level of (0.000) confirms that the overall regression model is statistically significant and highly robust. At the level of individual predictors, the results show that knowledge management systems exhibit a weak and statistically non-significant effect ($B = 0.07$, $Sig = 0.56$), indicating a limited direct contribution within the model when

considered alongside other variables. In contrast, leadership succession demonstrates a strong and statistically significant effect ($B = 1.18$, $Beta = 0.98$, $Sig = 0.00$), indicating a dominant explanatory role within the regression framework.

Accordingly, the fifth sub-hypothesis is supported in terms of the functional role of the learning organization characteristics (continuous learning, collective thinking, and shared vision) as an enabling and mediating framework that strengthens the relationship between knowledge management systems and leaders' readiness for succession plans. This finding indicates that the influence of knowledge

management systems becomes more effective when embedded within an organizational context characterized by shared learning processes, collective cognitive engagement, and a unified institutional vision.

This result may be interpreted as suggesting that the presence of learning organization characteristics enhances the capacity of knowledge management systems to translate into leadership readiness outcomes. Within such an environment, knowledge is not only generated and stored but is continuously developed, interpreted, and applied through collective processes. This dynamic reinforces institutional capacity for leadership preparation and contributes to the continuity and coherence of succession planning mechanisms.

It is observed from the above table related to the multiple linear regression analysis of the effect of the mediating variable (learning organization characteristics) on strengthening the relationship between knowledge management systems and leaders' readiness for succession plans that the overall significance level (Sig) is 0.000, which is lower than the significance threshold of 0.05. This indicates the statistical validity and adequacy of the proposed research model and confirms that the characteristics of the learning organization exert a statistically significant positive effect in strengthening the relationship between knowledge management systems and leaders' readiness for succession plans.

Furthermore, there is a strong and statistically significant positive relationship among the study variables, where the correlation coefficient reached

($R = 0.955$), while the coefficient of determination reached (0.91). This implies that 91% of the variance in strengthening the relationship between knowledge management systems and leaders' readiness for succession plans is explained by variations in the characteristics of the learning organization, whereas the remaining 9% is attributed to other variables not included in the model.

At the level of individual variables, it is noted that the leadership readiness for succession plans variable represents the strongest predictor in terms of influence, where the calculated t value reached (12.32), exceeding the tabulated t value of (2.4). In addition, the standardized beta coefficient reached (0.98), indicating that this variable alone accounts for approximately 98% of the explanatory influence within the model.

These findings may be interpreted as indicating that the central determinant in preparing leaders within succession planning frameworks in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences is fundamentally associated with the degree of readiness of individuals to assume leadership responsibilities. In this regard, knowledge management systems appear to exert their effectiveness not in isolation, but through the actual preparedness of potential leaders to absorb, internalize, and operationalize the knowledge and experience generated by these systems in the enhancement of their leadership performance. Accordingly, the effectiveness of leadership preparation is closely dependent on the level of readiness demonstrated by professors occupying structural and functional positions, as this readiness determines the extent to which

they are able to benefit from and translate the outputs of knowledge management systems into meaningful leadership development outcomes within the succession pathway.

In contrast, the results related to the learning organization characteristics variable indicate a relatively weak effect, where the calculated t value reached (0.57), which is lower than the tabulated value of (2.4). Similarly, the beta coefficient reached (0.04), indicating that its explanatory contribution is limited to approximately 4%. This suggests that the characteristics of the learning organization function primarily as a supportive and enabling contextual framework rather than as a direct determinant of leadership succession outcomes. Their influence appears to operate indirectly through the creation of a general organizational environment conducive to learning and collaboration, without exerting a strong or direct effect on the effectiveness of knowledge management systems in developing leadership readiness. This outcome suggests that the attainment of leadership succession objectives within a learning organization is more strongly linked to individuals' direct engagement with knowledge management systems than to the abstract or structural characteristics of the organizational environment.

CONCLUSION

As an extension of the study findings, three open-ended questions were incorporated into the questionnaire instrument to allow respondents to express their perspectives and propose recommendations related to the study topic. The responses generated a set of ideas and practical insights reflecting their lived professional experiences and

institutional needs. The most prominent suggestions and recommendations derived from the responses of the study sample, following systematic classification and thematic grouping, are presented as follows:

- **Regarding the most important practices that the university can adopt to strengthen knowledge management systems:**

The responses converged around several key proposals, summarized as follows:

- Transition toward the adoption of modern technologies in task execution, including technological empowerment and the integration of artificial intelligence and its applications across various administrative and pedagogical processes, accompanied by structured human resource training through specialized workshops and capacity-building programs.
- Establishment of a comprehensive digital database, including integrated administrative and pedagogical platforms covering all institutional processes, in alignment with the ongoing strategic orientation of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research toward the implementation of the fourth-generation university model.
- Strengthening participatory management practices and promoting an organizational culture based on learning, collaboration, and empowerment, while avoiding the monopolization of information and ensuring equitable access to knowledge resources.
- Organization of periodic coordination meetings among faculty and departmental officials to facilitate the exchange of experiences, practices, and institutional perspectives.

- Continuous alignment of the knowledge management system with the university's strategic planning frameworks and established quality assurance standards.
- Provision of systematic training programs focused on modern administrative principles, management practices, and leadership development competencies.
- Allocation of dedicated financial resources within the university budget to support knowledge management systems, encourage knowledge exchange initiatives, and promote partnerships with high-performing and successful institutions.
- **Regarding the three most important capabilities that should be developed among candidates to accelerate their readiness for succession plans:**
 - The capacity to make decisions in high-pressure situations.
 - Effective communication skills and participatory management practices.
 - A set of personal competencies including leadership ability, time management skills, crisis management and organizational conflict resolution skills, social and emotional intelligence, flexibility and adaptability, commitment to organizational culture, as well as self-directed learning and organizational learning capacities.
 - The ability to align daily operational decisions with the long-term strategic objectives of the institution.
 - The capacity to build cohesive, integrated, and well-functioning work teams.
 - The development of human resource management skills.
- **Regarding the most important proposals for improving leadership succession plans in the university:**
 - Establishing a clear and structured action plan or institutional charter that precisely

- defines the mechanisms, procedures, and conditions governing leadership succession in accordance with contemporary administrative standards and requirements.
- Strengthening prospective foresight and strategic planning in order to accurately determine the human resource needs of university faculties.
- Implementing job rotation mechanisms and enabling promising staff members to progressively assume leadership positions, thereby allowing gradual acquisition of necessary competencies through structured empowerment pathways.
- Defining transparent selection and appointment criteria based on merit, competence, and professional qualifications, rather than seniority as the primary determinant for leadership positions.
- Conducting periodic evaluation processes aimed at identifying potential future leaders, including the assessment of professional performance in both routine and crisis situations, as well as the systematic review of professional records and career trajectories.
- Introducing pre-assessment tools and tests designed to measure the degree of compatibility between leadership position requirements and the competencies of nominated candidates.
- Activating organizational learning as a foundational contemporary management approach within organizational behavior and human resource management frameworks, ensuring its integration into institutional practices and leadership development systems.

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