

## Self-Development as a Catalyst for Career Growth: Insights from Oman's Tourism Industry

Safa Ahmed Mohammed Al-Shidhani <sup>a</sup>, Nasreen Khalfan Said Al-Badowi <sup>b</sup>, Dr Preeti Bhaskar <sup>c</sup>, and Marwan Ahmed Mohammed Al- Shidhani <sup>d</sup>

College of Economics and Business Administration, University of Technology and Applied Sciences, Ibra,  
Oman [Shidhani.15@gmail.com](mailto:Shidhani.15@gmail.com), [31j1919245@utas.edu.om](mailto:31j1919245@utas.edu.om), [preeti.bhaskar52@gmail.com](mailto:preeti.bhaskar52@gmail.com),  
[31s1858@utas.edu.om](mailto:31s1858@utas.edu.om)

### Abstract

Oman's tourism sector has experienced substantial growth, contributing significantly to the country's economic and developmental goals. Oman's 2040 Economic Vision prioritizes tourism, aiming to increase its GDP contribution from 2.4% in 2021 to 10% by 2040. The aim of this strategy is to create more than 500,000 jobs in the tourism sector by 2040. Employees are a key part of developing the tourism sector, driving innovation and enhancing capabilities. Providing training opportunities and support is important for satisfaction, good experience and revenue growth. The study focuses on the impact of self-development on career growth among tourism industry employees in Oman. This study shows that (availability of time, self-motivation, financial support, professional memberships and technical infrastructure) are important factors that motivate employees to self-develop, and in turn, personal growth and professional growth are critical factors for career growth. The study results revealed a positive relationship between self-development and career growth. The research findings also reveal great importance for various stakeholders, indicating the need to make informed decisions within the tourism industry to achieve Oman Vision 2040. Knowing the factors influencing self-development and career growth can enhance strategic initiatives that help support and enhance employee engagement and career advancement. This research provides several recommendations for employees to focus on self-development for career growth. This study also provides important insights for companies in providing effective strategies to support self-development, which positively impacts the promotion of tourism in the Sultanate of Oman. These companies can use these insights to provide useful programs that facilitate the process of self-development by focusing on several factors such as (time management, self-motivation, financial support, professional membership, and technological infrastructure) that enhance personal and professional growth by investing in initiatives. This makes organizations create an appropriate environment for career growth. This, in turn, leads to a more skilled, motivated, and adaptable workforce, ultimately benefiting both employees' career growth and the overall competitiveness and success of the tourism industry in Oman.

**Keywords:** Oman Tourism Sector, Self-Development, Career Growth, Oman Vision 2040

## Introduction

Millions of people travel every year for pleasure, business, and other reasons, making the tourism sector one of the biggest and most rapidly expanding in the world. About 2.9 million tourists visited Oman in 2018, up 348 percent from 2021, according to data from the National Center for Statistics and Information (NCSI) (Al-Balushi, 2023). According to WorldData.info, 2023, this equates to 0.76 % of its GDP and about 1 percent of the total revenue from international tourism in Western Asia. Increasing tourism earnings is one of the strategic pillars of Oman's 2040 Economic Vision. The country plans to raise it to 5 percent by 2030 and 10 percent by 2040 from the 2.4 percent contribution the tourist sector made to the GDP in 2021. By investing 51 dollars billion, the target is to raise the total number of tourists to 11.7 million people by 2040. By 2040, the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism estimates that such an investment will bring in over nine billion Omani rials (\$22.5 billion) annually from tourism. By the year 2040, the National Tourism Strategy wants to add 500,000 new jobs to the sector (Times News Service 2019). Given these numbers, it is obvious that a country's growth can be significantly impacted by the growth of the tourism industry. If the tourism sector has to flourish, travel companies should offer top-notch travel experiences.

Employees can contribute to tourism growth in several ways. Employees must be properly trained, skilled and driven to provide our guests with exceptional service that exceeds their expectations. By providing good customer service for tourists, employees can also attract more customers in the future. By working in the tourism industry, employees can share the regional environment, culture, and heritage with others. By knowing the famous tourist areas and places, the employee in the tourism sector can provide a distinctive experience for the guests and visitors. Through this, they can identify the requirements and trends of consumers and the preferences of tourists. Employees can also make effective suggestions and come up with new activities, products and places that visitors enjoy and make their trip exceptional. They can also help in finding new and suitable job opportunities and boost the economy of the country by utilizing their experience and understanding. Employees with a background in business management, marketing or innovation can help in growing the tourism industry business. With the emergence and advancement of technology and consumer preferences, the tourism industry is changing very rapidly. Through training and development programs, employees can enhance their expertise and efficiency. These programs help them gain the necessary information to provide exceptional and distinctive experiences to consumers, and also the ability to deal with the changes that are happening around them and that positively affect the society. Self-development can be defined as the process of continuous learning, improvement and growth in order to develop career opportunities. Employees working in the tourism industry can be more dedicated and loyal to their work and tasks by enhancing their knowledge and skills. What we see today in the dynamic environment, self-development is one of the most important things for personal and professional growth. Not only that, but it

encourages commitment to work and taking initiative to improve skills and enhance knowledge and attributes in related fields. Employees in this industry need to enhance their capabilities and knowledge. Employees must now keep up with the most recent technical breakthroughs in tourist industry standards in order to stay relevant and competitive market. To fulfil the current and future needs of the tourism business, it is always advantageous for employees to pick up new skills and expertise. Employees can become more valued, productive, and marketable for current and potential employers. Employees today have a multitude of options at their disposal for self-development because of the availability of so many self-learning platforms, professional associations, conferences, and online courses. Growing personally and professionally is a never-ending path that requires constant effort and commitment. Employees must understand the value of continuous learning and development if they want to stay current and competitive. Employers play an important and critical role in fostering supportive work environments that promote self-development, enable people to succeed, and create opportunities for long-term career advancement. Thus, the main purpose of this research is to examine the impact of self-development on career growth among the employees of the tourism industry in Oman.

## Research Gap

From the literature review, it can be clearly comprehended that there is an absence of research on self-development and career growth specifically in Oman. Despite the fact that research on these subjects has been done in other countries, there is a knowledge gap when it comes to the Omani setting. This shows that research is required in Oman to comprehend the aspects of self-development and career growth. There is a dearth of studies explicitly focusing on the tourist business in Oman, while similar studies relating to self-development and career growth have been carried out in other sectors, such as the automotive and educational. This implies that the current research does not specifically focus on the unique requirements and changes in the Omani tourism industry. So, doing research on self-development and career growth within the Omani tourism business will be really helpful. Although some studies have investigated the relationship between self-development and career growth in Oman but not in the tourism industry. In order to gain a deeper understanding of how self-development impacts career growth it would be beneficial to study in Oman.

## Literature Review

A study was conducted by Shahzadi Sattar et al. (2024) among the HR managers in the tourism and service industries in Pakistan. The results of the study showed that technological readiness, organizational readiness, and competitive pressures have a positive relationship with the adoption of HR analytics and career growth. In addition, the study highlighted the importance of enhancing these positive attitudes towards HR analytics to enhance its impact on career development. Similarly, a study by Bhaskar et al. (2021) investigated Career Growth and Development among the employees from IT companies. The study placed importance of levels like time to

complete a course, self-development cost, available jobs, and learning initiative. Those factors have proven influential in career advancement (job stability, income, promotions) and personal growth (soft skills, technical knowledge, self-confidence). Also, the results consistently revealed a great potential of continuing education effects on career growth and development. Bhaskar & Dayalan, (2021) study explored the variables affecting teachers' continuing education decisions, including financial support, job opportunities, time, and knowledge and skills acquisition. Results of the study indicated that continuing education has a positive impact on using knowledge in practice and on teachers' professional and personal development. Sulistianto et al. (2024) Investigating the effect of work motivation and career development on employees' loyalty in Indonesia. Loyalty was stereotypical and cannot be directly influenced by restructuring in work motivation while career development has a very positive impact on loyalty according to insights from the study results. According to Sastra and Lazuardini (2024), organizational culture enables career advancement and skill development through innovation, adaptability, and flexibility. Daniel et al. The study (2024) showed that the organization must introduce an additional employment culture to increase the potential for career advancement, job satisfaction and loyalty. Faiz et al. Kohli & Sundararajan (2022) propose a positive work ambience, development of human resources, and employee engagement as vital factors.

The findings indicate that work thriving is positively related to stress and distress, is negatively related to distress, and is positively related to career growth. Bai and Liu (2018) investigated the Influence of Career Growth on Work Engagement Among New Generation Employees. The study revealed key factors which include career development, organizational rewards, and alignment between personal and organizational values and results revealed a positive relationship between career growth and organizational recognition. Karim et al. (2019) focused on the elements that affect employee performance, how training and development impact organizational effectiveness, and assessing employee satisfaction. The results showed how training affects employee performance within an organization and their retention. Khan (2012) analyzed the effect of training and motivation on employee performance. The contributing factors in the study were identified such as technology, management behaviour, and work environment. The results showed a positive relationship between training, organizational motivation, and employee performance. Farooq and Khan (2011) revealed several factors such as motivation, mentoring and job rotation were revealed in the study. The results showed that proper training and feedback are essential for the success of an organization. Karna et al. (2024) highlighted the impact of banks in promoting savings, investment and self-growth programs.

## **Conceptual framework**

The study Conceptual framework has two variables. The independent variable is self-development, and the dependent variable is career growth.

## Independent variable: Self-development

**Self-Development.:** The process by which a person grows, develops, or changes and becomes more advanced in their life through their own efforts.

### Factors:

- **Self-motivation:** is the internal condition that enables us to begin, carry out, or stop a behavior. For example, we may be driven to continue working at a job in order to pay our expenses, or we may be driven to end a relationship when it isn't working out for us any longer. Most human action is assumed to originate from self-motivation.
- **Financial Support:** The provision of financial resources, such as cash or capital and credit, as well as the acquisition or provision of cash or capital for a purchase or business venture and the resulting finances.
- **Time requirement:** indicates the period of time needed to finish all parole, probation, and sentence-related requirements for a conviction before applying for a job or getting access to certain medical facilities.
- **Technical Infrastructure:** Industry players can find support to commercialize new goods, processes, and services in complete compliance with EU rules through facilities, equipment, capabilities, and support services. These technological infrastructures demand significant financial outlays for both initial setup and ongoing modernization.
- **Professional membership:** is the position that one obtains after joining a professional organization. Professional memberships are created to help people on a professional level and grow in their chosen professions.

## Dependent variable: Career Growth

**Career Growth:** The steps or processes an employee takes on his/her journey to achieve his career goals.

### Factors:

- **Personal Growth:** The process of developing new skills, actions, reactions, or attitudes that can have positive effects on your life and increase your overall health.
- **Professional Growth:** Apply new skills and experiences to positively impact your professional assignments and current position.



## Self-development

## Career Growth

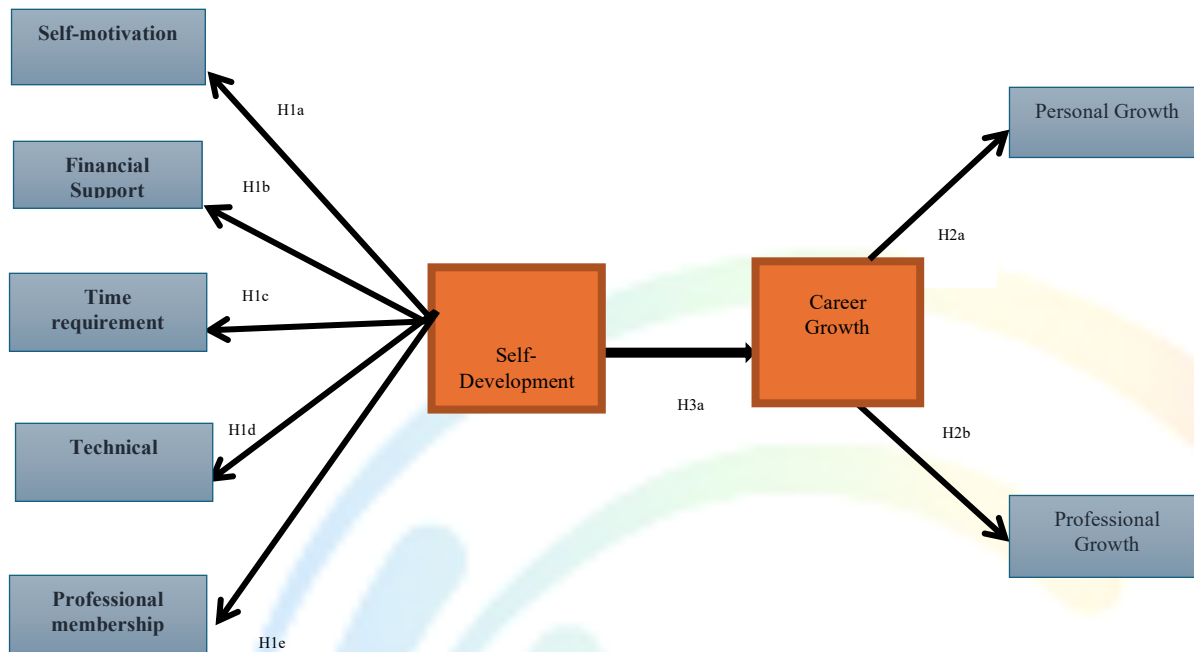


Figure: 1 Conceptual Framework

## Hypotheses

**To identify the factors influencing self-development among the employees of the tourism industry in Oman, the following hypotheses are proposed:**

- *Hypothesis 1a:* Self-motivation has a significant positive impact on self-development
- *Hypothesis 1b:* Financial Support has a significant positive impact on self-development
- *Hypothesis 1c:* Time requirement has a significant positive impact on self-development
- *Hypothesis 1d:* Technical Infrastructure has a significant positive impact on self-development
- *Hypothesis 1e:* Professional membership has a significant positive impact on self-development

**To identify the factors influencing career growth among the employees of the tourism industry in Oman, the following hypotheses are proposed:**

- *Hypothesis 2a:* Personal growth has a significant positive impact on career growth
- *Hypothesis 2b:* Professional growth has a significant positive impact on career growth

**To study the impact of self-development on career growth among the employees of the tourism industry in Oman**

- *Hypothesis 3a:* Self-development has a significant positive impact on career growth

## Research Methodology

The explorative research design to identify the factors of self-development and career growth. This research specifically targets travel companies operating in Oman and exclusively considers those that are officially registered on the government-managed Experience Oman website (<https://www.experienceoman.om/>). It is a government website managed by the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism, Oman. As per the website Experience Oman, Muscat has the largest number of registered travel companies managing domestic and international travel (<https://www.experienceoman.om/services/tour-operators/>). At present there are 63 travel companies registered on the Experience Oman in Muscat region. The total population consists of approximately 1623 employees who are employed across these 62 travel companies at various levels and departments. This research focuses on a diverse range of employees, encompassing both Omani nationals and expatriates. The study's population will consist of all employees, regardless of their position within the hierarchy (top, middle, or lower level) from various departments. This inclusion is based on the assumption that all employees share a common interest in seeking career growth.

The study utilized a stratified random sampling method to ensure diverse adequate representation from various organizational divisions. Among the 63 travel companies listed on Experience Oman, a minimum of 20% of their employees were selected as a sample.

### *Sample selection criteria:*

Travel companies = 63

Total Employees = 1623

Desired Sample Size = 20% of 1623 = 325 employees (approximately)

As per Krejcie and Morgan's 1970 guidelines, the sample size of 313 is considered sufficient for the population of 1700 (Annexure 3)

The SPSS was used for performing factor analysis to identify the factors of Self-development and career growth and to study the impact of self-development on career growth among the employees of the tourism industry.

## Data Analysis

### Exploratory factor analysis

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) is used to uncover the underlying structure of a large set of variables and to identify latent constructs by reducing dimensionality (Hair et al., 2019). Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) is used to identify underlying relationships between measured variables, allowing researchers to uncover latent constructs that explain observed patterns in the data (Goretzko et al., 2019). Table: 2 shows that the KMO value is 0.861, suggesting that the data is reliable and suitable for factor analysis. As per Hair et al. (2010), a KMO value

above 0.7 is considered adequate for analysis, while a value below 0.50 is considered inadequate. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient is 0.904, which is considered quite high, indicating strong internal consistency among the 24 items measured in the dataset.

Table:2: KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.861
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	4939.259
	df	276
	Sig.	0.000
Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items	
.904	24	

Table 3 outlines the prerequisites for conducting Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), indicating that all necessary conditions for EFA have been satisfied in this research.

Table: 3 Assumptions for EFA			
Assumptions of EFA	Conditions	Reference: (Chopra et al. 2019)	Assumptions
Sample size is 337	$n > 200$	Kyriazos (2018)	Met
Barlett's test of sphericity is significant	$p < 0.001$	Field (2013)	Met
KMO value is 0.904 measure of sampling adequacy	$> 0.70$	Hutcheson and Sofroniou (1999)	Met
Satisfactory communalities values	$> 0.50$	Field (2013)	Met
Total variance explained is 76.575%	$> 50\%$	(Podsakoff and Organ, 1986)	Met
The variance for the first factor is 12.542%	$< 50\%$	(Podsakoff and Organ, 1986)	Met

**Exploratory factor analysis for identifying factors influencing self-development among the employee of the tourism. industry in Oman**



Total Five factors were extracted through EFA that influence self-development of employees in the tourism industry in Oman. those five factors are Self-motivation (SM), Financial Support (FS), Time requirement (TR), Technical Infrastructure (TIN), Professional membership. The Self-motivation (SM), Financial Support (FS), Time requirement (TR) have 4 items each whereas Technical Infrastructure (TIN) have 3 items, Professional membership (PR) have 2 items. It can be clearly seen in the table 13 that all the items demonstrated high factor loadings ( $>0.5$ ) with their respective factors.

The rotated component matrix or factor loading is a crucial outcome that presents significant estimates of the correlations between each factor and the variables included in the analysis The result of the rotated component matrix is displayed in Table 4.

	<b>Table 4: Rotated Component Matrix<sup>a</sup></b>				
	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
SM1	.820				
SM2	.865				
SM3	.801				
SM4	.750				
FS1		.806			
FS2		.839			
FS3		.794			
FS4		.824			
TMR1			.783		
TMR2			.816		
TMR3			.747		
TMR4			.767		
TIN1				.803	
TN2				.816	
TIN3				.811	
PR1					.851
PR2					.860
Total Variance explained (Cumulative %)	12.542	25.076	37.149	69.537	76.575
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.					
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.					
a. Rotation converged in 7 iterations.					

## Exploratory factor analysis for identifying factors influencing career growth among the employees of the tourism. industry in Oman

Total two factors were extracted through EFA that influence career growth among the employees of the tourism. industry in Oman. Those include Professional growth and Personal growth. Professional growth has 4 items and Personal growth have 3 items. It can be clearly seen in the table 13 that all the items demonstrated high factor loadings ( $>0.5$ ) with their respective factors. The rotated component matrix or factor loading is a crucial outcome that presents significant estimates of the correlations between each factor and the variables included in the analysis. The result of the rotated component matrix is displayed in Table 5.

	Table 5 Rotated Component Matrix <sup>a</sup>	
	Component	
	1	2
PRG1		.902
PRG2		.899
PRG3		.901
PFG1	.802	
PFG2	.740	
PFG3	.800	
PFG4	.778	
Total Variance Explained (Cumulative %)	49.028	60.185
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.		
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.		
a. Rotation converged in 7 iterations.		

## Confirmatory factor analysis

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) is a statistical technique used to test and validate the hypothesized structure of relationships between observed variables and their underlying factors. Table 6 displays the values of various fit indices such as Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) = 461.388, Degrees of freedom (df) = 232,  $\chi^2/df$  = 1.981, Root mean square residual (RMR) = 0.028, Goodness of fit Index (GFI) = 0.898, Adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI) = 0.868, Normed fit index (NFI) = 0.909, Parsimony normed fit index (PNFI) = 0.764, Incremental fit index (IFI) = 0.953, Tucker–

Lewis index (TLI) = 0.943, Comparative fit index (CFI)= 0.952, Parsimony goodness of fit index (PGFI) = 0.848 and Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = 0.054 with their threshold limits.

Table 6: Goodness of fit indices PBDA				
Fit Index	Limit	Values in	References	Acceptability
		Present Study	(Hooper, 2008)	
Absolute Fit Indices				
$\chi^2$		461.388		
df		232		
p value	>0.05	0		Yes
$\chi^2 / df$	1.00-5.00	1.988	Kline (2010)	Yes
RMR	<0.08	0.028	Hu and Bentler (1999)	Yes
GFI	>0.90	0.898	Jöreskog and Sörbom (1993)	Yes
AGFI	>0.80	0.868	Jöreskog and Sörbom (1993)	Yes
Relative Fit Indices				
NFI	>0.80	0.909	Bentler and G. Bonnet (1980)	Yes
PNFI	>0.50	0.764	Bentler and G. Bonnet (1980)	Yes
IFI	>0.90	0.953	Bollen (1990)	Yes
TLI	>0.90	0.943	Tucker and Lewis (1973)	Yes
Noncentrality- based indices				
CFI	>0.90	0.952	Byrne (2010)	Yes
PGFI	>0.50	0.695	James et al. (1982)	Yes
RMSEA	<0.08	0.054	Steiger (1990)	Yes

### Convergent validity

As indicated in Table 7, all the items had statistically significant ( $p < 0.001$ ) factor loadings with their specified latent constructs. Moreover, all the factor loadings were greater than the threshold value of 0.50, which ensured the convergent validity of the respective constructs. The composite reliability (CR) values and Cronbach's alpha

coefficients of all the constructs exceeded the recommended cut-off value 0.70 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994), indicating that the items reliably measured their respective constructs. Furthermore, the values for average variance extracted (AVE) of all the factors surpassed the cut-off value of 0.50 (Hair et al., 2010), indicating that the constructs exhibited adequate reliability.

**Table: 7 Standardized Regression Weights: (Group number 1 - Default model)**

ITEMS		CONSTRUCT	FACTOR LOADING		CR	AVE	MSV
FS4	<---	FIN_S	0.832	<b>FIN_S</b>	0.884	0.656	0.248
FS3	<---	FIN_S	0.793				
FS2	<---	FIN_S	0.838				
FS1	<---	FIN_S	0.775				
TMR4	<---	TM_R	0.741				
TMR3	<---	TM_R	0.815				
TMR2	<---	TM_R	0.811	<b>TM_R</b>	0.868	0.622	0.269
TMR1	<---	TM_R	0.786				
SM4	<---	SELF_M	0.743				
SM3	<---	SELF_M	0.824				
SM2	<---	SELF_M	0.865	<b>SELF_M</b>	0.873	0.633	0.242
SM1	<---	SELF_M	0.742				
TIN3	<---	T_INF	0.79	<b>T_INF</b>	0.830	0.621	0.269
TN2	<---	T_INF	0.845				
TIN1	<---	T_INF	0.725				
PR2	<---	PRF_M	0.82	<b>PRF_M</b>	0.844	0.731	0.242
PR1	<---	PRF_M	0.891				
PFG1	<---	PRS_G	0.923				
PFG2	<---	PRS_G	0.938	<b>PRS_G</b>	0.939	0.836	0.209
PFG3	<---	PRS_G	0.883				
PRG3	<---	PRF_G	0.73				
PRG4	<---	PRF_G	0.809				
PRG2	<---	PRF_G	0.743	<b>PRF_G</b>	0.850	0.588	0.204
PRG1	<---	PRF_G	0.779				

## Discriminant validity

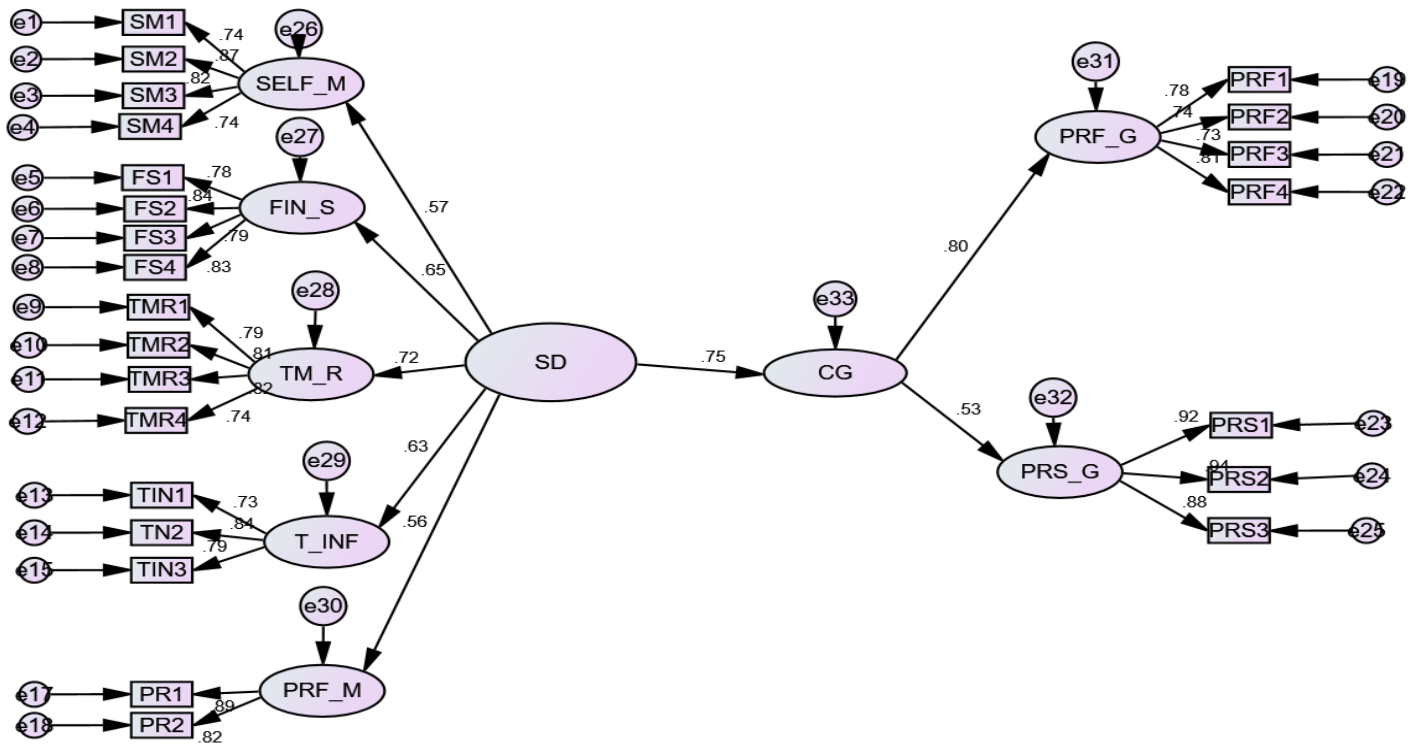
The discriminant validity was evaluated by examining the correlation estimates among the 5 factors of self-development and career growth. As can be noticed from Table 10 all the inter-factor correlation estimates were less than the threshold value of 0.85 (Kline, 2005) confirming discriminant validity. Moreover, all constructs had the squared root of AVE higher than their correlation estimates with other corresponding dimensions suggesting sufficient discriminant validity.

Table 10: Discriminant validity							
	PRS_G	FIN_S	TM_R	SELF_M	T_INF	PRF_M	PRF_G
PRS_G	<b>0.914</b>						
FIN_S	0.275	<b>0.810</b>					
TM_R	0.457	0.498	<b>0.789</b>				
SELF_M	0.153	0.305	0.374	<b>0.796</b>			
T_INF	0.205	0.468	0.519	0.280	<b>0.788</b>		
PRF_M	0.054	0.392	0.292	0.492	0.310	<b>0.855</b>	
PRF_G	0.425	0.322	0.387	0.452	0.354	0.438	<b>0.767</b>

## Structural model

A structural model depicting the above proposed causal relationships was tested using SEM. The entire sample data consists of 337 respondents which has been used to test the model.





**Figure 2 Structural model**

In Figure 2 Structural model, the path diagram shows the strong positive impact of 0.75 from self-development to career growth among the employees of the tourism industry in Oman. A coefficient of 0.75 suggests a relatively high level of impact between self-development to career growth. This indicates that focusing on self-development is likely to significantly contribute to career growth among the employees of the tourism industry in Oman.

It can also be seen that self-development is influenced by all factors Self-motivation (0.57), Financial Support (0.65), Time requirement (0.72), Technical Infrastructure (0.63) and Professional membership (0.56). All factors impact the self-development among the employees of the tourism industry in Oman.

1. Time Requirement has a stronger influence, with a coefficient of 0.72 indicating that time availability motivates employees to engage in self-development programs among the employees of the tourism industry in Oman.
2. Financial Support with a coefficient of 0.65 indicates that financial support also influences employees to engage in self-development.
3. Technical Infrastructure with a coefficient of 0.63 indicates that access to proper technical resources or infrastructure impacts an employee's engagement in a self-development program.

4. Self-motivation with a coefficient of 0.57 implies that employees who possess higher levels of self-motivation are more likely to engage in self-development programs.
5. Professional Membership with a coefficient of 0.56 indicates being a part of professional memberships or organizations to motivating employees to engage in the self-development programs.

It can also be observed that career growth is influenced by Personal growth (0.53) and professional growth (0.80) among the employees of the tourism industry in Oman.

1. Professional Growth with a coefficient of 0.80 indicates that engaging in self-development programs helps in better career opportunities, salary, promotion and job security.
2. Personal Growth with a coefficient of 0.53 indicates engaging in a self-development program helps in personality development, gaining social recognition and improving knowledge, skills and abilities.

### Hypothesis testing

Table 11 shows the model fitness was ensured, results of path analysis were interpreted below:

**To identify the factors influencing self-development among the employees of the tourism industry in Oman, the following hypotheses are proposed:**

- *Hypothesis1a:* Self-motivation has a significant positive impact on self-development
- *Hypothesis1b:* Financial Support has a significant positive impact on self-development
- *Hypothesis1c:* Time requirement has a significant positive impact on self-development
- *Hypothesis1d:* Technical Infrastructure has a significant positive impact on self-development
- *Hypothesis1e:* Professional membership has a significant positive impact on self-development

The results reveal that Self-motivation has a significant positive impact on self-development (critical ratio = 6.807,  $p < 0.001$ ), Financial Support has a significant impact on self-development (critical ratio = 6.795,  $p < 0.001$ ), Time requirement has a significant positive impact on self-development (critical ratio = 6.832,  $p < 0.001$ ), Technical Infrastructure has a significant positive impact on self-development (critical ratio = 6.383,  $p < 0.001$ ), as well as Professional membership has a significant positive impact on self-development (critical ratio = 6.342,  $p < 0.001$ ). Hence, the hypotheses H1a, H1b, H1c, H1d and H1e are accepted.

**To identify the factors influencing career growth among the employees of the tourism industry in Oman, the following hypotheses are proposed:**

- *Hypothesis2a:* Personal growth has a significant positive impact on career growth
- *Hypothesis2b:* Professional growth has a significant positive impact on career growth

The results reveal that professional growth has a significant positive impact on career growth (critical ratio = 6.038,  $p < 0.001$ ), and personal growth has a significant positive impact on career growth (critical ratio = 6.038,  $p < 0.001$ ). Hence the hypotheses H2a and H2b are accepted.

### To study the impact of self-development on career growth among the employees of the tourism industry in Oman

- *Hypothesis 3a:* Self-development has a significant positive impact on career growth

The results reveal that self-development has a significant positive impact on career growth (critical ratio = 6.714,  $p < 0.001$ ). Hence the hypothesis H3a is accepted.

Table : 11 Hypothesis testing							
			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label
SELF_M	<---	SD	0.563	0.093	6.807	***	H1a Accepted
FIN_S	<---	SD	0.655	0.234	6.795	***	H1b Accepted
TM_R	<---	SD	0.723	0.255	6.832	***	H1c Accepted
T_INF	<---	SD	0.635	0.194	6.383	***	H1d Accepted
PRF_M	<---	SD	0.555	0.183	6.342	***	H1e Accepted
PRF_G	<---	CG	0.787	0.174	6.038	***	H2a Accepted
PRS_G	<---	CG	0.545	0.158	6.038	***	H2b Accepted
CG	<---	SD	0.759	0.178	6.714	***	H3a Accepted

**It can be clearly seen from the table 11 that all the hypothesis is accepted**

### Conclusion

This study reveals the key aspects that drive self-development in employees within Oman's thriving tourism industry. Time availability, financial support, technical resources, self-motivation, and professional memberships were found to be essential in motivating individuals to participate in skill-enhancing programs. The benefits of such activities are not only manifested in career advancement but also in personal growth and development outside of day-to-day work. Through recognition and affirmation of these timeless components, organizations continue to build a skilled and motivated workforce, providing them a competitive edge in the challenging tourism industry. With Oman being a developing and fast-growing tourism destination, employees across the different sectors face challenges and barriers to pursuing self-development opportunities that will assist them in climbing up the career

ladder. For various reasons, such as limited training resources in certain sectors or insufficient infrastructure or technology/resources provided by niche training organizations, this limits access to optional niche classes due to financial or time limitations, scalable courses available during the working day. Additionally, Organizations can also take proactive steps by investing in scholarships, flexible hours, mentorship opportunities, recognition of team efforts and employees can be further re-invigorated by good management initiatives to help them take full advantage of the company over the long run. Comprehensive online learning platforms that let employees be in charge of their personal development can certainly help. In addition, self-development initiatives can be focused and pursued through partnerships and collaborations with universities to provide distinguished courses, provide valuable technical resources, partner with appropriate professional organizations, host knowledge exchange sessions, facilitate access to necessary resources, and create good opportunities for career advancement.

By promoting employee self-development, companies can gain a competitive edge as a plethora of skills can also be gained from this. When companies invest in their employees, it shows that they care about their well-being. Customers keep coming back for more! This enables employees to contribute to a greater extent, which in turn fosters innovation, productivity, and adaptability within the organization. In addition, companies that invest in employee development going the extra mile in employee development also gain an advantage in attracting talent and enhancing their position as an employer brand. In addition, by encouraging ongoing learning, you foster a company that is flexible and ready for industry changes, leading to better performance, increased productivity, and an ethos of continuous development and progress. Involved and all together, investing in employees craft an appealing story in the organization that highlights a desire to have development and victory.

## **Recommendation**

### **Recommendation for employees**

These findings have important implications for travel companies in Oman. These organizations can develop initiatives that foster engagement and advancement for employees by recognizing what drives personal development and growth in one's profession. Armed with these insights, organizations can create tailored programs that tackle key enablers of self-development such as time availability, funding, readiness of technology, self-drive and professional networks. When employers put investments in place to ensure their employees' professional and personal development, they can create a culture of ongoing employee learning. So, this ultimately results in an adaptable, highly skilled and passionate workforce. This is advantageous not only for career growth of the employees but also for the general competitiveness and success of the tourism industry in Oman.

- Employees should join in workshops and online lessons to learn about changes happening in the travel business. This focus on always learning increases a worker's skills and helps them stay ahead.

- Employees need to keep improving their skills and always look for chances that help them move up in the industry. Go after certificates that match your job to show you are committed and skilled.
- Employees working in the tourism business should make connections with other professionals. Workers should take part in social events, join groups linked to their jobs and talk with successful people. This can help them find more chances and get noticed. It might even lead to career growth.
- Employees need to show they can change and adjust to new technology advancements, plus the ways of doing things in their industry. The skill to change fast with technology in order to stay ahead in the busy tourism business.
- Employees who work in tourism should try to learn a lot about different jobs and tasks. By learning about different parts of the tourism industry, employees can also take on many roles and jobs.
- Employees who work should learn about leading others, no matter what job they have now. Showing leadership skills can lead to better results and may help you get important jobs in business.
- Employees need to stay up-to-date with changes worldwide and nearby that affect the travel business. Workers should use the self-improvement courses that are popular both locally and worldwide.

### **Recommendation for companies**

- Companies should help workers join training classes, courses and testing related to the travel business. Putting money into teaching workers all the time helps them get better at what they do. This makes them more able to compete with others.
- Companies should create an atmosphere that motivates workers to make professional connections in their field. Helping them take part in gathering events and websites increases their chances. It's good for the company, making it more visible with stronger connections.
- Companies should give workers a chance to learn about different parts of the travel industry. This big knowledge makes them experts and helps the company succeed.
- Companies should treat customer service as a very important parameter. Making workers focus on giving good customer experiences helps the company's name and how well it does in business.
- Companies should put money into teaching and growing leaders, making leadership skills in employees everywhere stronger. People who lead at work help the company grow and outperform others.
- Companies need to make sure their workers are up to date about world and local changes that affect the travel business. Giving workers information about their business helps them make smart choices. This is good for where the company wants to go in future plans.



## Scope for Future Research

- The study focused on the tourism sector in Muscat, Oman. This geographical limitation may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other regions in Oman, where the dynamics of the tourism industry might differ. Future researchers can expand the study to encompass multiple regions in Oman to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics between self-development and career growth across the entire country.
- Future researchers can conduct longitudinal studies. It will help in tracking the changes taken over time in the relationship between self-development and career growth. This longitudinal approach could reveal trends, emerging challenges, and the effectiveness of interventions over extended periods.
- Future researchers can conduct a comparison of self-development practices in the Omani tourism industry with international benchmarks to identify areas for improvement and innovation. This could involve exploring successful strategies implemented in other countries and new strategies can be suggested for employees working in the tourism sector of Oman.
- Future research can make a more detailed analysis of responses based on demographics, including nationality, age, and job roles. This could uncover nuanced insights into the varying needs and challenges of different groups within the tourism sector.

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## Annexure: 1: Questionnaire

Dear respondents:

We are undergraduate students pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Human Resources Management (HRM) at the University of Technology & Applied Sciences, Ibra. Our research is centered on the topic " **Impact of self-development on career growth among the employees of tourism industry in Oman**".

Kindly help us by filling the annexed questionnaire of the study. It will approximately take 5-7 minutes to fill this. Your response will be highly appreciable and helpful to this study. We assure you that the data collected will be utilized exclusively for research purposes.

Thank you for your cooperation.

### Section 1: Demographic Information

<b>Gender</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Male	<input type="checkbox"/> Female		
<b>Nationality</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Omani	<input type="checkbox"/> Other nationality		
<b>Age (Years)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> 20-30	<input type="checkbox"/> 30-40	<input type="checkbox"/> 40-50	<input type="checkbox"/> 20-30
<b>Experience (Years)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6-10	<input type="checkbox"/> 10-15	<input type="checkbox"/> More than 15
<b>Marital Status</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Single	<input type="checkbox"/> Married	<input type="checkbox"/> Others	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Qualification</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Diploma	<input type="checkbox"/> Advance diploma	<input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor	<input type="checkbox"/> Masters <input type="checkbox"/> Other
<b>Department</b>	<hr/>			
<b>Designation</b>	<hr/>			

### Section 2: Please indicate your responses to the following questions related to self-development:

1. Have you ever undertaken any self-development programs/courses/activities to enhance your career growth?

☐ Yes ☐ No

2. Select the self-development program/courses/activities you have undertaken for career growth (select checkbox question)

<input type="checkbox"/> Conference	<input type="checkbox"/> Apprenticeship	<input type="checkbox"/> Coaching
<input type="checkbox"/> Seminar	<input type="checkbox"/> Online Courses	<input type="checkbox"/> Mentoring
<input type="checkbox"/> Life skills workshop	<input type="checkbox"/> Networking Events	<input type="checkbox"/> Job rotation
<input type="checkbox"/> Job hunting skills	<input type="checkbox"/> Workshops	<input type="checkbox"/> Online Webinars and Seminars
<input type="checkbox"/> Simulations	<input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer Work	<input type="checkbox"/> Personal Development Books



**3. Please rate the effectiveness of the self-development program/courses/activities you have undertaken for career growth.**

- ☐ Not effective at all  
☐ Less effective  
☐ Neutral  
☐ Very effective  
☐ Extremely effective

**4. How important do you think self-development program are for career growth?**

- ☐ Not important at all  
☐ Less important  
☐ Neutral  
☐ Very important  
☐ Extremely important

**5. Please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements on self-development**

Factors	Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<b>Self-motivation</b>	I have an urge to learn new things for self-development					
	I regularly update my knowledge and skill to remain competitive in the industry.					
	My organization continuously share information about self-development programs to motivate enrollment.					
	My organization motivates for enrollment in self-development programs, emphasizing career growth.					
<b>Financial Support</b>	I have my own financial support to pursue courses/programs for self-development.					
	My organization provides financial support for pursuing courses/programs for self-development.					
	My organization provides funds for purchasing technological infrastructure (Laptop, camera, software etc.) for pursuing self-development programs					
	My organization refund the expenditure incurred on the enrollment for self-development programs					



<b>Time requirement</b>	I have enough time to take courses/programs for self-development					
	My organization provides flexible work schedule to participate in a self-development program					
	My organization adjust my workload for participating in self-development programs					
<b>Technical Infrastructure</b>	I have a laptop with the required software to pursue courses/programs for self-development.					
	My organization allow me to use technical support staff for resolving technical issues that occurred while doing self-development programs					
	My organization provides me with the necessary Technical Infrastructure to pursue courses/programs for self-development					
<b>Professional membership</b>	I have taken Professional membership in many organizations to pursue courses/programs for self-development.					
	My organization have tie-up with a professional organization (course era, eduX, NPTEL, etc) for various types of course/program for self-development					

### Section 3: Please indicate your agreement or disagreement to the following statements on the impact of self-development on Career growth

Factors	Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<b>Professional growth</b>	Participating in Self-development programs/courses/activities helps me in finding better career opportunities.					
	Participating in self-development programs/courses/activities gives me job security.					
	Participating in a Self-development program/courses/activities provides me with an opportunity to increase my salary.					
	Participating in Self-development programs/courses/activities provides me with promotion opportunities.					



<b>Personal Growth</b>	Participating in: Self-development programs/courses/activities helps in developing my personality					
	Participating in Self-development programs/courses/activities helps me improve my knowledge, skills and abilities					
	Participating in Self-development programs/courses/activities gives me social recognition					

## Biographies

**Safa Ahmed Mohammed Al-Shaidhani**, a graduate of the University of Technology and Applied Sciences with a degree in Human Resource Management. She has two months of HR experience, excelling in data entry, report preparation, and guidance. She has attended over 35 workshops, presented a tourism research paper, and won first place in a business competition, reflecting her skills in research, creativity, and execution. Safa is dedicated to continuous growth and excellence.

**Nasreen Khalfan Said Al-Badowi** is a graduate of the University of Technology and Applied Sciences with a degree in Human Resource Management. She has gained valuable experience in the HR field, where she honed skills in data entry, report preparation, and offering guidance. Committed to continuous development, Nasreen has participated in numerous training workshops, presented a research paper on tourism, and earned recognition for her creativity and strategic thinking by winning a business competition.

**Dr. Preeti Bhaskar** is working as faculty at University of Technology and Applied Sciences, Ibra, Oman. She possesses 13 years of teaching experience in the area of Human Resource Management. Her research interests include technology adoption, e-government, job performance, job satisfaction, sustainable development, continuing education, job performance, online teaching and learning. She has published research papers in reputable journals (ABDC and SCOPUS) and presented research papers at various national and international conferences. She has also authored books on "general management" and published case studies in Case Centre, the United Kingdom. She is actively engaged in conducting student and faculty development programs at various universities.

**Marwan Ahmed Mohammed Al-Shidhani** is currently pursuing a degree in accounting. As an accounting student, he is dedicated to gaining a thorough understanding of financial principles and practices. Marwan is committed to developing his skills through his academic journey and seeks to apply his knowledge in real-world scenarios. His focus on accuracy and analytical skills is shaping his growth in the accounting field, preparing him for a successful career in the industry.