

Report On
TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT: APEX FOOTWEAR LTD.

By

TASNIA EBNAT
Student ID: 20204007

An internship report submitted to the BRAC Business School in
partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Bachelor of Business Administration

BRAC BUSINESS SCHOOL

Brac University
September 2024

© 2024 Brac University
All rights reserved.

Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The internship report submitted is my/our own original work while completing degree at Brac University.
2. The report does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.
3. The report does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
4. I/We have acknowledged all main sources of help.

Student's Full Name & Signature:

TASNIA EBNAT

Student Full Name
Student ID : 20204007

Supervisor's Full Name & Signature:

Tanzin Khan
Senior Lecturer, BRAC Business School
BRAC University

Letter of Transmittal

Tanzin Khan
Senior Lecturer,
BRAC Business School
BRAC University
Kha 224 Bir Uttam Rafiqul Islam Avenue
Merul Badda, Dhaka 1212

Subject: Submission of internship report, “Training and development program at Apex Footwear Limited”

Dear Madam,

This is my pleasure to display my entry level position as an intern at Apex Footwear Limited, which I was appointed by through the direction of BRAC University, PSDP program.

The internship program has allowed significant absorption of corporate knowledge and etiquettes. Through the proper implementation of the academic guideline received under BRAC Business School curriculum, I have attempted the compact and comprehensive completion of the report. I trust that the report will meet the desires.

Lastly, I would like to express my deepest gratitude for your consistent support and good advice and empathetic leadership.

Sincerely yours,

Tasnia Ebnat
Student ID : 20204007

BRAC Business School

BRAC University

Date: October 5, 2024

Non-Disclosure Agreement

I am declaring that this report will not contain any harmful content that may lead to a negative impact on the company's reputation. There will be no engagement in displaying confidential data to the competitors that may result in the reduction of the company's competitive advantage over them.

This non-disclosure agreement is between me and Apex Footwear Limited. I am declaring and promising that this report will not be published in any internet Publications or any Journal. This report will only be saved within BRAC university's library server..

Acknowledgement

By the immeasurable grace of Almighty Allah, I have hereby completed my internship program smoothly under the supervision of BRAC Business School. Without Allah's willingness, it would be impossible on my part to get the opportunity of being groomed under a renowned University like BRAC University and to work with one of the most renowned Bangladeshi footwear companies like Apex Footwear limited as an HR intern.

As a mandatory part of the undergraduate program, I have completed my internship under the supervision of Ms. Tanzin Khan, Senior lecturer at BRAC Business School, BRAC University. I am thankful for the cooperative and empathetic guidance of my academic supervisor without whose valuable guidance it would be impossible to complete such a task. Her kind display of words and constant encouragement acted as an anchor even in the most difficult situations that the country has had to observe.

Lastly, immense gratitude to all the individuals who had participated in the completion of the report directly and indirectly.

Executive Summary

This study examines the training and development programmes at Apex Footwear Limited, focusing on their structure, effectiveness and alignment with company goals. Through a mixed methods approach, including qualitative interviews with HR professionals and quantitative training needs assessment (TNA) survey of 200 managerial employees, the research identifies strengths and gaps. findings reveal that while Apex's program covers essential skills, they lack customisation for department specific needs And have limitations in feedback mechanisms and orientation effectiveness. recommendations address enhancing program alignment with strategic objectives, fostering a culture of continuous learning and improving TNA processes. This report provides valuable insights for optimizing the company's training programs, with implications for HR professionals in improving employee engagement, retention and overall performance in the footwear industry.

Table of Contents

Declaration	1
Letter of Transmittal	1
Non-Disclosure Agreement	4
Acknowledgement	5
Executive Summary	6
Table of Contents	7
Chapter 1	1
1.1 Student Information:	1
1.2 Internship Information	1
1.3 Internship Outcomes	3
Chapter 2	7
2.1 Introduction to the Company:	7
2.2 Overview of the Company	8
2.3 Management Practices	10
2.3.2 Leadership Style	11
2.3.4 Human Resource Planning Process	12
2.4 Marketing Practices	13
2.4.1 Product Development and Competitive Practices	15
2.4.2 Branding Activities	15
2.4.3 Advertising Strategies	16
2.4.4. Market Issues and Gaps	16
2.5 Financial Performance and Accounting Practices	17
2.5.1 Financial Aspect	17
2.5.2 Accounting Practices:	18
2.6 Operations Management and Information System Practices	20
2.7 Industry and Competitive Analysis	21
2.7.1 Porter's Five Forces	21

2.7.2 SWOT Analysis	24
2.8 Summary and Conclusions:	28
2.9 Recommendations/ Implications:	29
Chapter 3	30
3.1 Introduction:	30
3.1.1 Literature review	31
3.1.2 Objectives	33
3.1.3. Significance of the Report	34
3.2. Methodology	34
3.3 Findings and Analysis	39
Qualitative findings: interview based insights on training and development at Apex Footwear Limited	39
Quantitative findings: TNA based insights on training and development at Apex Footwear Limited	45
Discussion:	51
3.4 Conclusion/ Summary	56
3.5 Recommendations	57
References	60

Chapter 1

1.1 Student Information:

Name: Tasnia Ebnat

ID:20204007

Completion of Undergraduation under BRAC Business School, majoring in Human Resource Management while minoring in Finance.

1.2 Internship Information

1.2.1 Period, Company Name, Department/Division, Address

Period: 15th May to 14th September

Company Name: Apex Footwear Limited

Department: Human Resource Management(Operations, C&B and MIS)

Address: House # 06, Road # 137, Block # SE(D) Gulshan-1, Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh

1.2.2 Internship Company Supervisor's Information

Name: MD Jakaria Sumon

Position: Manager- Human Resources

1.2.3 Job Scope – Job Description/Duties/Responsibilities

During the tenure of my internship program at APEX Footwear ltd. I have undergone an internship within the Human Resources Management Department, specifically under the

subdivisions of operations and Information Management Systems. There had been an opportunity to be involved in a plethora of differentiated work dynamics under the HR department for Unit 2. This sector involves tasks oriented around the local aspect of the business, whereas Unit 1 contributes and oversees the international or export activities of the firm.

The primary responsibilities included the following:

- Filing the processed documents of an individual particularly that of Sales Associates, ensuring all the documents were organized within the correct or relevant order according to the file structure. This included the CV of the individual, followed by their NID and educational certificate photocopies. Below the stack had to be the photocopies of guardian NIDs and their passport size pictures. Attachment of the passport size pictures of individuals had to be done once the reception and filing of the acknowledgment letter, bank transfer letter and personal information form had been done.
- Assisting in the onboarding process through the process of making calls for various vacant positions within the Unit-2 sector of the company.
- Writing of acknowledgement letters and bank transfer letters as required for the internal processes.
- Printing ID cards for the new employees within the managerial and non-managerial sectors along with the updating and replacement of existing ones.
- Assisting in the talent management and acquisition section by acting as a conductor for the various interview sessions. This involved calling the interviewees prior to the session to ensure their interest and presence, guiding them to the interview rooms and assisting in their escorting process to ensure the uninterrupted flow of the interview.

1.3 Internship Outcomes

1.3.1 Students Contribution to the Company

Through consistency and diligence there had been the opportunity to bring about improvements to the overall filing system through the organization of managerial level files within specific departments. They could be arranged in a numerically increasing order based on their ID numbers. This increased the efficiency with which the HR team could retrieve information without much hassle.

Assisted in streamlining the ID card printing process which led to a faster onboarding process of the new employees.

Assisted in the communication between potential employees and the management to ensure an uninterrupted flow of information during the onboarding process through mass phone calls and text messages.

Enhanced the interview process by ensuring smooth coordination between the interviewees and the interviewers, contributing to a positive candidate experience.

1.3.2 Benefits to the Student

The rigorous process of the internship program has allowed the gain of invaluable hands-on experience in the various HR operations, particularly within the area of document management and recruitment process. The consistent , active involvement in the meticulous task of organizing and filing employee documents, especially those of sales associates, ensured the learning of the significance of accuracy and ease of accessibility when handling

mass documents. The experience enhanced attention to detail and allowed the significant understanding of systematic record keeping and its value within the human resources.

One of the most consequential aspects of the role included the involvement within the recruitment and onboarding process. Participation in multiple stages of the recruitment cycle , from contacting the potential candidates to confirming their availability for interviews. The responsibility range included sending texts, making phone calls and providing necessary guidance on the required documents that had to be carried to ensure the smooth flow of the process. This allowed the understanding of the significance of effective communication within the HR responsibilities, providing a deeper insight into how effective onboarding is the key to integrating new hires into the company.

Development of multitasking capabilities and time management had been developed through the juggling of multiple tasks such as the requirements of document filing, preparation of ID cards, writing acknowledgement forms and coordination of interviews simultaneously. The experience taught the prioritization of tasks and management of time in an efficient manner to ensure all due assignments could be completed promptly while maintaining its standard.

Through the requirement of direct communication with multiple levels of candidates and team members, effective communication had to be embraced. The interactions of guiding interviewees to the appropriate rooms to the liaison with senior management about the progress of different tasks acted as primary instruments in the development of interpersonal skills. It taught the differentiation of formal and informal communication where necessary to yield the desired outcome from a given task or situation.

The overall experience gave a much required viewpoint on the understanding of the HR practices that are circulated within the real world that may differ from the theories due to cultural and situational factors.

1.3.3 Difficulties faced during the internship period

Initial difficulties in understanding the filing system and its requirements, which required additional guidance and practice.

Management of multiple tasks simultaneously was challenging at first but became manageable with the given time and patience of the colleagues.

Communication barriers with some candidates such as the language and accent barrier with the Sylhet locals during inquiry calls had been quite challenging to overcome as an individual who has no previous experience as such.

1.3.4 Recommendations to the company for future internships:

1.3.4 a: Introduction for the Interns

- Providing a more detailed orientation to the interns on the filing and document management systems to reduce the learning curve due to the small time frames of the internship programs. This would allow further enhancement of efficiency with which interns are able to perform.

1.3.4 b Detailed guidance

- Create a more comprehensive guide for interns to handle interview conduction sessions and carrying out in-person and over the phone interactions with the candidates which would allow them to perform their duties with utmost professionalism.

1.3.4 c Feedback mechanism

- Offer structured feedback sessions for the interns to assist their understanding and allow progress within areas of improvement.

Chapter 2

2.1 Introduction to the Company:

Apex Footwear Limited, a Syed Manzur Elahi corporation, is a leading footwear company within the premises of the country, Bangladesh. It is one among the other entities under APEX Groups. Known for its promising tagline of consistent growth, it is well known for its high-quality products and robust market presence. Standing as one of Bangladesh's premier footwear manufacturers, exporters and retailers, the company is known for its significant presence in both domestic and international markets. It carries out mass exporting to areas such as Europe, North America and Japan. Apex is renowned for its high quality products that cater to a broad consumer base, encompassing a variety of footwear styles, accessories and lifestyle solutions. The company operates through a network of over 247 points of sale across the country, which has solidified its position as one of the market leaders within Bangladesh. With the commitment to innovate, design and customer satisfaction, Apex Footwear continues to grow its footprint globally while offering a wide range of products tailored to different market segments.

2.2 Overview of the Company

Founded in the year 1990, Apex Footwear Limited has been operating within the leather and footwear industry with an unwavering focus on the manufacturing, retail and export of its products. Being a subsidiary of Apex Group it deals with tannery and leather products. The company leverages Bangladesh's competitive advantage and craftsmanship due to its relatively cheap labor force resulting from the massive population of the country. Positioning itself as a leader in high-quality footwear, Apex is not only a domestic retail giant but also a major exporter to foreign markets in Europe, Asia and North America. The company works successfully in line with the stringent international quality standards and works tirelessly to match the sustainability goals for which it has recently been awarded. The constant strive to work in line with its tagline, "Honest Growth" is reflected in the awareness instilled within the production practices and governance framework.

Fig 2.2.1: Vision of AFL



Fig 2.2.2 : Mission of AFL



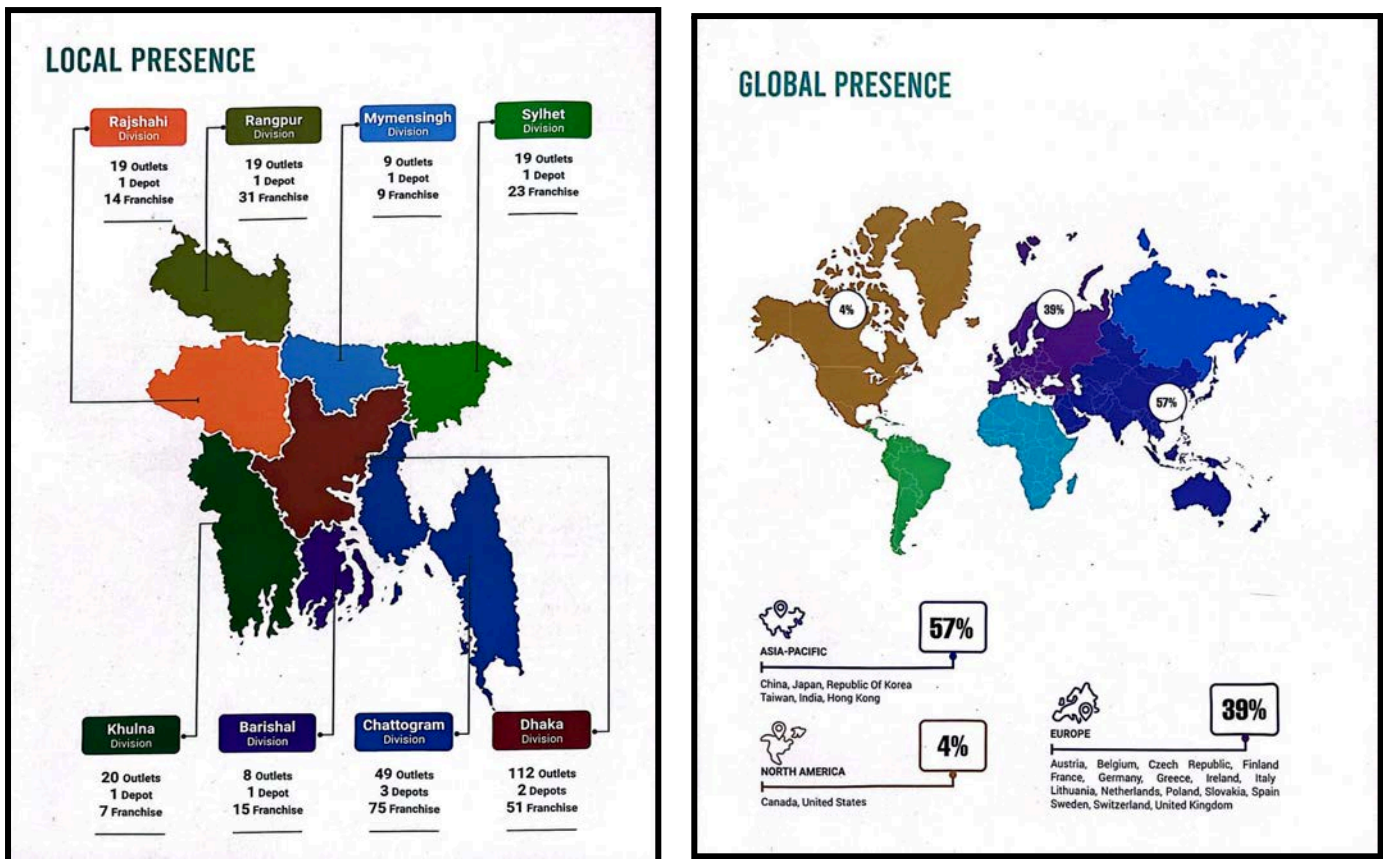


Fig 2.2.3: Local & Global Presence of AFL

Apex Footwear Limited has been a significant player within the footwear industry, offering a range of products that cater to the various market demands within varying segments. The strategic focus on the quality, innovation and consumer satisfaction has enabled the perseverance to maintain a competitive edge within the market. It operates with a portfolio of 10 in-house brands, each working to target a unique consumer demographic. The company's flagship brands include, "Apex", which specializes in mens shoes, sandals and accessories and "Nino Rossi", a brand focused on women's footwear and accessories. Other prominent brands include "VENTURINI", offering premium designer footwear for men whilst "MOOCHIE" includes a range of high-end women's shoes and bag collections. "SPRINT" caters to the needs of activewear enthusiasts. Additionally, "Maverick" is marketed as a

lifestyle brand, “Twinkler” offers footwear suitable for toddlers and “SchoolSmart” focuses on the demand of school shoes. Moreover, “Dr. Mauch” specializes in therapeutic footwear, uniting innovative 5 Zones Technology with stylish comfort to cater to enhanced foot health for both genders.

The diverse product range ensures appeal to consumers within the various market segments, from luxury to affordable daily wear products. The company relies on its commitment to quality, design and consumer satisfaction, which has allowed it to maintain a strong comparative position in both the local and international market segments. Apex footwear approximately has more than 10.5k individuals working under them, emphasizing its role as a significant player within the industrial and retails sectors of the country. The vast workforce supports its extensive operations in manufacturing retailing and global export expeditions, allowing them to cater to the international needs whilst simultaneously abiding by the laws of the country.

The success of the company is rooted in its ability to offer a wide array of products across varying price points while maintaining a consistent focus on quality and innovation. With brands that resonate with diverse audiences and a strong retail and export presence, the company hopes to operate as one of the prime leaders within the global footwear industry. Despite this, they cater to the social and economical needs of the country further upgrading the quality of their services whilst showcasing an area of strong morals and socioeconomic responsibility.

2.3 Management Practices

The management practice of a company refers to the techniques and ideas managers employ to increase the effectiveness of a company. Apex Footwear Limited operates with the democratic leadership style, which fosters employee engagement and decision making at

various levels of the organization. The leadership team focuses on aligning the company's goals with the market demand while maintaining a collaborative work culture. This approach is crucial for a large manufacturing and retail organization like Apex, where the leadership must be flexible and responsive to both internal and external market shifts.

The company also emphasizes performance based incentives for its employees including those at management levels. This practice aligns employee goals with the company's objectives driving higher productivity and accountability. Its top management fosters a transparent communication system encouraging innovation and feedback from all levels thereby ensuring continuous improvement in both products and processes. The management practices of the company involve the style of leadership that it follows and the human resource planning process that it integrates.

2.3.2 Leadership Style

Leadership is a significant aspect of any organization as the leader brings forth a large mass of people and organizes their credibility and skills towards one specific goal. The leadership style at Apex Footwear Limited could be described as being participative. Here, employees are encouraged to provide input and feedback regarding every event that takes place under the supervision of each department. For instance, once an employee has submitted their resignation form, upon clearance of their monetary and legal aspects, it is mandatory for them to undergo another interview where their feedback regarding every aspect of the job is taken under serious consideration. Moreover, the responses are entered unanimously into the system which is then shared with the respective departments to enhance work facilities and culture allowing employees to be an integral part of the decision making process of the organization. Similarly, the MD himself had hosted a celebration for the women of the company where the male co-workers had been strictly forbidden. Significant highlight was

given to any individual who had suggestions or complaints so as to better integrate the minority population within the corporate structure of the organization. Moreover, higher management encourages new ideas and provides an open platform for any individual to express their ideas regardless of its logical reasoning. This inclusive attributable approach fosters a collaborative work environment, leading to higher employee engagement, satisfaction and productivity. Through the adaptation of this leadership style, the organization successfully aligns and integrates the employee goals with that of its overall objectives, resulting in an environment that thrives with innovation and willing productivity.

2.3.4 Human Resource Planning Process

Apex footwear's HRM planning revolves around the recruitment, selection and retention of a skilled workforce regardless of its manufacturing units or the management system.

Recruitment and selection process: The company's recruitment process is systematic and involves multiple stages of screening, interviews and background checks to ensure the selection of candidates is in line with the values of the organization. Apex employs a comprehensive onboarding process ensuring that new hires integrate smoothly into the organizational culture.

Training and development initiatives: Training programs are also integral to the company's HRM practices particularly for sales associates and factory workers where the focus is on skill development, quality control and consumer services.

Compensation and benefits: Like most organizations, the company recognises the requirement of an effective compensation package mandatory to draw in exceptional talent within the job market. Along with two weekly holidays and subsidized lunch packages, the

company provides two festival bonuses, loan opportunities free from interest costs, medical discounts at renowned hospitals such as Ibn Sina, Square etc and end of service benefits.

Performance appraisal: The company's performance appraisal system is designed to reward high performing employees and encourage continuous development through feedback and coaching. For instance, the performance of employees are categorized under three levels: excellent, good, fair and needs improvement based on Key Performance Indicators(KPIs). While those receiving an excellent performance feedback receive the highest appraisal of 14%, reception of good and fair feedback get an increment of 10 and 9% respectively. Those who need improvement would receive a warning message with a plethora of instructions to better their performance. Inability to do so eventually leads to termination. Regular feedback and appraisal sessions allow employees to better grasp the concept of their strength and areas for improvement in order to enhance their existing skills and efficiency

2.4 Marketing Practices

Apex footwear's marketing strategy is focused on both "domestic retail" and "international exports". The company mostly undergoes the marketing strategy where it focuses on brand positioning as a quality and affordable footwear provider. However, more expensive brands within Apex have a different consumer segment and marketing strategies. The company targets different consumer segments including men, women and children across varying price points. it utilizes both the online and offline channels including social media, print and electronic media to promote its products and engage with consumers.

Domestically the company uses a multi channel approach combining brick-and mortar stores with E-Commerce platforms to reach a diverse consumer base. Based on the area and target consumer marketing requirements, a plethora of processes such as billboard renting, magazine advertisements, store POSM, leaflet and area based "mikings" announcements are

carried out. Its marketing efforts emphasize brand value, quality and affordability positioning it as a go-to footwear brand in Bangladesh.

Internationally, Apex has targeted markets in Europe, North America and Asia where it has established itself as a reliable exporter. The company's branding efforts in this market are supported by quality certifications and sustainability practices which appeal to environmentally conscious consumers. Apex also leverages social media and digital marketing to promote its products and engage with the younger tech-savvy audience contributing to increase brand visibility and sales growth.



Fig 2.2.4: Global Standards of AFL

2.4.1 Product Development and Competitive Practices

Apex Footwear Limited actively focuses on product development ensuring it remains competitive in both local and international markets. The company's in-house brands such as “Nino Rossi” and “VENTURINI” consistently release newly designed products on-board with the ongoing fashion trends, catering to different target demographics. Apex has positioned itself as a luxury in the Bangladesh footwear industry through its diverse offerings ranging from luxury and premium footwear “MOOCHIE” to activewear, SPRINT and therapeutic shoes, Dr. Mauch fulfilling the demand of individuals in need for stylish, yet medically equipped footwear. This wide range ensures that the company stays competitive against both local brands and global players like Bata, Nike and Adidas. Apex is known for using advanced technology and manufacturing and integrating sustainable practices particularly in leather processing to meet Global standards

2.4.2 Branding Activities

Apex footwear’s branding efforts are designed to appeal to a broad demographic, with a strong focus on both the premium and mass markets. For instance, its “Ninno Rossi” brand is heavily focused on appealing to a fashion forward female demographic while “MOOCHIE” targets a more premium audience. The company often highlights craftsmanship quality and design innovation in its branding messages. Recently the company has used “Founders Day” as a significant event in its branding efforts through the enablement of a “26% flat discount across all sales channels” further reinforcing brand loyalty and consumer engagement. The company also plans to launch a “Ninno Rossi” campaign targeting female consumers with a focus on different age and lifestyle segments.

2.4.3 Advertising Strategies

The company utilizes a combination of traditional advertising and digital marketing to promote its brands and products. It has adopted a comprehensive approach, leveraging social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram and YouTube to reach a broader audience spectrum, especially millennials and Generation Z. Recent campaigns include the pooja campaign starting from the 29th September the 13th October and the Nino Rossi brand campaign (October 10 to November 15th), both of which are highly targeted towards specific consumer groups. Digital ads, influencer partnerships and social media engagement are key tools employed to promote its offerings. The “Founders Day” promotion with significant discounts, is a part of a broader omnichannel strategy that incorporates both online and in-store marketing.

2.4.4. Market Issues and Gaps

Despite its robust market presence, Apex footwear faces challenges such as “pricing competition” from local players and global brands. Moreover, the rise of e-commerce and fast fashion could present challenges in terms of maintaining market share due to the rise of brands such as “Meraki” and “Lamode” shoes who are offering in-trend women's footwear at a fraction of Apex price ranges. “Brand differentiation” for some of its mid range products could also be improved. There are potential gaps in the company's digital marketing execution, particularly in scaling its social media strategy and capitalizing on trends like influencer marketing. Lastly, expanding beyond Bangladesh with stronger branding in the international market is another area where Apex could focus more intensely .

2.5 Financial Performance and Accounting Practices

Apex Footwear Limited has shown consistency in term of their financial growth over the past 4 years despite the blow that had been caused during the pandemic of 2020. Bouncing back from such hard times has shown sound financial management practices.

2.5.1 Financial Aspect

a. Liquidity and Solvency:

The company faced numerous challenges in the year 2021 to 2022, due to the after effects of the global pandemic and supply chain disruptions, causing a decrease in overall footwear demand all over the world. However, by the year 2022-2023, export sales had improved, increasing by 12.1% while total exports reached 3.96 million pairs. Liquidity reflected through a likely improvement in the current ratio, was bolstered by 22.25% growth within the domestic sales category.

b. Efficiency:

Efficiency ratios such as the inventory turnover likely improved as leather product sales grew by 22.11% and synthetic product sales by 22.57% in the year 2022-2023. With better sales and inventory management, the company has shown a capacity for efficiently handling its production and inventory levels.

c. Profitability:

The domestic sales of the company grew from Tk 7,687.22 million in 2021-22 to Tk. 9,397.27 million in 2022-23, signaling 22.25% growth. Export growth also contributed to improved profitability. The company's gross and net profit margins likely benefited from this increase, despite the rising cost of material and global demand fluctuations.

d. Leverage:

There may have been a strategic use of debt to support its growth. The debt-to-equity ratio and interest coverage ratio reflect the company's ability to manage its financial obligations, with growing revenues supporting debt repayments.

e. Market value:

The market value of the company had been positively influenced by its 17.72% growth in export volumes and continued domestic expansion. Branding campaigns like "Founders Days" and the "Puja Campaign" helped drive consumer engagement and strengthen the market presence.

2.5.2 Accounting Practices:

Apex Footwear follows the "accrual basis of accounting", ensuring timely recognition of revenues and expenses. The company adheres to standard accounting cycles and utilizes "straight line depreciation" for assets. Comprehensive accounting disclosures ensure transparency, with adjustments made to reflect global market risks and supply chain challenges.

Apex Footwear follows core accounting principles that align with both national and international standards. Based on the provided financial details:

- a. Method of Accounting: Apex use the accrual basis of accounting, which is standard for large corporations. This method records revenues and expenses when they are earned or incurred, rather than when cash is exchanged. It aids in the clear picture formation of the company's financial health.

- b. Accounting Cycle: Apex appears to follow a complete accounting cycle, including steps like identifying and recording transactions, posting to ledgers, preparing financial statements and closing accounts. These practices ensure compliance with reporting standards and aid in the transparency of the financial aspects.
- c. Depreciation methods: The company likely uses a combination of straight-line depreciation for its long term assets and accelerated depreciation for certain capital expenditures, particularly in the production and retail infrastructure. Depreciation plays a key role in maintaining accurate asset values and managing taxation
- d. Accounting disclosures: The company provides extensive financial disclosures in their annual reports. Here, multiple aspects of the financial health, market risks and business operations are portrayed. This transparency ensures compliance with financial reporting standards in Bangladesh and all across the globe. Here, there has been an overall scenario regarding the challenges faced due to global markets as a result of supply chain issues, while ensuring the proper portrayal of the adjustments that were made to the inventory management and production system.

Fig 2.5. 1 Export Pairs and Revenues: 2021-2022 & 2022-2023 respectively

Quarter	Export Pairs	Export Revenue	Quarter	Export (pairs) %	Export (revenue) %
Q1	-29.46%	-38.91%	Q1	66.49%	88.38%
Q2	67.73%	39.48%	Q2	13.56%	57.96%
Q3	-5.91%	-6.90%	Q3	-10.24%	23.68%
Q4	45.63%	79.46%	Q4	-10.91%	-8.59%
Total	8.78%	4.01%	Total	12.09%	35.01%

Fig 2.5.2 Domestic Revenues: 2021-2022 & 2022-2023 respectively

Quarter	Revenue Tk.	Revenue %	Quarter	Revenue (Taka)	Revenue %
Q1	-296.90 million	-16.73%	Q1	243.09 million	16.45%
Q2	6.30 million	0.35%	Q2	327.69 million	18.03%
Q3	80.01 million	4.55%	Q3	577.08 million	31.44%
Q4	1,217.10 million	90.89%	Q4	562.19 million	21.99%
Total	1,006.40 million	15.06%	Total	1,710.05 million	22.25%

2.6 Operations Management and Information System Practices

Apex Footwear Limited employs advanced systems to ensure seamless operations across its departments, leveraging technology to improve efficiency, quality and data management.

Use of the POS Software:

Apex footwear uses Point Of Sales(POS) software for data entry and real time product tracking. This system is critical in their retail operations,ensuring that the data related to each product, including its available size, material and quality is accurately captured and updated. When a product's barcode is scanned for purchase the database is immediately updated to reflect the transaction. This ensures efficient inventory management and quick responsiveness to stock levels, contributing to better consumer satisfaction and operation efficiency.

IFS (Industrial and Financial Systems) for ERP:

The company also integrates IFS software, also known as the Industrial and Financial System across all its departments. The software shows immense significance for Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), where each department is managed through separate modules, from human resources to supply chain management. The IFS software enables Apex to streamline its business processes, providing real time data for better decision making, improved operational oversight and cost effective resource allocation. This ensures that all departments including finance, production and marketing are interconnected and operating efficiently.

ID card management with the Andron:

Additionally, Apex uses the Andron software to manage and print ID cards for its employees. This system accommodates different levels of workers by producing ID cards in varying formats. Employees at the head office have a distinct format compared to those working in

sales. The formal customized ID card system ensures clear identification of staff roles and levels, enhancing organizational structure and security.

Through the employment of such software solutions Apex footwear, demonstrates its commitment to using cutting edge technology to optimize its operations, manage resources efficiently and maintain a seamless workflow across all its business segments. These systems also enable the company to respond more quickly to market demand improving overall operational agility.

2.7 Industry and Competitive Analysis

2.7.1 Porter's Five Forces

Regardless of the strength with which a company portrays itself, it is essential to carry out an Industrial and competitive analysis to understand the overall strength and position a company holds within a market. A detailed Porter's Five Forces analysis provides an in-depth understanding of the competitive dynamics in the footwear industry where Apex Footwear Limited operates. Here is a breakdown of each force in the context of Apex.:

1. Threat of New Entrants:

The footwear industry in Bangladesh, particularly for a large player like Apex faces a low threat of new entrance. This is due to the significant capital investment required to set up manufacturing facilities, build a distribution network and establish a brand presence. Apex has strong brand recognition and benefits from economies of scale which serve as significant barriers to entry for smaller new companies. Additionally, its vertical integration particularly in leather processing for the making of some export quality products makes it harder for new players to complete without access to similar resources and supply chains.

However there is some risk of new entrances introducing innovative or niche products, particularly in the non-leather footwear segment, which could target specific consumer groups, in this case, individuals looking for fast fashion footwear especially due to the emergence of much cheaper alternatives such as Meraki BD and Nawabi shoes. New digital players entering the e-commerce market with minimal upfront costs could also pose a threat in the future, especially with the rise of direct-to-consumer brands.

2. Bargaining power of suppliers

Supplier power is moderate in this case, especially considering that it relies on quality leather for its production. The leather industry is somewhat concentrated, with Apex sourcing raw material from a limited number of suppliers who have specialized capabilities. However, the company's vertical integration into leather processing, through the availability of the Apex Tannery reduces its dependency on external suppliers, allowing it to exert control over the supply chain.

Despite this, fluctuations within the raw material prices, especially leather, can impact the cost structure. Reliance on quality materials means that any price or regulatory issues affecting leather production goods would significantly affect its cost base and profitability.

3. Bargaining power of buyers

In both the domestic and international markets, the bargaining power of buyers is relatively high. Apex caters to a broad market including price sensitive consumers domestically and premium buyers in export markets. Though consumers cannot directly influence the price due to the "Fixed price" tag, within the domestic market, consumers can easily switch between different footwear brands which exerts downward pressure on prices. International buyers, especially large retailers and wholesalers often have substantial negotiating power especially

when it comes to bulk purchases and their willingness to avail the concept of economies of scale.

As consumers become more informed and have access to a wider range of products through eCommerce, their power increases. Apex mitigates this by focusing on product quality and brand loyalty. Furthermore, they have also integrated and invested a greater deal on their e-commerce sites allowing them to reach the highest sales objective this year than they ever have before. The company must continuously innovate and expand their branches of service and products to keep their consumer base satisfied while attracting new consumers as trends within the high technological environment continue to change rapidly .

4. Threat of substitute products

The threat of substitutes is moderate to high. The footwear industry is diverse and consumers have many options such as synthetic shoes, sports footwear or products from global brands. Apex footwear focuses primarily on leather footwear, but other materials like synthetics are becoming increasingly popular due to cost effectiveness, durability and changing consumer preferences such as environmental consciousness allows consumers to opt for vegan or sustainable or alternatives.

The rise of fast fashion and casual wear also increases the availability of cheaper alternative footwear. Apex mitigates this risk by offering a wide range of products and leveraging its established reputation for quality. .

5. Industry rivalry

Rivalry among existing competitors is intense in the Bangladesh footwear market, with both domestic brands like Bata and global players like Nike, Adidas and Puma competing for

market share. Apex also competes against smaller localized brands that can offer low cost products to specific market segments.

Within the export market Apex faces competition from other Asian manufacturers particularly from countries like China and Vietnam which are dominant players in the global footwear industry. This forces the company to continuously innovate, maintain competitive pricing and focus on quality to retain its competitive edge. the company's commitment to sustainability and ethical practices also allows it to stand out within the increasingly conscious market.

Conclusion:

As the company operates in a highly competitive environment, with strong market positioning that assists it to navigate the various challenges posed by suppliers, buyers and competitors. The company's ability to leverage its strengths in quality, brand loyalty and vertical integration allows it to mitigate many of these competitive forces. However, constant innovation and adaptation are crucial for maintaining its edge, particularly in the face of rising substitutes and intense rivalry.

2.7.2 SWOT Analysis

The company's SWOT analysis:

Strength:

1. Strong market presence:

Bangladesh is marked as being one of the fastest growing footwear industries in the world standing at 8th in production, 9th in consumption and 16th in export. (*Our Industry* | APEX, n.d.) As one of the leading and renowned companies within the

country, Apex enjoys a prominent position in both the domestic and international markets, with a well established reputation in Europe, North America and Japan. It is the most prominent shoemaker in the southern part of Asia, accounting for an approximate percentage of 15% for the leather footwear exports from the country. (Babul, 2023)

This strong brand presence allows a boost within consumer loyalty while providing a competitive edge in the global markets.

Implications: Apex may leverage its strong brand identity to continue expanding its product lines and enter new markets, mitigating risks associated with market volatility.

2. Vertical integration:

Apex has integrated a portion of its production processes, allowing the advantage of cost control and efficient production of customized export products.

Implications: while vertical integration ensures quality control it simultaneously provides the flexibility to adapt the production cycle to changing consumer demands mitigating the heavy reliance on third party suppliers.

3. Robust supply chain infrastructure

Through the completion of three decades within the industry, Apex has developed a reliable supply chain. Through effective synchronization of third party providers and vertical integration vendors, the company has proven the insurance of efficient management of large scale production.

Implications: this allows the consistent delivery of products to the high value international clients while sustaining consumer satisfaction and prompt delivery to the local market.

Weakness:

1. Dependence on leather imports:

The company has a heavy reliance on countries such as China, Ukraine, and Nigeria for its primary raw material: leather. The price fluctuations and supply chain disruptions particularly due to the ongoing war has caused the creation of vulnerability for the company. (Babul, 2023)

Implications: over reliance on external suppliers for raw materials increases the risk of production delays while dollar fluctuations may increase the cost of production, which can in turn impact the company's ability to meet consumer demands on time and at a feasible rate.

2. Over- reliance on International Markets:

A significant portion of Apex's revenue comes from International markets, making the company susceptible to global economic down trends especially within Europe. (Star Business Report, 2023)

Implications: economic instability or changes in trade policies could severely impact Apex's revenue stream, stressing the need for further diversification.

Opportunities:

1. Expansion into newer markets:

Apex has the potential to expand into emerging markets, particularly within Asia and the Middle East where footwear demand is on the rise, (*Footwear Industry | Middle East - Market Forecast 2032*, n.d.) allowing diversification within the company's revenue streams. Simultaneously it would reduce dependence on the western markets and its forthcoming demand fluctuations.

Implications: a well planned market expansion strategy could allow Apex to capture new consumer bases and reduce its dependence on traditional markets enhancing overall profitability.

2. Technology Advancements:

With the use of POS, IFS and other advanced software, Apex is positioned to streamline operations and improve decision making processes.

Implications: further Technological integration can boost operational efficiency, allowing effective management of its supply chain, while simultaneously enhancing the consumer experience.

Threats:

1. Local economic uncertainty:

The ongoing challenges posed by inflation, political instability and supply chain disruptions may prove to be heinous to the overall operations of the company. (Bahree, 2024)

Implications: rising production costs and currency fluctuations can squeeze profit margins, making it imperative for Apex to focus on cost control measures and efficient resource allocation.

2. Intensifying competition:

The footwear industry is becoming increasingly competitive with both local brands and international players targeting similar consumer bases. (Parvez, 2008)

Implications: Apex may face price wars and the need to invest heavily within its marketing department to maintain its market share with good effect profitability due to cheaper alternatives such as Meraki bd, Nawabi Shoes that have been gaining mass popularity among the young generation.

2.8 Summary and Conclusions:

Apex Footwear Limited has successfully positioned itself as a key player within the Footwear Industry of Bangladesh through effective management, financial stability and marketing strategies. The company's strong market presence, vertical integration and well established supply chain provide the competitive edge, particularly in the export sector. In addition, its participative leadership and comprehensive HR practices, including employee training and development have been integral in maintaining workforce engagement and operational excellence. The company's ability to balance between managerial and non-material training programs reflects its commitment to addressing workforce needs and aligning them with organizational objectives. However there are still areas where improvements can be made through the customization of training programs and leveraging technology to improve learning outcomes.

2.9 Recommendations/ Implications:

To sustain its growth and position in the competitive global footwear market, Apex Footwear Limited may focus on the following:

1. Expansion of digital marketing effort: given the growing importance of digital channels in reaching new consumers, the company should invest more in digital marketing initiatives. This could include social media campaigns with the trending influencer base known and loved by the younger consumer base, targeted online advertising and the effective use of its E-Commerce platform.
2. Exploration of newer markets: the company has the opportunity to expand into emerging markets in Asia, Africa and the Middle East, where the demand for quality footwear is growing. Through the strategic entrance into these markets they may be able to mitigate the forthcoming decrease in demand from the traditional market.
3. Strengthening sustainability and compliance training: given the increasing global focus on sustainability, Apex should continue to enhance its training programs on sustainability and compliance as it has been. This would ensure that the workforce is well equipped throughout the years to meet the international standard and regulations. This would allow them to withhold companies' reputation as a socially responsible brand within the global marketplace.

Chapter 3

3.1 Introduction:

Training and development play a pivotal role in equipping employees with the necessary skills to meet organizational goals. In the competitive footwear industry, companies like Apex Footwear Limited must continuously invest in human capital to remain ahead of the curve, especially where efficiency and innovation drive success. (Putri, 2022) Apex Footwear Limited, a key player in Bangladesh's footwear industry, recognises this need and has implemented training programs aimed at equipping employees- particularly managerial staff- with the skills required to thrive in both local and global markets.

Despite these efforts, questions remain about the effectiveness of these processes in addressing the diverse and evolving needs of managerial employees. While the existing framework covers basic skills, there may be gaps in providing the advanced training necessary for leadership and strategic roles. This shortfall could hinder individual performance and the company's ability to achieve broader goals.

Addressing this issue is crucial, as ineffective training increases the probability of skill gaps, lowers engagement and reduces productivity, particularly alarming within a competitive industry. (Putri, 2022) There is a lack of clarity regarding how well the current programs meet the specific needs of managerial employees and align with Apex footwear's strategic objectives.

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the company's training programs for managerial staff, examine how well they address competency gaps and support the company's long term goals. This study aims to provide insights and recommendations to improve the effectiveness of the

training work, filling the knowledge gap and strengthening employee development at Apex Footwear Limited.

3.1.1 Literature review

Training and Development Concepts: Training and development refer to systematic processes aimed at improving employees' skills, knowledge and competencies to meet organizational goals.(ARMSTRONG & Taylor, 2020) (Chellappa, n.d.) In particular, development focuses on long term growth and career progression, while training often emphasizes immediate skill acquisition. Both are integral to sustaining the performance of an organization especially in industries like footwear, where innovation and adaptability are critical.

Key Perspectives on Training: Different scholars provide various views on the impact of training and development on organizational success. Armstrong (2020) asserts that structured training enhances employee performance, job satisfaction and productivity. (ARMSTRONG & Taylor, 2020) Noe, highlights the importance of tailored programs for managerial staff, arguing that organizations with focused management training experience higher leadership qualities, improved employee engagement and higher rates of retention. (Noe, n.d.) Dessler (2022) adds that as industries evolve, the need for both technical and leadership skills among managers increases. (Dessler, 2022, #) In this context, organizations must provide training that fosters a balance between functional expertise and soft skills to meet changing market demands.

Relationship Between Concepts: The concept of training, development, employee engagement and retention are deeply interconnected. Effective training not only addresses skill gaps but also fosters employee engagement by making staff feel valued and prepared for future roles (ARMSTRONG & Taylor, 2020). When employees are equipped with the necessary skills, they are more likely to remain engaged and committed to the organization,

reducing turnover rates (Noe, n.d.). (Putri, 2022) This is particularly significant for managerial employees, whose role in leading teams directly influences overall organizational efficiency and morale. The lack of adequate development can lead to disengagement, limiting employee growth and contributing to higher attrition rates.

Findings from Related Studies: Research consistently shows that employee training is linked to improved job performance and satisfaction. A study by Dessler (2022) revealed that companies investing in managerial training saw a 15% higher retention rate compared to those that did not. (Dessler, 2022, #) Similarly Armstrong(2021) found that organizations with well designed training programs reported better operational outcomes and higher levels of employee engagement. In the contest of the footwear industry, where both technical expertise and leadership are crucial, training plays a pivotal role in maintaining competitiveness. (Singh, 2023)

Comparisons and Gaps: While most studies emphasize the positive effects of training and development, gaps remain in addressing individualized training needs. Many organizations implement generic training programs that may not fully cater to specific departmental requirements or evolving market conditions. This creates a misalignment between training and actual workforce needs, leading to under-developed skill sets and disengaged employees (Noe, 2020). For Apex footwear, aligning training programs with both functional expertise and leadership development is key to closing these gaps, ensuring both employee growth and organizational success.

In conclusion, the literature suggests that a strategic approach to training and development, especially for managerial staff, is essential in fostering employee engagement, improving retention and driving organizational performance. However, the challenge remains in tailoring these programs to meet both current and future skill needs. This review serves as the

foundation for evaluating Apex Footwear's training programs in addressing these concerns and improving its workforce development strategy.

3.1.1.2 Problem Statement:

Apex Footwear Limited faces challenges in ensuring its training and development programmes effectively address skill gaps among managerial employees. While the company offers structured orientation and periodic training, these programs may not fully align with the evolving needs of different departments or the company's strategic objectives. The lack of tailored training in both functional and leadership skills risks lowering employee engagement and retention, as inadequate development can lead to disengagement and turnover.

The report delves into the nooks and crannies of the training system to examine the effectiveness of Apex Footwear's current training programs in addressing such issues and proposes improvements to better align training initiatives with organizational goals and employee growth.

3.1.2 Objectives

The objectives of the report are as follows:

1. Analyze the design and implementation of the training and development programs at Apex Footwear Limited, particularly for managerial employees.
2. Assess the effectiveness of these programs in enhancing employee skills, both in terms of functional expertise and leadership development.
3. Identify potential gaps in the current training framework that may impact employee engagement, retention and overall performance.
4. Evaluate how the training programs align with the broader strategic objectives of the company.

5. Explore specific development needs across various departments to recommend targeted improvements.

3.1.3. Significance of the Report

The training and development programme at Apex Footwear Limited is crucial to the company's human capital development. This report provides valuable insight into the training and development practices at Apex Footwear Limited, which are critical for the company's long term success and competitiveness in the fast evolving footwear industry. With the industry in Bangladesh facing rapid technological advancements and shifting market demands, effective employee training programs are essential for enhancing both managerial and non managerial skills, boosting productivity and driving innovation.

By analyzing the current training framework at Apex footwear, this report will offer data driven recommendations to bridge existing skill gaps, improve employee engagement and enhance retention, particularly among managerial staff. The findings of the report will not only help optimize the company's training methods to better align with its strategic goals but also serve as a valuable resource for HR professionals and industry stakeholders, contributing to more informed decision making and better talent management in the broader footwear sector .

3.2. Methodology

3.2.1 Research Design

The study employs a mixed-methods research design combining quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a comprehensive understanding of the training and development programs at Apex Footwear Limited. The qualitative aspect focuses on gathering insights from key HR personnel through interviews, while the quantitative side involves data

collection from a Training Needs Assessment (TNA), allowing for the identification of specific training requirements across managerial employees.

The mixed-methods approach was chosen due to the ability to allow for the triangulation method of data, ensuring a well rounded analysis of both the structural design and the effectiveness of the training programs.

3.2.2 Sample

The sample for the qualitative component consisted of three HR professionals directly involved within the training and development programme at Apex Footwear Limited:

Mehnaz Alim: Assistant Manager, Talent Management and Acquisition

Mridul Chanchal: Assistant Manager, Training and Development

Shahriar Rahman: Manager, Training and Development

These individuals had been selected based on their extensive knowledge of the company's HR and training strategies.

For the quantitative component, the sample included 200 managerial employees from various departments, selected based on their participation in the training programs and their representation in the TNA process. The results have been shown within the table below:

Fig 3.2.2 Quantitative research outcome

Sl.	List of Trainings (PMS 2022)	No. of Requirements
1	ICURES	9
2	Organizational Behavior	3
3	Email Writing	4
4	Stress Management	1
5	Negotiation Skill	7
6	Motivation	2
7	Time Management	14
8	Communication skill	46
9	Confidence Increase	1
10	Leadership training	31
11	Negotiation Skill	4
12	Team Building	24
13	Power Point	12
14	MS Power BI	2
15	Advance Excel Training	34
16	Process development	3
19	Quality Management	6
20	Compliance	9
21	Traning on sustainabilty	13
22	People management	13
23	Financial Statements Analysis	1
24	Kaizen	2
26	Infographic presentation	1
27	Problem solving skill	2
28	Analytical ability	4
29	HR Generic Certification	2
30	Succession Planning	2
32	Total Reward Management Course	2
37	Certified HRBP Course	2
38	Performance Management	1
41	Training Module Development	1
45	Production process	1
46	Vendor management	2
49	IFS Training	11
50	Forensic Audit	3
51	Understanding Business Process	6
52	Commercial/Banking Training	2
53	Local Apparel Merchandising and Supply Chain Management	1
54	VAT Software	1
55	Microsoft SQL server	5
57	Risk Management	12
58	Project Management	13
59	Decision Analytics	1
60	Standard Business Domain Knowledge Training	1
62	Brand Knowledge	1
64	Interpersonal Skills building	1
65	Skill development in graphic design & animation	1
67	Digital Marketing	2
68	Data analysis, trend understanding, preparing dashboard	1
75	Meta Social Media Marketing Professional Certificate	1
76	Content Marketing Strategy	1
77	Google Data Analytics Professional Certificate	1
78	Meta Marketing Analytics Professional Certificate	1
81	Strategic planning	4
82	Basic Financial Management	9
83	Anticipation and inventory management	2
84	Advance Business operation process	2
85	POS operation & basic trouble shooting	1
86	EBIDTA , Cost Management	3
87	Product training	6
89	Managerial Competency	6
90	Traning on footwear technology	2
92	Traning for CAPEX & Budget making works.	6
93	Training for RCA of machines.	6
Grand Total		374

3.2.3 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

A purposive sampling technique was employed for the qualitative interviews, as the HR professionals were chosen specifically for their expertise in the field of training and development. The small, targeted sample size of three interviewees is appropriate given the exploratory nature of the qualitative research.

For the quantitative data collection, a printed questionnaire form had been distributed among 200 managerial employees who had agreed to cooperate when contacted by the HR department. A significant portion within each department had been provided with the questionnaire to ensure proportionate representation of every department within the TNA model, allowing for a comprehensive overview of training needs across the different areas of the company. The total sample size for the TNA survey was 200 managerial employees, which is representative of the company's broader managerial population of approximately 296 staff members.

3.6.4 Data Collection Process

Data collection was conducted through the application of primary and secondary processes:

Interviews: Semi structured interviews were conducted with the three HR professionals to gather proper insights on the design, execution and evaluation of the training programs.

These interviews were conducted in person and lasted approximately 45 minutes each.

Training Needs Assessment: A structured survey was distributed to 296 managerial employees. The TNA focused on identifying gaps in both technical and soft skills, as well as employees perceived training needs. The survey covered a wide range of training categories, including leadership development, technical training and communication skills.

Document review: internal documents such as orientation guidelines, departmental training modules and employee performance feedback reports were analyzed to understand the structure and content of existing training programs.

3.6.5 Data Analysis Plan

Qualitative data analysis: thematic analysis was employed to analyze the interview data. It allowed for the identification of recurring themes related to the effectiveness of the training programs, areas for improvement and the alignment of training content with the company's strategic objectives. Key themes that emerged included the need for more continuous learning opportunities that align with an employee's career path, better alignment of training across departments to induce effective communication and improved feedback mechanisms.

Quantitative Data Analysis: the TNA survey data was analyzed to determine the frequency and distribution of various training needs. Observations were made to examine how training needs varied across various departments. This analysis helped identify critical training areas that require immediate attention and areas where employees felt their training needs were being met.

Triangulation: the findings from the qualitative interviews and quantitative TNA survey were triangulated to ensure a more robust analysis. This approach helped validate the results and provided a deeper understanding of the training gaps, challenges and opportunities for improvement at Apex Footwear Limited.

3.3 Findings and Analysis

Qualitative findings: interview based insights on training and development at Apex Footwear Limited

The concerned section presents findings from interviews conducted with three pivotal personnels in Apex Footwear, under the HR department. The individuals interviewed were: Shahriar Rahman (Manager, Training and Development), Mehnaz Alim (Assistant Manager, Talent Management and Acquisition) and Mridul Chanchal (Assistant Manager, Training and Development). Each interview followed a structured question format, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the company's training and development program for its managerial employees.

Interview with Shahriar Rahman (Manager, Training and Development)

Introductory questions:

1. “Thank you for meeting with me Shahriar bhaiya. Could you please enhance my knowledge about your role and how long you have been involved with the training and development at Apex Footwear?”

Purpose: this introductory question establishes rapport and provides context on the interviewees experience, setting the foundation for the discussion.

Response: he had shared his extensive experience in training and development, highlighting his role in structuring programs and overseeing training initiatives for both managerial and non managerial employees, however had requested the emission of such details on the paper.

2. “Could you describe the key categories of employees at Apex and the specific training approaches for each group?”

Purpose: this question aimed to understand the segmentation of employees and how training differs by category. Identification of such distinctions clarifies the overall structure of the company's training programs.

Response: he explained the categorization of employees under the labels of "Managerial" and "Non-managerial". The latter is further divided into sales and Factory workers.

Here, each group has tailored training protocols as discussed below:

Managerial employees: receive a one month orientation, followed by a six-month probationary period and undergo soft skills training. Their positions are finalized after probation.

Non-managerial employees: Store and Factory workers, have a 3-month probationary period and undergo shorter role specific training that include 1-2 weeks of store attachment for hands-on experience. Training of Sales Associates are primarily focused on sales-specific skills and some soft skills. Factory workers on the contrary receive a one-day functional training session, covering compliance, HR policy awareness and functional tasks.

In depth questions

3. "What specific skills or topics are covered in the soft skills training for managerial and sales employees?"

Purpose: this question probes the nature of soft skills training, emphasizing how it is customized for different roles.

Response: he mentioned that managerial employees receive extensive training in overall communication that is to be conducted within and among the departments, overall leadership skills that must be shown and the significance of time management. Whereas sales employees focus on consumer interaction and negotiation skills. Factory employees primarily receive functional skills training.

4. “How does the training differ for non managerial employees, particularly between sales and Factory workers?”

Purpose: this question delves deeper into how training is adapted to specific non-managerial roles, which may require different competencies.

Response: he highlighted that factory workers receive training specific to functional skills and compliance, while sales employees get a combination of soft and sales oriented training to improve their interaction with consumers.

Interview with Mehnaz Alim (Assistant Manager, Talent Management and Acquisition)

Introductory questions:

1. “Thank you for your time Mehnaz apu. Can you please tell me about your role and the responsibilities you manage within talent management and acquisition?”

Purpose: this initial question allows the interviewee to describe her role, providing insight into involvement in the employee orientation and training processes.

Response: she outlined her responsibilities in overseeing the orientation process of managerial staff while ensuring that employees receive proper onboarding, managing

the Google Classroom resources for new hires and CV sorting for various managerial positions.

2. “Could you provide an overview of the orientation process for new managerial hires at Apex?”

Purpose: This question seeks to understand the steps in the orientation process, which are essential for establishing foundational knowledge for the newcomers.

Response: she described the one month orientation process, highlighting key activities such as the following:

The first day involves HR paperwork, background verification and a company overview.

From day two onwards the following events take place based on availability and requirement:

- Google Classroom modules: new hires study self-paced modules, covering topics such as Apex’s product lines, company values and a theoretical introduction to each department.
- Departmental meetups and quizzes: after each module has been completed studying after the theoretical knowledge consumption of each department, employees complete a quiz after the completion of each module and engage in a question and answer session with Department Representatives.
- On site visits: visits to the CDC, Factory and retail stores are included to give practical exposure and allow new employees to experience the operational aspects of Apex Footwear first hand.

In-depth question:

3. “Could you please explain the purpose of the Google Classroom modules and how they fit into the overall orientation process?”

Purpose: this question explores the use of digital Tools in training, Specifically how the Google Classroom modules support employee self learning.

Response: she elaborated on the Google classrooms role in allowing employees to learn at their own pace while following the one month that is allocated for the introductory phase of a newcomer. modules cover General company information, followed by Department- specific segments, which employees must study to prepare for the Department meetups.

4. “What is the purpose of the quizzes and departmental meetups during orientation?”

Purpose: this question focuses on the practical application and assessment of learning within the orientation.

Response: she explained that quizzes assess retention, while departmental meetups allow new hires to ask questions and understand each Department's roles, facilitating a smoother transition into their new roles.

Interview with Mridul Chanchal (Assistant Manager, Training and Development)

Introductory questions:

1. “Thank you for joining me Mridul bhaiya. Can you please describe your role in the training and development team and your primary responsibilities?”

Purpose: An opening question to understand the employee’s role in identifying and addressing training needs.

Response: he outlined his role in conducting training needs assessments (TNA) and planning training programs based on feedback and specific skill gaps within the organization. However, had requested the omission of certain aspects of his response due to confidentiality.

2. “How do you identify training needs and decide which programs to implement?”

Purpose: this question explores the methodology behind training needs assessment and prioritization of programs.

Response: he explained that a monthly TNA is conducted based on employee feedback and HR requests. Training programs are determined by reviewing development gaps identified in the TNA, which are tailored based on demand, feasibility and budget constraints.

In depth question:

3. “Could you provide details on the types of training offered for managerial employees? How do you decide between functional and generic training?”

Purpose: this question seeks to understand how training is customized based on departmental and individual needs.

Response: He mentioned that functional training focuses on Department specific skills, such as financial analysis or marketing strategies, whereas generic training covers competencies like communication, time management and Leadership that are necessary across departments.

4. “What processes are in place to evaluate the effectiveness of training programs?”

Purpose: this question probes the methods used to assess the impact of training and determine areas for improvement.

Response: he details several evaluation tools, including participant feedback forms, post training impact assessments and Roi calculations. this data is reviewed to ensure training goals are met and to refine future programs.

5. “What challenges do you face in meeting diverse training needs, particularly for departments with unique skill requirements?”

Purpose: this question explores the potential challenges in delivering specialized training for smaller or specialized departments.

Response: he acknowledged that it's challenging to provide specific training for departments with fewer employees such as marketing. limited resources sometimes result in prioritizing larger teams, which may lead to dissatisfaction among employees who feel their training needs aren't fully addressed.

Quantitative findings: TNA based insights on training and development at Apex Footwear Limited

The training needs assessment(TNA) was distributed among 200 employees across various departments at Apex Footwear Limited to evaluate their training needs and preferences. The purpose of the questionnaires is to gather insights on employee demands for specific training

areas and assess organization's capacity to meet these needs. From the responses collected, several patterns have emerged, highlighting gaps in current training provisions, areas of high demand and opportunities for improvement.

Purpose of the questionnaire design:

The questionnaire is strategically designed to cover a range of training categories that identify both the immediate and the long term training needs of employees.

Section 1: General information

In this section questions were aimed at gathering basic demographic and departmental information from the participants. The goal was to contextualize responses and analyze whether training needs vary significantly by department or experience level.

“Years of experience”

- Reason for question: this was designed to understand if training needs differ across various experience levels. Less experienced employees may require basic skills training, whereas more seasoned employees need much advanced or leadership focus training .
- Inference: the training needs good very based on tenure, as never employees might privatize the foundation of skills such as communication and Excel, whereas more experienced employees might see managerial or strategic skills. segmenting the data by years of experience also helps in designing customized training paths based on employee career stages. For instance a respondent with 10 + years of experience would likely benefit more from advance to leadership and risk management training compared to someone with 0-2 year experience.

“Department”:

Reason for question: this is included to examine the specific training demands within different functional areas such as marketing, sales, Finance, HR and production. through identification of departments we can assess which functional areas feel the need for specific training.

Inference: as indicated by the results departments like marketing head significant training requirements particularly for Meta Social Media Marketing Professional Certificate, Content Marketing Strategy, Google Data Analytics Professional Certificate and Meta Marketing Analytics Professional Certificate. However, these needs were overlooked leading to frustration and higher rate of turnover. This question's significance lies in understanding how training gaps may correlate with department specific turnover or dissatisfaction.

Section 2: training preferences and priority

The training types mentioned in this section, have been inferred from previous reports that had been conducted under the training and development sector of the HR department.

Here the participants were asked to read the interest in various types of training programs using a scale from one, not needed to 5, high priority. it also asked whether they had previously attended these trainings and whether they required them in the future.

“Training types and priority”:

Reason for question: this allowed participants to express which types of training they considered critical for their roles. Through the use of a scale between 1-5, we could identify the most and least in demand training programs across the company.

Inference: high priority area such as communication skills, leadership and advanced Excel training emerge as critical needs, the results to demonstrated that employees from nearly all departments so I need for communication training, reinforcing the idea that communication is

not just important for external relations, but also for improving teamwork and collaboration within every department and themselves. advanced Excel training with 34 respondents suggest a growing Reliance on data analysis and reporting particularly in operations and Finance Departments.

“Previous training attendance”:

Reason for question: this helped identify gaps between previous training and current needs. If an employee had attended a training session before but still rated it as high priority, it could indicate that the training was either insufficient or needs to be revised or revisited due to changing job requirements.

Inference: this question reveals significant Gaps. For instance, several respondents had previously attended Excel or leadership training, yet they still rated these as high priority needs. This suggests that the content or depth of the sessions may not have met employee expectations or that the evolving job landscape requires continuous upskilling.

Section 3:

“Training preference(in person, online and hybrid)”

Reason for question:

This was designed to gauge employee preferences for how they received training. given the rise of remote work and digital training platforms, it was important to see whether employees preferred traditional in person methods, online self-paced learning or hybrid combination of the two.

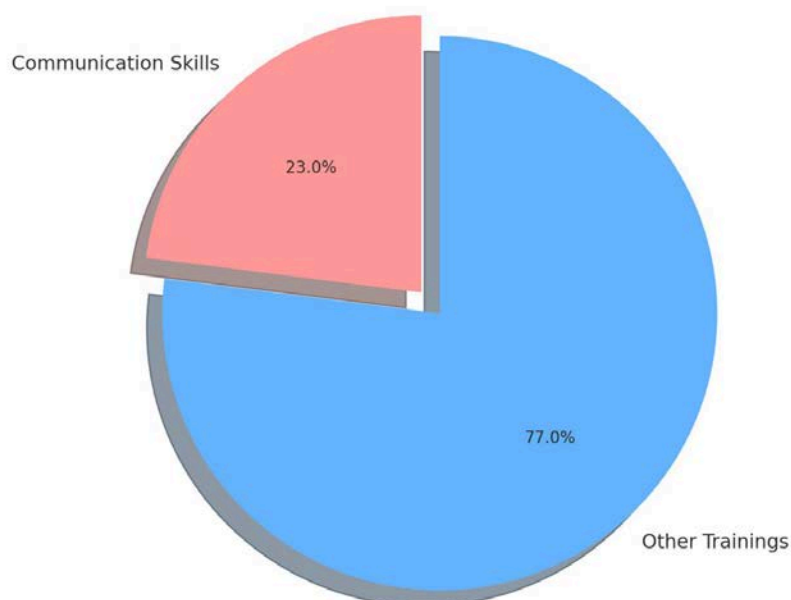
Inference: the results showed a growing preference for hybrid training, blending the flexibility of online learning with the interpersonal benefits of face to face sessions. employees in the marketing and Finance Department, in particular, favored hybrid models, indicating a need for training programs that accommodate both digital access and in person mentorship.

Data driven findings (quantitative analysis)

1. Communication skills training demand

Inference: 46 respondents expressed a need for communication skills training, the highest demand among all options. this could reflect a company- wide need for better communication, both internally (within teams) and externally (with clients or

Percentage of Employees Prioritizing Communication Skills Training



stakeholders)

The pie chart above shows that 23% of employees prioritize communication skill training. This highlights a significant need for improving communication across various departments at the company.

2. Leadership training demand:

Inference: 31 respondents indicated leadership training as a Priority, reflecting a focus on developing managerial and decision making abilities, especially among employees Aspiring for leadership roles.

Percentage of Employees Prioritizing Leadership Training



The second pie chart shows that 15.5% of employees prioritized Leadership training, highlighting the importance of Managerial skill development for many within the company. This need is particularly relevant for employees in roles requiring decision making and team management.

The pie chart below had been created for advanced Excel training, which also had a

Percentage of Employees Prioritizing Advanced Excel Training



notable demand.

The third pie chart shows that 17% of employees prioritized advanced Excel training, highlighting the need for enhanced data management and analytical skills. This is particularly significant for employees in roles that require detailed reporting and analysis, such as finance and operations.

Discussion:

Through multiple observations, interview sessions and surveys, several significant insights had been derived on the effectiveness of the Training and Development process within Apex Footwear Limited and possible areas of improvement. The findings are derived from multiple sources, including document reviews. The results highlight the impact of training on

employee performance, engagement and retention as well as the critical challenges faced in implementing an effective training framework.

3.7.1 Effectiveness of training and development programmes:

Training and development have long been recognised as vital for improving organizational performance. According to Armstrong (2020), effective training interventions positively influence employee performance and job satisfaction, which are key drivers of overall organizational productivity. (ARMSTRONG & Taylor, 2020) (Putri, 2022) In line with this, the findings suggest that while Apex Footwear Limited conducts multiple training sessions, there are significant gaps in their effectiveness, particularly regarding employee engagement and retention.

The qualitative interviews with HR personnels indicated that the training programs, although structured, often fail to address the unique needs of different departments often due to financial constraints. As seen within the table, individual needs such as “Time Management” are considered one of the lesser important issues due to the lower requirement numbers when compared to the mass. However, inability to meet obligations within allocated time may prove to be damaging for the organization in the near future.

Moreover, inability of individuals to grasp the significance of a specific topic of training results in inefficiency within the workplace which may reduce the desired workflow of the company. (Singh, 2023) Despite the conduction of multiple training sessions designed for the integration of specific skill sets, the trainers often face difficulties to ensure the quality of education instilled within every individual undergoing the training process. For instance, while there have been efforts to train employees on the ICURES app- a digital platform for managing leave and other HR functions within the company -many employees continue to

rely on manual processes, indicating a disconnect between training content and practical application. In order to reduce hassle, some HR employees carry out these applications resulting in the lack of effective understanding of the digitized process. This highlights a broader issue where training programs do not fully align with employees' operational realities, leading to decreased retention of knowledge and skills.

3.7.2 Orientation program limitation

The orientation program for new highers is a crucial touchpoint for employee integration and initial training. However, findings indicate several limitations within this program. One significant issue is the lack of cooperation from various departments tasked with supporting newcomers. Many departments are reluctant to dedicate time for orientation discussions, which diminishes the effectiveness of the on boarding process. This lack of collaboration can result in new employees feeling unsupported and unprepared for their roles, leading to lower employee engagement, dissatisfaction and eventually high rates of turnover.

In addition to this, it was observed that newcomers often do not take their training periods seriously, particularly with online resources like Google classroom where they are to learn the basics of the company and its departments. Many express hesitancy in completing assessments with integrity, which directly impacts the retention of critical information. This behavior suggests a culture that may not fully value training as a tool for professional development, ultimately hindering employee performance. (Putri, 2022)

3.7.3. Development Training Gaps

The analysis of training needs within the organization revealed a significant demand for development training in communication and leadership skills. The highest training requirements identified from the survey results centered on enhancing communication

abilities, particularly given the high turnover rate in the marketing department which was observed within the last few months. employees in this area expressed concerns that ineffective communication and misalignment of training with career pathways contribute to their decision to leave the organization.

Furthermore, leadership training requests have been notably high, particularly following the resignation of the head of a department with high significance. The individual had been a member of the company for a significant period of time. Despite that, the training had not been adequate to instill effective leadership attributes within the individual while his promotions had continued. This situation underlines a critical gap in training provision for managerial roles, where effective leadership is essential for departmental success. As a result, the department had undergone various difficulties which eventually resulted in an affected workflow. The mandatory departure of such high ranking officials due to inadequate training emphasizes the necessity for a structured approach to leadership development within the organization. (Singh, 2023)

3.7.4 Feedback mechanism and employee engagement

The findings indicate that feedback mechanisms surrounding training programs are inconsistent and often ineffective. employees tend to provide dishonest feedback about their understanding and retention of training content, primarily due to fear of embarrassment regarding their lack of knowledge. this behavior can significantly undermine the training programs objectives, as honest feedback is crucial for assessing training effectiveness and making necessary adjustments. (Beydoun & Saleh, 2023)

Moreover, it was observed that the correlation between training initiatives and career advancement prospects is weak. Employees are not adequately motivated to engage in

training programs when they do not perceive a direct link between their personal growth and future career opportunities. As noted in the literature, a well trained workforce demonstrates higher commitment to the organization leading to improved performance and retention. (Giday & P., 2023)The absence of clear pathways for advancement linked to training participation reduces employee morale and engagement.

3.7.5 Organizational culture and continuous learning

The organization's culture plays a pivotal role in the success of training and development initiatives. findings suggest that an organizational culture emphasizing continuous learning and personal development encourages employee participation in training programs. However, current practices at Apex Footwear Limited do not sufficiently cultivate such an environment. employees have expressed a need for more support from management to pursue training initiative activity where they are not taunted for the open expression of a skillset referred to as common knowledge. (Giday & P., 2023)

When management demonstrates a tangible commitment to continuous learning, through resource allocation and encouragement, employees are more likely to engage with training programs and apply their learning effectively. The observations indicated that adequate resources, both financial and technological, are essential for the successful implementation of training initiatives. without these resources, the efficacy of training programs diminishes, leading to subpar employee performance and engagement. (Beydoun & Saleh, 2023)

3.7.6. Training needs assessment

The importance of conducting thorough training needs assessment (TNA) is underscored by the findings. TNAs help organizations determine the appropriate training solutions for performance gaps (Beydoun & Saleh, 2023). In this case, the assessment process at Apex

Footwear Limited has revealed specific areas where employees feel they require additional training, particularly in communication and leadership skills.

However, it has become evident that the lack of timely and effective training needs assessments hampers the ability to address employee performance issues adequately. The findings suggest that a proactive approach, such as the assignment of a specific team to regularly conduct TNAs could facilitate better alignment between training programs and employee development needs, ultimately leading to enhanced organizational performance. (Beydoun & Saleh, 2023)

3.4 Conclusion/ Summary

The analysis of Apex Footwear Limited's training and development programs reveal significant gaps in addressing key skill areas such as leadership and communication , particularly for managerial employees. Despite structured initiatives, low engagement and ineffective application, especially with tools such as the ICURES app, persists. The high turnover in departments like marketing and the lack of leadership preparedness underscores the need for more targeted training.

The managerial implications involve the prime highlight on improving training alignment with departmental and mass needs where required. This would allow enhancement in leadership capabilities while allowing each team to be better equipped. Such improvements will reduce turnover, increase productivity and improve employee engagement resulting in the ultimate benefit to the organization's operational efficiency. HR managers in particular will see reduced manual workloads through better digital adoption.

The business applications would be benefited through the incorporation of the findings for essential optimisation of talent management and retention. Through continuous improvement

of the overall communication and leadership attribute instilling, Apex Footwear would be able to trace improvement in performance across the organization and serve as a model for other businesses undergoing similar challenges.

However, the limitations of the study includes the unavailability of several key elements due to the confidentiality of the data. Moreover it involves a narrow focus on managerial staff and the potential bias in employee feedback, which may mask true skill gaps. Future research should broaden the scope to include non-managerial staff and seek more objective feedback mechanisms to develop a more comprehensive training strategy.

3.5 Recommendations

1. **Tailored training programs:** through more tailored training programs specific to individual departments, the company may be able to address the unique skill sets that are required by each area of the company. Regular consultations with department heads may facilitate the insurance of proper alignment of training contents with practical needs, allowing for a greater efficiency on the application of knowledge.
2. **Enhanced leadership development:** through an increased investment on robust leadership development initiatives for the managerial body. Continuous and highly integrated Leadership training programs into the career progression would ensure the rise of leaders as equipped individuals with necessary skills to manage their teams effectively. Through the introduction of a mentorship program, further guidance may be provided to the emerging leaders.
3. **Strengthened orientation process:** the benefits extracted through the orientation program could be improved through the revamping of the program to ensure greater cooperation from all the departments. A structured and mandatory schedule that includes detailed departmental overviews and role-specific training would enable the

newer recruits to better understand their areas of responsibility. Additionally, onboarding assessments should be taken with greater weight where consequences for unfair practices should be enforced to promote integrity.

4. **Improved feedback mechanisms:** honest feedback carries heavy significance for the refinement of the training programs. Apex should develop more anonymous and supportive feedback mechanisms that would ensure encouragement for accurate reflections on the conducted training experiences. Post training surveys and one-on-one discussions could be used to gather comprehensive insights into the effectiveness of the programs.
5. **Continuous learning culture:** there is a dire need to cultivate a culture of continuous learning through vigorous encouragement of the employees to take full accountability of their development. This could be achieved through the offering of more flexible learning opportunities such as online courses, workshops and reward systems designated for individuals who constantly work to improve themselves, in turn improve their productivity. These must be connected directly to career advancement opportunities to ensure the realization of its significance.
6. **Regular conduction of TNAs:** regular and systematic training needs assessment may be conducted across all departments. A dedicated team could be assigned to frequently review and update training needs, ensuring that programs remain relevant to employees' evolving roles and the company's broader strategic objectives. This proactive approach will help in continuously identifying skill gaps and addressing them in a timely manner.

Through the implementation of these recommendations, Apex Footwear Limited would be able to enhance the effectiveness of its training and development programs, ultimately leading to improved employee engagement, retention and organizational performance.

References

- [1] ARMSTRONG, M., & Taylor, S. (2020). ARMSTRONGS HANDBOOK OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICE. Retrieved October 14, 2024, from http://lib.yzu.edu.tw/disciplines_bk/396cc355b0872e10dce44096b55c53be.pdf
- [2] Babul. (2023, September 28). *Apex Footwear makes record sales in FY23 on stronger footing at home and abroad*. The Financial Express. <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock/bangladesh/apex-footwear-makes-record-sales-in-fy23-on-stronger-footing-at-home-and-abroad>
- [3] Bahree, M. (2024, August 8). *Bangladesh economy under pressure amid 'uncharted' political turmoil*. Al Jazeera. Retrieved October 12, 2024, from <https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2024/8/8/bangladesh-economy-under-pressure-amid-uncharted-political-turmoil>
- [4] Beydoun, A. R., & Saleh, R. F. (2023, February). *LITERATURE REVIEW ON TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT IN WORK SETTING*. Digital Commons @ BAU. Retrieved October 14, 2024, from <https://digitalcommons.bau.edu.lb/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1136&context=schjournal>
- [5] Chellappa, S. (n.d.). *Importance of Training And Development: 12 Benefits*. Engagedly. Retrieved October 14, 2024, from <https://engagedly.com/blog/importance-implementation-and-benefits-of-training-and-development-program/>

- [6] Dessler, G. (2022). *Human Resource Management* (15th ed.). PEARSON.
<https://www.advisory21.com/mt/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Human-Resource-Management-by-Gary-Dessler-15th-ed.pdf>
- Footwear Industry | Middle East - Market Forecast 2032*. (n.d.). IMARC Group. Retrieved October 12, 2024, from <https://www.imarcgroup.com/middle-east-footwear-market>
- [7] Giday, D. G., & P., E. (2023). *A study on the effect of training on employee performance in the case of Mekelle City, Tigray, Ethiopia*. ScienceDirect.
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2590291123001729>
- [8] Noe, R. A. (n.d.). Employee Training & Development. Retrieved October 14, 2024, from <https://dedi1968blog.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/employee-training-and-development.pdf>
- [9] *Our Industry | APEX*. (n.d.). Apex Footwear. Retrieved October 12, 2024, from <https://www.apexfootwearltd.com/our-industry/>
- [10] Parvez, S. (2008, March 2). *Bata, Apex kick off expansion to win country's footwear market*. The Daily Star. Retrieved October 12, 2024, from <https://www.thedailystar.net/news-detail-25713>
- [11] Putri, R. F. (2022, November). *(PDF) HUMAN RESOURCES TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW AND BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS*. ResearchGate. Retrieved October 14, 2024, from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/365752240_HUMAN_RESOURCES_TRAINING_AND_DEVELOPMENT_A_SYSTEMATIC_LITERATURE_REVIEW_AND_BIBLIOMETRIC_ANALYSIS

- [12] Singh, I. (2023, September 9). (PDF) *Employee Training and Development Enhancing Employee Performance -A Study*. ResearchGate. Retrieved October 14, 2024, from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/373775939_Employee_Training_and_Development_Enhancing_Employee_Performance_-A_Study
- [13] Star Business Report. (2023, November 15). *Earnings of Apex Footwear fall for drop in export*. The Daily Star. <https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/earnings-apex-footwear-fall-drop-export-3469646>