

The Axiological Structure of Developmental Culture: Coaching-Supportive Leadership Climate, Self-Regulation, and the Cultivation of Leadership in Organizational Life

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the axiological conditions under which human development is sustained within organizational culture. Treating developmental culture not merely as a managerial variable but as a structured value system that shapes human flourishing, the study asks which internal competencies and contextual values most strongly orient managers toward growth. Drawing on self-determination theory, social cognitive theory, and philosophical accounts of practical wisdom and value cultivation, it frames leadership development motivation as an expression of axiologically significant commitments rather than a purely psychological outcome. A cross-sectional survey was conducted with 96 managers from private, public, and nonprofit organizations. Standard multiple regression and hierarchical regression were used to estimate the relative contribution of decision-making, problem-solving, communication, emotional regulation, interpersonal skills, and coaching-supportive climate. Emotional regulation and communication emerged as the strongest unique predictors, while coaching-supportive leadership climate explained additional variance beyond the competency block. Managers with prior coaching exposure also reported higher leadership development motivation. The findings contribute to philosophy of culture by suggesting that individual virtue alone is insufficient for sustained human development—culture itself must be organized around values of autonomy, growth, and relational support, and that the developmental efficacy of organizational life is irreducibly axiological in character.

Keywords: axiology; developmental culture; coaching-supportive leadership climate; leadership development motivation; practical wisdom; values; self-regulation

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Organizations increasingly expect managers to function not only as operational decision makers but also as developmental agents who can cultivate learning, resilience, and growth within their teams. In such settings, leadership development is shaped by both individual capability and the broader value climate that signals whether reflection, feedback, and learning are genuinely supported. A developmental culture can therefore be understood as an organizational context in which growth-oriented values are legitimized through everyday managerial interactions, developmental conversations, and psychologically safe opportunities for improvement.

1.2 Problem Statement

Although leadership development is frequently discussed in organizational research, the literature often treats managerial competencies, motivational readiness, and contextual support as separate domains. This creates a practical gap for organizations seeking to

understand why some managers invest actively in development while others do not. In particular, fewer studies examine whether a coaching-supportive leadership climate adds value beyond personal competencies when explaining managers' motivation to engage in leadership development.

1.3 Objective

Accordingly, the objective of this study is to examine whether personal competencies and coaching-supportive leadership climate predict leadership development motivation among managers in developmental work settings.

Managerial effectiveness is shaped not only by technical expertise or formal authority but also by the personal capacities that allow managers to interpret situations, regulate themselves, communicate clearly, and sustain constructive working relationships. These capacities matter especially in environments where organizations expect managers to learn continuously, lead adaptively, and translate developmental opportunities into improved leadership practice. From a motivational perspective, development is sustained when individuals can regulate effort, interpret feedback productively, and perceive growth as both meaningful and achievable (Zimmerman, 2002, p. 65; Ryan & Deci, 2020, Art. 101860).

Within this broader developmental frame, decision-making and problem-solving represent more than technical skills. They support a manager's sense of agency when confronted with ambiguity, competing demands, and unfamiliar leadership challenges. Communication and interpersonal skills are equally central because leadership development often occurs through dialogue, feedback exchange, collaboration, and the capacity to maintain trust while adapting behavior. Emotional regulation adds an additional layer of importance by helping managers remain open to learning rather than becoming defensive, avoidant, or overwhelmed when their practice is questioned (Gross, 1998, p. 275; Zimmerman, 2002, p. 66).

At the same time, managerial development does not depend on individual capability alone. Even capable managers may invest less in their own growth when the surrounding leadership environment is controlling, transactional, or weak in developmental support. Autonomy-supportive environments have consistently been associated with stronger internalization, more self-endorsed effort, and greater persistence because they provide meaningful choice, rationale, constructive feedback, and relational support (Black & Deci, 2000, pp. 744–745; Reeve, 2006, pp. 229–230; Niemiec & Ryan, 2009, pp. 139–140). In workplace terms, a coaching-supportive leadership climate can strengthen development motivation by encouraging reflection, feedback-seeking, experimentation, and ownership of growth.

Research on leadership development has often examined capability, engagement, climate, or leader behavior in separate strands. Fewer studies have directly examined how personal competencies and developmentally supportive workplace climate operate together when the focal outcome is leadership development motivation itself. This study addresses that gap by examining whether five personal competencies—decision making, problem solving, communication, emotional regulation, and interpersonal skills—predict leadership development motivation among managers, and by testing whether coaching-supportive leadership climate contributes additional explanatory value beyond those competencies. The study is relevant to coaching-informed leadership development because it conceptualizes managerial growth as a joint function of internal readiness and contextual support, a view consistent with broader work on autonomy support, self-regulation, and internalized motivation (Patall et al., 2008, pp. 274–276; Vansteenkiste et al., 2004, pp. 249–

251; Ryan & Deci, 2020, Art. 101860). This framing is consistent with leadership development research that distinguishes individual growth capacity from the broader developmental systems in which leaders learn and adapt (Day, 2000, pp. 582–584).

Organizational scholarship reinforces this point by treating culture as a learned pattern of shared assumptions and value commitments that shapes what members notice, reward, and reproduce over time (Schein, 2010; Alvesson, 2013). Developmental motivation is therefore unlikely to be sustained where the culture normalizes error concealment, compliance, or defensive routine rather than inquiry and learning (Argyris & Schön, 1996; Edmondson, 1999). In this sense, the present study approaches coaching-supportive climate not simply as an interpersonal style but as a practical manifestation of a deeper cultural orientation toward growth.

1.4 The Philosophical Dimension: Culture, Values, and Human Development

While the preceding sections have established the empirical and organizational dimensions of this inquiry, the present study is also animated by a philosophical question that belongs properly to the axiology of culture: under what value conditions does human development become possible, sustainable, and genuinely self-directed?

Axiology—the philosophical study of values—asks not merely which conditions are statistically associated with desirable outcomes, but which values, when institutionalized within a cultural form, create the conditions for human flourishing. A developmental culture, on this view, is not simply a contextual variable or an organizational climate score. It is a structured moral environment in which certain values—growth, reflection, autonomy, and the recognition of others as capable of improvement—are enacted, legitimized, and reproduced through everyday practice. This is precisely the sense in which Aristotle (1999) understood the polis as constitutive of human development: it is not merely a backdrop to the good life but the cultural form through which the good life becomes achievable.

The Aristotelian concept of *phronesis*—practical wisdom—is particularly instructive here. *Phronesis* names the capacity to perceive what a situation calls for and to act well under conditions of complexity and uncertainty. It is not a fixed rule but a cultivated disposition, developed through practice, reflection, and engagement with others who model and encourage sound judgment. The personal competencies examined in this study—decision-making, emotional regulation, communication, problem-solving, and interpersonal skill—can be understood as partial constituents of *phronesis* in the contemporary managerial context. They are not merely technical skills but cultivated capacities whose development depends on cultural conditions that value their exercise (Aristotle, 1999, II.4).

Max Scheler's (1973) material value ethics offers a complementary axiological lens. For Scheler, values are not invented by individuals or arbitrarily assigned by institutions; they are apprehended through feeling and lived experience, and they are arranged in a hierarchy in which the values of the person—growth, self-cultivation, dignity—rank above merely vital or utility values. Applied to organizational culture, this implies that a developmental culture is one that has, whether consciously or not, elevated person-values into its operative hierarchy: it treats the growth of its members as intrinsically significant rather than instrumentally useful. When a coaching-supportive climate encourages reflection, normalizes feedback, and creates space for experimentation and learning from error, it enacts—in Scheler's sense—a value orientation toward the person as a locus of irreducible worth and potential. The coaching practices examined in this study are thus not merely

managerial techniques but expressions of an underlying axiological commitment about what human beings are capable of and what they deserve.

Charles Taylor (1989) has argued that human identity and development are always formed within 'moral frameworks'—horizons of significance that define what counts as growth, what merits admiration, and what constitutes a meaningful life. Organizational cultures are not immune to this dynamic. When a workplace culture genuinely values development—when it treats reflection as legitimate, feedback as generative, and error as a site of learning rather than punishment—it instantiates a moral framework that makes self-directedness and growth coherent aspirations. The coaching-supportive climate measured in this study is, from an axiological perspective, an indicator of the degree to which such a moral framework is operative.

Pierre Bourdieu's (1990) concept of the habitus is equally relevant here. For Bourdieu, the dispositions individuals bring to action—their habits of perception, judgment, and response—are not formed in isolation but are shaped by the structured fields they inhabit. A developmental culture, in Bourdieu's terms, is a field organized around particular stakes and values, within which certain dispositions—toward reflection, growth, and self-improvement—are cultivated, rewarded, and reproduced. The personal competencies this study examines are, in this sense, not simply individual attributes; they are dispositions formed and sustained by cultural fields that make their exercise possible and meaningful. This account deepens the study's core claim: developmental motivation is not a purely internal psychological state but a culturally formed orientation whose conditions of possibility lie in the value structure of the organizational field.

Hans Joas (2000) has proposed that values are not simply given or chosen, but arise through experiences of self-formation and self-transcendence. This insight suggests that developmental motivation is not merely a psychological variable to be predicted; it is a value-laden orientation that emerges when individuals inhabit cultures that make growth a meaningful and supported endeavor. The present study offers empirical evidence for this philosophical claim: both internal competencies and external value conditions shape whether managers orient themselves toward development as something genuinely worth pursuing. Framing the issue in this way aligns the study with a cultural perspective, because developmental motivation is influenced not only by skill possession but by the values and norms that define whether growth is treated as an expected part of human life within an organization.

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Personal Competencies and Leadership Development Motivation

Leadership development motivation refers to a manager's willingness to invest effort in becoming more effective through reflection, feedback, learning, and behavioral adjustment. This kind of motivation is not reducible to general job involvement; rather, it reflects a specific orientation toward growth, self-improvement, and capability expansion. Self-determination theory suggests that sustained developmental effort is more likely when individuals experience competence, autonomy, and meaningful relatedness in the process of growth (Ryan & Deci, 2020, Art. 101860). In parallel, self-regulation research highlights that learners remain engaged when they can monitor progress, respond to setbacks constructively, and translate goals into action (Zimmerman, 2002, p. 66).

Decision-making and problem-solving capacities are relevant in this context because they help managers interpret complex situations as workable rather than paralyzing. Managers who can define problems, weigh alternatives, and act under uncertainty are more likely to approach developmental demands with confidence and persistence. These capacities also strengthen the perception that improvement is achievable, which is central to sustained effort in challenging developmental tasks (Zimmerman, 2002, p. 67; Ryan & Deci, 2020, Art. 101860).

Communication and interpersonal skills contribute in a different but equally important way. Leadership development is frequently enacted through coaching conversations, feedback exchanges, collaborative problem-solving, and relationship repair. Managers who communicate clearly and engage others constructively are typically better positioned to seek input, process developmental messages, and build the kind of relational climate that supports learning. Research on supportive environments suggests that relatedness and interaction quality are not peripheral to development; they help determine whether feedback is received as growth-enhancing or merely evaluative (Niemic & Ryan, 2009, pp. 139–140; Reeve, 2006, pp. 229–231). This relational dimension also aligns with research on managerial coaching, which suggests that coaching-oriented conversations and feedback exchanges are central pathways through which managers support and experience development at work (Heslin et al., 2006, pp. 875–878).

Emotional regulation is especially important in managerial roles because development often involves ambiguity, evaluation, identity challenge, and exposure to difficult conversations. Managers who can regulate frustration, defensiveness, and stress may be better able to remain open to learning and to sustain developmental effort over time. Gross (1998) conceptualized emotion regulation as a process through which individuals influence which emotions they have, when they have them, and how they experience and express them. Applied to leadership development, this suggests that emotionally regulated managers are more likely to treat feedback as usable information rather than as a threat to self-concept. This view is also consistent with adult-development research showing that meaningful growth often depends on a person's capacity to stay engaged with disconfirming evidence, revise entrenched assumptions, and work constructively with discomfort rather than defensiveness (Kegan & Lahey, 2009). Leadership development motivation is therefore partly a readiness to remain developmentally available when identity, competence, and habitual ways of acting are placed under pressure.

Taken together, decision-making, problem-solving, communication, emotional regulation, and interpersonal skills can be understood as personal developmental resources. They do not guarantee growth by themselves, but they make leadership development more actionable, more psychologically sustainable, and more likely to be translated into everyday managerial practice. On this basis, positive associations were expected between each competency domain and leadership development motivation. In competency-based approaches to leadership development, such capabilities are viewed not as isolated traits but as integrated behavioral resources that support effective action across changing work demands (Boyatzis, 2008, pp. 7–8).

2.2 Coaching-Supportive Leadership Climate and Managerial Development

A coaching-supportive leadership climate refers to a workplace environment in which managers experience developmental conversations, constructive feedback, meaningful

discretion, reflective questioning, and support for learning from experience. In such climates, growth is framed not only as performance correction but also as a legitimate and expected part of managerial work. The concept overlaps with autonomy-supportive and developmentally enabling environments described in the broader motivation literature, where support is conveyed through rationale, choice, listening, structure, and non-controlling guidance (Black & Deci, 2000, pp. 744–745; Reeve, 2006, pp. 229–230; Niemiec & Ryan, 2009, pp. 139–140).

This contextual dimension is important because development motivation is not generated solely within the individual. Managers may possess strong competencies yet still disengage from growth when the climate discourages candor, experimentation, or developmental dialogue. Research on supportive instructional and developmental environments has shown that autonomy support and structure can work together to deepen engagement rather than weaken accountability (Jang et al., 2010, pp. 589–592). Likewise, contexts that support meaningful choice and self-endorsed action tend to strengthen intrinsic or internalized motivation, persistence, and quality of effort (Patall et al., 2008, pp. 274–276; Vansteenkiste et al., 2004, pp. 249–251).

A coaching-supportive climate may therefore play an incremental role beyond personal competencies by signaling psychological safety, developmental value, and ownership of improvement. Where the surrounding environment encourages reflection, normalized feedback, and learning from mistakes, managers are more likely to interpret development as part of their role rather than as an externally imposed burden. This logic also aligns with evidence that controlling conditions and externally pressured incentives can undermine intrinsic motivation even when performance expectations are clear (Deci et al., 1999, pp. 631–633; Ryan & Deci, 2020, Art. 101860).

The organizational-culture literature makes this point more explicit. Schein (2010) argued that culture stabilizes what a group has learned about adaptation and integration, while Alvesson (2013) showed that values are reproduced through symbols, routines, and interpretive frames rather than through formal statements alone. A coaching-supportive climate is therefore significant not simply because it offers supportive behaviors, but because it expresses a shared answer to the question of what the organization believes people are capable of becoming. Relatedly, research on psychological safety suggests that learning-oriented climates become credible when people can speak candidly, admit uncertainty, and risk developmental exposure without fear of humiliation or sanction (Edmondson, 1999).

Accordingly, the present study treated coaching-supportive leadership climate as more than a background condition. It was modeled as a contextual factor expected to add explanatory value above and beyond managers' own personal competencies.

2.3 Axiology and Organizational Culture: Values as Developmental Conditions

Philosophy of culture has long insisted that culture is not reducible to shared behavior or organizational structure. Following Clifford Geertz (1973), culture is best understood as a web of significance—a system of meanings, values, and symbols through which human beings make sense of their experience and orient their action. On this account, a developmental culture is not simply an environment with certain features (feedback, coaching, discretion) but a meaning-structure that tells its members what growth is, why it matters, and whether they are capable of it.

Axiology—the branch of philosophy concerned with value—enters here as a critical lens. The question is not only whether developmental climates statistically predict developmental

outcomes, but what values must be operative in a culture for development to be experienced as meaningful and self-endorsed. The autonomy-supportive conditions identified in self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2020) map onto a philosophical conception of respect for persons as self-directing agents: a culture that provides rationale, choice, and non-controlling support is one that implicitly affirms the value of human autonomy. This is not merely a psychological mechanism—it is an axiological stance toward the humans who inhabit the culture. In Scheler's (1973) terms, it is a culture whose operative value hierarchy has placed the values of the person—self-cultivation, growth, dignity—above the merely functional values of efficiency, compliance, or output.

Schwartz's (1992) theory of basic human values helps clarify the normative architecture at stake. Developmental cultures privilege self-direction, growth, and benevolence over mere conformity or short-term instrumental control, thereby shaping whether managers interpret learning as an authentic obligation to the self and others or as a performative demand.

Taylor (1989) argued that moral frameworks are not optional additions to social life but constitutive conditions of human agency. When an organizational culture embeds values of reflection, growth, and mutual accountability into its everyday practices, it creates a moral framework within which developmental effort becomes not only instrumentally rational but intrinsically meaningful. The coaching-supportive climate construct operationalized in this study can thus be read as a partial indicator of the axiological structure of a developmental culture—the degree to which growth-affirming values have been institutionalized in the social environment within which managers work and develop.

Bourdieu's (1990) theory of practice adds a further dimension. The habitus—the system of durable dispositions through which agents perceive, judge, and act—is formed through sustained engagement with a structured field. A developmental culture, understood in Bourdieu's terms, is a field that reproduces growth-oriented dispositions by organizing its practices, rewards, and recognitions around values of reflection and self-improvement. The coaching-supportive climate examined in this study is one such field structure: it shapes the dispositions managers bring to their development by making certain orientations—toward feedback, reflection, and experimentation—feel natural, expected, and worth pursuing. This is why the incremental effect of coaching-supportive climate cannot be fully explained by competency alone: individual dispositions are always already formed within, and responsive to, the value structures of the cultural fields they inhabit.

MacIntyre (2007) sharpens this issue by arguing that practices require internal goods and traditions of excellence if they are to resist corruption by external goods alone. From this perspective, leadership development becomes shallow when organizations celebrate competence rhetorically but reward only compliance, speed, or status. Nussbaum's (2011) capabilities approach similarly suggests that flourishing depends on social arrangements that expand what persons are genuinely able to be and do. A developmental culture is thus better understood as a capability-enabling moral environment than as a neutral backdrop for performance management.

This philosophical framing also bears on the interpretation of personal competencies. From a purely psychological standpoint, emotional regulation and communication are predictors. From an axiological standpoint, they are cultivated human capacities whose exercise depends on cultural conditions that value their development. A culture that treats emotional expression as weakness or developmental conversation as a threat will suppress the very capacities its managers need to grow. The philosophical contribution of this study lies in

making visible the value presuppositions that underlie developmental effectiveness in organizational life.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESIS

3.1 Self-Determination and Developmental Motivation

Self-determination theory suggests that motivation is strengthened when individuals experience autonomy, competence, and meaningful relatedness in their environment (Ryan & Deci, 2020, Art. 101860). Applied to managerial development, this implies that managers are more likely to invest in growth when they believe development is self-endorsed, achievable, and socially supported. Personal competencies can reinforce felt competence, while a coaching-supportive leadership climate can strengthen autonomy and relational support. Evidence from autonomy-support research further indicates that developmental settings become more motivationally effective when feedback is delivered in ways that preserve ownership and support mastery (Black & Deci, 2000, pp. 744–745; Niemiec & Ryan, 2009, pp. 139–140).

3.2 Social Cognitive Theory and Coaching-Informed Developmental Practice

From a social cognitive perspective, managerial development depends on the reciprocal interaction of personal capability, environmental support, and behavioral engagement. A coaching-informed developmental lens extends this logic by emphasizing reflection, feedback, self-awareness, experimentation, and forward movement as core mechanisms through which managers convert potential into practice. The self-regulatory dimension of this process is especially important because development requires goal setting, monitoring, adaptive response, and persistence when progress is uneven (Zimmerman, 2002, pp. 66–67). This study therefore treats personal competencies as internal developmental resources and coaching-supportive leadership climate as a contextual enabler of leadership development motivation. This perspective is also consistent with coaching research showing that structured developmental conversations can strengthen goal attainment, learning, and workplace well-being when reflection is joined to behavioral follow-through (Ellinger et al., 2003; Grant et al., 2009).

3.3 Virtue Ethics and Practical Wisdom

A third theoretical resource, drawn from philosophical ethics, deepens the framework. Aristotelian virtue ethics holds that human excellence—*arete*—is not a fixed trait but a cultivated disposition developed through practice within a community that values and models excellent action (Aristotle, 1999, II.1). The virtues relevant to leadership—practical wisdom (*phronesis*), courage in facing uncertainty, justice in relational conduct, and temperance in emotional life—are not innate but are formed through habituation, feedback, and engagement with others who embody and encourage them. This account maps closely onto both the competency framework and the contextual model employed here: personal competencies are partially constitutive of practical wisdom, while coaching-supportive leadership climate represents the cultural condition that makes virtue development possible. The study thus treats leadership development motivation not merely as a psychological construct but as an axiologically significant orientation—the disposition of a person who inhabits a culture in which self-cultivation is valued, supported, and regarded as a constitutive part of what it means to work and lead well. Joas (2000) extends this insight into a philosophy of culture, arguing that values emerge not from rational deliberation alone

but from formative experiences within communities of practice—a claim that lends further philosophical support to the emphasis, in this study, on the developmental climate as a value-forming environment.

3.4 Hypotheses

H1a: Decision making will be positively associated with leadership development motivation among managers.

H1b: Problem solving will be positively associated with leadership development motivation among managers.

1c: Communication will be positively associated with leadership development motivation among managers.

H1d: Emotional regulation will be positively associated with leadership development motivation among managers.

H1e: Interpersonal skills will be positively associated with leadership development motivation among managers.

H2: Coaching-supportive leadership climate will explain significant incremental variance in leadership development motivation beyond the five personal competency domains.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

4.1 Research Design

This study used a quantitative, cross-sectional field-survey design to examine the relationships among five personal competency domains, perceived coaching-supportive leadership climate, and leadership development motivation among managers. The design was appropriate for an initial test of association patterns because it enabled comparison of multiple competency domains in the same model while also examining whether contextual developmental support explained incremental variance in the outcome. The analytic emphasis was explanatory rather than causal, with the intent of identifying a practically useful pattern of predictors for managerial development settings.

4.2 Participants and Setting

The final sample comprised 96 managers drawn from private, public, and nonprofit organizational settings. The cohort included 36 frontline managers (37.5%), 42 middle managers (43.8%), and 18 senior managers (18.8%). Most participants were between 35 and 54 years of age, and 40.6% reported prior coaching exposure. Participants were included if they currently held formal supervisory or managerial responsibility and had at least one year of experience in a role involving people management, project leadership, or cross-functional coordination.

4.3 Measures

Personal competencies.

Personal competencies were assessed across five domains: decision-making, problem-solving, communication, emotional regulation, and interpersonal skills. Each domain was measured with six items written for managerial settings so that the items reflected workplace judgment, adaptive response, developmental communication, self-regulation under pressure, and relational effectiveness in role. Illustrative item content included evaluating alternative courses of action before acting, reframing setbacks, communicating difficult messages clearly, remaining composed during pressure, and maintaining constructive working relationships across differences. All items used a consistent five-point response

scale ranging from strong disagreement to strong agreement. Reliability estimates ranged from .80 to .86 across the five domains. The content logic of these domains was aligned with established work on self-regulation and motivated functioning, particularly research emphasizing competence, emotional management, and effective goal-directed action (Gross, 1998, p. 275; Zimmerman, 2002, pp. 66–67; Ryan & Deci, 2020, Art. 101860).

Leadership development motivation.

Leadership development motivation was measured with nine items capturing the extent to which managers were willing to seek feedback, reflect on practice, invest in learning, and strengthen leadership capability over time. The measure was designed to reflect active commitment to managerial growth rather than general job motivation alone. Responses were recorded on a seven-point scale, and the measure demonstrated good internal consistency ($\alpha = .87$).

Coaching-supportive leadership climate.

Coaching-supportive leadership climate was assessed as the extent to which managers perceived their environment as developmentally supportive. Items addressed meaningful discretion, developmental feedback, reflective dialogue, encouragement to learn from mistakes, and support for experimenting with improved leadership behavior. The construct was conceptually informed by the broader autonomy-support literature, in which meaningful choice, rationale, and non-controlling support strengthen internalized motivation (Black & Deci, 2000, pp. 744–745; Reeve, 2006, pp. 229–230). The eight-item measure showed strong reliability ($\alpha = .88$).

Scale scores were computed as domain means so that all measures remained on their original response metrics and could be interpreted comparatively. Higher scores indicated stronger personal competencies, stronger perception of a coaching-supportive climate, and stronger leadership development motivation.

4.4 Procedure

After organizational permission was obtained, participants received a brief explanation of the study purpose, voluntary participation conditions, confidentiality protections, and estimated completion time. Data collection was completed through a structured questionnaire administered in a single collection period. The questionnaire required approximately 12 to 15 minutes to complete. Participation was anonymous, and participants were informed that responses would be used only in aggregated form for research purposes. Completion of the questionnaire indicated informed consent. No item requested direct performance ratings from supervisors, and no personally identifying information was retained in the analytic dataset.

4.5 Data Analysis

Analyses began with data screening, descriptive statistics, reliability checks, and correlation analysis. Standard multiple regression was used to examine the unique contribution of the five competency domains to leadership development motivation. A hierarchical regression model then tested whether coaching-supportive leadership climate explained additional variance after the competency variables were entered. Analyses were conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics, Version 29. Supplementary comparison was conducted for prior coaching exposure, and diagnostic checks focused on multicollinearity, normality of residuals, linearity, homoscedasticity, and influential observations. Variance inflation factors remained within acceptable ranges.

RESULTS

5.1 Sample Profile

Table 1 presents the sample profile for 96 managers. The cohort was weighted toward middle-management roles and private-sector organizations, while still including frontline, senior, public-sector, and nonprofit participants. Just over two-fifths of the sample reported prior coaching exposure, creating a useful contrast for coaching-related comparison.

Table 1 *Sample characteristics of the manager cohort (N = 96).*

Variable	Category	n	%
Gender	Men	53	55.2
	Women	41	42.7
	Prefer not to say / other	2	2.1
Age group	25–34 years	18	18.8
	35–44 years	34	35.4
	45–54 years	28	29.2
	55+ years	16	16.7
Managerial level	Frontline	36	37.5
	Middle	42	43.8
	Senior	18	18.8
Sector	Private	58	60.4
	Public	24	25.0
	Nonprofit	14	14.6
Prior coaching exposure	Yes	39	40.6
	No	57	59.4

5.2 Scale Properties and Descriptive Statistics

As shown in Table 2, emotional regulation and communication recorded the highest mean scores among the personal competency domains. Interpersonal skills and problem-solving also showed comparatively strong values, while coaching-supportive leadership climate and leadership development motivation both displayed healthy spread and acceptable reliability for the manager-focused model.

Table 2 *Reliability and descriptive statistics for the study measures.*

Construct	Items	Alpha	Mean	SD	Scale
Decision-making	6	.82	3.92	0.56	1–5
Problem-solving	6	.80	3.96	0.52	1–5
Communication	6	.84	4.08	0.58	1–5
Emotional regulation	6	.86	4.11	0.55	1–5
Interpersonal skills	6	.83	4.03	0.57	1–5
Coaching-supportive leadership climate	8	.88	4.02	0.61	1–5
Leadership development motivation	9	.87	5.24	0.76	1–7

5.3 Correlations

Table 3 shows a coherent positive pattern among the personal competencies, coaching-supportive leadership climate, and leadership development motivation. The strongest bivariate associations with leadership development motivation appear for emotional regulation, communication, and decision-making. All correlations significant at $p < .01$.

Table 3 *Correlation matrix (all $p < .01$).*

Variables	DM	PS	COM	ER	INT	CSLC	LDM
Decision-making (DM)	—	.50**	.46**	.43**	.48**	.36**	.54**
Problem-solving (PS)	—	—	.49**	.45**	.47**	.34**	.50**
Communication (COM)	—	—	—	.56**	.58**	.40**	.58**
Emotional regulation (ER)	—	—	—	—	.60**	.42**	.61**
Interpersonal skills (INT)	—	—	—	—	—	.39**	.52**
Coaching-supportive leadership climate (CSLC)	—	—	—	—	—	—	.46**
Leadership development motivation (LDM)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

5.4 Regression Analyses

The first regression model showed that emotional regulation and communication emerged as the strongest unique predictors of leadership development motivation, with decision-making making a smaller but still meaningful contribution. Problem-solving and interpersonal skills remained positive but weaker once the five competencies were considered simultaneously.

Table 4. *Multiple regression predicting leadership development motivation from the five personal competencies. Model $R^2 = .43$, $F(5, 90) = 13.58$, $p < .001$.*

Predictor	B	SE B	Beta	t	VIF
Decision-making	0.19	0.07	.16*	2.73	1.62
Problem-solving	0.08	0.06	.07	1.28	1.58
Communication	0.26	0.08	.24**	3.42	1.89
Emotional regulation	0.33	0.07	.30**	4.78	1.94
Interpersonal skills	0.11	0.07	.09	1.67	1.84

A second model then added coaching-supportive leadership climate after the competency block. This step tested whether contextual developmental support explained additional variance beyond the personal competencies alone.

Table 5. Hierarchical regression showing the incremental contribution of coaching-supportive leadership climate. *F-change for Step 2 = 8.11, p = .005.*

Predictor / model index	Step 1 Beta	Step 2 Beta	R ²	Adj. R ²	ΔR ²
Decision-making	.16*	.13			
Problem-solving	.07	.05			
Communication	.24**	.21**			
Emotional regulation	.30**	.27**			
Interpersonal skills	.09	.07			
Coaching-supportive leadership climate		.23**			
Model summary (Step 1)			.43	.40	
Model summary (Step 2)			.48	.44	.05**

5.5 Group Differences

As shown in Table 6, managers with prior coaching exposure reported higher leadership development motivation than managers without prior coaching exposure. This subgroup comparison adds a coaching-relevant perspective to the results and suggests that prior exposure to coaching may reinforce developmental readiness.

Group	n	Mean	SD	Test statistic	p
Prior coaching exposure: Yes	39	5.48	0.67	t = 2.73	.008
Prior coaching exposure: No	57	5.07	0.79	d = 0.56	

DISCUSSION

6.1 Summary of Findings

The findings show that personal competencies matter, but that developmental climate also contributes meaningfully to leadership development motivation. Emotional regulation and communication emerged as the strongest unique predictors, while coaching-supportive leadership climate added incremental explanatory value beyond the competency block. This pattern is consistent with the study's core proposition that managerial growth is shaped by both internal developmental resources and contextual support.

6.2 Implications for Coaching, Leadership Development, and Philosophy of Culture

The prominence of emotional regulation is theoretically sensible. Leadership development often requires managers to confront difficult feedback, role ambiguity, and identity-relevant challenge. Managers who can regulate affect are likely to remain more open to reflection, less defensive in developmental conversations, and more capable of sustaining growth-oriented effort across setbacks. This interpretation aligns with Gross's (1998, p. 275) account of emotion regulation and with self-regulatory perspectives that link adaptive control processes to sustained learning and improvement (Zimmerman, 2002, p. 66). In philosophical terms, emotional regulation is not simply a competency; it is the affective condition of possibility for phronesis—the capacity to remain receptive to the situation's ethical and developmental demands without being overwhelmed by them (Aristotle, 1999, II.3).

Communication also emerged as a strong predictor, which suggests that leadership development is not only an internal cognitive process but also a relational one. Managers develop through conversations: they ask for feedback, negotiate expectations, clarify meaning, and translate reflection into action with others. Where communication is weak, developmental input may be avoided, misunderstood, or poorly integrated into practice. The result fits motivation research emphasizing that relatedness and high-quality interaction shape whether developmental experiences are internalized and acted upon (Niemiec & Ryan, 2009, pp. 139–140; Ryan & Deci, 2020, Art. 101860). It also fits a Bourdieusian reading: communicative competence is a disposition formed within, and oriented toward, the relational field that coaching-supportive cultures help constitute.

The incremental effect of coaching-supportive leadership climate is the study's philosophically most significant finding. It demonstrates empirically what the axiology of culture proposes theoretically: that individual capability, however developed, does not self-sustain. Even capable and motivated managers orient themselves toward growth more strongly when the culture they inhabit treats growth as a genuine value—when it enacts, through coaching conversations, feedback practices, and reflective dialogue, an operative hierarchy in which the development of the person ranks above mere performance correction. In Scheler's (1973) terms, the coaching-supportive climate is a cultural form that has elevated person-values into its practical center. In Taylor's (1989) terms, it provides the moral framework within which developmental effort acquires meaning and direction. And in Bourdieu's (1990) terms, it is the field structure that reproduces growth-oriented dispositions by organizing its recognitions and rewards around values of reflection and self-transcendence.

The deeper implication of these findings is that developmental culture is not merely a managerial strategy or a cluster of best practices. It is a form of moral life—a way of organizing collective existence around the recognition that human beings are developmental creatures whose growth is not incidental but constitutive of their dignity. When coaching practices are embedded in organizational culture, they do not simply improve outcomes; they instantiate a value commitment about what human beings are for, and what a well-ordered collective life owes to its members. The coaching-supportive climate, understood in this light, is an axiological achievement as much as an organizational one. That this achievement produces measurable increments in developmental motivation is, from the standpoint of philosophy of culture, less surprising than reassuring: it suggests that values, when genuinely institutionalized, have real effects on how people orient themselves toward their own becoming.

This interpretation is also consistent with work on organizational learning and adult development. Where cultures support candor, inquiry, and learning from error, managers are more likely to engage in the kind of adaptive reflection that converts experience into growth (Argyris & Schön, 1996; Edmondson, 1999). Developmental cultures, in this sense, do not merely contain learning opportunities; they reduce the social cost of developmental vulnerability. Coaching-supportive climates can therefore be seen as institutional arrangements that widen managers' developmental capabilities and help translate aspiration into sustained practice (Kegan & Lahey, 2009; Nussbaum, 2011).

6.3 Limitations and Future Directions

This study's limitations should be understood not only as methodological constraints but as invitations to more philosophically ambitious future work. The cross-sectional design

and self-report data support associative rather than causal inference, and the sample of 96 managers, while adequate for the analyses reported, limits generalization across sectors and cultural contexts. More fundamentally, the operationalization of 'developmental culture' as a coaching-supportive leadership climate, while conceptually grounded, captures only a fraction of what a philosophical account of developmental culture would require. A fully axiological study of organizational culture would need to integrate qualitative, ethnographic, and philosophical methods alongside quantitative ones—attending to the symbolic systems, narrative practices, and institutional values that constitute organizational cultures as moral environments.

Future research should therefore explore whether the quantitative patterns identified here can be enriched by philosophical and interpretive approaches: How do managers narrate their developmental experience? What values do they invoke when they describe growth as meaningful? Do different cultural and regional traditions in the philosophy of culture—Confucian, African communitarian, or European phenomenological—illuminate dimensions of developmental motivation that Western psychological frameworks leave obscured? Such questions, while beyond the scope of the present study, represent the natural horizon of an axiologically informed research program into leadership and culture. It would also be useful to examine whether coaching-supportive climate functions only as an additive predictor or whether it moderates the effect of personal competencies by making those competencies easier to enact in daily leadership practice.

CONCLUSION

Leadership development motivation among managers appears to be shaped by both personal competencies and the developmental climate in which managers work. The data support the theoretical proposition that individual virtue—constituted here by emotional regulation, communication, decision-making, and interpersonal skill—is necessary but not sufficient for sustained developmental orientation. Culture, understood as a structured value system, does independent work: it makes growth meaningful, self-endorsed, and achievable in ways that individual capability alone cannot. The coaching-supportive climate examined here is, in axiological terms, a culture that has organized its operative values around the recognition of the person as a developmental being. That this recognition produces measurable effects on how managers orient themselves toward their own becoming is, philosophically, the study's most significant result.

Future work in this area should move toward the integration of philosophical and empirical methods—attending not only to the statistical regularities that quantitative designs make visible, but to the symbolic systems, narrative practices, and lived value commitments that constitute developmental cultures as moral environments. Such integration is the natural horizon of an axiologically informed inquiry into coaching, culture, and the conditions under which human beings grow.

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