



The Performance of Training Executive Agencies in Tanzania: Do Skills and Skill-based Organizational Strategies Matter?

Mugisha Kamala ^{a*} and Ajali Mustafa ^b

^a Department of Management Studies, Tanzania Institute of Accountancy, Tanzania.

^b Department of Political Science and Public Administration, University of Dodoma, Tanzania.

Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.

Article Information

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.9734/jesbs/2024/v37i61351>

Open Peer Review History:

This journal follows the Advanced Open Peer Review policy. Identity of the Reviewers, Editor(s) and additional Reviewers, peer review comments, different versions of the manuscript, comments of the editors, etc are available here: <https://www.sdiarticle5.com/review-history/124081>

Original Research Article

Received: 25/07/2024

Accepted: 29/09/2024

Published: 29/11/2024

ABSTRACT

The performance of training executive agencies in Tanzania is assessed in this study with a focus on the influence of skills and skill-based organizational strategies. The study was conducted in Tanzania, at the Headquarters of the selected Executive Agencies capitalized on the belief that the headquarters hold great deal of information about issues of central importance to the organization. The study used a partially mixed concurrent dominant status approach by combining both quantitative and qualitative aspects altogether within a single study for comprehensiveness. Given the nature of the study's objectives and scope, 263 academic staff from five selected training executive agencies were sampled to fill in the questionnaires where 238 (i.e. 91%) copies of the questionnaire were filled and returned. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected but more attention was placed to the quantitative facet. The study administered structured

*Corresponding author: E-mail: mugisha.kamala@tia.ac.tz;

Cite as: Kamala, Mugisha, and Ajali Mustafa. 2024. "The Performance of Training Executive Agencies in Tanzania: Do Skills and Skill-Based Organizational Strategies Matter?". *Journal of Education, Society and Behavioural Science* 37 (6):357-71. <https://doi.org/10.9734/jesbs/2024/v37i61351>.

questionnaires and interview to examine five training EAs: Tanzania Public Service College (TPSC), Agency for Development of Education Management (ADEM), Tanzania Institute of Accountancy (TIA), Livestock Training Agency (LITA), and Fisheries Education and Training Agency (FETA). Regarding the sampling technique, the study adopted the multi-stage sampling design. In the first step, training EAs were divided into two strata (basing on establishment age). From the old aged stratum, three EAs were selected, and two from the newly aged stratum. In the second step, the academic staff from the training executive agencies was sampled purposefully. The cross-sectional explanatory analytical survey was used to collect data once without tracking data changes. While descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze data from the questionnaires, thematic analysis was employed to analyze the qualitative data. Regarding the skills availability among the Tanzania's training executive agencies, the findings showed that the majority of the employees possessed the necessary professional, project management, inventive, and interpersonal skills. Few employees possessed pedagogical, technological, and multicultural skills. The findings on the degree of performance of Tanzania's training executive agencies revealed unsatisfactory performance, and it was determined that these agencies had not significantly enhanced the delivery of public services. The findings also showed that training EAs underinvested in skill-based organizational strategies. Notably, when individual competence levels rise, executive agencies' performance is likely to increase. Furthermore, the findings showed that human resource strategies and partnerships were the most important factors in improving the Tanzania's EAs performance.

Keywords: Skills; skill-based organizational strategies; executive agencies; performance.

1. INTRODUCTION

The central idea behind the establishment of Executive Agencies is to improve the performance of the Public Sector by increasing efficiency in public service provision (Malaya, 2021). Executive Agencies (EAs) operate satisfactorily elsewhere in the world, but Tanzanian public institutions fall short of expectations, resulting in poor delivery of public services (Suleiman, 2017). One of the reasons that contribute to this unsatisfactory performance in the other setting is the lack of capital, cumbersome procedures, bureaucratic red tape, high operational costs, and lack of skills (Nosiri, 2016). On the other hand, it was noted that relevant Ministries in Tanzania have done little in controlling operations, providing guidance, monitoring and evaluating EAs' effectiveness in terms of service delivery (Ndyali, 2016). Other reasons for unsatisfactory performance are the lack of administrative capacity and lack of political will in accommodating the tenets of New Public Management model (Idris, 2018).

The study is based on the Human Capital Theory (HCT), which prioritizes competent workers above all other elements that affect an organization's performance. Basing on HCT, employees need to develop their skills in order to keep up with the rapidly changing needs of consumers and technology in order to be effective, productive, and flexible (Dean and East, 2019). In examining the impact of a skill on performance in Tanzania, earlier research looked

at the impact of individual skills and or skill-based organizational strategies on the performance of non-training EAs of Tanzania (Hanafi and Ibrahim, 2018; Khan, 2017; Nosiri 2016).

The performance of a higher education institution largely hinges on the consultancy, research, and teaching it conducts (URT, 2015). This is consistent with its founding objective, which was to increase the number of graduates to close the skill gaps in particular fields of specialty (Ndyali, 2016). Nevertheless, despite all of the efforts, the executive agencies' performance in the areas of research and consultancy possess a lot to be desired (Tanzania Commission for Universities [TCU]). The question on what types of individual skills and skill-based organizational strategies are possessed by EAs is a crucial question that remains unresolved. In regards to whether the skills have an impact on how well the Executive Agencies perform, there were no conclusive answers. To get answers, the study utilized the chosen EAs of TPSC, ADEM, TIA, LITA, and FETA to assess how available skills affect performance in terms of research and consultancy.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Public Choice Theory

According to the Public Choice theory, as the government's functional area for providing goods and services to the public expands, the bureaucracy's effectiveness and quality

deteriorate because it lacks the essential technical expertise and abilities to carry out a given task (Ross 1973). According to the public choice theory, if market forces operate freely, there is a chance that they will function with much higher efficiency, which would reduce the need for an unnecessarily large government and make the delivery of goods and services to customers more transparent, affordable, simple, and economical (Formaini, 2003). The theory concludes that delegation of government duties to organizations is inevitable in order to maintain competition in a market modal. Despite criticisms, the Public Choice Theory is crucial to this study because it incorporates aspects of the market modal that are essential for efficiency and effectiveness. It establishes the relationship between costs, output, and goes on to discuss the significance of cost consciousness. The Public Choice Theory is pertinent to this study because it provides a deeper understanding of the need for managing the public sector using a marketing model while addressing the challenges of traditional practices, which can occasionally be notoriously slow to adapt to changes in the environment.

2.2 Human Capital Theory

Skills, according to Human Capital Theory (HCT), boost an individual's performance and productivity, which benefits the organization (Garibaldi, 2006). Skills are central to optimizing performance and elevating an organization's success (Cherono, 2017). HCT is an extension of the capital concept, which hypothesizes that expenditures on skills are capital investments yield economic and social returns at the individual and organizational levels. Skills are assumed to lead to greater productivity, which is ultimately translated into organizational performance (Netcoh 2016).

The concept of the rise of intangible resources and intellectual capital, which are the change in how assets are seen in the organization, forms the foundation of the human capital theory. The intangible skills and abilities of the workforce, sometimes known as the firm's intellectual capital, are what determine organizational performance in economics (Mahoney, 2015).

According to the Human Capital Theory, organizations with skilled workers perform better than their unskilled counterparts. The HCT promotes the notion that through investing in education or training, employees' knowledge and skills can be increased (Zhang et al., 2021). It is therefore important to assess how skills can be

leveraged to facilitate organization performance (Burkus et al., 2010). The theory subsequently provides that learned knowledge and acquired skills are significant factors for effective performance (Marginson, 2019). The theory, in this case, argues that the learned skills and acquired knowledge are the key determinants of performance.

It is therefore important to assess how skills can be leveraged to facilitate organization performance. A major strength of the HCT is that it helps policymakers and researchers to establish the relationship between education (skills) or training as inputs and organizational performance as outputs, and it provides a useful lens for understanding how policy can be developed to incentivize organizations' investment in advancing employee skills (Netcoh, 2016). The Human Capital Theory is criticized for imposing a relationship between skills and work performance assuming that skills determine marginal performance. The theory provides little insight into the processes through which skills are translated into higher performance and treats skills as relatively homogenous input by assuming that higher levels of skills attainment and quality will result in greater performance (Marginson, 2019).

3. METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Dar es Salaam and the Coast Region, at the Headquarters of Executive Agencies capitalized on the belief that the headquarters normally hold great deal of information (both primary and secondary) about issues of central importance to the organization (Magigi, 2015). The selected executive agencies include Tanzania Public Service College (TPSC), Agency for Development of Education Management (ADEM), the Tanzania Institute of Accountancy (TIA), which represent EAs with old ages. Other agencies included are the Livestock Training Agency (LITA) and Fisheries Education and Training Agency (FETA), representing the newly established EAs.

This study used a partially mixed concurrent dominant status approach which combines both quantitative and qualitative aspects altogether within a single study for comprehensiveness (Zhang and Creswell, 2013). Partially mixed concurrent dominant status approach allowed multiple methods of data collection, i.e. questionnaires and the interviews were administered concurrently but more emphasis was placed to the quantitative facet.

This study further used cross-sectional explanatory analytical survey under which the data were collected only once without tracking data changes. On the other hand, the explanatory design was affected because of the cause-effect relationship that exists between skills and performance whereby predictors (variables) of skills are used to explain the outcome variables that is the performance of executive agencies. The survey method was employed because the study covered a relatively large geographical area using sampling units with the help of questionnaires in Dar es Salaam and the Coast whilst saving time and financial resources.

Given the nature of the study's objectives and scope, the academic staff from Tanzania's training executive agencies was the study's target population. Five training executive organizations were chosen. The decision was made based on the age of the executive agencies, with LITA and FETA being the youngest and TPSC, ADEM, and TIA being the oldest. To reduce sampling error, a census survey was then employed. Other studies, which employed the census approach for the same purpose, are those conducted by (Kimario, 2020; Loice, 2015). In light of the above, 263 academic staff from five selected training executive agencies were sampled to fill in the questionnaires where 238 (i.e. 91%) copies of the questionnaire were filled and returned. This number of respondents was inadequate given that it falls within the common range and complies with the rule of thumb. The rule of thumb provides that a minimum sample size of 30 respondents is sufficient for inferential statistical analysis (Saunders et al., 2012).

Regarding the sampling technique, this study adopted the multi-stage sampling design. In the first step, training EAs were divided into two strata (the old and the young). From the old stratum, three EAs were selected, and two from the newly established stratum. In the second step, the academic staff from the training executive agencies was sampled purposefully. Because they possess knowledge on how skills affect training EAs in Tanzania, academic staff were thought to be the best respondents for this study. Structured questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and document reviews were used to collect the data. Additionally, descriptive statistics like percentages and frequencies were used to analyze data, while thematic analysis was used to identify, examine, and document patterns or themes in qualitative data.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Available Individual Skills among the Training Executive Agencies

Seven individual skills of employees in Tanzanian training executive agencies were evaluated to establish the available individual skills among these agencies. Interpersonal skills, professional skills, technological skills, educational skills, and innovative skills are a few among them. The results in Table 1 show the available individual skills possessed by employees of training executive agencies in Tanzania for both the old and new executive agencies. Five individual skills were identified during survey and interviews. The results of this study indicate that executive agencies in Tanzania employ personnel who possess all necessary competencies. According to survey results in Table 1, there is a variance in the number of skilled employees, whose skills are crucial for the identified organizations.

The survey results were somehow consistent with results from key informants as they were greatly in line with professional skills, followed by interpersonal skills, innovative skills, interpersonal skills and technological skills.

One of the DR-ARCs corroborated this during an interview by stating that:

In most of these Executive Agencies, we have employees with different skills, such as interpersonal skills and technological skills. However, the majority of them have professional skills because recruitment and selection of employees were done by considering someone's profession. This is because an individual's professional skills are extremely important in the business world. The way someone cooperates with others, handles their workloads and acts around the office can determine their success or failure as an employee (Dar es Salaam, September 2019).

The informant clarified that in addition to having professional skills; workers also have interpersonal skills that enable them to interact with coworkers more effectively. These skills allow workers to give and receive feedback, which in turn enables them to solve small problems among themselves before they escalate into larger ones.

Table 1. The available skills among the training executive agencies in Tanzania

Available individual skills	New agencies		Old agencies		Total		χ^2	df	Sig.
	N	%	N	%	N	%			
Interpersonal skills									
NO	25	46.3	66	35.9	91	38.2	1.922	1	0.166
YES	29	53.7	118	64.1	147	61.8			
Total	54	100	184	100	238	100			
Professional skills									
NO	15	27.8	52	28.3	67	28.2	0.005	1	0.945
YES	39	72.2	132	71.7	171	71.8			
Total	54	100	184	100	238	100			
Technological skills									
NO	40	74.1	117	63.6	157	66	2.045	1	0.153
YES	14	25.9	67	36.4	81	34			
Total	54	100	184	100	238	100			
Pedagogical skills									
Never	57	31	21	38.9	78	32.8	7.697	5	0.174
Once	57	31	18	33.3	75	31.5			
Twice	39	21.2	11	20.4	50	21			
3 times	15	8.2	0	0	15	6.3			
4 times	11	6	1	1.9	12	5			
5 times	5	2.7	3	5.6	8	3.4			
Total	184	100	54	100	238	100			

Source: Field Data (2020)

Although interpersonal skills were reported in different avenues (in both survey and interview results), its importance on the performance of executive agencies has remained the same. (Pórarinsdóttir, 2012) argued that interpersonal skills are important for project managers. Individual skills identified in this study are not novel; other scholars who conducted similar studies in executive agencies such as universities, colleges, as well as schools also reported them. For instance, (Abotalebi and Biglu, 2017) reported that the professional staff of academic medical libraries in Iran possessed general and personal skills as well as information service skills (Okiki and Mabawonku, 2013) reported that the academic staff of Federal Universities in Nigeria had literacy (interpersonal) skills. In addition, (Khan et al., 2017) reported that the majority of teachers had good communication skills, which forms the basis of interpersonal skills.

The study further compared individual skills in old and new executive agencies. The survey results as shown in Table 1 indicate that both old and new agencies followed the order of general results: professional skills > interpersonal skills > technological skills. However, there was a marginal difference in the number of employees with project management and innovative skills.

4.1.1 Interpersonal skills

Results in Table 1 show the responses from the respondents on the available skills among the training executive agencies in Tanzania. The majority of respondents (61.8%) acknowledged having good interpersonal skills. Individuals employ these abilities on a daily basis when speaking and engaging with others, both individually and in groups. Questioning respondents on their competence in writing, listening intently, proposing new ideas, making successful presentations, and being open to teamwork, evaluated these abilities. The Chi-squared (χ^2) test was used to determine whether the interpersonal skills of respondents differed significantly between new and old agencies. The results show that the proportion of respondents who reported to have interpersonal skills did not differ between agencies ($\chi^2 = 1.922$, $df = 1$, $p > 0.05$).

As presented in Table 1, the majority of respondents interviewed had interpersonal skills. There are various explanations for this. They included the employees' educational backgrounds and the executive agencies' initiatives to increase their capacity. Employees who graduated before they were recruited by executive agencies are taught interpersonal

skills, which are primarily about communication skills.

One of the interviewees said this during interview:

During my undergraduate studies, communication skills was a mandatory course. I took numerous courses on the subject, and I did well. I can therefore interact successfully with coworkers, employers, and customers who are a benefit to our business. Additionally, my employer permits everyone, regardless of their level, to freely communicate with their peers, colleagues, and superiors and share their thoughts. (Dar es Salaam, September 2019).

Another interviewee asserted that:

Nobody can boast of having interpersonal skills; everyone who has graduated from college or university has taken a course in it. It is a mandatory course that must be passed in most colleges. Even now, we instruct our students so that after they leave this place, they will be competent communicators. (Dar es Salaam, September 2019).

Prospectuses from universities where some EA's workers graduated do additionally support the interviews responses. For instance, communication skills is a core course for all undergraduate students at Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA), which produces aquaculture graduates who work at FETA. Additionally, graduates from community development and human resources management courses at the University of Dar es Salaam, studied communication skills.

4.1.2 Professional skills

Table 1 further reveals that 71.8% of the 238 respondents who were interviewed acknowledged having professional skills. The remaining 28.2% lacked professional skills, which means they lacked sufficient professional skills. Professional skills in this context refer to the career competencies that respondents employed by training executive agencies possess in order to be proficient in their day-to-day tasks. The respondents were asked about their competencies in three different areas: identifying customer needs, meeting those needs, and receiving client feedback. A detailed

examination of the findings in Table 1 reveals that the percentage of respondents who acknowledged having professional skills varied between new and old agencies. The difference between new and old executive training agencies, however, was not significant, according to a Chi-square test ($\chi^2 = 0.005$, $df = 1$, $p > 0.05$) (Table 1).

The findings imply that the majority of executive agencies' employees, both new and old, possess professional skills. These results suggest that the majority of employees are skilled in identifying clients' needs, meeting those needs, and receiving clients' feedback. The interviews exposed the fact that the majority of employees in executive agencies had received mentorship to become teachers and that they currently instruct students at various educational levels, including certificate, diploma, bachelors, and master's degree programs.

Employees follow the rules of professionalism because they were mentored to become instructors, as suggested by one of the respondents, who stated that:

Instead of lecturers, teaching professionals prefer to refer to themselves as teachers. You know, in theory, a teacher is someone who has been instructed to be sincere and helpful to students. He or she also produces high-quality work and adheres to deadlines, demonstrating competence and dependability. It is true that whoever claimed that teaching is a noble vocation did not exaggerate. It is important to understand that being a member of the nobility is not just about accumulating wealth. Realizing that a teacher shapes people's lives is what gives this nobility its meaning. (Dar es Salaam, September 2019).

Another interviewee added:

The opportunity to significantly impact young people's lives makes the teaching personnel feel honored every time. Being a teacher has a secret thrill. Despite the vicissitudes that come with it, I still find personal gratification in being the center of these students' lives. I love the engagement and the students' rapt focus, which frequently puts me at the center of their world and makes me feel alive. (Dar es Salaam, September 2019).

The interview findings also showed how staff members acquired professional competence. They said that among other methods of developing skills, including attending workshops, enrolling in courses, and reading articles or books, interaction with experienced employees and on-the-job training are the most effective (Wilcox, 2005).

4.1.3 Technological skills

The results depicted in Table 1 on technological skills show that out of 238 respondents, (66%) had no technological skills. The 34% of people with technology skills were more willing to abandon their accustomed methods of task management and focus on new, current methods of teaching, researching, and conducting consultancy. When responses from different executive training organizations were compared, it was discovered that 25.9% of the respondents from new training organizations had technological skills, compared to 36.4% of respondents from older organizations. However, there is little distinction between the old and new executive training organizations (Table 1).

From the qualitative responses on technological skills, very few staff of executive agencies admitted to possess such skill. Technology skills in this context is not about the ability to switch on and use a computer or any electronic device, it is about having knowledge and competency in new modern techniques of teaching, researching and conducting consultancies; and readiness to change from the previous techniques of managing tasks. The majority of the staff acknowledged having computer literacy, but their knowledge of computers was restricted to typing and using a mouse. Technology skills are important, and this is well accepted in the literature. For instance, according to (Okiki and Mabawonku, 2013), employees in an organization with high technology skills are likely to find more helpful and current information.

This is also supported by one CEO who asserted that:

It is true that the majority of employees lack the necessary technology skills. This is a result of the majority of organizations failing to equip effectively their workforce with technologically advanced skills. I think that employers have a fundamental duty to advance their knowledge and innovations; hence, there is a need to invest in helping employees become more technologically literate. (Dar es Salaam, September 2019).

4.1.4 Pedagogical skills

The survey also evaluated respondents' educational skills by asking how many pedagogical training sessions they had taken. Table 2's findings reveal that most respondents (32.8%) had never attended pedagogical training, while only a small percentage (3.5%) had done so at least five times. The difference in responses between the old and new executive training on the number of pedagogical training was tested using Chi-square and results show that there is no statistically significant difference (Table 2). The average number of training that respondents attended in the surveyed executive training agencies is presented in Table 2.

The Head of Academic, Research, and Consultancy concurred with the quantitative findings, stating:

In our institute, we do not provide pedagogical training for our lecturers since we initially believed that since they are knowledgeable about what they are teaching, they can teach effectively. The requirement for providing instructors with the necessary teaching knowledge and skills was one of several topics brought up during the students' evaluation of teachers. In the future, this training will be covered by a budget. (Dar es Salaam, September, 2019).

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for number of pedagogical training attended (mean ± s.e)

Age category of agency	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
New agencies	54	0.00	5.00	1.0926±0.17588	1.29248
Old agencies	184	0.00	5.00	1.3533±0.09627	1.30580
Overall	238	0.00	5.00	1.2941±0.08457	1.30467

Source: Field Data (2020)

The results in Table 2 showed the overall effectiveness of all executive training organizations. According to the median, 50% of those surveyed had a negative opinion on how well agencies performed. According to both research and conducted consultancies, it appears that training executive agencies' performance was deemed ineffective. The study equally evaluated and contrasted the performance of the new and old executive agencies. In addition to the previously mentioned Livestock Training Agency (LITA) and Fisheries Education and Training Agency (FETA), other recently established training executive agencies include Tanzania Public Service College (TPSC), Agency for the Development of Education Management (ADEM), and Tanzania Institute of Accountancy (TIA). In a similar vein, the performance of both new and existing training executive agencies was apparently found to be unsatisfactory based on research and consultancies undertaken, since more than 50% of respondents had negative opinions on the performance of the agencies. According to in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, executive agencies underperform for numerous reasons. The severe lack of funding and personnel in all executive agencies was cited as an example. Even worse, like with other organizations in Tanzania, training executive agencies have encountered significant delays while recruiting new employees in accordance with government recruitment procedures. However, all of the reasons given fall under the institutional framework because the training executive agencies are semi-autonomous and are thereby subject to all national laws governing the public sector.

For instance, training executive agencies have proven they can raise money through student fees and consultancy services to cover management expenditures. However, under the existing structure, training executive agencies must remit at least 15% of the money they collect to the Treasury in order to facilitate other government activities. In recent years, all public institutions, including executive agencies, have been obligated to pay the government dividends. Both the 15% remittance requirement and dividends lessen the executive agencies' financial resources. The executive agencies also lack control over their annual budget because there is a significant discrepancy between their approved budget and their actual budget, which reflects their actual spending. It was shown that the annual budget depended considerably more

on the funds the government would allot to the training executive agency (budget ceiling) through the ministry responsible for executive agencies.

Additionally, training executive agencies have little control over the recruitment process, which is lengthy and falls short of the actual demand. Multiple parties are involved in the procedure, which is overseen by Public Service Recruitment Secretariat (PSRS). The recruitment procedure is often initiated by the agency, which then submits it to the Director of Administration and Personnel (DAP) in the employing ministry to request the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry's approval to appoint (PSD). The PSD verifies that the appointment is accommodated within the available budget thereafter authorizes the appointment. The selection process is then initiated by sending a request to the PSRS, and once it is finished, the names of the chosen candidates are submitted to the MDA so that the appointment process can begin. The candidate is subsequently placed on the payroll, and the DAP drafts an appointment letter before sending it to the Chief Accountant, who completes the data entry form and submits it to the PSD for approval.

Once the appointment is approved, the paperwork is sent to the Budget Commissioner, who verifies if there are sufficient funds to facilitate the appointment. The data entry form is batched and data input is completed in either the Treasury or the PSD after the three pertinent authorities (the DAP, the head of the Establishment Division, and the Budget Commissioner) have signed it (Loch et al., 2017).

4.2 Skill-based Organizational Strategies of the Training Executive Agencies in Tanzania

This section outlines organizational strategies that are results-driven and skill-based and are employed to support improved performance of Tanzania's training executive agencies. There are eight organization-based skills strategies. These comprise: 1) human resource strategies; 2) research skill development; 3) consultancy skill development and 4) collaborative strategies. The organizational solutions with a skills-based focus that are currently being employed in Tanzania to support training executive agencies' improved performance are shown in Table 3. In executive agencies, eight abilities were identified and ranked depending on organizational strategies. According to Table 3, the majority of

those surveyed agreed that a consultancy unit should be established, followed by (in decreasing order) collaboration, the development of consultancy skills, human resource strategies, the establishment of a research unit, and the development of research skills. The study's skill-based organizational strategies are combined with findings from other earlier studies.

Other scholars identified other skill-based strategies. According to (Matimbwa and Masue, 2019) the strategies include the formation of business and research units, recruiting of executives from appropriate institutions and professional organizations, efficient use of resources, and ensuring unwavering commitment. (Mehdi et al., 2019) identified the establishment of research units, hiring researchers, setting up funds for research activities, collaborating with other research institutes, reducing teaching workloads, rewarding employees who publish, establishing a research agenda and building research capacities. (Naik et al., 2019) identified key strategies used in training institutions to include training staff on proposal writing, fundraising, taking part in budgeting, and the establishment of a research agenda.

4.2.1 Human resource strategies

Respondents were asked some questions on the following human resource strategies used to

support better performance of the training executive agencies: the adequate number of facilitators available, the adequateness of facilitators in terms of qualifications, conducive environment for the academic staff in terms of accessories, motivation of employees, and capacity building of employees. Information on these indicators is useful as they reflect the human resource strategies. The results from the study indicate that 78.6% of respondents mentioned that there are no human resources strategies in place while only 21.4% answered YES (Table 3). The results across executive training agencies also vary. The Chi-squared (χ^2) test was used to determine whether the responses differ significantly between new and old agencies. The results show that the proportion of respondents who answered NO and YES differ significantly ($\chi^2 = 7.851$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.05$).

One of the respondents from top management stated the following in support of the preceding argument:

Most executive agencies, like ours, need strong leaders who can inspire their workers to work eagerly and enthusiastically for the organization achieve its goals. The strategic integration of HR strategy and Business Strategy is also lacking, as are clear organizational policies. (Dar es Salaam, September, 2019).

Table 3. Skills based organizational strategies

	New agencies		Old agencies		Total		χ^2	df	Sig
	N	%	N	%	N	%			
Human resource strategies									
NO	35	64.8	152	82.6	187	78.6	7.851	1	0.005
YES	19	35.2	32	17.4	51	21.4			
Total	54	100	184	100	238	100			
Creation of research skills									
NO	44	81.5	163	88.6	207	87	1.861	1	0.173
YES	10	18.5	21	11.4	31	13			
Total	54	100	184	100	238	100			
Creation of consultancy skills									
NO	29	53.7	152	82.6	181	76.1	19.151	1	0.000
YES	25	46.3	32	17.4	57	23.9			
Total	54	100	184	100	238	100			
Collaboration									
NO	19	35.2	133	72.3	152	63.9	24.896	1	0.000
YES	35	64.8	51	27.7	86	36.1			
Total	54	100	184	100	238	100			

Source: Field Data (2020)

4.2.2 Development of research skills

The development of research skills is a crucial approach employed to support the training executive agencies' improved performance. This is so that workers in training executive agencies may perform their triple duties of training students, conducting research, and providing consultancy. A sufficient number of staff members with research skills were present, and a motivation to hunt for research opportunities was also examined as part of developing research skills. Findings in Table 4 reveal that just 13% of the 238 respondents acknowledged the existence of strategies for developing research skills. The remaining 87% of those surveyed indicated a lack of strategies for enhancing their research skills. However, there is no statistically significant difference between the responses from the old and new executive training programs when compared using Chi-square ($\chi^2 = 1.861$, $df = 1$, $p > 0.05$). The finding in Table 3 showed that organizational strategies based on skills were used to support improved performance of the training executive agencies in Tanzania, but research skill development was not given high priority. This is not because it was considered to be the least important; rather, it's because the majority of staff members in executive agencies garnered this expertise while at university. According to information obtained during interviews, all academicians possess undeniable research skills and the motivation to search for research possibilities. In addition, it was discovered that undergraduate and graduate degree programs teach and encourage the development of research skills. PhD programs also focus on developing these skills. Additionally, academicians in executive agencies develop and practice research skills by supervising students' special projects. An Interview with a senior staff at TPSC confirmed that research skills are not a serious challenge. He said:

The academic staff here can create research proposals, gather data, analyze it with various software programs, and generate scientific papers. By supervising students and acting as external examiners for Masters and PhD candidates from various universities, they continue to develop their expertise. As a result, I am confident in their research skills. (Dar es Salaam, September 2019).

According to the statement, supervising students' research projects helps academicians in training executive agencies develop their research skills. According to (Naziev et al., 2017), one strategy for effectively applying critical research skills is by teaching, supervising students, and participating in inquiry.

4.2.3 Development of consultancy skills

The responses from respondents regarding the existence of a strategy to develop consultancy skills are also shown in Table 3. The results show that 76.1% of respondents denied having a strategy to develop consultancy skills, compared to 23.9% who acknowledged having such a strategy. The following factors were used to determine the development of consultancy skills: possession of demonstrable consultancy skills, the availability of a sufficient number of people with consultancy skills, and the desire of individuals to look for consultancy opportunities. The responses differed between the old and new executive training agencies. The Chi-squared (χ^2) test was used to determine whether the responses differed significantly between the new and old agencies. The results show that the proportion of respondents who answered YES and NO differed significantly ($\chi^2 = 19.151$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.001$).

The results in Table 3 demonstrate that the majority of those surveyed cited the advancement of consultancy skills as one of the organizational strategies employed to support improved performance of Tanzania's training executive agencies. The fact that the strategy came forth in line suggests that there are adequate employees in executive agency with proven consultation skills and have the motivation to hunt for consultancy opportunities. As was previously mentioned, consultancy is a significant source of income for executive agencies and employees. Everyone aimed to increase their domain competency as a result by enrolling in either short or long project management courses. One of the respondents acknowledged the significance of consultancy skills and stated that every employee desire to develop consultancy skills to augment competency.

During an interview, one of the respondents stated:

In addition to your field of expertise, you need have consultancy skills if you want to

enjoy academic life. You should be able to find consultancies, develop proposals, and produce reports. All of these call for specialized training, which everyone in this institution is eager to acquire. There are individuals here who have excelled in consultancy, have built very large networks with other consultancies, and are earning extra money. (Dar es Salaam, September 2019).

The functions and responsibilities of the consultant are at the heart of why consultancy skills are crucial. A consultant is an independent, qualified person who offers professional services to people, organizations, or business entities, according to the Institute of Management Consultants (2000). Consultancy services are therefore offered by independent and qualified individuals to research issues pertinent to policies, organizations, processes, and methods; recommend suitable action; and assist in monitoring the enforcement of the recommendations (ibid). With all these, a consultant should be a qualified person as suggested by many literatures. For instance, (Feldon et al., 2011) in the book “the competitive consultant” acknowledge that it is crucial for a consultant to comprehend clients’ needs in order to deliver desired results. To accomplish their established goals, training is inevitable for consultants. Individuals expecting to venture into consultancy must understand the client-consultant relationship.

4.2.4 Collaboration

Collaboration is an organizational strategy used to support improved performance of Tanzania's

executive training agency. By asking respondents about their collaboration with other entities on research, teaching, and consulting activities, collaboration was evaluated. According to the results reflected in Table 3, 63.9% of the respondents indicated they had no collaboration agreements with other universities while 36.1% admitted that they did. Further analysis revealed that there is a significant difference between the two responses across training executive agencies. Lack of collaboration was more reported in old agencies than in new agencies ($\chi^2 = 24.896$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.001$). The second-placed skill-based organizational strategy employed to support improved performance of the training executive agency in Tanzania was collaboration with other institutions or researchers. In this sense, collaboration refers to working in partnership with other entities on research, teaching, and consultancy. Research and consultancy are the two main areas where employees in the examined executive agencies collaborate most. A respondent mentioned the following during an interview:

It is undeniable that some research and consultancies call for multidisciplinary teams. To maximize the likelihood that your proposal will be financed, you must include some of the fields that are not affiliated with your university. For instance, when you develop a proposal on the value of various livestock systems to the environment and for human subsistence, there are economic and environmental considerations to be made. Obviously, you must include economists and environmentalists in your project. (Coast Region, September 2019).

Table 4. Performance level of the training executive agencies in Tanzania

Statistics	Research conducted	Consultancies conducted
N	238	238
Mean	2.1891	2.2479
Median	2.0000	2.0000
Std. Deviation	1.07227	1.15173

Source: Field Data (2020)

Table 5. Performance level of new training executive agencies

Statistics	Research conducted	Consultancies conducted
N	54	54
Mean	2.0000	2.0741
Median	2.0000	2.0000
Std. Deviation	0.97129	1.04343

Source: Field Data (2020)

Table 6. Performance level of old training executive agencies

Statistics	Research conducted	Consultancies conducted
N	184	184
Mean	2.2446	2.2989
Median	2.0000	2.0000
Std. Deviation	1.09643	1.17942

Source: Field Data (2020)

Another key informant said that:

To enhance the performance of their organizations, our executives frequently work together with consultants from other firms. Because they are able to work together to overcome significant obstacles by using boundary objects and prototyping, it aids our institution in accomplishing a number of tasks. (Coast Region, September 2019).

The findings point to the value of collaboration. This is in line with the findings of a prior study by (Williams and Woodward 1994), who stated that for academic institutions, collaborating with other stakeholders like universities and research centers is crucial (Landa, 2018; James 2011).

4.3 The Performance Level of the Training Executive Agencies in Tanzania

With regard to the level of the Training Executive Agencies, the findings in Table 4 indicate that the median for both the research and consultancies done was 2, which is the code for "disagree". The findings imply that the majority of respondents have a negative opinion on the performance of the agencies (Javidan and House, 2001).

The descriptive statistics produced by SPSS (i.e., median, mean, and standard deviation) in Table 4 show the outcome of the performance level of new executive training organizations. These are recently established training executive agencies, including Livestock Training Agency (LITA), and Fisheries Education and Training Agency (FETA). The results in Table 4 show that the median for both research and consultancies conducted was 2, implying "DISAGREE". Again, such results suggest that 50% of the respondents interviewed have a negative opinion regarding the performance of new agencies (Kipping and Kirkpatrick 2013; Makene 2008; Mulongo; 2012).

Table 5 presents descriptive statistics (i.e. median, mean and standard deviation) indicating results of the performance level of old executive training agencies. These include Tanzania Public Service College (TPSC), Agency for the Development of Education Management (ADEM), and Tanzania Institute of Accountancy (TIA). The results in Table 5 show that the median for old agencies for both research and consultancies conducted was 2, implying "DISAGREE". The results suggest that the majority of respondents have a negative opinion on the performance of old agencies (Ohemeng et al., 2012; Shaw, 2002; Suleiman et al., 2017).

The overall performance level that was comprehensively measured is represented by the results in Table 6. When analyzing the relationships, the responses produced ordinal data that met the requirements of the ordered logistic regression model since each value represented an ordinal dependent variable as opposed to other regression models. Independent variables (individual skills) were recorded as either numerical (discrete and continuous) or categorical variables (Tanzania Commission of Universities, 2019; Tuwa, 2009; Wright, 1993).

5. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that training executive agencies in Tanzania have professional skills, interpersonal skills, and limited staff technical skills that are rudiments for employees in training institutions. In addition to this, training executive agencies are unable to produce professionals with intercultural competencies who are frantically needed to fill a variety of positions in international organizations. Additionally, technological and pedagogical skills received the lowest rankings, leading to the conclusion that the agencies' teaching methods have not changed in response to technological innovations. The study's conclusion on skill-based organizational techniques in executive

agencies is that insufficient funds are being invested to increase the effectiveness of training executive agencies. Collaboration, the development of consultancy skills, and human resource strategies are some of these. Therefore, it is argued that the training executive agencies being semi-autonomous public institutions have not adequately increased their institutional capacity. Finally, the data on the level of performance of the Tanzanian training executive agencies demonstrated unsatisfactory performance. In light of the results, it is concluded that training executive agencies have not satisfactorily improved the delivery of the public services (such as research and consultancy) they were entrusted with.

DISCLAIMER (ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE)

Author(s) hereby declare that NO generative AI technologies such as Large Language Models (ChatGPT, COPILOT, etc.) and text-to-image generators have been used during the writing or editing of this manuscript.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

REFERENCES

- Abotalebi, P., & Biglu, M. H. (2017). Identification of competencies for professional staff of academic medical libraries in Iran *Scientific Research*, 4, 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.4236/oalib.1103657>
- Burkus, D. (2010). Skills theory: What is the skills theory of leadership? <https://davidburkus.com/2010/02/skills-theory/>
- Cherono, J. (2017). *Employee development and organizational performance of Unilever Tea Kenya Ltd in Kericho County* (Master's dissertation, Kenyatta University, Kenya).
- Dean, S., & East, J. (2019). Soft skills needed for the 21st-century workforce. *International Journal of Applied Management and Technology*, 18(1), 5.
- Feldon, D. F., et al. (2011). Graduate student's teaching experiences improve their methodological research skills.
- Formaini, R. L. (2003). James M. Buchanan; the creation of public choice theory. *Economic Insights*, 8(2). <https://doi.org/RePEc:fip:feddei:y:2003:n:v.8no.2>
- Garibaldi, P. (2006). *Personnel economics in imperfect labour market*. Oxford University Press.
- Hanafi, H. M., & Ibrahim, S. B. (2018). Impact of employee skills on service performance. *International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR)*, 7(12), 587–598.
- Idris, I. (2018). *Knowledge, evidence and learning for development: Mapping economic exclusion in Tanzania*. Institute of Development Studies.
- James, O. (2011). *Government agencies in Europe and beyond*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Javidan, M., & House, R. J. (2001). Cultural acumen for the global manager: Lessons from project GLOBE. *Organizational Dynamics*, 29(4), 289–292.
- Khan, A., Khan, S., Zia-Ul-Islam, S., & Khan, M. (2017). Communication skills of a teacher and its role in the development of the students' academic success. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 8(1), 18–21.
- Kimario, H. (2020). *The perception of buyer-supplier relationships on the procurement performance of large manufacturing firms in Tanzania* (Doctoral thesis). The University of Dodoma, Tanzania.
- Kipping, M., & Kirkpatrick, I. (2013). Alternative pathways of change in professional services firms: The case of management consulting. *Journal of Management Studies*, 50(5), 777–807.
- Landa, E. (2018). Influence of training on employee's performance in public institutions in Tanzania. *International Journal of Human Resource Studies*, 8(2), 324–326.
- Loch, A. A., Chianca, C., Alves, T. M., Freitas, E. L., Hortêncio, L., Andrade, J. C., & Rössler, W. (2017). Poverty, low education, and the expression of psychotic-like experiences in the general population of São Paulo, Brazil. *Psychiatry Research*, 253, 182–188.
- Loice, K. (2015). Effect of buyer-supplier relationships on procurement performance: Evidence from Kenyan supermarket. *European Scientific Journal*, 1, 1857–7881.
- Magigi, W. (2015). *Research proposal development and report writing*. Safi Publisher and Trading Co Ltd.

- Mahoney, J. T., & Kor, Y. Y. (2015). Advancing the human capital perspective on value creation by joining capabilities and governance approaches. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 29(3), 296–308.
<https://doi.org/10.5465/amp.2014.0151>
- Makene, D. (2008). *Challenges facing executive agencies on service delivery in Tanzania* (Doctoral thesis). The Open University Tanzania.
- Malya, E. J. (2021). Agencification and minorization in Tanzania: A case of registration insolvency and trusteeship agency (RITA). *Huria Journal*, 28(1), 232–247.
- Marginson, S. (2019). Limitations of human capital theory. *Studies in Higher Education*, 44(2), 287–301.
- Matimbwa, H., & Masue, O. S. (2019). Usage and challenges of human resources information system in Tanzania public organizations. *Journal of Human Resource Management*, 7(4), 131–137.
- Mehdi, E. K., Edan, A., & Oudah, B. K. (2019). Human resource training and development strategy and its role in achieving the competitive advantage of business. *Portal de Revistas Crenticas and Humanisticas Journal*, 35(2).
- Mulongo, G. (2012). *The human capital theory in education: Principles, critiques and current thinking*. Institute of Education, University of London.
- Naik, M. S., & Naik, B. S. (2019). An overview of higher education: In context of legislative & institutional regulations. *Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research (JETIR)*, 6(3), 171–175.
- Naziev, A. (2017). What is an education? *International conference: The future of education*.
https://C:/Users/user/Downloads/Naziev_FoE-2017_short.pdf
- Ndyali, L. (2016). Higher education system and jobless graduates in Tanzania. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 7(4), 116–121.
- Netcoh, S. (2016). *The strengths and limitations of human capital theory in educational research and policymaking* (Master's thesis). Brunel University London.
- Nosiri, O. N. (2016). *Competencies and consultation delivery: Service quality strategy of multinational management consulting firms in Nigeria* (Doctoral thesis). Brunel University London.
- Ohemeng, F. L. K., Anebo, F. K. G., & Adusah-Karikari, A. (2012). The rise of executive agencies and their effects on the civil service in Ghana. *Conference of the International Institute of Administrative Science (IIAS)*, Merida, Mexico.
- Okiki, O. C., & Mabawonku, I. M. (2013). Information literacy skills of academic staff in Nigerian federal universities. *International Journal of Library Science*, 8(2), 63–77.
- Pórarinsdóttir, Þ. Í. (2012). *The importance of interpersonal skills training for future project managers* (Doctoral thesis). Skemman University.
- Ross, S. A. (1973). The economic theory of agency: The principal's problem. *American Economic Review*, 62, 134–139.
- Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2012). *Research methods for business students* (6th ed.). Pearson Education Limited.
- Shaw, J. (2002). Public choice theory. In *The concise encyclopedia of economics*.
<https://www.econlib.org/library/Enc1/PublicChoiceTheory.html>
- Suleiman, S. M., Hamad, A. U., & Sulaiman, M. B. (2017). Governance and management of State-Owned enterprises in Zanzibar: A proposed model for effective performance. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 8(5), 159–169.
- Suleiman, S. M., Hamad, A. U., & Sulaiman, M. B. (2017). Governance and management of state-owned enterprises in Zanzibar: A proposed model for effective performance. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 8(5), 159–169.
- Tanzania Commission of Universities. (2019). *List of approved universities institutions in Tanzania as per 4th February 2019*. Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.
- Tuwa, H. (2009). *Assessing performance accountability by executive agencies to the public in Tanzania*. University of Dar Es Salaam.
- United Republic of Tanzania. (2015).
- Wilcox, J. (2005). *Developing professional skills*. UK Centre for Materials Education.
- Williams, A. P., & Woodward, S. (1994). Consultancy roles. In *The competitive consultant* (pp. 28–36). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Wright, M. D. (1993). A critique of the public choice theory case for privatization: Rhetoric and reality. *Ottawa L. Rev.*
- Zhang, Q., Ma, Z., Ye, L., Guo, M., & Liu, S. (2021). Future work self and employee

creativity: The mediating role of informal field-based learning for high innovation performance. *Sustainability*, 13, 1352. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13031352>

Zhang, W., & Creswell, J. (2013). The use of mixing procedure of mixed methods in health service research. *Medical Care*, 51(8), 50–60.

Disclaimer/Publisher's Note: The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of the publisher and/or the editor(s). This publisher and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.

© Copyright (2024): Author(s). The licensee is the journal publisher. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Peer-review history:

The peer review history for this paper can be accessed here:
<https://www.sdiarticle5.com/review-history/124081>