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NOTE

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Editorial Note

HURIA Journal, Vol 33 (1), 2026

Background and rationale

HURIA Journal provides a multidisciplinary platform for scholarship that speaks to development challenges and opportunities in Tanzania, Africa and the wider global South. The Vol 33(1), 2026 edition brings together empirical studies and critical analyses that generate evidence for decision-making in education, governance and public finance, market and service performance, climate resilience and natural-resource management, health financing, migration and social cohesion, and cultural and literary scholarship.

Purpose of the edition

The purpose of this edition is to disseminate timely, policy-relevant research and stimulate informed dialogue among scholars, practitioners and policymakers. Specifically, the edition seeks to:

- Share new empirical evidence and syntheses on priority development issues;
- Translate research findings into practical recommendations for policy and implementation;
- Highlight cross-cutting linkages to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); and
- Strengthen scholarly networks and knowledge exchange across disciplines and countries.

Article highlights (11 papers)

The edition features the following papers (summarised in the order they appear in the journal):

1. "Integrating Cultural Aspects of the Target Audience in Literary Translation: A Case Study of Barua Ndefu kama Hii" analyses how target readers' cultural norms shape literary translation, using Clement Maganga's Kiswahili translation of Mariama Bâ's Une si Longue Lettre. Drawing on Polysystem Theory, the paper shows how reflecting smaller cultural systems of the target language can improve persuasion and comprehension, ease equivalence choices, and reduce cultural friction. It recommends culturally oriented training and curriculum integration for more authentic literary translation. SDG

linkages: SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 11.4 (Safeguarding Cultural Heritage).

2. "Teachers' and Parents' Perceptions of the Effectiveness and Sustainability of School Feeding Programmes in Tanzanian Primary Schools: A Qualitative Inquiry" explores stakeholder experiences of school feeding in Mara Region using 40 teacher interviews and 20 parent focus groups across 20 schools. Teachers link feeding to better attendance, punctuality, concentration, participation, behaviour and reduced stigma; parents describe the programme as a lifeline in food-insecure settings and a driver of motivation and social cohesion. Sustainability is threatened by poverty, climate variability, rising costs, infrastructure gaps and weak institutional support, highlighting the need for resilient financing and basic infrastructure investment. SDG linkages: SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being) and SDG 4 (Quality Education).

3. "Local Government Revenue Collection in Tanzania under the Outsourced Model: A Case of Kilosa District Council" assesses outsourced revenue collection using mixed methods with supervisors, council officials and taxpayers. The study finds that adequate staffing, modern collection tools and lower operating costs can improve collection efficacy, while negative perceptions, tax resistance and weak assessment of the revenue base undermine compliance. It recommends stronger council–agent partnerships, improved assessment processes, technology investment and sustained capacity-building for local revenue mobilisation. SDG linkages: SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) and SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities).

4. "Examining Service Quality Dimensions and Customer Satisfaction Interplay in the Retail Banking Sector: An Emerging Economy Perspective" analyses how reliability, tangibility, responsiveness, assurance and empathy shape satisfaction in Tanzania's retail banking using a cross-sectional survey (n=289) and ordinal logistic regression. All five service-quality dimensions positively influence customer satisfaction, pointing to actionable areas for improving the customer experience, loyalty and competitive performance in a fast-evolving market. SDG linkages: SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure).

5. "Effects of Climate Change on Land Use Patterns among Farmers and Pastoralists in Mvomero District, Tanzania" examines how drought, erratic rainfall and flooding reshape land use and livelihoods using a mixed-methods cross-sectional study (391 households and 26 key informants). The study reports shift in cropping calendars, uptake of climate-smart strategies, groundwater development, tree planting and increased livestock mobility. These pressures intensify competition over land and water, contributing to recurrent farmer–pastoralist conflict and displacement. It recommends strengthened institutions, community-based adaptation and integrated land-use planning. SDG linkages: SDG 13 (Climate Action), SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) and SDG 15 (Life on Land).

6. "Drivers of Enrolment Intention towards Social Health Insurance among Informal Sector Workers in Tanzania: Moderating Role of Health Literacy" applies the Theory of Planned Behaviour and PLS-SEM to survey 350 informal-sector vendors in Dar es Salaam. Attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control significantly predict enrolment intention; health literacy moderates only the perceived behavioural control–intention relationship. The paper argues for coupling insurance policy design with targeted health-literacy interventions to expand equitable coverage among underserved groups. SDG linkages: SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being) and SDG 1 (No Poverty).

7. "Understanding Pupils' Engagement in Extracurricular Programmes and Contextual Influences in Mbulu Town Council Primary Schools" explores participation patterns using mixed methods with 68 pupils across four schools. Pupils engage more in activities that are formally scheduled, structured and supervised; participation is shaped by facilities, parental support, peer dynamics and broader school support. The study recommends infrastructure improvement, adequate supervision and policy integration to strengthen inclusive and holistic development. SDG linkages: SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being).

8. "From Brand Awareness to Performance in Tanzanian Telecommunication Companies: The Mediating Role of Brand Attitude and Moderating Effect of Customer Satisfaction" uses survey data from 314 employees across four telecom firms and PLS-SEM to test how brand awareness translates into performance. Brand

awareness strengthens brand attitude and performance; brand attitude mediates the awareness–performance pathway. Customer satisfaction amplifies the effect of brand attitude on performance, underscoring the need to pair visibility campaigns with strong customer experience management. SDG linkages: SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure) and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth).

9. "Solidarity Beyond Borders: Understanding Local Rationales for Hosting Burundian Immigrants in Karagwe, Tanzania" investigates why residents host Burundian immigrants through informal arrangements, using a convergent mixed-methods design (371 surveys and 24 interviews). Hosting is explained by an interplay of economic pragmatism, shared cultural heritage and moral convictions, conceptualised through Social Capital Theory. The paper recommends policy reforms that harmonise legal frameworks with the lived realities of border communities and recognise informal solidarities in governance. SDG linkages: SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions).

10. "Dunia ya Ughaibuni: Usawiri wa Mfalme Sulemani katika Fantasia ya Adili na Nduguze ya Shaaban Robert" analyses the portrayal of King Solomon in Shaaban Robert's fantasy novel Adili na Nduguze using close reading and Andre Breton's surrealism (uhalisiafifi). The paper argues that the text draws on religious mythologies and Swahili beliefs about the 'world of the unseen', breaking boundaries between reality and fantasy to articulate human origins and destiny in Swahili cultural imagination. SDG linkages: SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 11.4 (Safeguarding Cultural Heritage).

11. "Rethinking Higher Education Quality in Tanzania through Total Quality Management (TQM): Spatial Qualities and Writing Culture Dimensions" explores how TQM principles can strengthen higher-education quality, focusing on Ardhi University and drawing contextual insights from MUST and TEKU. Through a review-driven qualitative synthesis of postgraduate research, practitioner reflections and a supplementary questionnaire, the paper finds that fragmented, compliance-oriented quality assurance and neglected student spatial environments constrain the development of a robust quality and writing culture. It proposes holistic, continuous-improvement-oriented TQM as a practical pathway to improve spatial learning conditions

and academic writing culture. SDG linkages: SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure).

Expected contribution

By bringing together diverse methods and disciplinary lenses, the edition contributes to evidence-based problem solving, strengthens debate on development pathways, and supports the translation of research into action aligned with the SDGs.

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Contents

Integrating Cultural Aspects of the Target Audience in Literary Translation: A Case Study of *Barua Ndefu kama Hii*

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Abstract
This study examines the importance of considering the cultural aspects of the target audience in literary translation using the novel Barua Ndefu kama Hii. *Clement Maganga translated this novel into* Barua Ndefu kama Hii *from* So Long a Letter*, originally written by Mariama Bâ in French as* Une si Longue Lettre. *The results of the analysis show that, to a large extent, the translator considered the cultural elements of the target audience by applying Polysystem Theory, whereby smaller cultural systems of the target language are reflected in the translated text. The study highlights the importance of cultural consideration in persuading target readers, enhancing comprehension, minimizing difficulties in selecting appropriate equivalents, and preventing potential cultural conflicts. The findings imply that literary translators should be trained to systematically analyze target-culture norms during translation, while educators and curriculum developers should integrate culturally oriented translation theories into translator training programmes to promote culturally responsive and authentic literary translations.*

Keywords: *Culture*, *Target Audience*, *Literary works*, *Translation, Literary Translation*

INTRODUCTION
Translation is the primary tool for communication between communities that use different languages (Palumbo, 2009). It involves the transfer of information from one community to another. Due to the importance of translation, the transfer of information must be done with great care to ensure that the message, from the source language (SL) to the target language (TL), is understood by the readers of the target language. The care required in transferring information should be especially high in the translation of literary texts. This is because these texts are much more difficult to interpret than other types of texts (Bassnett, 2002). The

difficulty arises from the presence of cultural elements that need to be transferred while considering the target culture, as various scholars from different parts of the world, who have dealt with the translation of literary texts, explain. Recent advances in translation quality assessment tools such as MAS-LitEval, highlight that preserving cultural nuance and stylistic fidelity remains a significant challenge for both human and Artificial Intelligency-assisted literary translation (Kim et al., 2025).

Among researchers outside Tanzania highlighting the challenges of translating literary texts is Cain (2001), who analyzed how cultural learning shapes the translation of Australian novels and how "reading positions" influence comprehension (Cain, 2001). Makinen (2010) examined translation challenges in the Harry Potter series, focusing on the adaptation of cultural references for Finnish audiences. Tanjour (2011) studied The Virgin and the Gipsy in the UK context, identifying difficulties related to preserving nuanced social mores. Ezika (2012) explored the translation of Oliver Twist into Igbo in Nigeria, particularly addressing the treatment of English personal names. Bustani (2014) researched broader cultural mediation in literary translation in the United States, emphasizing intercultural conveyance.

Similarly, in Tanzania, scholars have investigated literary translation challenges arising from small cultural systems within the target language culture. Malangwa (2005) analyzed the translation of *The Merchant of Venice*, Mtui (2008) examined *Oedipus Rex*, Pembe (2010) focused on *Song of Lawino*, and Feruzi (2011) studied *Nitaolewa Nikipenda*. They consistently underscore that effective translation requires deep insight into the literary and cultural elements embedded in source texts.

In light of these small systems, Even-Zohar's (2000) polysystem theory offers a valuable framework. He contends that translated literary works must be viewed within a dynamic literary system composed of multiple subsystems, urging translators to map and negotiate these cultural micro-systems within broader literary conventions (Even-Zohar, 2000). Through the work of the preceding scholars who have examined literary text translations, we see that the issue of cultural representation in novels translated into Kiswahili has not been sufficiently addressed, especially in terms of the Polysystems Theory. Despite the expansion of Kiswahili literary translation, limited scholarly attention has been given to how target-culture elements are represented and negotiated in translated novels, especially when examined through the lens of Polysystem Theory.

This study therefore seeks to investigate how cultural representation of the target language is constructed and mediated in the Kiswahili translation of *Barua Ndefu kama Hii*. The study aims to examine how target-culture elements are represented, negotiated, and shaped within the Kiswahili literary polysystem through the translation of *Barua Ndefu kama Hii*.

Synopsis of *Barua Ndefu kama Hii*

Barua Ndefu Kama Hii (originally *Une si longue lettre*, translated as *So Long a Letter*) by Mariama Bâ is a powerful and emotionally resonant epistolary novel that explores the inner world of Ramatulayi, a recently widowed Senegalese woman. Written as a long letter addressed to her close friend Aisatu who is living and working in the United States as a translator at the Senegalese embassy the novel unfolds as a deeply personal narrative that reflects on love, betrayal, womanhood, and resilience within a patriarchal society.

The letter begins with Ramatulayi informing Aisatu about the sudden death of her husband, Modu Falli, who passed away in a car accident. However, the letter soon becomes much more than a message of grief; it turns into a powerful testimony of a woman confronting the injustices and limitations placed on her by her culture and religion. Ramatulayi recounts how, after many years of marriage and raising a family together, Modu Falli betrayed her by marrying a much younger second wife, as permitted under Islamic and traditional customs. This polygamous union deeply hurt Ramatulayi and caused emotional and financial instability for her and her children, leading to their eventual abandonment.

Despite societal expectations and pressure from her community to remarry or conform, Ramatulayi chooses to raise her children alone. Her refusal to become a part of the widow inheritance system or to accept another marriage proposal challenges the norms that expect women to be dependent on men. Instead, she chooses dignity, self-respect, and independence, advocating through her life for the possibility of self-reliant womanhood. As the novel progresses, Ramatulayi not only mourns her husband's death but also reflects on broader issues facing women in Senegalese society such as early marriage, forced marriage, widowhood, polygamy, and the interruption of girls' education. Through her memories and commentary, she offers a powerful critique of cultural and religious practices that uphold gender inequality. Her voice is both personal and political, touching on the struggles of motherhood, friendship, tradition, and the search for self-worth.

The letter serves as a bridge between the past and the present, as well as between two women who have chosen different paths in life Ramatulayi who remains in Senegal, and Aisatu who has sought freedom abroad. Through this correspondence, the reader is offered an intimate view into the emotional and psychological landscape of African women caught between tradition and modernity. A landmark in African literature, *Barua Ndefu Kama Hii* is celebrated not only for its poignant and poetic style but also for its fearless advocacy for women's rights. It remains one of the most influential feminist texts in postcolonial African literature, portraying a woman's quiet strength and her determination to redefine her life beyond the constraints of a patriarchal society.

POLYSYSTEM THEORY

The polysystem theory, introduced by Itamar Even-Zohar in the 1970s, is rooted in Russian formalism and significantly impacts translation studies by extending beyond traditional linguistic translation theories (Munday, 2008). According to Even-Zohar, various social symbol systems such as language, literature, economics, politics, and ideology should be understood as interconnected systems rather than isolated elements. These systems are not independent structures but rather open frameworks composed of multiple interrelated subsystems, forming a dynamic polysystem where components interact, overlap, and influence one another.

In this context, literary works should not be analyzed in isolation but as integral parts of a broader literary system. Even-Zohar (2000) argues that the status of translated literature within a literary polysystem is fluid and depends on specific conditions. He identifies three scenarios in which translated literature assumes a central role: when a literary system is in its early stages of development, when it is weak or marginalized and relies on external influences, or when it is undergoing a crisis or transformation, creating a gap that translation helps to fill.

Furthermore, Even-Zohar asserts that the position of translated literature within the polysystem influences translation strategies. When translation holds a central position, translators are more likely to challenge established norms, adopt innovative approaches, and embrace a foreignization strategy that prioritizes the source culture. Conversely, when translated literature is on the periphery, translators tend to conform to existing literary conventions, favoring a domestication strategy that aligns with the target culture. Within the Polysystem Theory, foreignization and domestication are descriptive rather than prescriptive concepts, shaped by historical and cultural contexts, with no inherent right or wrong approach.

METHODOLOGY

This study is based on a qualitative research study that employed two complementary data collection methods, text analysis and in-depth interviews to explore the translation of literary texts. The qualitative approach emphasizes reflective engagement, enabling researchers to connect diverse insights and produce rich, descriptive interpretations through respondents' narratives (Awasthy, 2019; Nassaji, 2015). Drawing on descriptive qualitative methodology, the study used thematic analysis to remain closely tied to the data, minimizing interpretive transformation while identifying emergent codes and themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Sandelowski, 2010).

Thematic analysis followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) systematic stages, beginning with familiarisation through repeated reading of transcripts and text excerpts to develop an overall understanding of the data. This was followed by initial coding, where meaningful units were highlighted and inductive codes were assigned closely to participants' language. Related codes were then organised into preliminary themes during the theme development stage, after which these themes were reviewed and refined by comparing them with both coded extracts and the entire dataset. Once confirmed, the themes were clearly defined and named to capture their conceptual focus. The final stage involved reporting, where the themes were integrated with textual analysis and relevant theoretical perspectives to produce a coherent and data-driven interpretation.

For the text analysis component, the research involved an exhaustive, line-by-line reading of both the source text and its translation. *So Long a Letter* was selected as the primary source due to its frequent use of culturally-specific signifiers and idiomatic expressions, making it an apt case for investigating translational subtleties (Nyandwi & Bazimaziki, 2019). In addition to the primary texts, secondary literature such as scholarly articles was reviewed to provide triangulation and contextualize interpretive frameworks.

The interview phase involved nine participants: three translators, four literary scholars, and two Kiswahili/translation educators. Participants were recruited through purposive sampling, based on their expertise in translation and Kiswahili literature, followed by snowball sampling to identify additional knowledgeable respondents. Participants reflected on challenges encountered during translation such as preserving cultural references and managing intertextual signifiers offering nuanced accounts that were transcribed verbatim, coded inductively, and then classified into themes following standards of qualitative descriptive research (Magilvy & Thomas, 2009; Willis et al., 2016). These interviews yielded rich, data-near insights, affirming that effective literary translation demands a deep sensitivity to both source- and target-culture systems, a conclusion supported by Even-Zohar's (2000) Polysystem Theory.

Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to established ethical standards for qualitative research. Participants were provided with detailed information sheets and signed informed consent forms before interviews commenced. Confidentiality was maintained by anonymising all names, institutions, and identifying details. Audio recordings and transcripts were securely stored on password-protected devices. Ethical clearance for the study was obtained from the relevant institutional research ethics committee, ensuring compliance with national and institutional guidelines for research involving human participants.

Integrating Cultural Aspects of the Target Audience in Literary Translation by *Barua Ndefu kama Hii*

This section presents and discusses the importance of considering the cultural aspects of the target audience in the translation of literary works, using the novel *Barua Ndefu kama Hii* as a case study. By applying the Polysystem Theory, the study has identified various roles of incorporating the target audience's culture in translation. These roles include persuading the target readers, ensuring better comprehension of the work, avoiding difficulties in finding appropriate equivalents, and preventing cultural conflicts.

Persuading the Target Readers

The research findings demonstrate that considering the target audience's (TA) culture in translation influences readers' engagement with the work. The translator of the selected novel has used culturally relevant equivalents to appeal to the target audience. Similarly, the author has deliberately adjusted certain elements in the source text (ST) to reflect the TA's culture. This adaptation has been carried out either through omission or modification of elements.

Omission is evident at the beginning, where the word *Dear* in the phrase *Dear Aissatou* from the source language (SL) has been left out in the target language (TL). Ideally, the translation should have read *Mpendwa Aissatu* (*Mpendwa* being the equivalent of *Dear*). However, this omission was intentional, as the translator saw no significant impact on meaning or comprehension for the target audience.

Additionally, certain elements have been modified in translation. For example, character names have been adjusted to align with the TA's cultural norms. In Kiswahili, personal names often end with a vowel. The research found that the translator altered character names by adding vowel endings to make them more familiar to the target audience. Refer to Pair 1,

Pair 1

> **SL**: Tamsir, purge yourself of your dreams of conquest (pg. 58).
> **TL**: Tamsiri, zitapike hizo ndoto zako za kutaka kuniposa (pg. 78).

In the above quote, the name *Tamsir* was modified by adding the vowel "i" at the end, becoming *Tamsiri*. Ezika (2012), in her study on the translation of *Oliver Twist*, examined the challenges and strategies involved in translating character names and settings. She found cultural representation in literary translation through character names. For instance, the name *Oliver Twist* was translated as *Akabuogu*, meaning "a hand is a battle," to align with Igbo culture. This demonstrates that translators often modify character names when necessary to resonate with the cultural background of the intended audience. In Pair 2,

Pair 2

> **SL**: The smell of the Lakh cooling in the calabashes pervades the air, exciting (pg. 5).
> **TL**: Harufu ya ugali wa mtama uliowekwa katika vibuyu ili upate vuguvugu hewani na kututia hamu ya kula (pg. 7).

The element *Lakh cooling*, instead of being translated as a Senegalese dish made from millet and eaten with fermented milk, has been translated as millet porridge. The translator used "millet porridge" intending to persuade their readers because porridge is a well-known, popular, and widely consumed dish among Swahili speakers. Similarly, in Pair 3,

Pair 3

> **SL**: I did not mind being a 'stick-in-the mud' (pg. 77).
> **TL**: Potea mbali nikiitwa 'zilipendwa' (pg. 104).

The element *stick-in-the-mud* has been translated as *zilipendwa*. The term *zilipendwa* is commonly used in Swahili-speaking communities to refer to things, people, situations, or matters that are outdated. Therefore, the equivalent *millet porridge* in pair 2 and *zilipendwa* in pair 3 are closely tied to Swahili culture, which captures the readers' attention. Considering the environment and culture allows readers to create mental images and visualization through familiar elements.

The respondents stated that when a translation focuses on the target language (TL), the target audience feels connected to the work. Furthermore, they perceive that all the elements written in the text relate to them. This aspect helps the target language readers engage with the work more enthusiastically. One respondent stated that:

Translators of literary works use captivating and comprehensible language tailored to the intended audience to effectively convey the message, preserve the aesthetic quality of the original text, and emotionally engage readers. This requires not only linguistic fluency but also cultural competence and literary sensitivity. In translating novels into Swahili, for instance, the translator must ensure that the target audience can connect with the cultural references, idioms, tone, and rhythm of the language used. The translator's task is not merely to replace words from one language with those of another, but to re-create the experience, mood, and literary value of the original work in a way that resonates with Swahili-speaking readers.If readers of a novel translated into Swahili fail to experience the cultural and literary essence inherent in the Swahili language such as its proverbs, metaphorical expressions, oral traditions, and storytelling style they are likely to find the translation lacking in authenticity, emotional depth, and narrative power. As a result, they may not fully enjoy or appreciate the literary work, which can undermine the purpose of the translation itself. A successful literary translation must, therefore, go beyond linguistic accuracy to ensure cultural and stylistic relevance, allowing the translated text to feel as natural and impactful as an original Swahili literary creation.

This explanation highlights that culture is a crucial aspect of translating literary texts. Bassnet (2013), in his research on communication in translation, emphasizes the need to persuade readers of translated literary texts. He states, "In literary translation, one of the key aspects to consider in attracting and persuading the target audience is their culture. This aligns with the translator's selection of equivalents that exist within the cultural environment of the TL.

Additionally, research has revealed that the artistic use of language, particularly through idioms and proverbs, appeals to the TL audience by evoking emotions that stimulate their interest in reading. Refer to Pair 4,

Pair 4

L: The University has its own large number of despairing rejects (pg. 18).

TL: Hata katika Chuo Kikuu halaiki kubwa ya wanafunzi hushindwa na wengine hukata tamaa (pg. 25).

The element "rejects" has been translated as *hukata tamaa* (loses hope). The idiom *kata tamaa* is deeply rooted in Swahili culture, meaning a state in which a person loses hope in something and completely gives up on it. Moreover, the use of various idioms and proverbs in *Barua Ndefu kama Hii* demonstrates how the translator employed artistic techniques rooted in Swahili culture to make the Target Language audience eager to read the text. Polysystems Theory emphasizes that translation must be associated with various systems surrounding the life of the TL audience to ensure natural readability. The audience should not feel like they are reading a translated text but rather perceive it as an original work. These ideas grant translators the freedom to incorporate new elements into the TL, omit certain aspects of the SL in the translation, and refine some elements to persuade the target readers.

Making Readers Understand

Translators of literary works consider the culture of their target audience to ensure that the work is well understood. Taking into account the culture of the SL enables readers of the TL to encounter familiar elements from their everyday lives. As a result, the intended message reaches them more easily. Awadalbari (2018) emphasizes that one of the key qualities of a translator is having a deep understanding of both the source culture (SC) and the target culture (TC) to provide an accurate translation. This means that if a translator lacks sufficient knowledge of both the source and target languages, they are likely to distort cultural meanings during translation. Considering the cultural aspects of the TL in translated novels, particularly through thematic and stylistic adaptation, helps TL readers grasp the intended message more easily.

In terms of content, Swahili-translated novels depict messages that reflect the realities of Swahili life. Research has shown that *Barua Ndefu kama Hii* has been translated in a way that aligns with the culture of the TL because its themes relate to the daily life of the TL audience. For instance, in Pair 5,

Pair 5

SL: I sought refuge in God, as at every moment of crisis in my life (pg. 82).

TL: Nikamkimbilia Mungu, kama nilivyokuwa nafanya kila mara mkosi uliponijia katika maisha yangu. (pg. 112).

The element *crisis* has been translated as *mkosi* instead of *baa*. The translator chose *mkosi* because it is a widely recognized word in Swahili society, meaning something believed to bring misfortune to a person. Furthermore, *Barua Ndefu kama Hii* allows the TL audience to understand the intended message through religious beliefs that reflect Swahili culture. For example, in Pair 6,

Pair 6

SL: We buried our milk teeth in the same holes and begged our fairy godmothers to restore them to us (pg. 1).

TL: Meno yetu ya utotoni yalipokuwa yaking'oka tuliyachimbia katika mashimo yale yale na tuliomba msaada wa panya ili aturudishie meno mengine mazuri zaidi (pg. 1).

The phrase *we buried our milk teeth in the holes and begged our fairy godmothers to restore them to us* has been translated as *Meno yetu ya utotoni yalipokuwa yaking'oka tuliyachimba katika mashimo na tuliomba msaada wa panya ili aturudishie meno mengine mazuri zaidi.* Ramatulayi narrates this to Aisatu as a way of reminiscing about their childhood. Likewise, when TL readers encounter this passage, it evokes childhood memories since it is common for children to bury their fallen teeth in a hole or throw them onto the roof with the belief that they will receive better teeth.

Similarly, the theme of parenting is portrayed following Swahili culture to help the TL audience understand the SL more easily. Ramatulayi narrates:

Pair 7

SL: Did Modou appreciate, in its full measure, the void created by his absence in this house? Did Modou attribute to me more energy than I had to shoulder the responsibility of my children? (pg. 53).

TL: Je, Modu alishawahi kulipima pengo kubwa alililoliacha katika nyumba hii? Je, alikuwa amenipa nguvu zilizokuwa zaidi ya zile za kwangu ili niweze kuwasaidia wanangu wafanikiwe? (pg. 71).

The data presented above highlights how Ramatulayi is entrusted with the responsibility of taking care of her family and her husband. She finds herself in a difficult situation, asking many questions, indicating dissatisfaction with Modu's behavior of neglecting the family. This issue is very real for the Swahili community, where women are associated with caregiving. The presentation of themes that touch on real-life issues for the target audience is one of the important aspects that allows this audience to understand the translated text.

Furthermore, one of the respondents explained that in Swahili society, students who use translated novels such as *Barua Ndefu kama Hii* in their learning process understand them just as well as novels originally written in Swahili. This is because, considering the small-scale systems within the TT, such as literature, history, culture, and the environment, target audience reads TT as if it were ST. In the selected novel, Ramatulayi says:

Pair 8

SL: The assimilationist dreams of the colonist drew into its crucible our mode of thought and way of life. The sun helmet worn over the natural protection of our kinky hair, smoke-filled pipe in the mouth, white shorts just above the calves, very short dresses displaying shapely legs (pg. 24).

TL: Ndoto za mkoloni za kututaka tufanane nayo zilianza kutoa athari. Akili na utu wetu ulianza kuingia katika utamaduni wake, tukaanza kuvalishwa kofia ati kwa ajili ya kuzilinda nywele zetu zilizokamatana, wengine wakivuta mitemba itoayo moshi mdomoni na kuvaa kaptura nyeupe juu ya

> magoti, ambazo ni nguo fupi mno zilizoacha miundi na mapaja mazuri nje (pg.33).

Through the data presented above, the system of colonial history is outlined in a way that reflects the target audience. Swahilis, like other Africans, were colonized by the Europeans. Colonialism left a cultural impact on the Swahili community. When readers of the TT encounter issues of colonialism in a translated novel, it is easier for them to understand because their society has experienced that historical period. On this basis, novels translated into Swahili, in addition to strengthening Swahili culture, allow the Target audience to understand the target text more easily. This issue is also discussed by Tymoczko (2007). In his book on the analysis of comparative theory in literature, he states that three factors can affect the selection of synonyms by a translator to make the target audience understand the translation. These factors are the text being translated, the translator, and institutional reasons (which involve cultural factors). Tymoczko's ideas are related to our argument that the use of the target audience's culture in translation makes the translated text more comprehensible.

Avoiding the Difficulty of Finding Accurate Equivalents

When a translator considers the culture of the target audience in their translation, they will avoid the difficulty of finding accurate equivalents for concepts that do not have direct equivalents in TL. Nida (1964) & Newmark (1988) state that cultural equivalents are categorized into five main groups: ecology, flora and fauna, customs and traditions, politics, and religion. Due to cultural differences (based on these categories) between the ST and TT societies, the translator should use concepts that are familiar within the target culture. Additionally, a translator of literary texts has the freedom to use various methods, as discussed by Malangwa (2005) in her research on the cultural impact in translation. Her findings align with the translation strategies for cultural texts proposed by Newmark (1988). These strategies include transference, cultural substitution, active synonym definition, semantic translation, compensation, cultural borrowing, and cultural hybridization.

In the selected novel, the use of the strategy of transference has been considered to avoid the difficulty of finding equivalents. For instance, in Pair 9,

Pair 9

SL: The new brassiere or the one bought at the second-hand market (pg. 8).

TL: vitamba vipya vilivyonunuliwa kwa muuza mitumba (pg. 11).

The element "second-hand market" is translated as "mitumba" instead of "soko la mara ya pili." The word *mitumba* is widely known by Swahilis as they use second-hand items in their daily lives. When a reader encounters the word *mitumba*, it evokes images of everyday life in their community. It is important to note that Swahilis live in third-world countries that receive many used goods, especially items like clothes and utensils from developed countries. Wearing second-hand clothes is something familiar to them. In Pair 10,

Pair 10

SL: By the way of reply, I am beginning this diary, my prop in distress (pg. 1).

TL: Ili nikujibu, nafungua hili daftari ambalo nalifanya kama nguzo ya kujiegemezea katika vurumai lililonipata (pg.1).

The element "diary" is translated as "daftari" instead of "shajara." The consideration of the target culture helped the translator realize that there was no need to use "shajara" because Swahilis are not accustomed to keeping records in a diary. Therefore, the equivalent "daftari" is more widely understood than "shajara."

Avoiding Cultural Tensions

Literature is a product of society; thus, it carries the culture of the society in question. When a translator considers the culture of the target audience in their translation, they instill trust in the target audience by showing that their culture is valued and preserved. This also helps protect the cultural practices of SL and prevents the target audience from glorifying the culture of another society, thus avoiding cultural tensions that could arise from historical, temporal, and economic differences between the source and target communities.

In *Barua Ndefu kama Hii*, the translator has adjusted certain aspects to avoid cultural tensions. We see how the words of Farmata to Ibrahim Salli have been adapted in a way that aligns with the target culture without causing any conflicts. She says:

Pair 11

SL: Then warn your mother. We or I shall go to see her tomorrow to announce your crime (pg. 85).

TL: Basi, mweleze mama yako. Kesho tutakwenda au nitakwenda kumwona kumzungumzia mahari (pg.115).

In the data presented above, Ibrahim Salli, who impregnated Ramatulayi's daughter, is surrendering to her to ask for forgiveness for the things he has done. Farmata, who was present during the conversation, decides to provoke Ibrahim Salli by telling him that she will go to his home to discuss the dowry with his mother. Here, the word "warn" has been translated as "eleza" (explain) instead of "onya" (warn), and the word "crime" has been translated as "mahari" (dowry) instead of "faini/adhabu" (fine/penalty). This is a deliberate misinterpretation because, in Swahili culture, admonishing a mother is considered harsh language. A mother is expected to be respected and loved. Swahili people speak to mothers with polite language to honor them. The Swahili culture values the practice of dowry payment before marriage, which is why the translator has used a phrase to refer to dowry.

Research has highlighted how adherence to the target culture helps prevent cultural conflicts. One of the respondents explained:

In Swahili literature, novels must align with the customs and traditions of the Swahili people. There has been much debate about the freedom to depict love and sexual events openly. By nature, Swahili people do not discuss matters of love, sex, and intimate body parts directly but use euphemisms. For example, Professor Bertoncini daringly referred to the novel *Dar es Salaam Usiku* in English as "the first erotic novel in Swahili" because it discusses matters of romance in an open manner, which is different from what is typically accepted in Swahili culture. The issue of adhering to ethics among Swahili people is complex, which is why we have witnessed the banning of songs such as *Chura* by Snura due to moral misconduct. Always, freedom must have its boundaries to avoid misuse. In depicting such matters, the author can use various artistic techniques; for instance, euphemisms and symbolism to allow the reader to interpret these things for themselves.

The excerpt highlights how writers, translators, and literary critics must consider the culture of the target community. In *Barua Ndefu kama Hii*, we see how Daba tells her mother that Binetuu has found a man (lover) who gives her money to buy new clothes. She says:

Pair 12

> **SL**: Oh, I have a sugar-daddy who pays for them (pg. 35).
> **TL:** Nguo hizi nazipata kutokana na mfuko wa mzee mmoja. (pg. 46).

Through the data presented above, Binetuu appears to begin a romantic relationship with Modu, who is of the same age as her father. Modu has been giving Binetuu money to buy new clothes. We see that the translator has used the term *mzee mmoja* (an elderly man) instead of *hawara* (lover) to soften the harshness of the words because the Swahili community is not accustomed to directly mentioning words associated with love and sexuality. The use of *mzee mmoja* reflects respect, as opposed to the term *hawara*.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

This study concludes that cultural factors are fundamental to the translation of literary works. The analysis of *Barua Ndefu kama Hii* shows that effective incorporation of cultural elements from both the source and target contexts enhances translation quality, accuracy, and acceptability. The findings answer the research questions by demonstrating that cultural awareness and intercultural competence significantly influence how meaning is interpreted and conveyed, enabling translators to meet the expectations of diverse audiences and produce contextually appropriate translations.

The study contributes to translation theory by reinforcing culture-oriented perspectives that view translation as a culturally embedded practice rather than a purely linguistic exercise. In practical terms, it highlights the importance of equipping translators with strong cultural and intercultural competencies. However, the study is limited by its focus on a single text and translator and by the absence of reader reception or translator perspectives, suggesting the need for broader, multi-text and multi-method approaches in future research.

Recommendations

For Translators

Translators are encouraged to engage continuously with diverse literary texts from multiple cultural contexts to deepen their cultural awareness and intercultural sensitivity. Such engagement enhances their ability to interpret culturally embedded meanings and to make informed decisions when handling culture-specific expressions. Translators should also consciously choose between domestication and foreignisation strategies, depending on whether the communicative goal is to align with target audience expectations or to preserve and foreground the distinctiveness of the source culture.

For Trainers and Lecturers

Translation trainers and lecturers should place greater emphasis on cultural and intercultural competence as core components of translation training. Teaching approaches should integrate comparative cultural analysis, case studies of literary translations, and practical exercises that require students to justify their cultural translation choices. Encouraging critical reflection on cultural transfer will better prepare trainee translators for real-world translation challenges.

For Curriculum Developers

Curriculum developers are advised to design translation programmes that systematically incorporate culture-focused modules alongside linguistic training. Courses should include exposure to literary texts from diverse cultural backgrounds, translation theory on culture, and applied intercultural communication. Embedding culture as a transversal theme across translation courses will ensure that graduates possess both technical and cultural competencies.

For Policy Makers in Language and Culture

Policy makers should support policies that promote multilingualism, literary translation, and intercultural exchange. This includes funding translation projects, supporting translator training initiatives, and encouraging the inclusion of culturally diverse texts in education systems. Such policies would strengthen the role of translation in cultural preservation, mutual understanding, and cross-cultural dialogue at national and regional levels.

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Teachers' and Parents' Perceptions of the Effectiveness and Sustainability of School Feeding Programmes in Tanzanian Primary Schools: A Qualitative Inquiry

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Abstract
Despite the widespread implementation of School Feeding Programmes (SFPs) in Tanzania, research offers limited insight into how teachers and parents interpret SFPs and sustain them in everyday school life. This study explored stakeholder perceptions of SFPs' contribution to children's learning, well-being and participation in the Mara Region, and how motivational and ecological factors shape engagement. Guided by Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's parental involvement model and Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, we used a qualitative, interpretive phenomenological design. Data comprised 40 individual teacher interviews and 20 parent focus group discussions (n=200) across 20 public primary schools; analysis treated each school and focus group as the comparative unit and triangulated accounts using thematic analysis. Teachers associated SFPs with improved attendance and punctuality, stronger concentration and participation, calmer classroom behaviour and reduced stigma, with steadier gains in urban-proximate schools and more seasonal patterns in agrarian and lakeshore communities. Parents framed SFPs as a lifeline in food-insecure settings and as a motivational and social-cohesion mechanism where households had more reliable food access, and reported perceived health and emotional benefits alongside strong norms of collective responsibility. Sustainability was described as precarious due to poverty, climate variability, rising costs, infrastructure gaps (fuel, water, storage/utensils) and weak institutional support, yet communities reported adaptive collective strategies. Sustainable SFPs require resilient financing, basic infrastructure investment, and policy recognition of local agency and trust as foundations for educational equity.

Keywords: *School feeding, home-school partnerships, short-term hunger, community engagement, educational equity*

INTRODUCTION

Child malnutrition remains a critical public health and educational challenge across Sub-Saharan Africa, with profound implications for school attendance, cognitive development, and learning outcomes. In Tanzania, persistent nutritional deficiencies among school-age children continue to undermine national efforts to achieve equitable and high-quality education. Malnutrition, as evidenced by stunted growth, wasting, and micronutrient deficiencies, has been consistently linked to poor school participation, including absenteeism, early dropout, and low concentration in class (Grantham-McGregor et al., 2007; Sando et al., 2024; Silva et al., 2023). Children who attend school hungry often struggle to focus, retain information, or engage effectively in classroom activities, perpetuating cycles of poverty, food insecurity, and educational disadvantage. Recent reviews of Tanzania's school health and nutrition policies highlight that addressing school-age malnutrition remains an urgent concern, particularly in rural and food-insecure regions where vulnerability to seasonal hunger is acute (Sando et al., 2024). Despite steady policy attention to early-childhood nutrition, the nutritional status of school-age children remains comparatively under-addressed, even though it directly shapes learning readiness, equity, and progression through primary schooling. In this study, school feeding is treated not only as a welfare initiative but as a foundational enabling condition for educational participation and classroom engagement in food-insecure settings.

In response to these challenges, school feeding programmes (SFPs) have been widely adopted in Tanzania as integrated education and nutrition interventions that alleviate short-term hunger, enhance concentration, and promote attendance and retention. These programmes operate through diverse models, including donor-supported initiatives, government-led schemes, and home-grown school feeding (HGSF) approaches that utilise locally produced food and community involvement (Roothaert et al., 2021). Mara Region, situated in northwestern Tanzania along the shores of Lake Victoria, offers a particularly relevant context for such initiatives. It is predominantly agrarian, dependent on rain-fed agriculture and fishing, and characterised by chronic household food insecurity. Mara's significance in school feeding stems from its history with the Project Concern International's (PCI) "Pamoja Tuwalishe" programme, which between 2016 and 2020 reached over 170,000 preschool and primary school pupils across 231 schools, empowering local communities to manage meal programmes, mobilise resources, and strengthen transparency. The initiative's success led to the establishment of the Mara Regional School Feeding Strategy (MRSFS) in 2020, the first regional-level framework of its kind in Tanzania, signalling the region's leadership in institutionalising school feeding as part of long-term education and nutrition policy. In Tanzania, recent policy discussions increasingly frame school feeding as a cross-sector intervention linking education, health, agriculture, and social protection, particularly through home-grown approaches that aim to strengthen local supply chains while improving pupils' nutrition. This framing highlights that SFPs are not simply service-delivery mechanisms; they are governance arrangements that depend on local coordination, accountability, and sustained stakeholder contribution.

Empirical evidence from Tanzania and other East African countries demonstrates that well-implemented SFPs contribute meaningfully to children's educational engagement, attendance, and overall well-being. Studies in northern Tanzania have shown that school meals significantly reduce absenteeism and improve classroom participation, particularly among children from food-insecure households (Roothaert et al., 2021). Similar findings in Rwanda and Kenya suggest that meals enhance pupils' concentration and participation, while also strengthening parental involvement in school life (Assefa, 2025; Uwababyeyi & Munyakazi, 2024). However, the sustainability and effectiveness of SFPs rely heavily on the engagement of key stakeholders, especially teachers and parents, who are directly involved in daily operations, mobilisation, and maintenance of the programmes. Teachers coordinate meal delivery, monitor attendance, and observe classroom impacts (Mtambo & Omer, 2024), while parents contribute food, labour, and financial support through school committees (Roothaert et al., 2021). When these stakeholders perceive school feeding as valuable, they demonstrate stronger ownership and commitment (Gonjo et al., 2024; Haruna & Mwakalinga, 2025); conversely, when they view it as burdensome or externally imposed, sustainability is weakened. However, evidence from implementation settings suggests that positive outcomes are not automatic: programme effectiveness and continuity depend on operational reliability, transparency, and the day-to-day commitment of teachers and parents who manage resources, labour, and oversight at the school level. The post-donor phase is especially informative because it reveals whether perceived benefits translate into durable ownership and sustained community investment.

Despite widespread implementation of school feeding across Tanzania, most research on the subject remains quantitative, focusing on measurable outcomes such as attendance, nutritional status, or programme coverage (Sando et al., 2024). There is a limited understanding of how key stakeholders interpret, value, and experience these programmes in practice. Moreover, some studies suggest variations in how school feeding is perceived, with some viewing it as a burden due to cost-sharing demands. While many stakeholders view school feeding programs as beneficial, perceptions are not always uniform. In some settings, school feeding is embraced as essential to improving educational outcomes, while in others, it is viewed as a logistical burden or as externally imposed. These contradictions in experience and perception underscore the need for a more in-depth, context-specific exploration. For instance, Alderman, Gilligan, and Lehrer (2012), in their study of Northern Uganda, found that although food-for-education programs increased school participation, the degree of impact varied across regions and was influenced by how parents and communities perceived the relevance and ownership of the program As such, there is a need to examine the subjective, contextual, and sometimes conflicting meanings associated with school feeding initiatives among those most directly involved in these initiatives. In particular, there is limited qualitative evidence on how teachers and parents interpret trade-offs around cost-sharing, labour demands, and fairness, and how these interpretations shape sustained participation once external support declines. Addressing this gap requires attention to lived experience, not only programme outputs, because stakeholder meaning-making often explains why the same intervention endures in some schools yet weakens in others.

This study aims to explore how teachers and parents in Mara Region perceive the effectiveness and sustainability of school feeding programmes for children's learning, attendance, and well-being. Specifically, it examines how teachers perceive the role and impact of school meals in promoting pupils' academic engagement and how parents value these programmes for their children's educational participation. In doing so, the study also identifies the contextual challenges and motivations that shape the engagement of both groups with school feeding initiatives. By integrating these perspectives, the research seeks to provide a more nuanced and locally grounded understanding of the social and cultural dynamics that influence programme sustainability in rural Tanzanian settings. Drawing on in-depth interviews with teachers and focus group discussions with parents across multiple primary schools in

Mara Region, the study foregrounds stakeholder meaning-making as a key determinant of both perceived effectiveness and long-term sustainability.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative, interpretive design with a phenomenological orientation to explore how teachers and parents perceive the effectiveness and sustainability of school feeding programmes (SFPs) in Mara Region, Tanzania. The approach prioritised participants lived experiences and meaning-making, recognising that perceptions of SFP value and sustainability are socially constructed through interaction among families, schools, and community structures (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Recent educational research in Tanzania has also employed phenomenological designs to examine stakeholders' experiences of school initiatives, reinforcing the appropriateness of this orientation for the present study (Kojo, Seni, & Ndibalema, 2024; Mfaume, 2022; Silayo et al., 2025).

The study was informed by two complementary interpretive lenses: Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's Model of Parental Involvement (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005) and Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1994; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's model sensitised the analysis to how role construction, perceived invitations, and self-efficacy are experienced and negotiated by parents and teachers within school-community relationships (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). In resource-limited contexts, stakeholders' beliefs about sustaining feeding programmes are intertwined with local values of care, reciprocity, and collective action (Athumani, 2023; Roothaert et al., 2021). Similarly, parental and teacher self-efficacy is shaped by lived experiences of success or struggle in mobilising resources (Kigobe et al., 2025), while perceived invitations to participate are interpreted through relational practices such as inclusion, respect, and communication (Haruna & Mwakalinga, 2025; Malingumu, Kigobe, & Amani, 2023).

Bronfenbrenner's ecological perspective situated these meanings within interacting environmental layers (micro-, meso-, exo, and macro-systems), enabling interpretation of stakeholder engagement as shaped by household livelihood realities, community structures, and institutional and policy conditions (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1994; Bronfenbrenner &

Morris, 2006). Recent qualitative studies in Tanzania show how ecological approaches illuminate the contextual dynamics through which school-based initiatives are shaped, including the influence of local norms, economic realities, and institutional environments (Amani & Mgaiwa, 2023; Davis et al., 2021; Edward & Shukia, 2023; Ndijuye et al., 2020; Wineman et al., 2022). Used together, these frameworks supported a holistic interpretation of how individual beliefs and structural contexts jointly shape SFP participation and sustainability in rural Tanzania (Amani & Mgaiwa, 2023; Ndijuye et al., 2020).

Mara Region was purposively selected because it has implemented multiple SFP models (community-led, government-assisted, and donor-supported) and because many schools have experienced post-donor transition, creating a relevant context for examining sustainability. Twenty public primary schools were selected using purposive sampling and a multiple-case logic (Stake, 2006; Yin, 2018) to capture variation by geography (rural and peri-urban), programme model, and programme maturity. Each school constituted an embedded case. Participants were recruited through purposive sampling (Patton, 2015). The sample comprised 40 teachers (two per school) who participated in semi-structured interviews and 200 parents who participated in 20 focus group discussions (FGDs; one per school with approximately 10 parents). The analytic units were the school (case), the interview, and the FGD (20 cases; 40 interviews; 20 FGDs), rather than the total headcount, consistent with a qualitative multiple-case approach (Stake, 2006; Yin, 2018). Teachers were eligible if they had at least one year of experience at the selected school and direct involvement in, or sustained exposure to, the feeding programme. Parents were eligible if they had a child currently enrolled and were engaged with school-related activities (e.g., meeting attendance or committee participation). Individuals with very limited exposure to the school or feeding programme were excluded to ensure data reflected direct experience. Sample adequacy was assessed using the principle of information power (Malterud, Siersma, & Guassora, 2016).

Data were collected over three months using semi-structured teacher interviews (20-30 minutes) and parent FGDs (30-40 minutes). Guides were developed using sensitising concepts from the two theoretical lenses while remaining open to emergent meanings. All interviews and discussions were conducted in Kiswahili to support participant comfort and expression. With informed consent, sessions were audio-recorded and supplemented with field notes. The researchers maintained a reflexive journal to document positionality reflections, field decisions, and evolving analytic insights, contributing to transparency and an audit trail (Nowell et al., 2017). Audio data were transcribed verbatim in Kiswahili and translated into English, with attention to retaining culturally specific meanings and contextual nuance. Analysis followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), combining inductive coding with theory-informed interpretation. Coding proceeded iteratively, moving between transcripts and emerging themes, refining theme boundaries to reduce redundancy, and checking consistency across cases and data sources (teacher interviews and parent FGDs). NVivo 14 supported systematic coding, retrieval, and cross-case comparison. Cross-case matrices were used to compare convergence and divergence across schools and to assess analytic sufficiency at the case and group level, consistent with the principle of information power (Malterud, Siersma, & Guassora, 2016); by the final set of interviews and FGDs, no substantively new themes were generated, and additional data primarily deepened contextual nuance rather than adding new categories.

Trustworthiness was addressed using Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria. Credibility was strengthened through triangulation (interviews and FGDs), prolonged engagement across schools, and member checking through end-of-session summary confirmation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Dependability and confirmability were supported through an audit trail (including the reflexive journal, coding memos, and documented theme revisions) and peer debriefing with two independent researchers (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Nowell et al., 2017). Transferability was supported through thick description of school and livelihood contexts and the multiple-case design (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Ethical clearance was obtained from the Open University of Tanzania, with permissions granted by relevant regional and district authorities. Informed consent was obtained in Kiswahili, pseudonyms were used to protect confidentiality, and data were securely stored. The study adhered to principles of respect, beneficence, and justice consistent with ethical standards for qualitative research in Tanzania.

RESULTS

The findings of this study are organised in three main focus areas: (i) teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of school feeding in enhancing learning and engagement; (ii) parents' perceptions of effectiveness and sustainability; and (iii) challenges and contextual factors affecting sustainability. Throughout, teacher and parent accounts are explicitly cross-referenced to support triangulation, highlighting convergence, divergence, and contextual variation.

Teachers consistently described attendance and punctuality as among the most visible improvements following the introduction of school feeding, although the magnitude and stability of gains varied by livelihood and geographic context. In urban and peri-urban schools (Musoma Municipality and Musoma District Council), teachers tended to describe steady and sustained gains in both attendance and timely arrival, attributing improvements to predictable meal routines:

> *"Before the feeding programme, we would have 15-20 children absent daily out of 60 enrolled. Now, absenteeism has dropped to 3-5 on average. The change happened within the first month and has held steady for two years."* (Interview, Teacher 12, Musoma Municipality).

> *"Punctuality was our biggest problem. Children would arrive at 9 or 10 a.m., missing morning lessons entirely. Now, about 80% arrive by 7:30 a.m. because they know breakfast porridge is served at 8 a.m. sharp."* (Interview, Teacher 15, Musoma District Council)

By contrast, teachers in more remote agrarian communities (Bunda and Butiama) reported more fluctuating patterns linked to planting and harvest cycles, describing feeding as a partial buffer rather than a complete solution to seasonal attendance constraints:

> *"During planting and harvest seasons, attendance still drops because children help in the fields. But even then, the feeding programme has reduced absenteeism by half compared to before."* (Interview, Teacher 3, Bunda).

> *"Attendance is still seasonal here, but the programme has changed the baseline. Before, 40% attendance was normal during planting. Now, it is 65-70%."* (Interview, Teacher 2, Bunda).

In addition to school-level attendance changes, teachers emphasised that feeding reshaped children's motivation and household routines around schooling, shifting morning dynamics from enforcement to anticipation of meals:

> *"Parents used to have to drag children to school. Now, children remind parents if they are running late. The programme has shifted the burden from parents to children's own desire to attend."* (Interview, Teacher 18, Musoma District Council).

> *"Hunger was the invisible barrier. Once we removed it, the path to school became clear."* (Interview, Teacher 9, Butiama).

> *"Before, I had to drag him out of bed… Now, he prepares his uniform the night before."* (FGD, Bunda 1, Female participant).

Parent FGDs corroborated these attendance and punctuality gains, with many parents describing reduced morning conflict and children's heightened motivation to arrive early for meals. Convergence was strongest in food-insecure rural communities, where feeding was described as shifting daily routines; in more food-secure settings, parents more often framed the meal as a motivational supplement and a way of keeping children in school for the full day.

Beyond attendance, teachers linked school feeding to improved concentration, participation, and academic performance, while emphasising that effects varied by meal timing and programme arrangement. Where schools offered morning porridge (14 of 20), teachers commonly described immediate improvements in attentiveness during early lessons:

> *"The difference between a hungry child and a fed child is like night and day. Before porridge, children would stare blankly… After porridge, they participate, ask questions, and complete tasks."* (Interview, Teacher 5, Bunda).

> *"In mathematics lessons, I used to repeat explanations five or six times. Now, twice is enough."* (Interview, Teacher 11, Butiama).

In schools providing a midday meal (6 of 20), teachers more often emphasised reduced late-morning fatigue and improved afternoon participation:

> *"By 11 a.m., children used to become restless and irritable. Now, knowing that lunch is coming, they stay focused… Afternoon attendance has also improved."* (Interview, Teacher 14, Musoma District Council).

> *"The midday meal has eliminated the 'afternoon slump.' … Now, they return energised and ready to learn."* (Interview, Teacher 19, Butiama).

When teachers discussed performance, they often framed feeding as enabling learning rather than as a single causal factor:

> *"Our Standard 4 exam pass rate increased from 62% to 81% over two years. I cannot say it is only because of feeding, but feeding made learning possible."* (Interview, Teacher 2, Bunda).

> *"The children who benefited most are those from the poorest families… Feeding levelled the playing field."* (Interview, Teacher 16, Butiama).

Teachers also described changes in classroom climate, frequently linking feeding to calmer behaviour and fewer conflicts. Across most schools (teachers in 17 of 20 schools), these changes were interpreted as reductions in hunger-related stress and irritability alongside improved emotional regulation:

> *"Hunger made children aggressive… After we started feeding, the fights decreased dramatically. Now, they share, they wait their turn, they help each other."* (Interview, Teacher 8, Bunda).
>
> *"Before feeding, children would cry easily… Now, they are more resilient. They try again when they fail."* (Interview, Teacher 17, Butiama)

In schools serving higher proportions of orphans and vulnerable children, teachers described feeding as particularly important for restoring inclusion and self-confidence:

> *"For children from very poor homes… coming to school hungry was a daily humiliation… Now, everyone eats the same meal… It has restored their dignity." (*Interview, Teacher 10, Butiama).
>
> *"The biggest change I see is in mood… regular meals have stabilised his emotions."* (FGD, Musoma District Council 2, Female participant)

Parents described similar changes in children's mood and self-regulation, aligning with teachers' observations of improved classroom behaviour, including reduced conflict and greater cooperation. Across the two datasets, behavioural improvements were most often described as contingent on programme reliability; where meals were irregular, both teachers and parents reported that positive effects were less stable.

Teachers further described school feeding as a levelling mechanism that reduced visible socioeconomic differences and strengthened peer cohesion. Teachers in 16 of 20 schools highlighted shared meals as normalising participation for poorer pupils and strengthening peer relationships across household wealth:

> *"The meal is a great equaliser."* (Interview, Teacher 4, Musoma District Council).
>
> *"At lunchtime, everyone lines up together… That simple act teaches children that they are equal."* (Interview, Teacher 11, Butiama).

> *"For us, the benefit is not survival, it is convenience and equality. My child eats with everyone else, learns to share, and does not feel different from poorer children. That is valuable."* (FGD, Musoma District Council 1, Male participant)

Parents partially echoed this equity framing, often emphasising dignity, inclusion, and the normalising effect of children eating together. However, parents in the most food-insecure contexts more frequently framed equity in material terms (reducing hunger and enabling attendance), while those in relatively better-off contexts foregrounded social inclusion and peer learning, indicating variation in how "equity" was experienced and articulated.

Many teachers reported that feeding strengthened school-community relationships by increasing parental participation, trust, and shared responsibility. Teachers in 15 of 20 schools described feeding as catalysing greater parental engagement and strengthening everyday school-home relationships, with food, firewood, and labour contributions framed as generating ownership:

> *"Now, they see it as 'our school' because they contribute food, firewood, and labour."* (Interview, Teacher 4, Bunda).

> *"Feeding opened a door that was previously closed."* (Interview, Teacher 14, Musoma District Council)

At the same time, a minority of teachers (in 3 schools) reported tensions, including expectations of preferential treatment and the risk of wealthier contributors dominating decisions, suggesting that participation could build cohesion while also generating new equity challenges.

> *"This is not the government's programme, it is our programme. We own it."* (FGD, Bunda 1, Male participant).

Parents' accounts of ownership and collective responsibility converged with teachers' reports of strengthened school-community relationships and increased parental participation. Parent discussions also surfaced fairness tensions and capacity constraints around contributions, indicating that cohesion and participation were actively negotiated and could vary by season and community conditions.

Alongside perceived benefits, teachers consistently portrayed school feeding as fragile without reliable funding, consistent contributions, and institutional support. Across schools, teachers described progress as precarious in the absence of stable resourcing, with drought, rising prices, and contribution fatigue presented as risks that could quickly reverse gains:

> "*This programme is the best thing that has happened to our school. But every day, I worry: What if the food runs out? ... We have no backup plan*." (Interview, Teacher 3, Bunda).
>
> *"We are one drought, one bad harvest, one funding cut away from losing everything we have gained."* (Interview, Teacher 16, Musoma District Council).
>
> *"When the rains fail... the feeding programme stopped for two months. Children went back to staying home."* (Interview, Teacher 2, Bunda)

Across interviews and FGDs, sustainability concerns were ubiquitous. Teachers most often highlighted institutional and logistical constraints (storage, kitchens, fuel, and local authority support), while parents more often highlighted household economics and climate-related shocks. The triangulated pattern indicates high perceived value alongside persistent vulnerability to resource and governance gaps.

On parents' perceptions of the Effectiveness and Sustainability of School Feeding, the majority of parents framed school feeding as a critical form of security and support, though the intensity of dependence varied by household food security, livelihood, and exposure to climatic and economic shocks. Across the 20 FGDs, parents framed school feeding not only as an educational support, but as a household food-security strategy and source of emotional relief. However, the intensity of dependence varied sharply by livelihood and baseline food security. In chronically food-insecure agrarian areas, the school meal was often described as the most reliable meal available to children:

> *"Even if we have no food at home, I know my children will not stay hungry because the school will give them porridge." (*FGD, Bunda 2, Female parent participant*).*
>
> *"Last year, during the drought... the school kept feeding the children. That programme saved lives."* (FGD, Butiama 1, Male parent participant)

In more food-secure and urban settings, parents emphasised convenience, time savings, and social benefits (e.g., keeping children in school throughout the day and reducing visible differences between households). Fishing-dependent communities highlighted income volatility as a driver of episodic food insecurity, with school meals providing rare predictability.

Table 1
Cross-FGD variation in the 'school feeding as a lifeline' theme

FGD	Theme prominence	Context/livelihood	Key framing	Illustrative quote
Bunda 1	Dominant	Agrarian, chronic food insecurity	Survival necessity	"Some days we eat nothing at home. Children eat only at school."
Bunda 2	Dominant	Agrarian, drought-affected	Life-saving intervention	"Last year, the programme saved lives during drought."
Bunda 3	Dominant	Agrarian, seasonal hunger	Only reliable meal	"Some days, school is the only place my child eats."
Bunda 4	Dominant	Agrarian, poor harvest	Peace of mind	"I know my child will not starve because of the school meal."
Bunda 5	Moderate	Mixed livelihoods	Important, but not only a meal	"The meal is important, but we also feed them at home."
Butiama 1	Dominant	Fishing, income variability	Stability amid uncertainty	"Mining is gambling. School meal is stable."
Butiama 2	Moderate	Mixed farming/fishing	Complementary support	"We feed them at home, but the school meal helps a lot."
Butiama 3	Dominant	Fishing, unpredictable income	Essential safety net	"When the catch is poor, the school meal is everything."
Butiama 4	Moderate	Agrarian, moderate food security	Helpful addition	"We can manage, but the meal makes life easier."
Butiama 5	Dominant	Agrarian, poor soil quality	Survival framing	"Without school meals, children would be malnourished."
Musoma DC 1	Moderate	Semi-urban, mixed livelihoods	Convenience and equality	"Benefit is convenience and teaching equality."
Musoma DC 2	Moderate	Semi-urban, better market access	Time-saver for parents	"Meal saves us time and keep children at school."
Musoma DC 3	Moderate	Peri-urban, wage employment	Motivational tool	"Children want to go to school because of the meal."
Musoma DC 4	Dominant	Peri-urban, fishing families	Income-dependent necessity	"When fishing income drops, the meal is critical."

FGD	Theme prominence	Context/livelihood	Key framing	Illustrative quote
Musoma DC 5	Weak	Semi-urban, relatively wealthy	Nice to have	"We can afford food, but the meal is still useful."
Musoma Urban 1	Weak	Urban, diverse livelihoods	Equality benefit	"Benefit is equality, not survival."
Musoma Urban 2	Weak	Urban, salaried families	Convenience	"Keeps children at school all day."
Musoma Urban 3	Moderate	Urban, mixed-income	Variable within group	"Some families need it badly, others less so."
Musoma Urban 4	Weak	Urban, business families	Social cohesion	"Meal teaches children to eat together."
Musoma Urban 5	Moderate	Urban, low-income families	Important support	"Even in town, some families struggle. Meal helps."

Across 18 of 20 FGDs, parents used terms such as "peace," "relief," "blessing," and "lifeline" to describe the emotional impact of feeding. Overall, the 'lifeline' framing was strongest in rural agrarian and fishing communities where food insecurity and income volatility were most pronounced, and weaker in semi-urban and urban groups where households had more diversified livelihoods and market access.

Parents repeatedly described marked shifts in children's motivation to attend school, with the nature of the change varying by pre-programme barriers in rural, semi-urban, and urban contexts. Parents across 17 of 20 FGDs described a marked shift in children's motivation to attend school. In remote rural areas, parents reported dramatic reversals, from daily resistance to self-initiated early preparation, often explicitly linking the shift to relief from morning hunger. In urban areas, parents described feeding as adding an incentive that competed with play or household work.

> *"In town, children were not starving, but they preferred to stay home and play. Now, school feeding gives them a reason to go."* (FGD, Musoma Urban 1, Female parent participant)

Within-FGD interaction vignette (FGD Bunda 2): parents negotiated multiple explanations for children's renewed enthusiasm, illustrating collective meaning-making rather than a simple aggregation of individual views.

> Female Parent Participant 1*: "My daughter wakes up early now because she loves the porridge. It is that simple."*
>
> Male Parent Participant 1*: "It is not just the porridge. It is also that she sees other children there."*
>
> Female Participant 2*: "Yes, but before, even with friends, they did not want to go because they were hungry and tired."*
>
> Male Parent Participant 2: *"I think it is also that teachers are kinder now… the whole atmosphere has changed."*
>
> Female Parent Participant 3*: "For my child, it is all of these things: food, friends, and kind teachers. You cannot separate them."*
> *[*Group murmurs of agreement; several participants nod.*]*

Similar interactional dynamics, where participants refined and integrated explanations through dialogue, were observed in 14 of 20 FGDs. Moreover, parents reported observed improvements in children's health, energy, and development, with the types of change differing by baseline nutritional status and community context.

> *"My child used to be weak and often sick. Since the feeding programme started, she has fewer illnesses and more energy. Even the clinic said her nutrition had improved."* (FGD, Bunda 3, Female participant)

Parents in 14 of 20 FGDs reported visible improvements in children's health, energy levels, and emotional well-being. In food-insecure settings, parents described pronounced physical changes (e.g., weight gain, reduced illness, improved vitality). In contrast, in better-off contexts, they more often highlighted subtler dietary diversification and mood stability.

> *"Before, my son was thin… Now, he has gained weight… and he is full of energy."* (FGD, Bunda 3, Female parent participant)

Parents described substantial contributions to school feeding and a strong sense of ownership, while also highlighting variation in contribution capacity, fairness norms, and the social practices that sustained collective action.

> *"Every month, each family contributes two kilograms of maise. It is not much, but when you put it together, it feeds many children for weeks. That teaches us the power of unity."* (FGD, Butiama 1, Female parent participant)

A consistent theme across FGDs was strong parental ownership of feeding programmes. Parents described contributing maise, beans, firewood, labour, or cash as a shared investment in children's futures. However, contribution mechanisms and reliability differed by community capacity and seasonality. High-capacity communities (Musoma Urban and parts of Musoma District Council) more often described cash-based contributions with formalised committees and record-keeping. Agrarian communities relied primarily on in-kind contributions tied to harvest cycles, creating predictable seasonal shortfalls. In chronically food-insecure settings, parents described substituting labour and collective work days for food contributions.

Within-FGD interaction vignette (FGD Butiama 3): parents negotiated what 'fair' contribution means under unequal capacity.

> Male parent participant 1*: "Every family should contribute equally… That is fair."*
>
> Female parent participant 1: *"But some families have nothing. How can they contribute equally?"*

> Male parent participant 2: *"Then they should contribute labour. Everyone must give something."*
>
> Female parent participant 2: *"Labour is also hard when you are sick or old… We should accept that some families can only give a little."*
>
> Female parent participant 3: *"That is the spirit of Ujamaa (collective solidarity). The strong help the weak."*
> *[*Group murmurs of agreement; several participants nod.*]*

Despite strong appreciation for programme value, parents in all FGDs expressed concern about sustainability; the specific drivers of anxiety varied across agrarian, fishing, semi-urban, and urban contexts. Parents in all 20 FGDs expressed concern about sustainability. In agrarian communities, climate variability and harvest failure were central; in fishing communities, unpredictable income and declining catches were emphasised; and in urban/semi-urban groups, rising food and fuel costs and 'free-rider' dynamics were prominent.

> *"Everything is getting more expensive, maise, beans, firewood… We need external support." (*FGD, Musoma Urban 1, Female parent participant*)*

Notwithstanding these risks, a resilience narrative was present in 15 of 20 FGDs, with parents describing adaptive strategies such as borrowing grain, fundraising events, rotating contribution schedules, and substituting porridge when staples were scarce. Cross-FGD comparison showed that shared themes coexisted with clear contextual variation, confirming the analytic value of conducting 20 separate discussions.

By district**,** Bunda and Butiama FGDs most strongly framed school feeding as a survival necessity and emotional "lifeline," alongside strong narratives of community solidarity and collective responsibility. Sustainability concerns in these districts were primarily linked to climate and harvest instability, and free-rider concerns were rarely foregrounded. Musoma District Council FGDs were more mixed: lakeshore communities echoed the "lifeline" framing due to income volatility, while peri-urban groups more often framed feeding as a motivation and time-saving mechanism that kept children in school throughout the day; sustainability concerns here were frequently described through coordination burdens and rising costs. Musoma Urban FGDs least emphasised survival framing and most emphasised convenience, equality, and social cohesion benefits, while also reporting the strongest concerns about coordination fatigue, fairness, and free-riding, alongside higher expectations of government support.

By livelihood, agrarian FGDs most consistently emphasised seasonal contribution variability and climate vulnerability, while also describing strong reciprocity-based solidarity that enabled continued participation despite hardship. Fishing FGDs most strongly emphasised income unpredictability and dependence on the meal as a stabilising safety net when catches were poor. Mixed/urban livelihood FGDs placed less emphasis on survival and more emphasis on coordination challenges, fairness disputes, and cash-based contribution models.

By programme model, community-led programmes were associated with the strongest expressions of ownership, pride, and creative local coping strategies (rotating contributions, substitution of staples, community fundraising), but also with explicit concern that continuity remained fragile without external stabilisation. Government-assisted programmes generated stronger expectations of state responsibility and sharper frustration with inconsistent support, sometimes coinciding with weaker norms of parental contribution. Hybrid programmes occupied an intermediate position: parents described high local involvement and gratitude for external inputs, while also voicing uncertainty about dependency should outside support decline. Taken together, these patterned differences show that while appreciation of feeding and anxiety about sustainability were widespread, *what feeding meant* (lifeline versus convenience) and *what threatened it most* (climate/harvest versus costs/coordination) varied systematically across contexts, supporting the need for disaggregated analysis rather than a single aggregated "parent perspective."

On the challenges and contextual factors affecting the sustainability of School Feeding programmes, both teachers and parents identified sustainability as the central challenge for school feeding programmes. However, they emphasised different but complementary constraints. Sustainability emerged as the central challenge across both data sources. Teachers tended to emphasise institutional and logistical constraints within schools, while parents foregrounded household-level economic fragility and climate-linked shocks. Together, these perspectives illustrate sustainability as an interplay of economic, institutional, logistical, and environmental factors.

Economic fragility and inconsistent contributions were consistently described as major threats to continuity, especially in households and communities vulnerable to seasonal or income shocks. Teachers in all 20 schools described inconsistent parental contributions as the most frequent barrier, while explicitly distinguishing inability from unwillingness. Parents corroborated this account, describing predictable seasonal depletion of household stocks and the moral stress associated with 'failing' to contribute.

> *"Poverty is the problem, not attitude." (*Interview, Teacher 8, Butiama*)*
> *"By February or March, our stores are empty. We have nothing left to give. We feel ashamed."* (FGD, Butiama 1, Male parent participant)

Logistical and infrastructural deficits (kitchens, storage, utensils, water, and fuel) were described as operational bottlenecks that increased costs and labour burdens and undermined reliability. Teachers in 14 schools reported infrastructure deficits (kitchens, storage, utensils, water access) that increased labour burdens and reduced reliability of meal provision. Parents in 13 FGDs similarly highlighted the rising costs and scarcity of firewood and transport.

> *"We cook outside under a tree. When it rains, we cannot cook."* (Interview, Teacher 3, Bunda)
>
> *"Firewood used to be free… Now, the bush is bare, and we have to buy it."* (FGD, Butiama 1, Female parent participant)

Limited institutional support from local authorities was repeatedly described as a gap between rhetorical endorsement and material resourcing. Teachers in 17 schools and parents in 12 FGDs expressed frustration with limited material and technical support from district authorities, describing a gap between rhetorical endorsement and resource allocation.

> *"Praise does not feed children."* (Interview, Teacher 5, Bunda)
> *"We see those building offices and buying vehicles… Why is there no budget for feeding our children?"* (FGD, Bunda 2, Male parent participant)

Despite these constraints, teachers and parents described adaptive strategies and collective problem-solving that enabled programmes to continue, albeit often through compromise and uncertainty. Teachers and parents described adaptive practices that kept programmes functioning, including substituting staples, rotating contribution schedules, partnering with local faith organisations, and forming savings groups. These strategies were often anchored in the moral language of collective responsibility and Ujamaa-style solidarity.

> *"Even when food runs out, we sit together and find a way… We will not give up."* (FGD, Bunda 1, Female participant)

By integrating teacher interviews and parent FGDs, a consistent pattern emerges: school feeding was widely described as beneficial for attendance, punctuality, classroom engagement, and children's wellbeing, while its continuity was repeatedly characterised as fragile in the absence of stable resources. Across accounts, participants also described shared meals as reducing visible socioeconomic differences and strengthening children's sense of belonging at school. At the same time, teachers and parents emphasised different constraints: teachers most often highlighted school-level logistical and institutional challenges, whereas parents foregrounded household economic pressures and climate-related shocks. Reported experiences varied by context, with rural agrarian and fishing communities more often framing feeding as a livelihood safety net, and urban or relatively more food-secure settings more often framing it as an incentive, convenience support, and equity practice. Taken together, these results underscore high perceived value alongside persistent vulnerability shaped by local livelihood conditions, contribution capacity, and uneven institutional support.

DISCUSSION

This study explored teachers' and parents' perceptions of the effectiveness and sustainability of school feeding programmes (SFPs) in Tanzanian primary schools, with a focus on how these stakeholders engage with and make sense of such initiatives within their lived school and community contexts. The findings affirm that stakeholders do not perceive school feeding in the Mara Region as a mere welfare service or short-term intervention, but rather as a core pedagogical and community-building mechanism. Across the 20 school cases, teachers repeatedly described feeding as *associated with* improvements in children's capacity to engage in learning, highlighting improvements in attendance, concentration, participation, and classroom harmony when meals were available. Statements such as "when they eat, they listen better, even the shy ones start to talk" encapsulate how teachers directly link nutrition to academic engagement and emotional readiness. These perceptions align closely with Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (1997) assertion that teachers' involvement in promoting learning is influenced by their beliefs about effective educational practices. In this case, school meals are viewed not only as supporting cognitive performance but also as enhancing emotional regulation, cooperation, and the overall classroom climate.

Teachers' sense of efficacy, central to their professional identity, is reinforced when basic physiological needs are addressed, allowing them to fulfil their instructional roles more effectively. This echoes Bronfenbrenner's (1979) notion of the microsystem, where the immediate learning environment must support stable, responsive interactions for development to occur. When students are not distracted by hunger, they are more present, emotionally regulated, and socially engaged, contributing to a classroom culture where teaching and learning can flourish. Similar outcomes have been documented in other Tanzanian contexts. Mabula, Mkulu, and Tangi (2023) found that school feeding programmes in Misungwi District led to a marked decline in truancy and dropout while enhancing academic performance. Likewise, Daftari and Umeodum (2022) reported that female students in Morogoro Municipality participated more actively and confidently in lessons when meals were served regularly.

For parents, school feeding was perceived not just as a nutritional intervention but as a deeply moral and communal responsibility, reflecting both practical necessity and culturally grounded values. Parental narratives revealed strong emotional investment, with many describing feeding as an act of love and protection, particularly critical in a region where food insecurity is widespread. A parent's statement, "Even when we have no food at home, I know they will eat at school", highlights how SFPs alleviate household stress while also reinforcing parents' roles as caregivers and contributors to their children's futures. Within Hoover-Dempsey's model, this aligns with the construct of motivational beliefs and role construction: parents engage with school initiatives when they believe their involvement makes a difference, and when participation is consistent with their self-concept and community norms.

The concept of collective efficacy emerged strongly in this study, as parents described contributing maise, firewood, or labour not as burdensome, but as expressions of solidarity. This supports findings from Haule and Mwinami (2024), who documented similar parental involvement in Gairo District, and from Haruna and Mwakalinga (2025), who found that parent-school collaboration around feeding enhanced trust, ownership, and sustainability. These relational dynamics sit within Bronfenbrenner's mesosystem, where the quality of interaction between home and school determines the level and effectiveness of stakeholder participation. Parents reported feeling more connected to the school and more respected when their contributions were recognised, which in turn motivated continued involvement. As Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2005) assert, perceived invitations to participate, particularly from teachers, are among the strongest predictors of parental engagement. Notably, the FGD format itself made visible how such norms are collectively negotiated: parents frequently co-constructed explanations for children's changed school engagement and refined shared expectations of "fair" contribution through dialogue, consensus-building, and reference to cultural values such as Ujamaa.

However, this engagement is not unconditional. When communication breaks down or when schools fail to demonstrate transparency and appreciation, parental motivation tends to weaken. This was observed in Swilla, Seni, and Machumu (2024), where inconsistent communication in Dodoma led to disillusionment and a reduction in parental involvement. The same tension was acknowledged by participants in this study, who described greater enthusiasm for SFPs in schools that communicated openly and treated parents as partners, rather than passive donors. These dynamics underscore the fragility and importance of mesosystemic connections, which necessitate ongoing reinforcement through mutual respect, clear roles, and inclusive decision-making processes.

Despite these strong motivations and community commitment, the sustainability of school feeding programmes remains precarious due to persistent structural and contextual constraints. Both teachers and parents identified economic hardship, erratic rainfall, seasonal food shortages, inadequate infrastructure, and limited government support as major obstacles. These conditions are shaped by the exosystem and macrosystem in Bronfenbrenner's framework, which encompass local economies, agricultural systems, policy environments, and institutional support mechanisms. For example, teachers reported that when the rains failed, parents were unable to contribute, and schools were forced to suspend their feeding programs temporarily. Such disruptions were not due to apathy but to structural poverty and environmental vulnerability, conditions beyond the control of individual schools or families. Importantly, the cross-case results suggest that "sustainability" is not experienced uniformly: rural agrarian communities tended to frame risk in terms of rainfall and harvest failure, fishing communities in terms of income volatility, and urban/peri-urban communities more in terms of coordination costs and free-rider dynamics, patterns that map directly onto ecological differences in livelihood systems and local social organisation.

Similar challenges have been reported across Tanzania and the region. Athumani (2023) found that parents in Karatu District, although motivated, struggled to maintain contributions during periods of drought. Liguori et al. (2024) catalogued more than 50 implementation challenges across African countries, ranging from fuel and food procurement issues to storage constraints and inconsistent policy support. In Kisarawe, Sebba et al. (2025) observed that most schools failed to meet basic national standards for feeding due to limited resources and infrastructure, even when community support was high.

Nonetheless, what emerged powerfully from this study was a sense of local resilience and ingenuity. Faced with ongoing adversity, communities mobilised coping strategies such as rotational cooking shifts, collective fundraising, and informal task-sharing among parents. These efforts reflect what Bronfenbrenner (2006) describes as adaptive human agency, where individuals and groups act creatively within their environments to sustain key practices and behaviours. This resilience underscores that sustainability is not simply a technical challenge but also a social and moral endeavour, built upon trust, cooperation, and a shared vision for children's welfare. Roothaert et al. (2021) support this view, finding that school feeding in northern Tanzania thrived when communities were supported to take ownership through transparent management and inclusive decision-making.

Ultimately, this study illustrates that school feeding is a socially embedded practice, deeply intertwined with cultural values of care, reciprocity, and shared responsibility. Stakeholders described feeding as a form of "love for our children," highlighting its symbolic as well as practical function. This aligns with Bronfenbrenner's macrosystem, which refers to the cultural and ideological patterns that give meaning to everyday practices. In this context, feeding is not just about nutritional intake or education policy; it is about fulfilling communal obligations and preserving social cohesion. The programme becomes a vehicle through which communities enact their values and aspirations, making school feeding both a developmental tool and a moral institution.

This framing challenges technocratic and donor-centric models of school feeding that prioritise metrics and outputs without sufficiently acknowledging local meaning-making and community agency. Research from South Africa (Ndamase, 2025), Kenya (Njumwa & Solomon, 2024), and Malawi (Sulu & Matemba, 2023) similarly emphasises that sustainability depends not only on material inputs but also on whether programmes are seen as authentic, culturally consonant, and morally resonant. In Mara Region, school feeding is sustained not by mandates or external incentives alone, but by the collective conviction that feeding is integral to children's success, family dignity, and community vitality.

In synthesising these insights, the study shows that the sustainability and effectiveness of school feeding arise from the interplay of belief systems (motivation), interpersonal relations (engagement), and structural contexts (resources and policy). Teachers and parents are not passive implementers of external interventions; they are co-creators who negotiate meaning, mobilise resources, and reconstruct programmes in ways that align with their cultural logics and material realities. The integration of Hoover-Dempsey's motivational framework with Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory reveals the full complexity of this process. Together, these frameworks help explain how feeding initiatives become embedded in everyday school life, not simply as policy artefacts, but as lived, evolving, and socially constructed practices of care, education, and hope. This interpretation is strengthened by triangulation across individually elicited teacher accounts and interactionally generated parent FGDs: convergence was clearest on perceived effects for attendance/engagement and child well-being. At the same time, divergence was most apparent in how constraints were narrated (institutional/logistical emphases among teachers versus economic/climatic pressures among parents).

These findings are further validated by converging evidence across Tanzania and Sub-Saharan Africa. Multiple studies document the academic and behavioural benefits of feeding (Daftari & Umeodum, 2022; Mabula et al., 2023; Mohammed et al., 2023), the importance of community-based and culturally aligned engagement (Haruna & Mwakalinga, 2025; Haule & Mwinami, 2024), and the persistent threats posed by poverty, environmental shocks, and weak infrastructure (Liguori et al., 2024; Mainje et al., 2024; Sebba et al., 2025). Taken together, this evidence reinforces the view that sustaining school feeding requires a holistic approach, one that honours both the practical needs and the moral commitments of the communities that make such programmes possible. At a reporting level, the study therefore prioritises depth, triangulation, and cross-case variation rather than "volume" of distinct quotations proportional to headcount; the 20 FGDs function as 20 comparative cases, and the discussion interprets the patterned meanings that recur and vary across those cases.

CONCLUSION

This study explored how teachers and parents in Tanzania's Mara Region perceive the effectiveness and sustainability of school feeding programmes (SFPs), drawing on their lived experiences across 20 diverse primary schools. Anchored in Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's motivational framework and Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, the findings reveal that school feeding is perceived not simply as a nutritional intervention but as a community-embedded practice that supports children's learning, emotional well-being, and consistent school attendance.

Teachers viewed feeding programmes as critical for fostering academic engagement, concentration, and classroom harmony, particularly in contexts of poverty and food insecurity. Parents, meanwhile, saw feeding as a moral responsibility and a form of social care, deeply tied to cultural values of solidarity and collective parenting. Despite persistent challenges, including poverty, seasonal food shortages, and limited infrastructure, teachers and parents demonstrated strong commitment and adaptability, finding locally grounded strategies to sustain the programmes through shared labour, contributions, and cooperation. Ultimately, this study highlights that school feeding is not only a tool for educational access but also a catalyst for community ownership, relational trust, and moral agency. It calls for a deeper recognition of the cultural and ecological dimensions that shape local engagement with SFPs, positioning sustainability not just as a logistical issue, but as a shared social responsibility.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This study offers several practical and policy-oriented implications for enhancing the effectiveness and sustainability of school feeding programmes (SFPs) in Tanzania. At the policy level, there is a clear need to institutionalise school feeding as a core component of the national education strategy, rather than treating it as an auxiliary welfare intervention. To achieve this, the government should allocate consistent funding at both the district and national levels, ensuring long-term financial sustainability. In addition, promoting home-grown school feeding models that connect schools with local farmers can stabilise food supply chains while simultaneously boosting local agricultural economies. Policy tools such as the SABER School Feeding framework may be used to monitor programme performance, support coordination, and ensure alignment with Tanzania's broader development priorities (Assefa, 2025; Schultz et al., 2024).

From an educational practice perspective, the findings of this study underscore that school feeding is not just a logistical exercise but also a deeply relational and pedagogical activity. Teachers play a central role in sustaining these programmes, and as such, they require professional development that equips them to engage communities effectively. Training in areas such as parent engagement, communication, transparency, and participatory school governance is vital to fostering trust and shared responsibility between schools and families (Haruna & Mwakalinga, 2025). Strengthening these relational capacities can enhance parental involvement and improve the overall quality and sustainability of feeding initiatives.

The implications also extend to development partners and NGOs working in school nutrition. Rather than focusing on short-term food provision, such actors should prioritise long-term community empowerment and capacity building. This includes supporting the development of effective school committees, enhancing local governance structures, and promoting locally managed feeding systems that build on existing social capital and cultural values. When communities are actively involved in decision-making and programme implementation, as documented by Kazanskaia (2025a, 2025b) and Lema and Mwila (2022), programmes are more likely to succeed and endure beyond donor cycles. Investments in basic infrastructure, such as kitchens, food storage facilities, and monitoring mechanisms, are also crucial for reducing dependence on external aid and enhancing operational efficiency.

The study carries several implications for future research as well. It demonstrates the value of combining motivational and ecological theoretical lenses to gain a deeper understanding of how community-based education programmes function and evolve. Future studies should include the voices of children themselves to better capture their lived experiences and perceptions of school feeding. Longitudinal research is also necessary to track changes in programme impact, stakeholder engagement, and community ownership over time (Mainje et al., 2024; Roothaert et al., 2021). Moreover, expanding the scope of inquiry to include local government officials and school management committees would provide a more holistic picture of how institutional and policy environments interact with grassroots implementation practices. These research directions can inform the design of more inclusive and context-sensitive school feeding strategies across Tanzania and the broader Sub-Saharan region.

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Local Government Revenue Collection in Tanzania under the Outsourced Model: A Case of Kilosa District Council

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Abstract
This study assessed local government revenue collection in Tanzania under an outsourced model, using the Kilosa District Council as a case study. A mixed-methods approach was adopted, combining quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data were collected through a survey method assisted by a questionnaire, and qualitative data were collected through an interview method with the aid of an interview guide. Primary data were obtained from revenue collection supervisors, council officials, and taxpayers, while secondary data were drawn from official documents. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics, and qualitative data were analysed through thematic analysis. The results indicated that the adequacy of human resources affected revenue collection efficacy. Similarly, the application of modern tools enhances both the efficiency and accuracy of revenue collection, while low operational costs are also associated with improved collection efficacy. Likewise, findings identified challenges, including taxpayers' negative perceptions, resistance to paying taxes, and inadequate assessment of the resource base. The study concludes that, compared to non-outsourced models, outsourcing revenue collection in Kilosa District Council offers considerable potential for enhancing revenue generation. However, addressing operational challenges and establishing robust support mechanisms are essential to sustaining its effectiveness. The study recommends strengthening capacity-building initiatives, improving technological infrastructure, and fostering partnerships between local government and contracted agents. Thus, this study provides insights for policymakers and other local authorities in Tanzania and similar contexts, considering outsourcing as a revenue collection strategy.

Keywords: *Taxpayer, Indigenous Agent, Efficacy, Mixed Method Approach and Cost-Effectiveness*

INTRODUCTION

Local government revenue collection is critical in financing public services at the sub-national level. Globally, local governments play a pivotal role in revenue collection to enhance service delivery, infrastructure development, and economic governance (Haas,2017). In this context, local governments are increasingly outsourcing revenue collection to other entities to improve the efficiency of the revenue collection process. According to Bejleri et al (2022), effective revenue mobilisation is essential for local authorities to fulfil their mandates and promote sustainable development. However, Lukio and Mganga (2016) note that in many developing countries, local governments face persistent challenges in raising adequate revenue due to the use of manual methods of revenue collection, corruption, and limited administrative capacity. In response, an increasing number of local governments worldwide have adopted outsourcing models for revenue collection (Furgin, 2021). Outsourcing involves contracting private firms or third-party agents to collect revenue on behalf of local authorities to enhance efficiency, transparency, and accountability. Countries such as Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria, and India have employed outsourced revenue collection to strengthen local revenue mobilisation Freeman & Pallas, 2018), facilitating easier revenue collection and reducing the administrative burden on the public sector.

In Tanzania, local governments face similar challenges in optimising revenue generation and ensuring efficient and transparent collection processes. Traditional methods have often been characterised by inefficiencies, revenue leakages, and limited institutional capacity (Lukio & Mganga, 2016). To address these shortcomings, some local government authorities, including Kilosa District Council (KDC), have adopted an outsourced revenue collection model. This entails delegating revenue collection to private sector entities or third-party service providers (Salvador & Riba, 2017) to improve efficiency, transparency, and accountability by leveraging external expertise and resources.

Despite its potential, implementation of the outsourced model in Tanzanian local government authorities has faced criticism and operational challenges (Mtasigazya, 2021), including concerns about loss of control, accountability gaps, and the need for robust oversight mechanisms to ensure fairness and transparency (Abdullahi & Sallam, 2019). The involvement of non-state actors (NSAs) in public service delivery is part of a wider governance trend. NSAs, including NGOs, CBOs, CSOs, and sub-national institutions, possess operational agility, specialised expertise, and a capacity to focus on specific issues, which has made them attractive partners for governments at international, national, and local levels (NIC, 2024; Freeman & Pallas, 2018). In the context of revenue collection, local governments have contracted NSAs such as private companies, co-operatives, associations, and individuals to collect revenue. For example, since 2017, Kilosa District Council has engaged indigenous agencies for this purpose (KDC, 2019).

According to Freeman and Pallas (2018), the principles of New Public Management (NPM) emerged to radically reform public sector organisations in response to inefficiency, rising costs, and declining public trust. NPM and its associated models, including outsourcing and co-production, seek to enhance efficiency, accountability, and responsiveness in public service delivery. Co-production approach recognises that public services are increasingly delivered through collaborative arrangements involving citizens, non-profit organisations, and communities alongside public officials (Furgin, 202; Bandola,2023). The outsourcing model adopted by Kilosa District Council aligns with this approach, as the council awarded contracts to local indigenous agents to collect revenue from 2017 onwards.

The resumption of outsourcing in Kilosa District Council has raised questions about its effectiveness, challenges, and overall impact on revenue generation and governance (Lukio & Mganga, 2016). By the mid-2010s, many local government authorities in Tanzania discontinued outsourcing due to low remittances from contracted agents. Kilosa District Council ceased outsourcing in 2014 for similar reasons (KDC, 2014), and by 2015, several urban councils, including Ilala, Kinondoni, and Temeke, had followed the same trend (Mtasigazya, 2017; IMC, KMC, & TMC, 2018). However, in 2017, Kilosa District Council became the first to resume outsourcing (KDC, 2018), prompting the need to investigate the factors underlying this decision, the impact of the new approach over the five financial years from 2017–2018 to 2021–2022, and the challenges experienced.

Previous studies (Fjeldstad et al., 2009b; Ishabairu, 2013; Mtasigazya, 2017) have examined outsourcing practices, focusing on the revenue effects of outsourcing by comparing pre- and post-outsourcing performance, contrasting rural and urban councils, and assessing implications for service delivery. Other studies, like Bajari et al (2022), Manga (2023), focused on technology outsourcing and contact management and compliance outsourcing. In contrast, this study focuses on the factors sustaining the outsourcing of Local government revenue collection in Kilosa District Council after the introduction of a new model involving indigenous collectors rather than registered companies or co-operatives. This new approach contributes to the literature by highlighting how local government dynamics, community participation, and informal mechanisms influence the continuity and effectiveness of outsourcing practices.

The significance of the study lies in its potential to inform practitioners, shape policy development, and contribute to scholarly debates on local government revenue collection under outsourced models in Tanzania. Outsourcing has emerged as a strategic management tool enabling organisations globally to improve efficiency, enhance competencies, and reduce operational costs. This study aims to provide practical recommendations to improve revenue generation, strengthen transparency and accountability, and guide policymakers and local government authorities considering outsourcing as a revenue collection strategy.
Accordingly, the study was guided by three objectives

i) Determine the efficacy of revenue collection before and after the outsourced model in Kilosa district council?
ii) Assess the impact of the new outsourcing model in the Kilosa district council.
iii) Identify challenges facing local government revenue collection under the outsourced model.

The following questions guided the study:

i) To what extent does the efficiency of revenue collection differ between outsourced and non-outsourced
ii) What is the impact of the new outsourced model on the Kilosa district council?
iii) What challenges are associated with outsourced local government revenue collection in the Kilosa district?

Theoretical Framework

Outsourced Model that was integrated by Resource based-Theory informed this study. To start with, the outsourcing model gained prominence in the United States and Great Britain during the 1980s, under the political leadership of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher, respectively. It emerged as part of broader public sector reforms aimed at delegating government functions, among them revenue collection to external service providers (Katsamunska, 2012).The outsourced model states that an organisation, particularly in the public sector can improve efficiency, effectiveness, and service quality by delegating certain functions or services to external (non-government) entities through contractual arrangements, while the government retains overall policy control, regulation, and accountability. Over time, globalisation has further stimulated the adoption of outsourcing as a strategic management tool, attracting increasing scholarly and policy attention. The model rests on several assumptions: that outsourcing can enhance the effective execution of government functions; that it may increase the exposure of local governments to systemic corruption risks; that service delivery can be monitored through clearly defined performance indicators; that a sufficient number of competent service providers exist; and that outsourcing entails both economic costs and benefits, as well as political and social trade-offs (Troacă & Bodislav, 2012).

Many organisations adopt outsourcing to gain a competitive advantage, with decisions largely driven by economic considerations (Lukio & Mganga, 2016). Sarifuzzaman (2012) conceptualises these considerations as transaction cost variables, including asset specificity, uncertainty, and transaction frequency. Accordingly, outsourcing decisions must take into account factors such as machinery and tools, human capital in terms of skills and knowledge, location, and the availability of natural resources (Sarifuzzaman, 2012; Lukio & Mganga, 2016).

In the public sector, the growing use of outsourcing is closely associated with the diffusion of New Public Management (NPM) reforms (Liviga, 2011). NPM promotes the application of private-sector management principles within government, emphasising market-oriented approaches, performance measurement, privatisation, and contracting-out of services. Its core objective is to enhance efficiency by reducing costs while maintaining service quality and citizen satisfaction (Gupta & Mikouzai, 2005). Within local government revenue collection, NPM highlights several potential benefits of outsourcing, including increased revenue mobilisation, reduced corruption, lower political interference, and reduced collection costs (Alfred, 2015; Fjeldstad et al., 2009; Mtasigazya, 2018).

It is noted that there is increasing number of governments collaborate with the private sector in delivering public infrastructure and services

(World Bank, 2017). In this context, Public–Private Partnerships (PPPs) have assumed growing importance in local government revenue collection. Richard (2009) identifies key enabling conditions for effective PPPs, including transparent and competitive procurement processes, effective monitoring mechanisms, and strong supervisory frameworks. Under such arrangements, private firms assume operational responsibility for revenue collection, while local governments retain regulatory oversight, ensuring that mutual interests are formalised and safeguarded through contractual agreements.

The selection of the outsourcing model for this study is justified by the fact that the outsourcing of public sector functions, including revenue collection, has been widely promoted within governance reforms influenced by NPM principles (Liviga, 2011; Lukio & Mganga, 2016). Globally, outsourcing is commonly regarded as a mechanism for improving efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery (Sella, 1993). As a structured process, outsourcing typically comprises several stages: preparation, vendor selection, transition, relationship management, and periodic reassessment (Jørgen & Pedersen, 2007). In local government revenue collection, these stages may involve open and competitive tendering, transparent bidding processes, evaluation of bidders' human, financial, and material capacity, and the identification of revenue sources suitable for outsourcing (Fjeldstad et al., 2009).

Proponents of outsourcing further emphasise several conditions necessary for sustainability (Mtasigazya, 2018), including competitive and transparent procurement to minimise corruption risks, public disclosure of contract awards, and independent oversight by adequately resourced regulatory bodies (Richard, 2009). Technological innovations such as electronic filing and electronic payment systems are increasingly recognised as critical enablers of efficiency and transparency in revenue collection (World Bank, 2014). Additional enabling factors include effective supervision and motivation of revenue collectors, taxpayer education, and comprehensive assessments of revenue potential prior to implementation (Kimario, 2014; Mwinisongole, 2024).

In practical terms, the outsourced revenue collection model involves the delegation of collection functions to external service providers through formal contractual arrangements (Bovaird & Loeffler, 2012; Menberu, 2021). These providers may be responsible for taxpayer registration, billing, payment processing, enforcement, and record-keeping, often supported by technology-driven systems designed to improve transparency and efficiency (Mabonesho, 2022). The anticipated benefits include enhanced revenue performance, improved taxpayer compliance, increased accountability, and reduced administrative burdens for local authorities (Hinson & Kuada, 2015).

Despite these advantages, the outsourced model faces several challenges, including loss of control, hidden costs, excessive dependence on external vendors, and limited contractual flexibility. Effective implementation therefore, requires careful provider selection, strong governance and oversight mechanisms, data security safeguards, and sensitivity to public perceptions (Mabonesho, 2022). These challenges can significantly undermine the effectiveness of outsourced revenue collection. Inadequate revenue potential assessments and political interference may result in unrealistically high bids and the appointment of unqualified agents. For instance, in Mwanza City Council, such shortcomings led to lower revenues from outsourced markets compared to in-house collection (Fjeldstad et al., 2008). Moreover, instances of corruption in outsourced revenue collection have been documented in several developing countries, including Nigeria, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Uganda (Haas, 2017). Consequently, performance monitoring should be continuous, incorporating clear metrics, contractual compliance checks, and regular evaluations supported by structured feedback mechanisms between local governments and service providers (Salvador & Riba, 2017).

Outsourcing is preferred among other models in local government revenue collection because it offers practical solutions to common weaknesses in revenue collection faced by local authorities, especially in developing countries such as Tanzania. Outsourcing allows local government authorizes to engage private firms with specialized expertise**,** advanced technology, and managerial skills to faster revenue collection, reduced leakages, improve accuracy in billing and enforcement.

While the outsourced model provides opportunities for broader stakeholder participation in local governance, it does not sufficiently explain vendor characteristics, particularly in relation to capacity and resource endowment. To address this limitation, the study integrates the Resource-Based Theory with the outsourcing model. Resource-Based Theory posits that organisational performance is determined by the tangible and intangible resources an organisation controls and effectively utilises. In this study, the relevant resources include human and physical resources. Nalukenge et al. (2024) define resources to encompass assets, shared knowledge, employee competencies, and capital equipment, all of which can constitute sources of superior performance. Accordingly, the theory suggests that improved service delivery specifically revenue collection depends on the effective utilisation of skilled personnel, competent contracted agents, information technology systems, and modern equipment such as point-of-sale devices. Local government authorities are therefore expected to mobilise and deploy these resources, either internally or through contracted agents, in order to achieve desired performance outcomes. By integrating the outsourcing model with Resource-Based Theory, the study adopts a more comprehensive analytical framework, enabling a deeper understanding of how stakeholders can perform more efficiently when adequately equipped with critical resources, thereby enhancing revenue collection efficiency in local government authorities.

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted in Kilosa District Council, Morogoro Region, Tanzania. The council was selected due to its sustained use of outsourcing in revenue collection beyond 2015, when the selection decision was made in 2017. Additional selection criteria included a minimum of ten years of operational experience (2008–2021) and demonstrable engagement in outsourced revenue collection (KDC, 2022).

A mixed-methods approach was adopted, integrating quantitative and qualitative techniques supported by a documentary review. A cross-sectional research design was employed to facilitate data collection at a single point in time (Zheng, 2015). Multistage sampling techniques were used to select the study areas and respondents. Out of 40 wards in Kilosa District Council, four wards, Dumila, Rudewa, Msolwa, and Msowero, were purposively selected due to the presence of revenue-generating activities under study, specifically auction markets and parking areas. From these wards, 8 villages were selected to ensure representation of taxpayers involved in crop cess payments, predominantly farmers. These included Dodoma, Isanga, and Chabima villages in Msanze Ward; Rudewa Batini and Rudewa Gongoni villages in Rudewa Ward; Kwambe and Mkundi villages in Dumila Ward; and Msowero and Mkobwe villages in Msowero Ward.

As noted by Best and Khan (2006), a sample represents a small portion of a population selected for observation and analysis. The target population for this study comprised 5,796 registered taxpayers (KDC, 2020), selected purposively from the four wards and the 8 villages including farmers, drivers, livestock keepers, guesthouse owners, bus owners, and market traders.

Using the Yamane formula, a sample size of 197 respondents was determined from the known and fixed population of 5,796 taxpayers, based on records obtained from the revenue registry at Kilosa District Council (KDC, 2022). Primary data were collected through questionnaires and interviews. Of the questionnaires administered, 37 were found to be unusable, resulting in 160 valid responses, representing a response rate of 81.2 per cent. This response rate is considered high and adequate for reliable analysis (Dillman & Christian, 2014). The questionnaire focused on human resource adequacy, cost-effectiveness, utilisation of modern tools, and challenges associated with outsourcing.

Additionally, nineteen key informants comprising eleven council officials and eight revenue supervisors were purposively selected based on their skills and knowledge on revenue collection procedures. Semi-structured interviews, guided by an interview schedule, were conducted to explore the effectiveness of outsourced revenue collection. Secondary data were sourced from the Controller and Auditor General (CAG) reports, the President's Office, the Regional Administration and Local Government (PO-RALG) documents, and Kilosa District Council revenue reports covering the period 2017–2022.

Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistical technique to allow for a comprehensive understanding of the study findings. The study variables were measured using three levels of responses, namely Yes, No, and Do not know, for human resource and application of modern tools, and high and low levels for cost effectiveness which enabled the capture of both definite positions and areas of uncertainty among respondents. Frequencies and percentages were generated using SPSS version 23 to summarise response patterns and to describe the distribution of views across the study sample. The results were presented in tables and figures to enhance clarity and facilitate comparison across the three variables.

Beyond simple description, the generated frequencies and percentages provided insights into prevailing trends, levels of awareness, and the degree of consensus or divergence among respondents. High proportions of Yes responses were interpreted as indicators of widespread agreement or positive affirmation of the efficacy of local revenue collection, while dominant No responses suggested resistance, non-adoption, or negative perceptions. The Do not know responses were particularly useful in reflecting gaps in knowledge, limited exposure, or inadequate dissemination of information related to the outsourcing practice, thereby highlighting areas requiring policy attention or capacity building.

Qualitative data were analysed thematically using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step framework, comprising data familiarisation, generation of initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report. In addition, a deductive approach was employed in analysing key informant responses, guided by the framework proposed by White and Marsh (2014).

Validity, reliability, and trustworthiness were ensured through multiple methodological strategies. Validity was enhanced through rigorous and transparent data collection procedures that captured in-depth and comprehensive information from the target participants. Triangulation of data sources questionnaires, interviews, and documentary review was employed to cross-validate findings and improve accuracy. As noted by Cohen et al. (2000), careful sampling procedures, appropriate research instruments, and robust statistical analysis contribute significantly to validity. Furthermore, the questionnaire and interview guides were reviewed by two subject-matter experts a statistician and an anthropologist to ensure methodological soundness and content relevance. Their feedback informed iterative revisions to the research instruments.

Reliability was addressed through pre-testing of the data collection tools with a small group of participants. Five respondents were administered the questionnaire two weeks prior to the main data collection exercise; these individuals were excluded from the final sample. Insights gained from the pilot study enabled the researcher to refine question wording, improve clarity, and enhance the overall data collection process. Clear and unambiguous questions, pre-testing for comprehension, and alignment with the study objectives helped minimise response variability and strengthened internal consistency (Zombo & Chan, 2014).

Trustworthiness in the qualitative component was reinforced through the application of credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability criteria. These were operationalised through techniques such as member checking, maintenance of an audit trail, and the provision of rich and contextualised descriptions of the study setting and findings. Ethical considerations were strictly observed throughout the study: informed consent was obtained from all participants, anonymity and confidentiality were maintained, and data collection adhered to established ethical standards.

RESULTS

This paper assesses local government revenue collection in Tanzania, with a particular focus on the Kilosa District Council. It investigates the council's revenue collection system within the framework of the outsourcing model. The study aims to provide insights into the efficacy of revenue collection through the outsourced model in Kilosa district council, that is, the revenue collection system before and after the adoption of outsourcing, and assess the impact of the new outsourcing model in the Kilosa district council, finally, the study identified challenges facing local government revenue collection under the outsourced model.

The findings, obtained through questionnaires, interviews, and documentary reviews, analysed through descriptive statistics, are presented and discussed in line with the study objectives.

Efficacy of Revenue Collection through the Outsourced Model in Kilosa District Council (KDC)

Pre-outsourced local government revenue collection

Before the adoption of outsourcing, revenue collection in Kilosa District was unsatisfactory. During this period, the council relied solely on its own employees, employing manual tools such as ledgers, notebooks, and taxpayer lists. Estimates and receipts were prepared manually (KDC, 2015). For the pre-outsourcing period, the analysis considers revenue collection practices during the 2015/2016 financial year, one year before the introduction of outsourcing. The data illustrating the pre-outsourcing practices in Kilosa District Council are presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Revenue Contribution before Outsourcing Practice, 2015/2016

Revenue Source	Projected Revenue (TZS)	Collected Revenue (TZS)	Performance (%)
Business License Fee	330,005,103	171,125,098	51.86%
Hotel and Guest House Levy	-	-	-
Market Fee	16,000,000	3,707,800	23.17%
Parking Fee	-	-	-
Bus Stand Fee	90,240,000	5,200,000	5.76%
Billboard Fee	3,315,571	631,000	19.03%

Source: KIlosa District Council, 2015

In the 2015/2016 financial year, the council relied on its own employees for revenue collection. Of the six sources examined, revenue was collected from four, while two, the guesthouse levy and parking fee, were not collected at all. The data further indicate that collections from the market fee, parking fee, and bus stand fee, and billboards fell significantly below the estimates, as shown in Table 1. Consequently, the council adopted an outsourcing arrangement with different tax collectors from the 2017 financial year onwards.

Council officials and revenue collection supervisors were asked to assess the overall contribution of pre-outsourced revenue collection to Kilosa District Council's own-source revenue in 2015/2016, and to rate its performance. The responses indicated that revenue contribution under the pre-outsourcing model was generally average; notably, no respondent rated the contribution as excellent. These findings suggest that the pre-outsourced revenue collection system was underperforming.

Empirical evidence supports the view that outsourcing can improve revenue collection performance. For example, Zubairu et al. (2016) found that the use of private firms in revenue collection, whether under partial or full outsourcing, produced a significant positive difference in comparison with State Board of Internal Revenue collections. This implies that outsourced revenue collection tends to be more efficient than non-outsourced arrangements.

Post-outsourced local government revenue collection

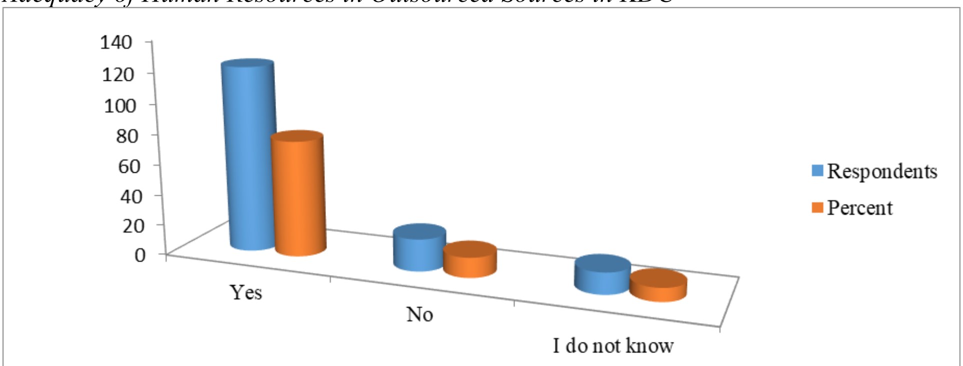
In the post-outsourcing period, the assessment focuses on the adequacy of human resources, cost-effectiveness, and the application of modern tools in revenue collection to evaluate the efficacy of the model. Proponents of outsourcing contend that the practice offers several advantages for local government revenue collection, including cost savings, access to adequate and skilled human resources (revenue collectors), and the utilisation of efficient and modern revenue collection tools (Haas, 2017; Abdulkader, 2016; Zubairu et al., 2016; Bucki, 2017). Accordingly, the efficacy of outsourced revenue collection in Kilosa District Council was assessed using selected indicators such as human resources, modern tools, and cost effectiveness, which are presented and analysed in the following sub-sections.

Human resources in outsourced local government revenue collection

In determining the efficacy of revenue collection through the outsourced model, the study sought to find whether the number of revenue collectors from outsourced sources in Kilosa District Council was adequate. In this context, adequacy of human resources refers to having a sufficient number of revenue collectors to effectively manage all assigned revenue sources. Revenue collectors from outsourced sources included personnel employed by private firms or individual agents contracted by the council. Respondents were asked to indicate their experience regarding the availability and adequacy of these human resources between 2017 and 2022. Figure 1 summaries the responses.

Figure 1

Adequacy of Human Resources in Outsourced Sources in KDC



Source: Field Data 2022

The findings presented in Figure 1 indicate that the majority of respondents considered outsourced sources to have adequate human resources, enabling effective revenue collection from assigned sources. Specifically, 122 respondents out of 160 (76.3%) reported that private collectors had sufficient human resources, 21 respondents (13.1%) indicated that resources were inadequate, and 14 respondents (8.7%)

stated that they were unsure. The question posed was: Do outsourced sources have adequate human resources to effectively collect revenue from the sources assigned to them?

In addition, contracted agents were interviewed to provide their views on the adequacy of privately hired human resources. A total of 24 private collectors, operating across four wards and eight selected villages, were interviewed. Of these, 18 (75%) indicated that outsourced sources appeared to have sufficient human resources capable of effectively collecting revenue.

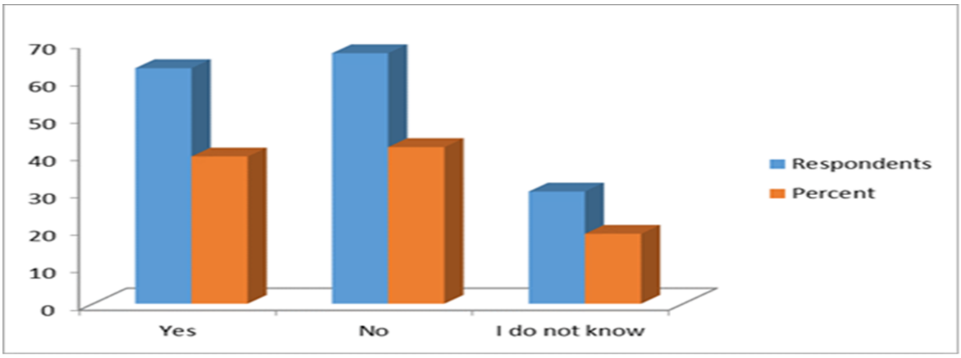
These findings indicate that, under the outsourced model, human resources were sufficient to support effective revenue collection. The results align with previous studies, such as Opoku et al. (2014), Mwenisongole (2013), and Green (2000). For instance, Opoku et al. (2014) observed that private firms in Kumasi, Ghana, had greater human resource capacity than local government authorities. Similarly, Mwenisongole (2013) identified the shortage of human resources as a key factor driving the outsourcing of local government revenue collection (LGRC), while Green (2000) highlighted the lack of internal human resources as a common reason for outsourcing revenue collection in various local councils.

Application of efficient and modern tools in outsourced local government revenue collection

The application of efficient and modern tools was assessed by examining the availability of devices, such as POS machines, and the capacity to integrate these electronic collection tools with the Local Government Revenue Collection Information System (LGRCIS). Efficacy was evaluated by comparing the use of such modern tools against non-digital methods, such as manual receipt books. Effective revenue collection is highly dependent on the utilisation of efficient and modern tools.

The Government of Tanzania has increasingly emphasised the adoption of modern tools in local government revenue collection through the introduction of LGRCIS (PMO-RALG, 2015; PO-RALG, 2016; CAG, 2017). Currently, POS machines are prioritised as a key tool for LGRC. For example, letter number ED/151/297/01/92 of 14 June 2016 from PO-RALG mandated that all local government authorities in Tanzania employ POS machines for revenue collection and provide electronic receipts. This initiative aimed to ensure that all revenue transactions could be monitored directly via the council dashboard (CAG, 2019; PO-RALG, 2016). Figure 2 presents respondents' feedback on the application of modern tools in outsourced local government revenue collection.

Figure 2
Application of Modern Tools in Outsourced LGRC in KDC



Source: Field Data

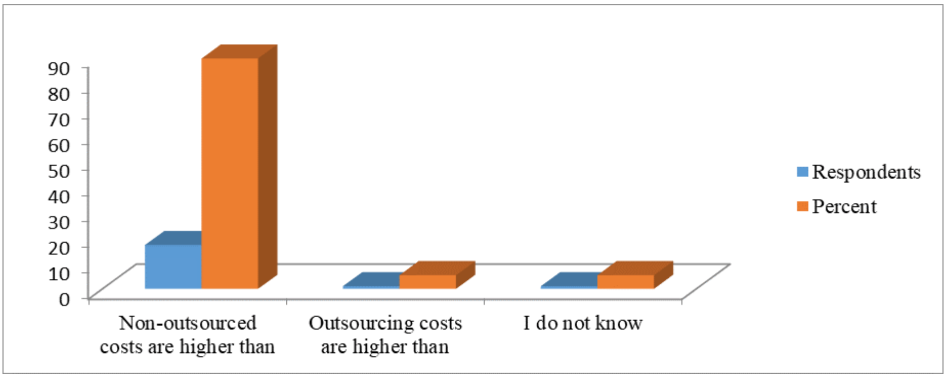
The findings presented in Figure 2 indicate that the level of application of modern tools was moderate. Of the respondents, 63 (39.4%) reported substantial use of efficient and modern tools, such as POS machines; 67 (41.9%) indicated limited application; and 30 (18.7%) were unsure. This suggests that the adoption of modern technologies, including electronic payment systems and digital databases, enhances both the efficiency and accuracy of revenue collection.

Conversely, the absence of modern tools reduces performance in local revenue collection. These results are consistent with prior studies on electronic payment implementation. For example, Ndekwa et al. (2022) observed that the adoption of e-payment systems across public institutions led to increased revenue, reduced costs, enhanced transparency, and strengthened trust, thereby minimising leakages and substantially improving local government revenue collection.

Cost-effectiveness in local government revenue collection

The literature suggests that outsourced revenue collection can lead to cost savings, as it reduces administrative expenses for local government authorities by transferring revenue collection responsibilities to the private sector rather than relying on council employees (Abdulkader, 2016). In this part of the study, council officials and revenue collection supervisors were interviewed to compare the costs associated with outsourcing LGRC, such as tender advertisement and evaluation, contract monitoring and design, and enforcement, with the costs incurred by the council in non-outsourced revenue collection, including operational and travel expenses. A total of 19 respondents provided input, and their responses are summarised in Figure 3.

Figure 3
Expenses Incurred between Outsourced and Non-outsourced LGRC



Source: Field Data

The data in Figure 3 indicate that the majority of respondents (17; 89.4%) reported that the costs of collecting non-outsourced revenue were higher than those incurred through outsourced LGRC. One respondent (5.3%) stated that outsourcing costs exceeded those of non-outsourced revenue collection, while one respondent (5.3%) indicated uncertainty. When asked to elaborate, most respondents noted that the new outsourcing system introduced in the 2017/18 financial year had substantially reduced operational expenses. The respondent who reported higher outsourcing costs clarified that these referred to the previous system involving registered companies, rather than the current model.

These findings suggest that cost-effectiveness was more readily achieved under the outsourced model compared to non-outsourced revenue collection. Similar results have been reported in studies of Kinondoni, Morogoro, and Tanga Municipal Councils, where outsourcing property tax and guesthouse levy collection reduced costs, as tendering expenses were lower than salaries and stationery costs for council-employed collectors (Mtasigazya, 2018). However, Fjeldstad et al. (2008) caution that, despite improvements in revenue collection, challenges such as agent non-compliance, corruption, excessive profit extraction by private collectors, and inadequate assessment of revenue potential may limit the overall effectiveness of outsourcing.

The Impact of the New Model of Outsourcing in KDC

This objective sought to examine the factors that prompted Kilosa District Council to resume the outsourcing of revenue collection in 2017, following a two-year suspension. The study also aimed to identify the innovations introduced in the newly adopted model. The focus was on comparing the former and current outsourcing models, particularly in terms of the level of revenue contribution achieved under the new system over the five years studied.

Factors that motivated the Kilosa District Council to resume outsourcing of local government revenue collection in 2017.

Council officials and revenue collection supervisors were interviewed to identify the factors that motivated Kilosa District Council to resume outsourcing in 2017. Sixteen out of nineteen respondents emphasised that, following the increasing trend of contract terminations observed in 2015, KDC began considering an alternative outsourcing system. One official noted, "For the two years, 2015 and 2016, KDC was in transition from the former system of outsourcing, which relied on registered companies, cooperatives, and associations, to the new system that employs indigenous agents, individually hired and supervised by VEOs and WEOs on behalf of the council" (Interview, February 2023).

The rationale for adopting the new system was that indigenous agents, being residents of the respective localities, possess in-depth knowledge of the value of the revenue sources, the number and type of taxpayers, and their locations. Additionally, these agents are familiar with the strategies of non-compliant taxpayers, particularly those liable for crop and livestock cesses, which constitute the council's major sources of revenue.
Interviewees were further asked to compare the effectiveness of the former and current outsourcing models. Sixteen out of nineteen respondents indicated that the new system was superior and had demonstrated promising results relative to the previous model. Key informants highlighted that the former system faced considerable challenges, notably because single contracted agents (companies) were unable to provide close supervision and follow-up for revenue collectors operating across KDC.

Revenue contribution of outsourced sources to the council's revenue

Data on the annual revenue collected following the reinstatement of the new outsourced model in Kilosa District Council were obtained from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were collected from taxpayers, council officials, and revenue collection supervisors to substantiate the findings. Secondary data were sourced through a documentary review of annual financial reports.

With regard to primary data, taxpayers were asked to indicate the mode of revenue collection, outsourced or non-outsourced and the sources through which they had most frequently paid taxes between 2017 and 2022. The objective was to identify the number and type of taxpayers regularly using outsourced channels, as well as to determine their contribution to the council's revenue. Table 3 presents the responses of the participants.

Table 3
Revenue Contribution of Outsourced Sources from 2017-2022

Year	Sources	Estimates (TZS)	Actual Collections (TZS)	Per cent
2017/2018	Crop cess	1,487,056,028	1,682,541,309	113
	Parking fee	30,120,000	74,384,204.81	247
	Bus stand fee	33,099,995	61,565,585.81	186
	Market fee	57,263,000	44,796,700	78
	Open/Auction market fee	33,612,000	48,917,550	146
2018/2019	Crop cess	2,050,563,400	871,748,812	43
	Parking fee	30,120,000	50,617,320	168
	Bus stand fee	15,000,000	35,964,540	240
	Guest house levy	50,000,000	95,396,874	191
	Open/Auction market fee	30,000,000	84,976,625	283
2019/2020	Crop cess	2,201,082,244	1,274,722,334	58
	Parking fee	90,000,000	46,643,300	52
	Bus stand fee	40,000,000	49,893,460	125
	Guest house levy	77,175,052	138,643,511	180
	Open/Auction market fee	37,320,684	40,180,900	108
2020/2021	Crop cess	2,000,000,000	1,117,304,748	56

Year	Sources	Estimates (TZS)	Actual Collections (TZS)	Per cent
	Parking fee	52,920,000	55,451,400	105
	Livestock cess	62,520,000	64,360,180	103
	Guest house levy	111,384,000	146,225,025	131
	Open/Auction market fee	12,588,000	16,789,500	133
2021/2022	Crop cess	1,996,614,705.66	1,530,412,457.46	77
	Parking fee	53,126,558.99	56,004,500	105.42
	Livestock cess	12,637,229.02	20,015,500	158
	Guest house levy	111,819,599.40	174,822,330	156
	Open/Auction market fee	62,764,502.57	63,016,420	100

Source: Kilosa District Council 2017 /18-2021/22

As noted, in the 2017/18 financial year, Kilosa District Council adopted the new outsourcing system, which employs individual agents who are directly supervised by Ward Executive Officers (WEOs) and Village Executive Officers (VEOs) on behalf of the council. The data presented in Table 3 indicate that the collecting agents demonstrated remarkable performance from the outset. Except for market fees, revenue collections from the other four outsourced sources exceeded the projected estimates. Specifically, revenue from crop cesses surpassed estimates by 13%, parking fees by 147%, bus stand fees by 86%, and open and auction market fees by 46%.

High performance in revenue collection was sustained across most sources in the subsequent four years. However, collections from crop cesses the principal source of income for Kilosa District Council, were consistently below estimates in the last four years under study (2018/19 to 2021/22), with shortfalls of 43%, 58%, 56%, and 77%, respectively. The decline in crop cesses during this period was attributed to insufficient supervision and follow-up, resulting from a shortage of transport facilities, such as motorcycles, for revenue collection supervisors and collectors. It should be noted that crop cesses represent dispersed sources of income across Kilosa District, presenting numerous opportunities for taxpayer non-compliance.

Challenges Facing Local Government Revenue Collection under the Outsourced Model in Kilosa District Council

Studies have identified several challenges associated with the inefficient implementation of outsourced local government revenue collection in many councils across Tanzania. Research by Mtasigazya (2017), Ishabairu (2013), and Fjeldstad et al. (2009) highlights issues such as political interference and corruption. Consequently, numerous councils had discontinued outsourcing practices by 2015. However, Kilosa District Council resumed outsourcing in 2017, following a two-year suspension in several revenue streams, with the exception of crop cesses and open market fees.

This section analyses the challenges confronting outsourcing in Kilosa District Council. The challenges identified are presented, examined, and discussed based on data collected from respondents and corroborated through documentary evidence

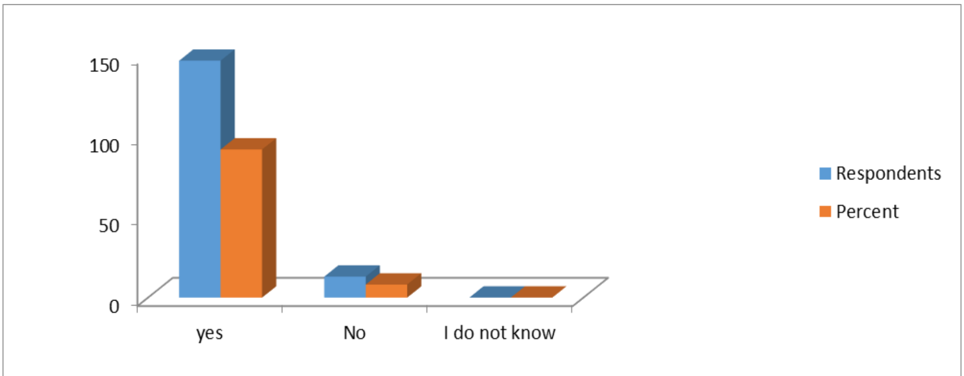
Challenges related to the application of the Local Government Revenue Collection Information System (LGRCIS) and Point of Sales Machines (POS)

Respondents were asked about the challenges experienced in using LGRCIS and POS machines within the outsourced revenue collection system in Kilosa District Council. The challenges cited included incomplete transactions when generating receipts and the failure to print payment receipts. Additional issues reported were the printing of duplicate payments, receipts displayed in a foreign language (e.g., Chinese), and receipts reflecting incorrect payment amounts. For instance, a payment of TZS 10,000 was occasionally recorded incorrectly as TZS 100,000 due to an extra digit being added by the device.

Taxpayers' perception of the importance of tax

Figure 4 shows that the majority of respondents, 147 out of 160 taxpayers (91.9%), indicated that they were aware of the importance of paying taxes. Conversely, 13 respondents (8.1%) reported that they were not aware of the significance of taxation. These findings suggest a high level of taxpayer awareness in Kilosa District Council, which is likely to enhance compliance and willingness to pay. For example, Mwenisongole (2013) argues that increasing revenue collection through outsourcing requires educating taxpayers on the importance of tax payment, alongside maintaining an up-to-date taxpayer database.

Figure 4
Responses on the Importance of Tax



Source: Field Data

Furthermore, the study examined the extent of educational sensitisation received by taxpayers. It was posited that taxpayers' awareness of the importance of taxation and their compliance could be linked to the educational interventions provided. Consequently, respondents were asked whether they had ever received guidance on the significance of paying taxes. Table 4 presents the responses of the participants.

Table 4
Responses on Educational Sensitization on the Importance of Paying Tax

Response	Frequency	Percent (%
Yes	87	54.4
No	73	45.6
Total	160	100

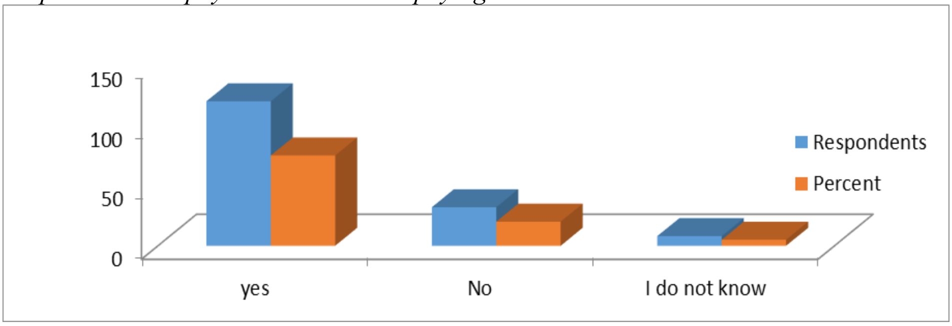
Source: Field data, 2021

Table 4 shows that the majority of respondents, 87 (54.4%), reported having received educational sensitisation on the importance of paying taxes, whereas 73 respondents (45.6%) indicated that they had never received such education. Among the farmers (n = 80) and livestock keepers (n = 20), 48 farmers (60%) and 14 livestock keepers (70%) stated that they had not received any educational sensitisation. This suggests that educational efforts were more frequently directed towards taxpayers located in or near the town centre, such as traders and hotel or guesthouse owners. However, in Kilosa District Council, farmers represent the largest group of taxpayers, as agricultural activities account for approximately 88% of economic activity and significantly contribute to the council's revenue through tax payments (KDC, 2018).

Taxpayers' Resistance to Paying Tax

The study sought to determine whether the outsourcing model had contributed to reducing taxpayers' resistance to paying taxes in Kilosa District Council. Existing literature emphasises the critical role of taxpayers in revenue collection and identifies factors that may either mitigate or intensify their reluctance to comply. A principal factor in reducing taxpayers' resistance is the cultivation of a positive and cooperative relationship between taxpayers and revenue collectors (LARAM, 2019; Kimario, 2014). Figure 5 illustrates respondents' perceptions concerning the occurrence of resistance to tax payment.

Figure 5
Responses on taxpayers' resistance to paying tax in Kilosa District Council



Source: Field Data

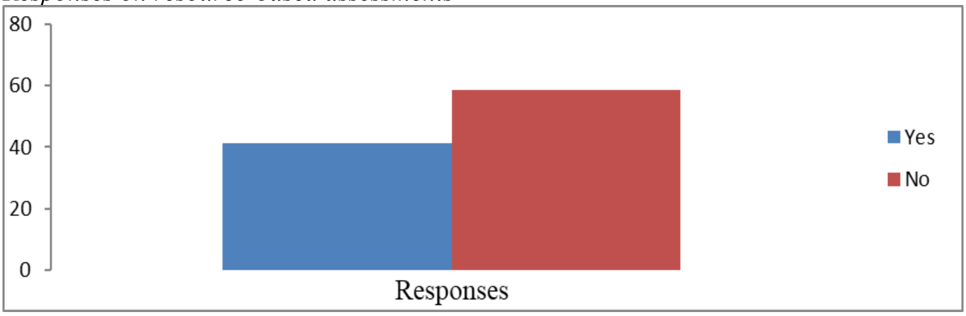
Figure 5 shows that 120 (75%) of the 160 respondents believed that taxpayers' resistance had been reduced through the outsourcing of local government revenue collection in Kilosa District Council, while 32 respondents (20%) indicated that it had not, and 8 respondents (5%) stated that they did not know.

Two key observations emerge from these responses. First, the majority of respondents emphasised that outsourcing had reduced, rather than entirely prevented, taxpayers' resistance to paying taxes. Second, a distinction was noted between the two phases of outsourcing. The first phase demonstrated a moderate reduction in resistance, whereas the second phase, which commenced in the 2017–2018 financial year, showed more pronounced improvements. For example, a revenue collection supervisor at the village level noted that under the new system, the relationship between taxpayers and collecting agents had improved. This improvement was attributed to the fact that many collecting agents are residents of the areas where they operate, and thus familiar with the taxpayers, fostering trust and cooperation.

Weak resource base assessment

According to the Presidential Guidelines for Outsourcing Revenue to Collecting Agents (2016) and Circular No. 16 for Local Councils and Collecting Agents (2016), local government authorities (LGAs) are required to conduct comprehensive feasibility studies or resource-based assessments prior to outsourcing revenue collection (PO-RALG, 2016). In this study, taxpayers were asked whether tax officials had assessed their businesses before outsourcing. Figure 6 presents the responses of the participants.

Figure 6
Responses on resource-based assessments



Source: Field Data, 2023

Figure 6 indicates that the majority of respondents, 94 (58.75%), reported that tax evaluators had not assessed their businesses. This group included 73 farmers (91.25%), six lorry drivers (60%), 11 livestock keepers (55%), and four market sellers (25%). Conversely, 66 respondents (41.25%) indicated that their businesses had been assessed, suggesting that feasibility studies had been conducted for these enterprises. This group comprised seven farmers (8.75%), 20 licensed traders (100%), 10 hotel and guesthouse owners (100%), nine livestock keepers (45%), 12 market sellers (75%), four lorry drivers (40%), and four bus company owners (100%).

The findings suggest that feasibility studies were largely conducted for trade-related businesses, such as licensed traders, hotels, guesthouses, and transport companies, where assessments were carried out fully (100%). Farmers, who constituted the largest group of taxpayers in KDC (80 respondents, 50%), were the most affected by the lack of assessments, with only seven large-scale farmers evaluated. Smaller-scale farmers were largely excluded from the feasibility studies, as their plots were considered minor. Overall, the results indicate that feasibility studies were not adequately conducted for the majority of sources outsourced to private collectors.

These findings align with those of Kimario (2014), who asserts that one of the primary challenges facing privatised revenue collection in LGAs is the inadequate assessment of revenue potential across different tax bases. Kimario notes that such assessments are often conducted on an ad hoc basis, typically relying on historical revenue collection reports rather than systematic evaluation.

DISCUSSION

The study examined outsourced local government revenue collection in Tanzania, using Kilosa District Council as a case. It analysed the meaning and implications of the findings, their relationship to existing literature, and their support for the study's conclusions.

The results showed that the council lacked sufficient internal human resources to manage non-outsourced revenue effectively, unlike private collectors handling outsourced sources. This justified continued outsourcing and aligned with resource-based arguments that inadequate internal capacity can prompt outsourcing to enhance efficiency. The findings underscore the need for councils to balance outsourcing with efforts to strengthen internal capacity through recruitment, training, and retention.

The study further revealed minimal differences in the use of modern technological tools between outsourced and non-outsourced systems. This contradicts New Public Management assumptions that outsourcing automatically enhances technological adoption. For instance, scholars of the New Public Management (NPM) contend that one of the benefits of outsourcing is the application of advanced technology in Local Government Revenue Collection (Haas, 2017). Both systems were constrained by limited information and communication technology capacity, suggesting the need for deliberate investment in digital infrastructure, staff information and communication technology competence, and consistent technological standards.

Regarding cost-effectiveness, outsourcing through companies and associations proved inefficient, leading to frequent contract terminations. From time to time, these companies were not doing well in terms of the amount of revenue remitted to the council. As a result, there were frequent terminations and changes to the contracts of outsourcing, and by 2014, all contracts of outsourcing were stopped, except contracts in crop cesses and in auction market fees (KDC, 2018). A new model introduced in 2017–18, using individually contracted agents supervised by Ward and Village Executive Officers, improved oversight and cost-effectiveness, supporting co-production arguments. This model also reduced opportunities for tax evasion and improved revenue performance, particularly for guesthouse levies, although crop cess revenues remained hampered by weak supervision and inadequate transport.

Results on the impact of the new model of outsourcing in Kilosa District Council revealed that there were many easier ways of escaping paying tax for unloyal tax defaulters. Now the situation is quite different with the new model because the collecting agent works in a small area, for example, a village, and it becomes easier for him or her to identify and control some loopholes that can be used by tax defaulters.

In respect of revenue, the contribution of outsourced sources to the council's own revenue it was depicted that the new model that was adopted by Kilosa District Council in 2017 has brought about positive changes in revenue collection when compared to the former system of outsourcing. This is depicted in the increase in revenues remitted from most sources that were collected for five years.

The study identified persistent challenges linked to Local Government Revenue Collection Information Systems and Point of Sales (POS) machines taxpayer perceptions, resistance to paying tax, and weak assessment of revenue potential. Many LGAs lacked feasibility studies before outsourcing, resulting in inaccurate revenue projections. The findings tally with those of the CAG report (2018). The report stipulates that in some Local Government Authorities, there were no records to justify that feasibility studies were conducted before the outsourcing of revenue to collecting agents. What was noted was that most Local Government Authorities relied on budget guidelines from 2015 and used previous performance to project the revenues of various sources without conducting feasibility studies (CAG, 2018). Kimario (2014) contends that this situation may result in an underestimation of the revenue potential of the outsourced sources. Thus, strengthening technical capacity for systematic resource assessment is therefore essential.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the research conducted on local government revenue collection in Tanzania under the outsourced model, specifically focusing on the case of Kilosa District Council, the study concludes that outsourcing revenue collection in Kilosa District Council has shown some positive outcomes. It has improved revenue mobilisation and enhanced the efficiency of revenue collection processes. The outsourced model in combination with resource-based theory has helped to reduce corruption and improve transparency in revenue collection by introducing third-party accountability. The revenue collection agents have brought in specialised expertise and technologies, which have positively affected the overall revenue generation for the council. However, some challenges still hinder the revenue collection process and its outcomes, including taxpayer resistance, a weak resource base assessment and the lack of modern tools in outsourced revenue collection. The study suggests that Kilosa District Council needs to establish a robust supervision and follow-up, as well as adequate transport facilities for revenue collection supervisors and collecting agents. The council needs to invest in capacity-building programmes for its staff to enhance their skills and knowledge in the application of new technology, such as POS and Local Government Revenue Collection Information System (LGRCIS), in revenue collection. The council needs engage in public awareness campaigns to educate citizens about the importance of paying taxes and the benefits it brings to the community. Thus, the Kilosa District Council, with an outsourced model with adequate human and physical resource, can further enhance its revenue collection efforts, leading to increased revenue generation, improved service delivery, and overall socio-economic development in the district.

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Examining Service Quality Dimensions and Customer Satisfaction Interplay in the Retail Banking Sector: An Emerging Economy Perspective

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Abstract
This study assesses the relationship between service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction. Specifically, the study aimed to determine the influence of reliability, tangibility, responsiveness, service assurance, and empathy on customer satisfaction with retail banking services. A cross-sectional research design was adopted. Questionnaires were used to collect data from 289 respondents, and the data were analysed using ordinal logistic regression. Findings indicate that customers are satisfied with the overall quality of services rendered by the retail banking sector. Findings further reveal that reliability, tangibility, assurance, responsiveness and empathy positively influence customer satisfaction. The findings highlight the importance of service quality dimensions in shaping customer perceptions and satisfaction in the banking sector, and identify areas for development to improve overall service delivery and the customer experience. The study's findings are particularly relevant in emerging economies, where competition is intensifying, and customer expectations are evolving. Findings suggest that Banks that prioritise these dimensions can foster stronger customer loyalty, quality service delivery, greater financial performance and sustainable growth. This study contributes to the body of knowledge by addressing a critical research gap in the Tanzanian retail banking sector, particularly regarding the relationship between service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction. Unlike previous studies that examined conventional banking services, this study emphasises the unique dynamics of retail banking, catering to a large unbanked population in the country. By providing insights into specific service quality factors, the study equips Tanzanian banks with actionable strategies to enhance customer experiences and drive financial inclusion in an evolving economic landscape.

Keywords: *Service Quality Dimensions, Customer Satisfaction, Retail Banking Sector, Tanzania*

INTRODUCTION

To flourish in the future, businesses need to prioritise their customers (Mandlik et al., 2025; Howat et al., 2018). Managers should therefore learn to identify the gaps between consumer expectations and perceptions (Chiguvi et al., 2025). This comprehension is critical for developing effective service practices and standards that can enhance customer experiences (Awan et al., 2019). In the financial landscape, commercial banks play a vital role in ensuring the smooth operation of the economy (Bozic and Bozic, 2025; Sharma et al., 2024). In a fiercely competitive business environment, service quality attributes (i.e., reliability, tangibility, responsiveness, empathy, and assurance) contribute substantially to customer satisfaction (Ezekiel et al., 2024; Ifedi et al., 2024; Raza et al., 2018). These quintet dimensions are instrumental in improving banks' performance, expanding market share, and profitability (Beisengaliyeva et al., 2024).

Service quality is considered a valuable strategy for corporates to sustain their competitive advantage (Raza et al., 2018). Service organisations such as retail banks tend to distinguish themselves in the market through unique service offerings that are often regarded as essential competitive tools (Palamidovska-Sterjadovska et al., 2024). Studies by Onuonga et al. (2025a), Sharma et al. (2024), Leem and Eum (2021) and Awan et al. (2019) postulate that service quality is a central determining factor of customer satisfaction and an important area of study in the service industry. A serious investment in service quality provides valuable insights for corporate managers, giving them a good understanding of consumers' service perceptions (Mostafa and Eneizan, 2018). This understanding is therefore important in developing strategies that improve firms' service provision.

Recently, many African scholars have focused attention on service quality research in the banking sector (e.g., Dangaiso et al., 2024; Gonu et al., 2023; Moosa, 2023; Nautwima and Asa, 2022; Cheruiyot and Maru, 2016). While we acknowledge considerable research on service quality in African banking industry, very few studies extend beyond the retail banking sector to examine the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction (i.e., Twum et al., 2022; Tee, 2022; Mwiya et al., 2022). This underlines the need for a meaningful examination of the nexus between service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction, particularly in the retail banking industry. Understanding these aspects is critical for improving quality of service delivery and fostering customer engagement in emerging economies, particularly in this important industry.

Research conducted in Tanzania (e.g., Ramadhani and Bilen, 2024; Semu, 2024; Hussein, 2018; Raza et al., 2018) highlights the importance of service quality metrics in the service sector, particularly within the banking industry. The Tanzanian banking industry is proven to be growing very fast following the arrival of foreign-based banks, which entered the market and accelerated competition with local banks (Makorere and Sudi, 2024). As a result, banks are pushed into improving the quality of their services to strengthen their customer base. Service quality, therefore, becomes essentially linked to customer satisfaction, and studies have affirmed this relationship in the Tanzanian bank industry (e.g., Masanja and Mollel, 2024; Semu, 2024; Hussein, 2018). Researching the nexus between service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction in the Tanzanian retail banks is crucial, given the evolving competitive business environment and increasing customer expectations. In a country where less than 50% of the population has access to bank services (Nzilano and Magoti, 2025; Komba and Mwakujonga, 2024; FinScope, 2023; CEIC, 2017), it is important to understand how reliability, responsiveness, empathy, assurance, and tangibility influence customer perceptions can help banks increase their customer base and tailor their services effectively.

As the retail bank sector in Tanzania faces deepened competition, insights from such research may uncover critical gaps between banks' customer expectations and actual service delivery, allowing banks to improve service quality, customer experiences, and thereby fostering their satisfaction. Furthermore, a focus on service quality can drive financial inclusion, improve overall performance, and sustain the growth of Tanzanian retail banks, ultimately contributing to the country's economic stability (Nzilano, 2025; Ramadhani and Bilen, 2024). While prioritizing these five dimensions, retail banks can better position themselves to meet emerging market demands and adapt to the abruptly changing needs of their customers. This study aims to assess how each of the five dimensions of service quality influences customer satisfaction in the Tanzanian retail banking sector. The study seeks to address five research questions:

RQ1: Does tangibility significantly affect customer satisfaction in retail bank services?

RQ2: Does responsiveness significantly affect customer satisfaction in retail banks?

RQ3: Does reliability significantly affect customer satisfaction in retail bank services?
RQ4: Does assurance significantly affect customer satisfaction in retail bank services?
RQ5: Does empathy significantly affect customer satisfaction in retail bank services?

THEORETICAL MODEL AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Theoretical Model

This study is anchored on the SERVQUAL model and the Assimilation-contrast theory. At the heart of the study is the SERVQUAL model, as it captures five variables that influence retail bank customers' satisfaction. The Assimilation-contrast theory was adopted to fuel the leading model, which encompasses the service quality dimensions.

SERVQUAL model

The SERVQUAL model, developed by Parasuraman et al. (1985), provides a structured approach to assessing service quality and customer satisfaction within the service and retail sectors (Bhuvaneswari and Maruthamuthu, 2024; Tien and Huong, 2023; Gonu et al., 2023; Twum et al., 2022). This model evaluates the role of five dimensions (i.e., reliability, responsiveness, assurance, tangibles, and empathy) in shaping customer satisfaction (Arora and Banerji, 2024; Ifedi, et al., 2024; Tien, 2019). Its relevance in this study stems from its focus on the relationship between customer expectations and satisfaction, measuring both anticipated and actual perceptions of service. The degree to which a service meets or exceeds customer expectations plays a pivotal role in determining overall satisfaction (Zeithaml, 2018).

This model examines customers' expectations before and after their service experience. The challenge associated with this model is measuring service quality, which is inherently perishable and subjective, and its success relies heavily on customer perception. Expectations delineated in the SERVQUAL framework indicate what customers expect from exemplary service providers. The consequence gap, a disparity between expected and received service, serves as an indicator of service quality; a narrower gap signifies better service. As emphasized by Parasuraman et al. (1985), poor service often results in a larger gap between customer expectations and the actual service delivered. This study employs the model to analyse the five aspects of service quality to gauge customer satisfaction effectively.

Assimilation-Contrast theory

To explain the consumer's assessment of the performance of goods and/or services after use, Anderson (1973) developed the concept of assimilation-contrast theory. According to the theory, if perceived performance is in the consumer's zone of acceptance, small inequalities between expectations and performance are likely to be assimilated or disregarded; whereas if performance is in the consumer's zone of rejection, inequalities are likely to be contrasted or emphasized, with the result that consumer satisfaction is reduced (Terry, 1997). This concept of consumer satisfaction aligns with the disconfirming model of Hovland et al. (1957), but with more emphasis on consumers' actions to accommodate small inequalities between expectations and performance.

This approach, based on the assimilation-contrast theory, adds depth to the disconfirming model proposed by Hovland et al. (1957), who suggested that consumer satisfaction depends on the differences between expectations and performance. Instead, consumers mentally diminish or accentuate the differences between what is expected and what is actually experienced, especially if the difference is small. Both approaches, by disconfirming models or by assimilation-contrast theory, have empirical support (Anderson, 1973; Dangol, 2024; Thin et al., 2024; Mitchell & Hollenbeck, 2025). Again, similar work by Oliver (2019) and Reginald et al. (2003) explains that integrating both disconfirming models or assimilation-contrast models works better.

Hypotheses development

Customer satisfaction is the degree to which a service or product provided meets or exceeds customers' expectations, especially those related to perceived quality (Hussein, 2018). In this study, customer satisfaction is defined as customers' overall evaluation that results from the match between expected and experienced service performance. Service quality, a concept closely related to satisfaction, is conceptualized as the subjective comparison made by a customer between the expected service standards and the actual performance delivered by the service provider. It reflects the difference between what customers expect before service contact and their perceptions of actual service received (Haitham, 2019). Accordingly, service quality in this study is perceived as customers' evaluative judgment about a bank's performance relative to their prior expectations. This differentiation provides a sharper distinction between service quality as a cognitive judgment and customer satisfaction as an affective response based on the outcome of such a judgment.

Tangibility refers to the physical elements that facilitate service delivery; these include modern equipment, well-maintained facilities, and professional appearances of staff (Zeithaml et al., 2016). These are visible clues that give customers first impressions of service reliability and competence. For retail banks, a clean environment, updated technology, attractive premises, along with professional staff appearance, enhance customers' confidence in the institution and lower uncertainty during service encounters. Such evidence enables customers to assess the quality of services, particularly those that are intangible. As a result, good tangibility in a retail bank enhances customer satisfaction by engendering trust, comfort, and a positive perception of the bank's overall service performance.

Responsiveness, according to Ding et al. (2017), is one of the service quality characteristics used by companies such as banks to promote customer satisfaction. It reflects how promptly and efficiently customer needs, inquiries, and problems are dealt with without unnecessary delay. When bank staff exhibit preparedness to help and respond promptly, customers feel valued and supported, decreasing frustration and uncertainty. Herein this study, responsiveness refers to employees' willingness to assist customers and thereby deliver services efficiently. Consequently, effective responsiveness reinforces customer satisfaction by guaranteeing well-timed solutions and encourages positive service experiences, thereby strengthening customers' overall perception of the bank.

Reliability refers to a firm's ability to deliver promised services consistently and accurately (Ding et al., 2017). In retail banking, when transactions are executed correctly, services are delivered on time, and problems are resolved effectively, customers develop trust, which enhances satisfaction and loyalty. Service assurance relates to personnel's skills and capabilities, as well as to whether these skills and capabilities earn customers' trust, faith, and confidence. Customers who are at ease with the company's staff are more likely to return to doing business with the company in the future (Alhkami and Alarrusi, 2016). Empathy in the retail banking service sector significantly influences customer satisfaction by fostering emotional connections and demonstrating genuine care for customers' needs. When bank employees actively listen and respond compassionately to clients, it enhances the overall service experience. This personal touch can make customers feel valued and understood, ultimately encouraging loyalty and positive perceptions. By addressing individual concerns and providing tailored solutions, banks can effectively meet and exceed customer expectations, driving satisfaction. Collectively, the five dimensions of service quality strengthen customer satisfaction by combining dependable service performance with personalized interactions, resulting in positive service experiences and stronger long-term relationships between customers and banks. In view of this discussion, five hypotheses (H_1-H_5) are developed:

H_1: Service tangibility has a significant effect on customer satisfaction in retail bank services.

H_2: Service responsiveness has a significant effect on customer satisfaction in retail bank services.

H_3: Service reliability has a significant effect on customer satisfaction in retail bank services.

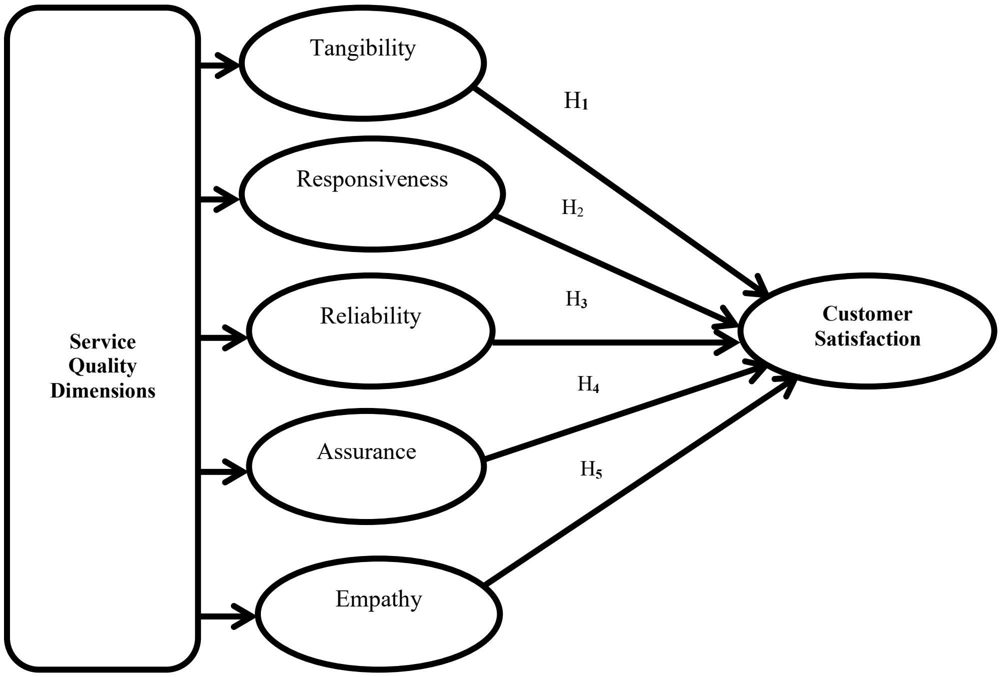
H_4: Service assurance has a significant effect on customer satisfaction in retail bank services.

H_5: Service empathy has a significant effect on customer satisfaction in retail bank services.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework in Figure 1 illustrates the interrelationships among the service quality dimensions (i.e., Tangibility, Responsiveness, Reliability, Assurance, and Empathy) and customer satisfaction as described in the SERVQUAL model. Each dimension contributes uniquely to customer perceptions: Tangibility enhances confidence through visible quality; Responsiveness fosters satisfaction by promptly addressing needs; Reliability assures consistency and dependability; Assurance builds trust through knowledgeable service; and Empathy creates emotional connections by providing individualised attention. These five dimensions align with Assimilation-Contrast Theory, which suggests that customers evaluate their service experiences against their expectations. When service quality meets or exceeds these expectations, assimilation occurs, leading to higher satisfaction. Conversely, significant gaps can result in dissatisfaction through contrast. Therefore, a balanced focus on all five dimensions is essential for enhancing overall customer satisfaction, enabling businesses to build loyalty and achieve long-term success (see Figure 1).

Figure 1:
Conceptual Framework



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research design, sampling and data collection

This study employed a cross-sectional research design, which enables the analysis of data from a population at a specific time. This design does not require monitoring changes in the dependent variable over time and allows for a comprehensive approach to data collection and analysis (Kumar, 2011). The population of this study comprised customers of local banks (i.e., CRDB, NBC, and NMB) and foreign banks (i.e., EQUITY, KCB, and STANBIC) who hold accounts with these banks in Moshi Municipality, Kilimanjaro, Tanzania. The sample was obtained using a proportionate stratified sampling technique to ensure proper representation of the heterogeneous population (De-Vaus, 2013).

Accidental sampling was then used within each stratum for convenience, enabling data collection from readily accessible segments of the population (Bryman and Bell, 2011). To mitigate selection bias and increase the generalization of the study's findings, we combined proportionate stratified sampling with careful validation of the accidental sampling method. This was done to ensure diverse representation across all strata and to make thorough checks for consistency, thereby strengthening the reliability of the findings beyond retail banks in Moshi Municipality. However, it is worth noting that the use of accidental sampling limits the ability to generalize these findings beyond Moshi Municipality. This, therefore, makes the results most relevant to the specific branches surveyed. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data from 289 sampled bank customers, facilitating quick data collection (Burns and Burns, 2012; Morris, 2012).

Variable measurements and operationalisations

The measurement scales for the five service quality dimensions (i.e., tangibility, responsiveness, reliability, assurance and empathy) and customer satisfaction were established from the existing literature, and they have been validated and used in preceding studies. The constructs used included tangibility (6 items), responsiveness (5 items), reliability (6 items), assurance (4 items), and empathy (5 items), whereas customer satisfaction is measured using a single composite score based on 4 items. Constructs related to service quality dimensions were measured using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1="strongly disagree" to 5="strongly agree". The respondents were requested to show if they strongly disagreed (1), disagreed (2), neutral (3), agreed (4) and strongly agreed (5) with the statements by ticking in the appropriate boxes. These scales were adopted from studies by Alfatafta et al. (2025), Widagdo et al. (2025), Onuonga et al. (2025b), Ibrahim et al. (2024) and Kazungu and Kubenea (2023). Customers were asked to rate their level of satisfaction by using a three-point Likert scale ranging from 1=low extent, 2=moderate extent,3=high extent (Vineethan et al., 2025).

Data analysis

Descriptive statistics were used in the data analysis, including population parameters like mean, frequency distribution, and percentages. For Inferential analysis, the Ordinal logit regression model was used to assess the relationship between service quality dimensions and consumer satisfaction, evaluating model fitness and significance. The Ordinal logit regression model equation applied is as presented in equations 1-2;

$$\text{Logit } Y_i = \ln(\pi/1-\pi) = \alpha + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \beta_5X_5 +_e \text{ .... } (1)$$

The Ordinal logistic regression model involved fitting an equation to the following form to the
variables as indicated in equation 2.

$$\text{Customer satisfaction} = \alpha + \beta_1\text{tangibility} + \beta_2\text{responsiveness} + \beta_3\text{reliability} + \beta_4\text{assurance} + \beta_5\text{empathy} + {}_e \quad (2)$$

Whereby:

Y_i	=	Dependent variable (in this case, Customer satisfaction)
α	=	The intercept between X and Y axis
$\beta_1 ... \beta_p$	=	Regression coefficients
X_{1-5}	=	Vector of independent variables (Reliability, Responsiveness, Tangibility, Assurance, Empathy)
e	=	Logistic error term
π	=	Probability of an event

The study also examined how tangibility, responsiveness, reliability, assurance and empathy influence customer satisfaction by testing hypotheses at a 5% significance level, and p-values less than 0.05 (Cooper et al., 2012). Multicollinearity was assessed using the variance inflation factor (VIF) and Tolerance, while Heteroscedasticity was also tested using Levene's Test for Equality of Error Variances.

Validity and Reliability

Cronbach's alpha was used to confirm the study's reliability as a measure of internal consistency (i.e. coefficient of reliability). The study's Cronbach's alpha was 0.830 (see Table 1), above 0.7, thus the instrument is reliable (George and Mallery, 2003). The questionnaire and interview guide were pre-tested to verify content validity by performing pilot research to assess the instruments' correctness and make any necessary changes. For this study, a small number of respondents were chosen and utilised. The efficiency and quality of the data collected were tested before the actual data collection, and different questions were adjusted. As a result, the research was done in a fashion that was consistent in theory and practice.

Table 1
Reliability

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	No of items
0.830	0.832	10

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The findings in Table 2 on respondents' demographic characteristics reveal important insights into how various groups perceive and experience service quality. For instance, differences in age and sex may influence expectations and satisfaction related to service reliability, tangibility, responsiveness, and assurance.

Findings in Table 2 show that among the respondents, the maximum age was 42 years, the minimum age was 25, and the median age was 33. With a median age of 33, the findings indicated that most of the respondents were middle-aged individuals using bank services. This implies that younger respondents might prioritize modern service aspects and technology integration, while older respondents may emphasize reliability and personalized service. Customers of middle age can differentiate between quality services and poor services. And they are able to judge whether they are satisfied or dissatisfied with the services they receive. The results are similar to those of Oanda (2019), who also found that the majority of the respondents were in the age bracket of 31-35 years (47.9%).

One demographic component that is essential in customer satisfaction research is a person's gender. Findings in Table 2 show the gender distribution of the responses. Males account for 64.7 per cent of the sampled clients. Female responders accounted for the remaining 35.3%. Understanding these demographic nuances is vital, as they allow businesses to tailor their service offerings more effectively to meet the diverse expectations and needs of their clientele, ultimately enhancing overall customer satisfaction.

Table 2
Distribution of Respondents' Demographic Characteristics

Variable	Frequency (Percentage)
Age	
Minimum	25 years
Medium	33 years
Maximum	42 years
Sex	
Female	102 (35.3)
Male	187 (64.7)

Testing for Multicollinearity

A variance inflation factor (VIF) analysis was used to check for multicollinearity in the regression model. The results in Table 3 indicate no significant multicollinearity among the variables. All Tolerance values are above 0.1, with Service Reliability at 0.893, Service Tangibility at

0.932, Responsiveness at 0.923, Service Assurance at 0.616 and Empathy at 0.722. Correspondingly, the VIF values are well below the threshold of 5, with Service Reliability at 1.120, Service Tangibility at 1.073, Responsiveness at 1.084, Service Assurance at 1.624 and Empathy at 1.213. These results suggest that the predictors can be included in the regression model without concern for multicollinearity, allowing for reliable interpretations of their relationships with the dependent variable.

Table 3
Multicollinearity Statistics

Variables	Tolerance	VIF
Service Tangibility	0.932	1.073
Service Reliability	0.893	1.120
Service Responsiveness	0.923	1.084
Service Assurance	0.616	1.624
Empathy	0.722	1.213

Test for Heteroscedasticity

The Breusch-Pagan and Koenker test was used to determine the presence of heteroscedasticity. The rule of thumb is that if the sig-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_0: Heteroscedasticity not present [homoscedasticity]) is rejected. The results in Table 4 show sig values of 0.16 and 0.996, indicating that p>0.05. H_0 is acceptable, hence we conclude that there is no significant evidence of heteroscedasticity among the groups concerning customer satisfaction.

Table 4
Breusch-Pagan and Koenker test statistics and sig-values

Test statistic	LM	Sig
BP	7.624	0.106
Koenker	0.185	0.996

H_0: Heteroscedasticity not present [homoscedasticity]
Variables: Tangibility, Responsiveness, Reliability, Assurance and Empathy

Model fit tests

The results in Table 5 indicate a strong model fit, as evidenced by the Chi-square value of 96.432, which suggests that the model is significantly better than a null model. The Pearson statistic of 354.231 further supports this by demonstrating a good association between observed and expected frequencies. The Deviance value of 290.712 further reinforces the adequacy of the model, indicating low levels of unexplained variance. In terms of explanatory power, the Cox and Snell R^2 of 0.598 and the Nagelkerke R^2 of 0.519 indicate that approximately 60% and 52% of the variation in levels of customer satisfaction can be explained by service quality dimensions in the model, signifying a strong relationship and good predictive power. This, however, indicates that there is still a significant amount of unexplained variability. The McFadden R^2 value of 0.190, while lower, still indicates a goodness-of-fit for a logistic regression model. This suggests that the model explains 19% of the variance in customer satisfaction relative to a baseline model that only includes an intercept, thereby confirming the relevance of service quality for further research and practical applications. Overall, these results imply that the predictors included in the model are significantly associated with the outcome variable and can effectively explain a substantial portion of its variability, suggesting practical relevance for decision-making or further research.

Results of hypotheses testing

The statistical significance of the relationship between customer satisfaction and Tangibility was established. Findings in Table 5 shows β=8.27, p-value=$0.002 \leq 0.05$, Wald=4.993 and Exp (β)= 2.113. The Wald statistic of 4.993 indicates that Tangibility contributed significantly to predicting the possibility of customer satisfaction with retail bank services. The findings indicate that Tangibility increased the likelihood of satisfied customers by 2.113, with an associated odds ratio of 8.27, implying that banks that capitalise on Tangibility were 8.27 times more likely to satisfy their customers. Thus, we accept the hypothesis (H_1) that service tangibility has a significant effect on customer satisfaction in retail bank services. The findings underscore the essential role of service tangibility in shaping customer satisfaction within the retail banking sector, highlighting that customers are more likely to feel valued when they encounter well-maintained facilities and tangible service aspects. This indicates that the physical aspects of service delivery do indeed enhance customer satisfaction. Service providers should therefore invest in updating service facilities to promote customer satisfaction (Kazungu and Kubenea, 2023). By prioritizing the enhancement of physical elements such as branch appearance and interactive touchpoints, banks can effectively foster a more satisfying experience for their clients (Aripin, 2025; Widagdo et al., 2024; Alonge, et al., 2021). Ultimately, these improvements not only boost customer satisfaction but also foster loyalty and competitive advantage in an increasingly crowded market.

In contrast, H_2, which hypothesizes that service responsiveness affects customer satisfaction, also yielded a p-value well below the critical threshold (i.e., β=4.82, p=$0.003 \leq 0.05$, Wald=12.14, Exp (β) =1.573) (see

Table 5), thus confirming a significant relationship. The Wald statistic of 12.14 indicates the significant effect of responsiveness on customer satisfaction. Thus, the hypothesis (H_2) that service responsiveness has a significant effect on customer satisfaction in retail bank services was accepted. The findings show that with prompt responses from service personnel, customer satisfaction increased by 1.573, and the odds ratio is 4.82, suggesting that the increase in responsiveness was 4.82 times higher in customer satisfaction. This suggests that customers value prompt responses from their service providers. The findings further underline the critical importance of service responsiveness in enhancing customer satisfaction within retail banking, as prompt responses are highly valued by customers. The evidence clearly demonstrates that service responsiveness plays a pivotal role in shaping customer satisfaction in retail banking, as customers increasingly prefer quick and effective communication from their service providers. By prioritizing timely responses, banks can significantly enhance customer loyalty and overall satisfaction, aligning with the growing trend highlighted in recent studies. Retail banks should therefore prioritize improving their service responsiveness to foster stronger relationships and drive customer satisfaction and loyalty as observed in recent studies by Aripin (2025), Zaman et al (2025) and Arora and Banerji (2024).

In examining H_3, pertaining to service reliability, the p-value obtained was critical in determining the acceptance of this hypothesis. The results in Table 5 revealed a p-value below the critical threshold (i.e., β=7.45, p=0.000≤0.05, Wald=4.887, Exp(β)=2.009), indicating that the consistent performance of services is essential for maintaining customer satisfaction. The Wald value of 4.887 suggests that service reliability was significant in satisfying banks' customers. The findings imply that reliable bank services increased the chance of having satisfied customers by 2.009. The odds ratio of 7.45 indicates that banks with reliable services were 7.45 times more likely to have highly satisfied customers. Therefore, the hypothesis (H_3) that service reliability has a significant effect on customer satisfaction in retail bank services was accepted. The findings emphasize the critical importance of service reliability in the retail banking sector, highlighting that consistently dependable services lead to higher levels of customer satisfaction. Reliability is regarded as the most crucial aspect of service quality (Ifedi, et al., 2024; Zeithaml, 2018), with accessibility being a key element that ensures services are available when needed (Minhaj and Khan, 2025). In the context of Banks that prioritize reliable service delivery, they are likely to foster stronger relationships with their customers, ultimately driving loyalty and retention. Also, this emphasis on reliability may serve as a competitive differentiator in a market where customer expectations are constantly evolving. Furthermore, continuity is important, as it signifies that the service will remain available and maintain an acceptable standard; inconsistent reliability can lead to customer distrust and a shift to other providers (Widagdo et al., 2024; Ojo, 2019).

Moving on to H_4, concerning service assurance, the p-value was similarly significant (i.e., $\beta=5.08$, $p=0.003\leq0.05$, Wald=13.06, Exp(β)=1.625) (see Table 5). The Wald of 13.06 proposes that service assurance was significant in satisfying retail banks' customers. The findings imply that the probability of having satisfied customers increases by 1.625 when bank personnel are competent. The odds ratio of 5.08 indicates that banks with guaranteed service assurance are 5.08 times more likely to have highly satisfied customers. Hence, the hypothesis (H_4) that service assurance has a significant effect on customer satisfaction in retail bank services was accepted. This leads to the conclusion that customers feel more assured and satisfied when services are delivered competently. The significant relationship between service assurance and customer satisfaction suggests that competent service delivery plays a crucial role in enhancing customer confidence and satisfaction. These results match the previous findings by Onuonga et al. (2025a), Ghaazi et al. (2024), Chege (2022) and Al Ali (2021), who further emphasize the importance of service assurance for satisfied customers in the banking industry.

Lastly, H_5, which suggests that empathy influences customer satisfaction, found strong support through a low p-value (i.e., $\beta=14.78$, $p=0.004\leq0.05$, Wald =17.426, Exp(β)=2.693) (Table 5). It is worth noting that the Wald statistic of 17.426 indicates that employee empathy significantly predicts customer satisfaction. The findings imply that when banks invest in empathy among employees, the probability of extremely satisfied customers increases by 2.693, with the corresponding odds ratio of 14.78, indicating that banks with more empathetic employees are 14.78 times more likely to have very satisfied customers. Henceforth, the hypothesis (H_5) that service empathy has a significant effect on customer satisfaction in retail bank services was accepted. Thus, it is concluded that the capacity to understand and meet banks' customer' needs has a significant impact on their overall satisfaction. The strong relationship between service employees' empathy and customer satisfaction in the banking sector emphasizes the necessity for financial institutions to prioritize empathetic interactions in their service delivery. By fostering a culture of empathy among employees, banks can significantly enhance customer experiences, leading to improved loyalty and overall financial performance. These findings align with the observations by Onuonga et al. (2025b), Widagdo et al. (2024), and Sherwani et al. (2024), who noted that empathy among service personnel and Customer Satisfaction have a strong positive relationship in the retail banking sector.

These results in Table 5 confirm that all five dimensions of service quality significantly influence customer satisfaction in retail banking, extending the SERVQUAL model and Assimilation-Contrast theory. The emphasis on tangible aspects, responsiveness, reliability, assurance, and empathy in service delivery is crucial, especially for retail banks in emerging economies. Overall, these findings are in line with studies by Nzilano (2025) and Masanja, and Mollel (2024) which observed a significant relationship between service quality dimensions and banks' customer satisfaction. These findings highlight the necessity for such banks to enhance service quality in these key areas, which can lead to improved customer satisfaction, increased retention rates, and positive word-of-mouth. Ultimately, this strategic focus on service dimensions will foster sustainable growth and customer loyalty in the competitive banking landscape. By doing so, banks can improve customer satisfaction, thereby facilitate higher retention rates and generate positive word-of-mouth, which is crucial in competitive markets.

Table 5
Regression Results of Service Quality Dimensions on Customer Satisfaction

Variables	β	S.E	Wald	Df	Sig.	Exp(β)
Tangibility	8.27	0.887	4.993	1	0.002	2.113
Responsiveness	4.82	0.397	12.14	1	0.003	1.573
Reliability	7.45	0.756	4.887	1	0.000	2.009
Assurance	5.08	0.389	13.06	1	0.003	1.625
Empathy	14.78	0.725	17.426	1	0.004	2.693
Constant	2.82	4.223	16.113	1	0.000	16.766

Note(s): *Chi- square=96.432; Pearson=354.231, Deviance=290.712; Cox and Snell=0.598, Nagelkerke=0.519, McFadden=0.190*

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion, each of the hypothesised relationships was accepted, demonstrating that all identified service elements significantly affect customer satisfaction in retail banking. These findings highlight the importance of focusing on tangible aspects, responsiveness, reliability, assurance, and empathy in service delivery. For banks operating in emerging economies, these insights suggest a compelling need to enhance service quality in these areas. By doing so, they can improve customer satisfaction, thereby facilitate higher retention rates and generate positive word-of-mouth, which is crucial in competitive markets. Enhanced focus on these dimensions will ultimately contribute to sustainable growth and customer loyalty in the banking sector.

In light of the findings on service quality dimensions (i.e., tangibility, responsiveness, reliability, assurance, and empathy), it is recommended that banks take a multifaceted approach to enhance customer satisfaction. First, banks should improve tangibility by ensuring their physical facilities are modern and welcoming, which instils confidence in customers. Next, prioritizing responsiveness is crucial; timely service and prompt responses to inquiries can significantly strengthen customer relationships. Reliability must also be emphasized, ensuring that services are consistently delivered as promised. The study further recommends that training staff to provide assurance and demonstrate empathy will foster trust and emotional connections with customers. Therefore, banks should also pay more attention to prioritising and promoting their organisational commitment among their employees. This study further advocates that banks should prioritize improving their service responsiveness to foster stronger relationships and drive customer loyalty. By focusing on these key dimensions, banks can create a more positive customer experience, ultimately driving loyalty and satisfaction.

Policy Implications

Results from this study have highlighted that the tangibility of services plays an important role in customer satisfaction for Tanzanian retail banks, and therefore, policy interventions are necessary to enhance service quality. Policymakers should develop laws that force banks to invest in the maintenance and modernization of physical branches and service environments. Banks should allocate a certain percentage of their annual budget to the improvement of branch facilities, ensuring that they meet modern-day design expectations. In promoting these, policies that aim at making service quality assessments open should be put in place to enable customers to make their choices based on quality levels. Again, community-based initiatives that involve customer feedback will enable banks to tailor services to customers better and ensure that physical attributes meet customer expectations to promote overall improved banking experiences in Tanzania.

Managerial Implications

The findings of this study highlight the need to invest in the tangible dimensions of service delivery to enhance customer satisfaction.

Therefore, banks in Tanzania should invest in branch remodeling initiatives that create welcoming environments and a functionally appealing atmosphere that reflects customer expectations. Banks should also tailor their employee training to incorporate the importance of first impressions and how tangible service factors contribute to customer perceptions. Training can include role-plays of interactions where customers seek service and model behavior that reflects service environments. Also, management should integrate regular branch condition assessments and customer feedback as part of their practices to achieve continuous improvement. With these approaches, managers would be able to effectively nurture a more satisfying customer experience, which will lead to loyal customers and positive word-of-mouth referrals in the competitive retail banking environment.

Theoretical contribution

This study makes a theoretical contribution by contextually extending the SERVQUAL framework using the Assimilation-Contrast Theory in the Tanzanian retail banking sector. This research work is a contextual refinement that moves on from the universal service quality factors by developing context-sensitive factors such as technological accessibility, procedural transparency, and relationship assurance. This is with respect to the developing context of Tanzania, which is undergoing rapid digitalization with unequal consumer abilities. This is besides developing the universal principles of service quality, such as the influence of bank relationship assurance in moderating perception gaps that occur between the idealized and real service delivery of banks, such as in Tanzania. This research work using the Assimilation-Contrast Theory helps to establish that consumer perception about services is not driven by individual instances of services, but by the total experience of dealing with retail banks through accumulated tolerance levels. Therefore, developing this work using theoretical concepts helps to provide a distinct contribution to the literature related to service qualities by developing enhanced theoretical understandings for consumer services related to developing markets like that of Tanzania.

Practical implications

This study provides critical insights for banking institutions aiming to enhance customer experience. By highlighting the relationship between service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction, the research shows the necessity for retail banking to focus on improving reliability, responsiveness, and empathy. These implications are particularly relevant in emerging economies where competition is increasing, and customer expectations are evolving. Banks that prioritise these dimensions can foster stronger customer loyalty, improve overall service delivery, and ultimately achieve greater financial performance and sustainable growth.

Research limitations

This study focused only on retail banks in Moshi, Kilimanjaro, Tanzania. Further research should involve more banks to generalise the findings. Again, the study has focused on the influence of service quality dimensions on customer satisfaction; however, there may be other issues that have direct or indirect influence on customers' satisfaction on Tanzania retail banking sector. Thus, future researchers may broaden their scope and conduct research in these areas.

Areas for Further Research

The study focused on five SERVQUAL aspects that determine customer satisfaction. Other Studies should be done using other models and frameworks that measure service quality, like the e-banking service quality, to encompass similar dimensions and criteria that define the effectiveness and user satisfaction of online retail banking services. Again, the study has focused on the influence of service quality dimensions on customer satisfaction; however, there may be other issues that have a direct or indirect influence on customers' satisfaction in the Tanzania retail banking sector. It is, therefore, suggested that future researchers may broaden their scope and conduct research in these areas in a context other than Tanzania.

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Effects of Climate Change on Land Use Patterns among Farmers and Pastoralists in Mvomero District, Tanzania

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Abstract
Climate change continues to reshape land use systems globally, with rural communities in sub-Saharan Africa experiencing disproportionate impacts. This study examined how climate variability influences land use patterns and livelihood strategies among farmers and pastoralists in Mvomero District, Tanzania. Using a cross-sectional mixed-methods design, data were collected from 391 household heads selected through stratified random sampling and 26 purposively chosen key informants. Quantitative data were analyzed descriptively, while qualitative data were examined thematically. Findings indicate that prolonged droughts, erratic rainfall, and flooding have altered agricultural and pastoral practices, leading to shifts in cropping calendars, increased reliance on climate-smart agriculture, groundwater development, tree planting, and long-distance livestock mobility. These environmental stressors have intensified competition over land and water resources, contributing to recurrent farmer–pastoralist conflicts, displacement, and loss of property. The study concludes that climate change is a major driver of land use transformations in Mvomero District and recommends strengthened institutional frameworks, community-based adaptation, and integrated land use planning.

Keywords: *Climate change, Land use patterns, Farmers, pastoralists, adaptation, Mvomero District, Tanzania*

INTRODUCTION
Climate change has emerged as one of the most pressing global challenges of the 21st century, with profound implications for land use systems, food security, and rural livelihoods. Globally, rising temperatures, shifting precipitation patterns, and increased frequency of extreme weather events have disrupted agricultural production and pastoral mobility (IPCC, 2022). These climatic shifts have altered land suitability, reduced water availability, and intensified competition over natural resources, particularly in developing countries where livelihoods

depend heavily on climate-sensitive sectors. At the regional level, sub-Saharan Africa is considered highly vulnerable due to its reliance on rain-fed agriculture and extensive pastoralism. Studies across East Africa show that prolonged droughts, unpredictable rainfall, and recurrent floods have contributed to declining crop yields, rangeland degradation, and increased pastoral migration (Nkiaka et al., 2020; Gebremeskel et al., 2021). These changes have heightened tensions over land and water resources, especially in areas where farming and pastoralism coexist.

In Tanzania, agriculture accounts for more than 26% of GDP and employs over 65% of the population, making climate change a significant threat to national development (URT, 2023). The country has experienced recurrent droughts, floods, and temperature increases that have disrupted farming systems and pastoral mobility. Several districts in Morogoro Region including Kiroka, Mkindo, and Njage have been documented as climate-change hotspots due to frequent flooding, crop losses, and water scarcity (TMA, 2022). Despite these challenges, limited empirical research has examined how climate variability specifically shapes land use patterns among farmers and pastoralists in Mvomero District. Mvomero District is characterized by a long history of farmer-pastoralist interactions, recurrent land use conflicts, and climate-induced migration. Although the district has benefited from national initiatives such as Village Land Use Plans (VLUPs), the Environmental Management Act (2004), decentralized climate adaptation funds, and village by-laws, the effectiveness of these interventions remains unclear. Existing reports indicate persistent disputes over grazing areas, farmland expansion, and water access, suggesting gaps in land governance and climate adaptation mechanisms (MLHHSD, 2021).

Despite the growing body of literature on climate change and land use in Tanzania, several gaps remain. First, most studies focus on either agricultural impacts or pastoral mobility, with limited attention to how both systems interact under climate stress. Second, few studies integrate local perceptions with empirical evidence to explain how climate variability shapes land use decisions. Third, there is limited contextual analysis of Mvomero District, despite its documented vulnerability and history of resource-based conflicts. This study addresses these gaps by examining how climate change affects land use patterns and livelihood strategies among farmers and pastoralists in Mvomero District. Specifically, the study aims at assessing the major climate-related environmental stressors affecting land use, examining how farmers and pastoralists have adjusted their land use practices in response to climate variability, and analyzing the implications of climate-induced land use changes for local livelihoods and human security. By integrating quantitative and qualitative evidence, the study contributes to ongoing debates on climate adaptation, land governance, and conflict mitigation in Tanzania.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Climate change has become a defining driver of land use transformations worldwide. Rising temperatures, altered precipitation patterns, and increased frequency of extreme weather events have reshaped agricultural systems, rangelands, and settlement patterns (IPCC, 2022). Globally, farmers have been forced to modify cropping calendars, adopt drought-tolerant varieties, and shift from rain-fed to irrigated agriculture (Thornton et al., 2021). Pastoral communities, particularly in arid and semi-arid regions, have experienced shrinking grazing lands, reduced forage quality, and increased livestock mortality (Herrero et al., 2020). These changes have intensified competition over natural resources, contributing to land degradation, biodiversity loss, and resource-based conflicts.

Studies from Asia and Latin America show similar patterns. In India, climate-induced water scarcity has driven agricultural expansion into forest margins, increasing human-wildlife conflict (Kumar et al., 2020). In Brazil, prolonged droughts have accelerated deforestation as communities seek new agricultural land (Silva et al., 2021). These global findings highlight the interconnectedness of climate change, land use decisions, and livelihood vulnerability. Sub-Saharan Africa is widely recognized as one of the most climate-vulnerable regions due to its dependence on rain-fed agriculture and extensive pastoralism (Nkiaka et al., 2020). Across East Africa, prolonged droughts have reduced pasture availability, forcing pastoralists to migrate over longer distances and into farming zones (Gebremeskel et al., 2021). In Kenya, climate variability has contributed to recurrent farmer-herder conflicts in Turkana, Baringo, and Laikipia, where competition over water and grazing land has intensified (Mkutu, 2020). Similar patterns have been observed in Ethiopia, where pastoral mobility has increased due to rangeland degradation and water scarcity (Teshome et al., 2022). In Uganda, flooding and erratic rainfall have altered cropping systems, leading to expansion into wetlands and forest reserves (Nsubuga & Namutebi, 2021). These regional studies demonstrate that climate change is reshaping land use patterns through both ecological stress and human adaptation strategies.

Tanzania has experienced significant climate variability over the past three decades, including rising temperatures, recurrent droughts, and unpredictable rainfall (TMA, 2022). These changes have affected agricultural productivity, pastoral mobility, and land governance. National reports indicate that climate change has contributed to declining crop yields, increased livestock mortality, and expansion of farming into marginal lands (URT, 2023). Several areas in Morogoro Region-such as Kiroka, Mkindo, and Njage have been identified as climate-change hotspots due to frequent flooding, soil erosion, and water scarcity (Morogoro Regional Secretariat, 2022). Despite this, limited empirical research has examined how climate variability specifically influences land use patterns in Mvomero District, which has a long history of farmer-pastoralist interactions. Tanzania has implemented several policy initiatives to address climate-related land use challenges, including village land use plans (VLUPs) to guide land allocation and reduce conflict, environmental management Act (2004) to regulate resource use, national climate change strategy (2021-2026) promoting adaptation and resilience, decentralized climate adaptation funds supporting community-level initiatives, and village by-laws governing grazing, farming, and water access. However, studies show that these initiatives often face challenges such as weak enforcement, limited community participation, and inadequate institutional capacity (Kangalawe, 2020; MLHHSD, 2021). This raises questions about their effectiveness in districts like Mvomero, where climate-induced land use conflicts persist.

Existing literature consistently shows that climate change influences land use patterns through environmental stressors such as drought, flooding, and soil degradation. For example, Kashaigili et al. (2021) found that changes in rainfall and temperature patterns in Tanzania have altered cropping calendars and increased reliance on drought-tolerant crops. Msuya et al. (2020) reported that reduced pasture quality in semi-arid regions has forced pastoralists to migrate more frequently, increasing the likelihood of conflict with farmers. Studies from Nigeria, Ghana, and Sudan also show that climate-induced resource scarcity contributes to violent confrontations between farmers and pastoralists (Tonah, 2020;

Ofuoku & Isife, 2019). These conflicts often arise from crop destruction, livestock theft, and competition over water sources. While these studies provide valuable insights, most focus on either agricultural or pastoral systems in isolation. Few examine how both systems interact under climate stress, particularly in districts with complex land use histories like Mvomero.

Despite the growing body of literature, several gaps remain including limited integrated analysis of farming and pastoral systems where most studies examine either agricultural impacts or pastoral mobility, but not how the two systems interact under climate stress. Another gap is insufficient localized evidence from Mvomero District where although Mvomero is known for recurrent farmer-pastoralist conflicts, few studies have analyzed how climate variability specifically shapes land use patterns in this district. Weak linkage between national policies and local realities is another gap identified where existing research rarely evaluates how national initiatives such as VLUPs, EMA 2004, and climate strategies, influence land use decisions at village level. Also, there is limited use of mixed-methods approaches where studies combine quantitative household data with qualitative insights from key informants, which are essential for understanding complex land use dynamics. The last gap identified is lack of empirical evidence on human security implications where conflicts are documented, the specific ways climate-induced land use changes affect peace, safety, and livelihoods remain underexplored. The reviewed literature demonstrates that climate change is a major driver of land use transformations globally, regionally, and nationally. However, significant gaps remain regarding how climate variability affects land use patterns among farmers and pastoralists in Mvomero District. This study addresses these gaps by providing an integrated, mixed-methods analysis of climate-induced land use changes and their implications for livelihoods and human security.

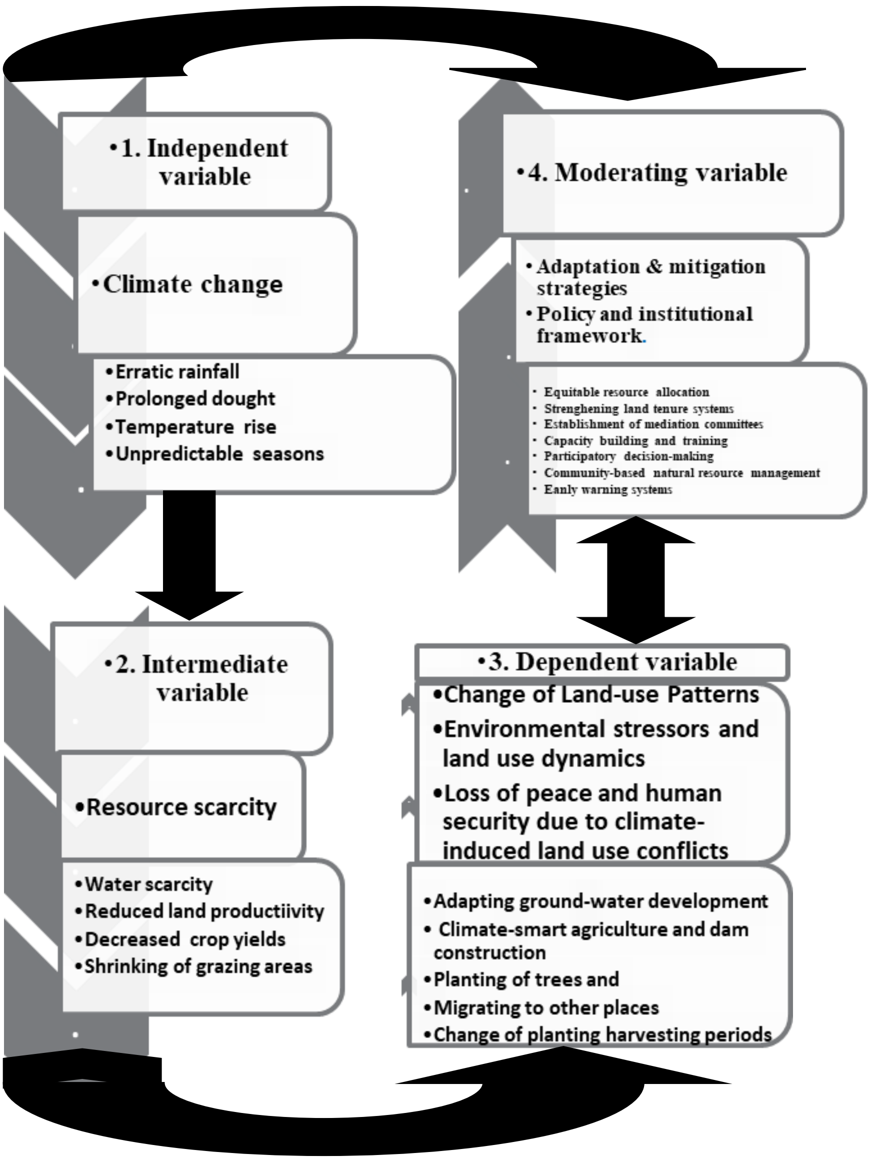
Understanding how climate change influences land use patterns among farmers and pastoralists requires a framework that links environmental stressors, resource dynamics, human responses, and institutional conditions. The conceptual framework guiding this study is grounded in climate-livelihood interaction theory and empirical evidence from global and regional studies. The framework illustrates how climate change acts as a primary driver, triggering a chain of ecological and socio-economic responses that ultimately reshape land use patterns in Mvomero District.

It also identifies intermediate variables that mediate these relationships and moderating variables that influence the extent of their effects.

Climate change is conceptualized as the overarching independent variable influencing land use decisions. Based on global and regional literature (IPCC, 2022; Nkiaka et al., 2020), the study focuses on four major climate-related stressors including prolonged droughts which leads to reduced water availability, dry up grazing lands, and lower soil moisture, affecting both crop and livestock productivity.

Other major climate-related stressors include erratic rainfall which shortens planting seasons, disrupts agricultural calendars, and increases uncertainty in land preparation, flooding which damages crops, destroys infrastructure, and forces temporary or permanent relocation, and temperature rise which accelerates evapotranspiration, reduces soil fertility, and alters vegetation composition in rangelands. These stressors create ecological pressure that directly affects land availability, productivity, and suitability for farming or grazing. The effects of climate change on land use are not direct; they operate through several mediating variables that shape how communities respond including resource scarcity where climate stress reduces the availability of water sources, pasture and forage, and fertile agricultural land. This scarcity forces both farmers and pastoralists to modify their land use practices.

Figure 1:
Effects of climate change on land-use patterns



Key: Forward relationship, Backward and forward relationship
Source: Researcher (2024)

As drought intensifies and pasture declines, pastoralists increase the distance and frequency of livestock movement. This mobility often brings them into farming zones, creating overlapping land claims. Resource scarcity and mobility lead to expansion of farming into grazing lands, encroachment of livestock into cultivated fields, and use of forest reserves and marginal lands for survival. These overlaps heighten the risk of conflict and environmental degradation.

The relationship between climate stress and land use outcomes is influenced by institutional and socio-economic factors that can either mitigate or exacerbate the effects. These include policy and institutional frameworks such as Village Land Use Plans (VLUPs), Environmental Management Act (2004), National Climate Change Strategy, Village by-laws and Conflict resolution committees. Where these systems are strong, land use conflicts are minimized, and where they are weak, disputes escalate. Households and communities adopt various strategies such as climate-smart agriculture, groundwater development, tree planting, dam construction, diversification of livelihoods, and seasonal or permanent migration. These strategies influence how land is used and how communities cope with climate stress. Household income, education, livestock ownership, and access to extension services shape the ability to adapt and influence land use decisions. The combined effects of climate stressors, mediating factors, and moderating conditions result in observable changes in land use patterns, including shifts in cropping systems, expansion of farmland into new areas, increased pastoral mobility, use of forest reserves and marginal lands, intensification of land use competition, and increased frequency of farmer-pastoralist conflicts. These outcomes directly affect livelihoods, human security, and environmental sustainability.

The conceptual framework in Figure 1 can be described as a forward-moving chain, where climate change introduces environmental stressors such as drought, erratic rainfall, flooding, and rising temperatures. These stressors create resource scarcity, reduce pasture and water availability, and degrade agricultural land. Resource scarcity triggers behavioral responses, including pastoral mobility, farmland expansion, and encroachment into shared or contested areas. The extent and nature of these responses are shaped by institutional and socio-economic moderators, such as land policies, adaptation strategies, and community governance structures. The interaction of these factors results in altered land use patterns, which may lead to conflict, displacement, or livelihood transformation. This framework aligns with global climate-livelihood models and provides a structured lens for analyzing land use dynamics in Mvomero District.

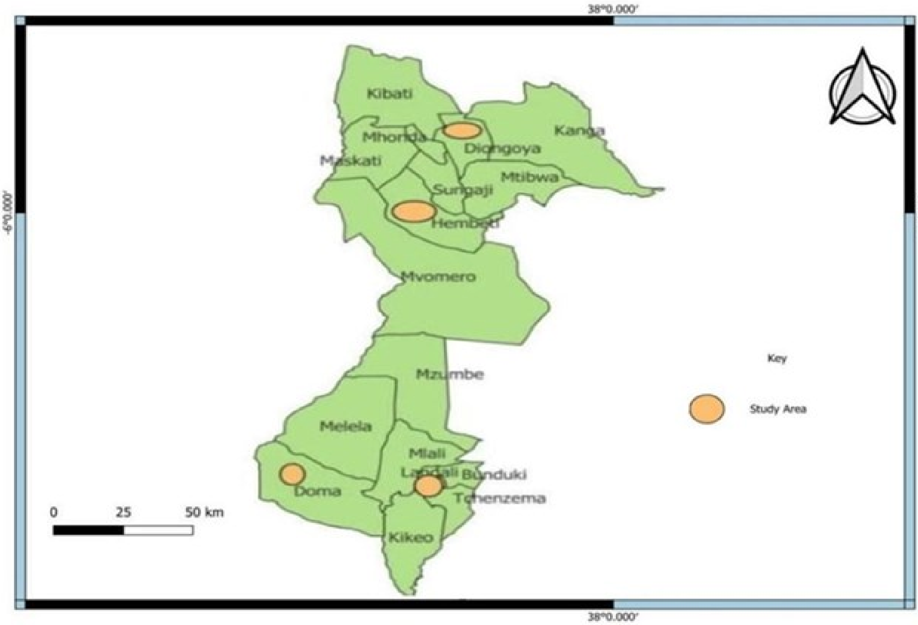
METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a cross-sectional mixed-methods design to examine how climate change influences land use patterns among farmers and pastoralists in Mvomero District. The cross-sectional approach enabled the researcher to collect data at a single point in time, capturing existing experiences, perceptions, and practices without implying temporal change. The mixed-methods design combined quantitative and qualitative techniques to enhance the depth, validity, and triangulation of findings.

The research was conducted in Mvomero District, Morogoro Region, Tanzania. The district is characterized by diverse agro-ecological zones that support both crop farming and livestock keeping. It has a long history of farmer-pastoralist interactions, climate-related stress, and recurrent land use conflicts. These characteristics make Mvomero an appropriate setting for investigating climate-induced land use dynamics. Four villages were selected for the study including Doma, Langali, Diongoya, and embeti. Doma and Langali are predominantly farming communities, while Diongoya and Hembeti are largely pastoralist. This variation provided a balanced representation of both livelihood systems. The villages were selected purposively based on the following criteria. Looking on high exposure to climate variability, the Mvomero District environmental reports identify these villages as experiencing recurrent droughts, erratic rainfall, and seasonal flooding, documented history of land use conflicts.

Previous studies by Kisoza, 2007; Mwamfupe, 2015, and district security records show frequent farmer-pastoralist disputes in these areas, and coexistence of farming and pastoralist communities. The study required villages where both groups interact and compete for land and water resources. Although other villages in Mvomero District such as Kiroka, Mkindo, and Njage, are also climate-affected, they were excluded because they do not exhibit the same intensity of farmer-pastoralist overlap as selected villages.

Figure 2
A Map of Mvomero District to a show the area of study



***Source**: Mvomero District Council Investment Profile (2024)*

The target population consisted of 16,675 household heads residing in the four selected villages. Additional participants included village leaders, agricultural and livestock officers, traditional leaders, and district officials who possess contextual knowledge of land use and climate-related challenges. A total sample of 415 participants was used in the study, comprising 391 household heads for the quantitative survey, and 26 key informants for qualitative interviews. The sample size for household heads was determined using Yamane's (1967) formula at a 95% confidence level and a precision level of 0.05:

[n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)}]
Where: N = 16,675 , and
e = 0.05)

This yielded a sample of 391 respondents, which was considered adequate for statistical analysis. The additional 26 key informants were purposively selected based on their roles, experience, and relevance to the study. A stratified random sampling technique was used to select household heads. Each village formed a stratum, and the number of respondents drawn from each village was proportional to its household population. This ensured fair representation of both farmers and pastoralists. While, purposive sampling was used to select 26 key informants, including Village chairpersons, Village Executive Officers (VEOs), Ward Executive Officers (WEOs), Agricultural and livestock officers, Security committee leaders, traditional leaders (Laigwanani/Laibon), District Executive Director (DED), and Officer Commanding District (OCD). Additionally, eight Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted, two in each village-separately for farmers and pastoralists.

Multiple data collection methods were used to enhance triangulation and validity. A structured questionnaire was administered to 391 household heads to collect quantitative data on climate change awareness, environmental stressors, and use practices, adaptation strategies, and livelihood impacts. The questionnaire included Likert-scale items, closed-ended questions, and a few open-ended items. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 26 key informants to gather in-depth insights on historical land use changes, climate-related challenges, conflict dynamics, and institutional responses. Eight Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) (6–8 participants each) explored shared experiences and community perceptions of climate change and land use. Transect walks were conducted to observe flood-affected areas, drought-stricken grazing lands, soil degradation, and encroachment patterns. Secondary data were obtained from government reports, district profiles, climate policy documents, village land use plans, and academic publications. These documents provided historical and contextual information.

Measurement of variable was done through indicators such as frequency of droughts, rainfall variability, flood occurrence and temperature changes. Respondents rated severity on a 5-point Likert scale. The mediating variables including resource scarcity, pastoral mobility and land use overlap. This measured through frequency and severity scales. Moderating variables include institutional support, adaptation strategies, and socio-economic characteristics, measured through categorical and Likert-scale items. Dependent variable; land use patterns, measured through changes in cropping systems, farmland expansion, livestock mobility, and use of forest or marginal lands.

Ensuring the validity and reliability; content validity ensured through expert review by climate and land use specialists, construct validity achieved by aligning items with established climate-livelihood frameworks, while face validity confirmed during pilot testing. A pilot study involving 40 respondents (10% of the sample) was conducted in a non-study village to ensure the reliability. Cronbach's alpha results show climate stressors: 0.82, land use practices: 0.79 and adaptation strategies: 0.84. All exceeded the acceptable threshold of 0.70. The trustworthiness of qualitative Data was maintained through credibility which achieved through triangulation and member checking, dependability ensured by maintaining detailed field notes and an audit trail, conformability enhanced through verbatim transcription and peer debriefing, while transferability supported by thick descriptions of the study context.

In data analysis, quantitative data were coded and analyzed using SPSS Version 20. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means, were used to summarize climate stressors, land use changes, and adaptation strategies. Qualitative data were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) reflexive thematic analysis, involving familiarization, coding, theme development, theme review, theme definition, and report writing. Themes were aligned with the study objectives.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings of the study based on quantitative data from 391 household heads and qualitative insights from 26 key informants and eight focus group discussions. The results are organized according to the study objectives and supported by descriptive statistics and thematic analysis. A total of 391 questionnaires were administered to household heads across the four study villages. Of these, 366 questionnaires were fully completed and valid for analysis, yielding a response rate of 93.6%. Twenty-five questionnaires were excluded due to incomplete responses or inconsistencies identified during data cleaning.

Respondents included both farmers (n =193) and pastoralists (n = 173). Ages ranged from 30 to 80 years, with the majority (62%) aged between 35 and 60 years. Males constituted 79% of respondents, reflecting the cultural norm that household heads are predominantly men. Most respondents had primary-level education, and farming or livestock keeping was their main livelihood activity. These demographic characteristics provide context for interpreting land use decisions and climate change perceptions. Respondents were asked to identify the major environmental challenges affecting their land use practices. Four key stressors emerged including drought, flooding, soil acidity, and erratic rainfall.

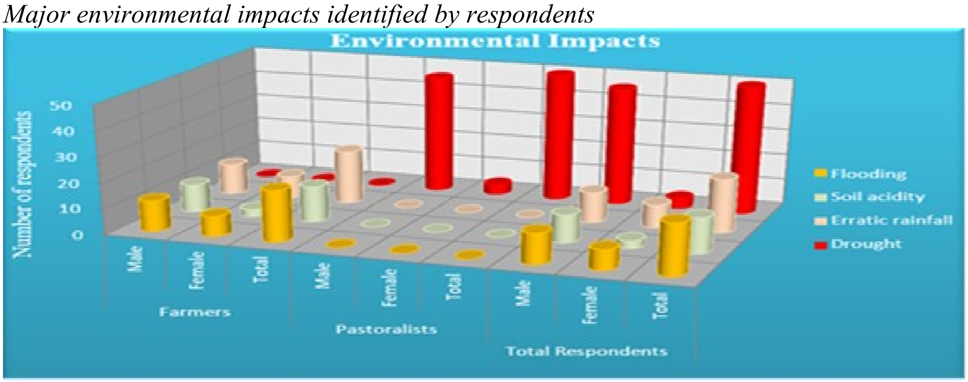
Table 1
Environmental Stressors Reported by Respondents

Environmental Challenge	Pastoralists (n=173)	Farmers (n=193)	Total (n=366)	Percentage (%)
Drought	165	28	193	52.7%
Flooding	5	142	147	40.2%
Soil Acidity	0	15	15	4.1%
Erratic Rainfall	3	8	11	3.0%

Source: Field Data (2024)

Drought was the most frequently reported stressor, cited by 52.7% of respondents. It was especially severe among pastoralists, with 95.4% identifying it as their primary challenge. Respondents explained that prolonged dry spells had depleted water sources and pasture, forcing livestock to migrate long distances. Flooding was the second most reported challenge, affecting 73.6% of farmers. Farmers noted that heavy rainfall events had become more unpredictable, damaging crops, delaying planting, and causing soil erosion. Soil acidity and erratic rainfall were less frequently reported but still contributed to reduced agricultural productivity and uncertainty in land preparation. During field observations, several low-lying areas in Hembeti and Doma villages were found submerged following intense rainfall. Farmers reported that such flooding events had become more frequent in recent years, destroying crops and forcing temporary relocation. The study examined how climate variability has altered land use patterns among farmers and pastoralists.

Figure 3
Major environmental impacts identified by respondents



Source: Field Data (2024)

Farmers reported several adaptive changes in response to climate stress including shifting to drought-tolerant and short-cycle crops, expanding farmland into previously uncultivated areas, increasing reliance on groundwater and small-scale irrigation, planting trees to restore degraded land, and adjusting planting and harvesting calendars. These changes were driven by unpredictable rainfall, declining soil fertility, and increased flooding. Pastoralists reported significant disruptions to traditional grazing patterns. Table 2 summarizes key indicators.

Table 2
Climate-related impacts on pastoralist mobility

Indicator	Respondents (n=173)	Percentage (%)
Pasture scarcity due to drought	171	98.8%
Long-distance migration (≥ 40 km)	168	97.1%
Live tock collapse/death due to hunger	168	97.1%
Slaughtering dying animals for survival	112	64.7%

Source: Field Data (2024)

Pastoralists explained that formerly grass-dominated rangelands had transformed into shrub lands due to rising temperatures. This ecological shift reduced forage availability, forcing livestock keepers to migrate up to 40 km in search of pasture and water. A key informant stated:

> *"Pasture has dried out due to high temperatures. The area has changed from grasses to shrubs and woods, which livestock cannot eat. This has forced us to move far from our homes."* (Key Informant, November 2024)

One of the most significant findings of the study is the link between climate change, land use overlap, and rising conflict.

Table 3
Effects of Climate-Induced Land Use Conflicts

Impact on Human Security	Pastoralists (n=173)	Farmers (n=193)	Total (n=366)	Percentage (%)
Physical assault or injury	122	138	260	71.0%
Destruction of property	95	104	199	54.4%
Deaths reported	48	52	100	27.3%
Sexual violence	7	11	18	4.9%
Fear and displacement	135	146	281	76.8%

Source: Field Data (2024)

Respondents reported that conflicts often began when livestock entered crop fields during migration. Farmers guarding their fields confronted pastoralists, leading to violent clashes. A farmer explained:

> *"When livestock enter our farms andwe try to chase them out, the pastoralists resist. They fight back with weapons. Some farmers have been beaten, even killed."* (Key Informant, November 2024)

Respondents noted that village leaders often failed to intervene promptly, perpetrators were rarely held accountable, and existing land use plans were poorly enforced. These weaknesses contributed to a cycle of revenge, fear, and displacement. The results demonstrate that, climate change has introduced severe environmental stressors, particularly drought and flooding, farmers and pastoralists have significantly altered their land use practices in response to climate variability, pastoral mobility has increased, leading to encroachment into farming areas, land use conflicts have intensified, resulting in injuries, deaths, displacement, and destruction of property, and institutional mechanisms remain weak, limiting effective conflict resolution and climate adaptation.

This section also discusses the study's findings in relation to existing global, regional, and national literature. The discussion is organized around the major themes emerging from the results including environmental stressors and land use dynamics, shifts in agricultural and pastoral practices, and climate-induced land use conflicts and human security.

Environmental stressors and land use dynamics

The study found that drought and flooding are the most significant environmental stressors affecting land use patterns in Mvomero District. More than half of the respondents (52.7%) identified drought as the primary challenge, while 40.2% reported flooding as a major concern. These findings align with global assessments by the IPCC (2022), which indicate that climate change is intensifying the frequency and severity of extreme weather events, particularly in tropical regions.

Figure 4
Flooding caused by erratic rainfall at Hembeti Village, Mvomero District

Source: Field Data (2024)

At the regional level, similar patterns have been documented across East Africa. Nkiaka *et al*. (2020) and Gebremeskel *et al*. (2021) report that prolonged droughts and erratic rainfall have disrupted agricultural calendars and reduced pasture availability, forcing communities to modify land use practices. The situation in Mvomero mirrors these regional trends, demonstrating how climate variability directly affects land productivity and resource availability.

Nationally, the Tanzania Meteorological Authority (TMA, 2022) has reported increasing rainfall variability and rising temperatures across the country. These climatic shifts have contributed to soil degradation, water scarcity, and reduced agricultural output. The presence of soil acidity and erratic rainfall in Mvomero, though less frequently reported, is consistent with findings from other Tanzanian districts such as Kilosa and Kiteto, where climate-induced soil degradation has reduced agricultural viability (Kangalawe, 2020). Overall, the environmental stressors identified in this study reflect broader climate change patterns observed globally and nationally, reinforcing the need for localized adaptation strategies.

Shifts in agricultural and pastoral practices

Farmers in Mvomero have responded to climate variability by adopting several adaptation strategies, including shifting to drought-tolerant and short-cycle crops, expanding farmland into new areas. Increasing reliance on groundwater and small-scale irrigation, planting trees to rehabilitate degraded land, and adjusting planting and harvesting calendars. These findings are consistent with global literature indicating that farmers increasingly adopt climate-smart agriculture to cope with unpredictable weather patterns (Thornton *et al*., 2021). Similar adaptation strategies have been documented in Kenya, Ethiopia, and Uganda, where farmers have modified cropping systems to reduce vulnerability to climate shocks (Teshome *et al*., 2022).

In Tanzania, studies by Kashaigili *et al*. (2021) and URT (2023) show that farmers are increasingly adopting drought-resistant crops and expanding cultivation into marginal lands due to declining soil fertility and rainfall variability. The findings from Mvomero therefore align with national adaptation trends, highlighting the growing importance of climate-smart agricultural practices. Pastoralists in Mvomero reported significant ecological changes in grazing lands, including the transformation of grasslands into shrublands due to rising temperatures. This has resulted in increased long-distance migration example up to 40 km, higher livestock mortality, reduced milk production, and slaughtering of dying animals as a coping strategy. These findings are consistent with regional studies showing that climate change has disrupted traditional pastoral mobility patterns in East Africa (Herrero *et al*., 2020). In Kenya's Turkana and Ethiopia's Afar regions, pastoralists have been forced to migrate longer distances due to declining pasture and water availability (Mkutu, 2020; Gebremeskel *et al*., 2021).

Nationally, Msuya *et al*. (2020) reported similar patterns in semi-arid Tanzania, where recurrent droughts have reduced pasture quality and increased livestock mortality. The ecological shift from grasses to shrubs observed in Mvomero is also consistent with findings from Simanjiro and Kiteto, where rangeland degradation has intensified pastoral vulnerability (Maleko, 2015). Thus, the study confirms that climate change is reshaping pastoral livelihoods in Tanzania, with significant implications for mobility, livestock health, and household resilience.

Climate-induced land use conflicts and human security
One of the most critical findings of this study is the link between climate change, land use overlap, and rising conflict between farmers and pastoralists. More than 71% of respondents reported physical assault or

injury, while 76.8% reported fear and displacement due to conflict. These findings reflect a growing body of literature that identifies climate change as a catalyst for resource-based conflicts.

Globally, studies have shown that climate-induced resource scarcity increases the likelihood of violent conflict, particularly in regions where livelihoods depend heavily on natural resources (Detges, 2020). In the Sahel, for example, competition over water and grazing land has intensified clashes between farmers and herders (Nyong & Fiki, 2021). Regionally, East Africa has experienced similar tensions. In Kenya, Ethiopia, and Uganda, climate variability has exacerbated farmer–herder conflicts, often resulting in fatalities, displacement, and destruction of property (Mkutu, 2020; Teshome et al., 2022). In Tanzania, studies by Mwamfupe (2015) and Rweyemamu (2018) highlight that climate-induced migration and land scarcity are major drivers of farmer–pastoralist conflicts. The findings from Mvomero align with these national trends, demonstrating that climate change intensifies competition over land and water, leading to violent confrontations.

The study also found that weak institutional frameworks such as poor enforcement of Village Land Use Plans (VLUPs), inadequate conflict resolution mechanisms, and limited accountability exacerbate tensions. This is consistent with national reports indicating that land governance challenges undermine efforts to manage resource-based conflicts (MLHHSD, 2021). Thus, climate change does not act alone; it interacts with institutional weaknesses to produce conflict outcomes. Overall, the study demonstrates that climate change is a major driver of environmental stress in Mvomero, famers and pastoralists are adapting, but their strategies often lead to land use overlap, resource scarcity and mobility pressures intensify competition over land, weak institutions fail to mediate disputes effectively, and the result is heightened conflict, insecurity, and livelihood vulnerability. These findings reinforce global and national evidence that climate change is not only an environmental issue but also a socio-economic and security challenge.

CONCLUSION

This study examined how climate change affects land use patterns among farmers and pastoralists in Mvomero District, Tanzania. The findings demonstrate that climate variability particularly prolonged droughts, erratic rainfall, and seasonal flooding has significantly reshaped agricultural and pastoral systems. These environmental stressors have reduced water availability, degraded soils, and diminished pasture quality, forcing both farmers and pastoralists to modify their land use practices. Farmers have responded by shifting to drought-tolerant crops, expanding farmland into new areas, adopting groundwater irrigation, and adjusting planting calendars. Pastoralists, on the other hand, have experienced severe pasture scarcity, leading to long-distance livestock migration, increased livestock mortality, and reliance on emergency coping strategies. These adaptations, while necessary for survival, have intensified land use overlap and competition for scarce resources. The study further reveals that climate-induced resource scarcity has escalated farmer-pastoralist conflicts, resulting in injuries, deaths, displacement, and destruction of property. Weak institutional mechanisms-including poor enforcement of Village Land Use Plans, limited conflict resolution capacity, and inadequate accountability-have exacerbated tensions and undermined community resilience. Overall, the study concludes that climate change is not only an environmental challenge but also a driver of socio-economic vulnerability and human insecurity in Mvomero District. Addressing these challenges requires integrated, multi-level interventions that strengthen adaptation capacity, improve land governance, and promote peaceful coexistence between farmers and pastoralists.

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Drivers of Enrolment Intention towards Social Health Insurance among Informal Sector Workers in Tanzania: Moderating Role of Health Literacy

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Abstract
The focus of the study is to examine the moderating role of health literacy on the determinants of enrolment intention towards social health insurance among informal sector workers in Tanzania. The study employed a positivist research philosophy, a deductive approach, and an explanatory research design. Using stratified and systematic random sampling techniques, a sample of 350 vendors from local markets across Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, was selected. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire and analysed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM). The findings reveal that attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control significantly, and positively affect enrolment intention in social health insurance. Nonetheless, health literacy significantly moderates only the relationship between perceived behavioural control and enrolment intention. This study contributes to the literature by integrating the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) with health literacy to assess enrolment intention in the context of social health insurance among informal sector workers in Tanzania. It is among the first studies in the region to explore the moderating role of health literacy in the effects of attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control on enrolment intention. The findings offer theoretical insights and practical implications for designing health insurance policies and literacy interventions targeted at underserved populations.

Keywords: *Health literacy, social health insurance, Informal sector workers, Enrolment intention.*

INTRODUCTION
Enrolment in social health insurance schemes is a key factor in ensuring equitable access to healthcare services worldwide (Achmadi *et al.,* 2024).

Globally, social health insurance systems have been established to provide financial protection against high medical costs, especially for vulnerable populations (Tam *et al.,* 2021). These systems are widely used in both developed and developing countries. For example, countries like Germany, Japan, and South Korea are achieving near-universal health coverage through compulsory social health insurance (Ranabhat *et al.,* 2023). However, the success of such systems depends on widespread enrolment, as higher participation rates enable better risk pooling and more efficient healthcare delivery (Azizam *et al.,* 2020).

In developing countries, including many African countries, the effectiveness of social health insurance schemes has been hindered by low enrolment rates, particularly among informal sector workers who constitute a large portion of the workforce (Kazaure, 2019). While countries such as Rwanda and Ghana have made strides in expanding social health insurance coverage, Tanzania continues to face significant challenges in this regard (Malik and Alemu, 2024). The informal sector, which comprises over 75% of the Tanzanian workforce, faces unique challenges in accessing health insurance due to irregular income, lack of formal employment, and limited knowledge (Nzowa *et al.,* 2023). These challenges hinder the effectiveness of social health insurance schemes in achieving universal healthcare coverage (Mwinuka *et al.,* 2024).

There are numerous efforts to expand health insurance coverage in Tanzania. Yet, the enrolment rate in social health insurance schemes, particularly among informal sector workers, remains low (Kitole *et al.,* 2023; Afriyie *et al.,* 2024). The persistent low enrolment rates among informal sector workers raise concerns about achieving universal health insurance targets in the country (Mwinuka *et al.,* 2024).

Previous studies have identified several factors influencing intentions to enrol in health insurance, such as attitudes toward health insurance (Sun *et al.,* 2024), subjective norms (Nie *et al.,* 2023), and perceived behavioural control (Maurya and Yasmeen, 2023), primarily through the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB). A favourable attitude toward health insurance is associated with a higher intention to enrol, as individuals who perceive it as beneficial for managing healthcare costs are more likely to proactively decide to join (Sun *et al.,* 2024).

On the other hand, subjective norms contribute to increasing enrolment intention as suggested by TPB (Mamun *et al.,* 2021). This is because individuals are more likely to enrol in health insurance when they perceive social pressure or approval from important people in their lives, such as family, friends, or community leaders (Nie *et al.,* 2023). Moreover, perceived behavioural control influences health insurance enrolment by increasing confidence in overcoming barriers like affordability and the complexities of insurance schemes, leading to a higher likelihood of enrolling if individuals feel in control of the process (Raza *et al.,* 2020). However, these studies have primarily focused on different health insurance, such as commercial, private, or Islamic health insurance in countries like China, Australia, and Vietnam (Nie *et al.,* 2023; Tam *et al.,* 2021; Mai and Mai, 2023). Consequently, there is a notable lack of studies focusing on social health insurance enrolment in developing countries like Tanzania, where informal sector workers face distinct challenges (Afriyie *et al.,* 2024).

Moreover, empirical evidence on the effects of attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control on health insurance enrolment shows mixed results, with some studies indicating positive and significant relationships (Sun *et al.,* 2024; Maurya and Yasmeen, 2023) and others finding negative and insignificant effects (Do and Mai, 2023; Achmadi *et al.,* 2024). This inconsistency suggests a lack of theoretical foundation to explain health insurance enrolment.

Furthermore, limited attention has been given to the role of health literacy as a moderating variable, which could enhance the predictive power of the TPB (Mai and Mai, 2023). Drawing from Self-Determination Theory (SDT), health literacy was introduced as a moderator to explain how individuals' knowledge and understanding of health insurance influence the effect of attitude, subjective norms, perceived and behavioural control on enrolment intention (Zheng *et al.,* 2020; Caso *et al.,* 2024). By integrating TPB and SDT, this study provides a stronger theoretical foundation for explaining heterogeneous enrolment behaviours and enhances the explanatory power of TPB in the context of social health insurance.

The current study aimed to examine the moderating role of health literacy on the determinants of enrolment intention towards social health insurance among informal sector workers in Tanzania, with a specific focus on Dar es Salaam. The study focused with Dar es Salaam because it has the largest concentration of informal sector workers in Tanzania, where the problem of low enrolment in social health insurance is most prevalent (NBS, 2019).

This study contributes to theoretical and practical knowledge, as well as to policy. Theoretically, the study extends TPB by using health literacy as a moderator variable on the effects of TPB factors on enrolment intention in social health insurance. This increases the predictive power of TPB in explaining enrolment intention in the context of social health insurance. Practically, the findings offer valuable insights into the management of social health insurance schemes. It also offers strategies to develop more effective outreach and education initiatives that address the role of health literacy in fostering health insurance enrolment among informal sector workers. From a policy perspective, the study provides valuable recommendations to improve health literacy among informal sector workers. Consequently, the study supports the Tanzanian Government's goal of achieving universal health insurance coverage.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review

This study integrates the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) and Self-Determination Theory (SDT) to identify key theoretical drivers influencing enrolment intentions in social health insurance and to inform the development of the conceptual framework. The TPB, an extension of the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), posits that behavioural intention is influenced by attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975; Ajzen, 1985). While TRA lacked explanatory power in situations involving limited individual control, TPB addressed this by including perceived behavioural control as an additional determinant (Maurya and Yasmeen, 2023; Raza *et al.,* 2020). In the context of health insurance, TPB suggests that enrolment intention is shaped by individuals' attitudes, perceived social pressure, and their sense of control over the process (Mai and Mai, 2023; Sun *et al.,* 2024). Studies such as Brahmana *et al.,* (2018); Nie *et al.,* (2023), and Kazaure (2019) confirm the usefulness of TPB in predicting health insurance enrolment. The theory is praised for its comprehensiveness, flexibility, and predictive power (Shetu, 2024; Zareban *et al.,* 2024), but it falls short in considering demographic influences such as education or literacy (Sun *et al.,* 2024). To mitigate this gap, this study incorporates SDT to account for the role of health literacy.

SDT developed by Deci and Ryan in the 1980s, emphasises the role of internal motivation in shaping human behaviour through the fulfilment of autonomy, competence, and relatedness needs (Deci and Ryan, 1980). When individuals feel autonomous, competent, and socially connected, their motivation, well-being, and performance improve (Evans *et al.,* 2024). Applied to health insurance, SDT posits that health literacy enhances individuals' ability to make informed decisions, increases their confidence in understanding insurance products, and encourages engagement when supported by others (Caso *et al.,* 2024; Zheng *et al.,* 2020; Srikanteshwara and Ilavarasu, 2024). SDT's strength lies in its focus on intrinsic motivation and adaptability across disciplines. However, its limitation is its minimal focus on external constraints such as socioeconomic factors (Caso *et al.,* 2024). Therefore, researchers recommend combining SDT with TPB to provide a broader and more comprehensive understanding of complex decisions, such as health insurance enrolment (Srikanteshwara and Ilavarasu, 2024).

Health literacy is incorporated as a moderating variable to strengthen the explanatory power of TPB. Within TPB, the effects of attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control on intention depend on individuals' capacity to understand and evaluate health insurance information. Health literacy enhances this capacity by improving cognitive processing, informed judgment, and realistic assessment of enrolment constraints. From an SDT perspective, health literacy reinforces autonomy and perceived competence, enabling more self-determined and informed enrolment intentions (Caso *et al.,* 2024). Thus, health literacy conditions the strength of the relationships between TPB constructs and enrolment intention, offering a clearer theoretical explanation for observed variations in social health insurance participation.

Development of Research Hypotheses

Attitude

Attitude refers to an individual's positive or negative evaluation of engaging in specific behaviour (Tam *et al.,* 2021). Empirical studies on the effects of attitude on enrolment intention have shown mixed results (Tam *et al.,* 2021; Mai and Mai, 2023). However, most studies aligned with the TPB revealed that attitude and enrolment are positively and significantly related (Sun *et al.,* 2024; Mai and Mai, 2023; Kazaure, 2019). Individuals with favourable attitudes toward health insurance perceive it as beneficial in terms of financial protection and access to medical services. This increases their willingness to enrol (Sun *et al.,* 2024). Based on most of the studies and the TPB, the following hypothesis statement was developed:

H_1: *Attitude has a positive effect on enrolment intention in social health insurance among informal sector workers.*

Subjective Norms

Subjective norms refer to the perceived social pressure to perform or not perform a behaviour (Azizam *et al.,* 2020). Previous studies have produced contradictory findings on the effect of subjective norms on enrolment intention in health insurance (Mamun *et al.,* 2021; Azizam *et al.,* 2020). However, most studies are consistent with the TPB, which have shown a positive and significant relationship between subjective norms and enrolment intention (Mamun *et al.,* 2021; Brahmana *et al.,* 2018; Nie *et al.,* 2023). Subjective norms positively influence enrolment in intention in health insurance because individuals are often influenced by the opinions and behaviours of those around them, such as family, friends, or society at large (Nie *et al.,* 2023). Drawing the insights from most of the studies and TPB, this study developed the following hypothesis statement:

H_2: *Subjective norms have a positive effect on enrolment intention in social* health *insurance among informal sector workers.*

Perceived Behavioural Control

Perceived behavioural control is defined by Raza *et al.,* (2020) as an individual belief in their ability to perform a specific behaviour, based on their perception of the ease or difficulty of doing so. Earlier studies on the effect of perceived behavioural control on enrolment intention in health insurance have shown mixed results (Maurya and Yasmeen, 2023; Achmadi *et al.,* 2024). However, most empirical studies are consistent with TPB, finding a positive and significant relationship between perceived behavioural control and enrolment intention (Maurya and Yasmeen 2023; Raza *et al.,* 2020; Nzowa *et al.,* 2023). Perceived behavioural control positively affects enrolment intention in health insurance because it reflects an individual's belief in their ability to overcome barriers and complete the enrolment process. When people feel that they have sufficient resources, opportunities, and self-efficacy to enrol in social health insurance, they are more likely to enrol in health insurance (Raza *et al.,* 2020). Drawing on the previous studies and the TPB, this study developed the following hypothesis:

H_3: *Perceived behavioural control has a positive effect on enrolment intention in social* health *insurance among informal sector workers.*

Health Literacy

Health literacy refers to the degree to which individuals can access, comprehend, and use information to make appropriate health-related decisions (Zheng *et al.,* 2020). The role of health literacy as a moderating variable was proposed to test the effects of attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behaviour control on enrolment intention in social health insurance among informal sector workers. The objective is to increase the predictive power of the TPB in understanding enrolment decisions. Individuals with high health literacy are more informed about health insurance benefits and the enrolment process, which can affect their perception of control and decision-making processes (Caso *et al.,* 2024; Zheng *et al.,* 2020). In contrast, individuals with low health literacy may face challenges in understanding and acting upon health insurance information, potentially affecting their intentions differently (Srikanteshwara and Ilavarasu, 2024). Thus, based on the given explanation, the following hypotheses are developed:

H_{4a}: *Health literacy positively moderates the relationship between attitude and* enrolment *intention in social health insurance among informal sector workers.*

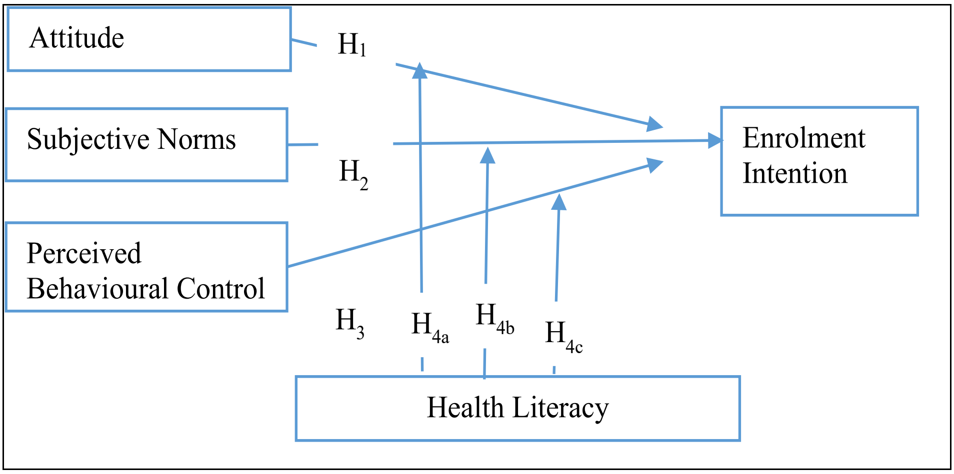
H_{4b}: *Health literacy positively moderates the relationship between* subjective *norms and enrolment intention in social health insurance among informal sector workers.*

H_{4c}: *Health literacy positively moderates the relationship between* perceived *behavioural control and enrolment intention in social health insurance among informal sector workers.*

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework in Figure 1 is based on the integration of the TPB and SDT to explain enrolment intention in social health insurance. The study assumes that enrolment intention in social health insurance is direct influenced by attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control, these are drawn from TPB. Moreover, health literacy drawn from SDT is a moderating variable in the effects of attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control on enrolment intention in social health insurance.

Figure 1
Conceptual Framework



METHODOLOGY

Research Philosophy and Approach

This study adopted a positivist research philosophy. The philosophy emphasises the existence of an objective reality and the use of scientific methods, including statistical analysis, to test hypotheses and analyse measurable data (Wati, 2024; Mazengo and Mwaifyusi, 2021). Positivism was appropriate for this study as it aimed to empirically examine the moderating role of health literacy on the relationship between attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control, and enrolment intention. In line with this philosophy, the study employed a deductive research approach. The approach involves deriving hypotheses from established theories and testing them through empirical observation (Premraj, 2024; Hall *et al.,* 2023). Specifically, hypotheses were developed based on the TPB and SDT.

Research Design, Strategy, and Study Area

This study adopted an explanatory research design, which is suitable for examining causal relationships using a deductive approach (Swedberg, 2020; Mmasi and Mwaifyusi, 2021). The design was chosen to explore the causal links between attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control, health literacy, and the intention to enrol in social health insurance. To operationalise this design, the study employed a survey research strategy, which aligns with the positivist and deductive paradigm (Hall *et al.,* 2023). The survey strategy was suitable for collecting quantitative data from a large sample, allowing for the statistical testing of hypotheses and generalisation of findings. It also supported the structured analysis of relationships among variables derived from theoretical frameworks (Swedberg, 2020).

With regards to study area, the study was conducted in Dar es Salaam, Tanzanian largest city, and economic hub (Kirumirah and Munishi, 2022). The city was selected due to its high concentration of informal sector workers, who contribute over 3.2% to the national GDP (NBS, 2019). The research focused on five major markets including Kariakoo, Temeke Stereo, Tegeta, Kigamboni Ferry, and Simu 2000 which represent key informal economic zones within the city.

Population, Sampling Procedures and Sample Size

This study focused on informal sector workers from five major markets, comprising a total population of 12,378 registered vendors (DCC, 2023). Due to the positivist approach adopted, probability sampling was deemed the most appropriate method. Specifically, stratified random sampling was used to categorise the markets into five strata based on worker numbers. Within each stratum, systematic random sampling was applied to ensure proportional representation and reduce selection bias, as recommended by Hair *et al.,* (2016).

Each market's proportion to the total population was calculated to allocate the sample accordingly: Kariakoo (47.6%), Temeke Stereo (20.0%), Tegeta (11.1%), Kigamboni Ferry (10.7%), and Simu 2000 (10.6%). Systematic sampling intervals were determined by dividing population size with its corresponding stratum sample size, where all strata yielded an interval of every 35th individual, ensuring consistency across the sample.

Given that Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) requires large samples, and considering the 21 questionnaire items, a minimum of 315 participants was estimated based on the rule of 15 participants per item (Field, 2009). Kass and Tinsley (1979) also support a sample size of 300 for SEM. Nonetheless, based on previous studies in social health insurance that employed surveys, the average response rate was 85.6%, implying 14.4% non-response rate (Afriyie *et al.,* 2024; Azizam *et al.,* 2020). To accommodate this expected non-response rate, the final sample was adjusted by dividing 300 by 0.856, yielding a sample of 350. Hence, the study used a final sample size of 350 vendors from the informal sector. The distribution of the sample across the five local markets is outlined in Table 1.

Table 1

Sample Distribution by Stratum and Systematic Sampling Interval

Stratum	Ratio	Sample Size (350 × Ratio)	Sampling Interval (K/n)
Kariakoo	0.476	167	5,891/167 = 35th
Temeke Stereo	0.200	70	2,478/70 = 35th
Tegeta	0.111	39	1,370/39 = 35th
Kigamboni Ferry	0.107	37	1,322/37 = 35th
Simu 2000	0.106	37	1,317/37 = 35th
Total	1	350	

Selected vendors were approached in person at their market stalls during normal business hours by trained research assistants, who explained the purpose of the study and invited voluntary participation. In cases where a selected vendor declined or was unavailable, the next vendor in the sampling sequence within the same stratum was approached as a replacement, ensuring that proportional representation across markets was maintained while minimising potential self-selection bias.

Research Instruments and Measurement

The study employed a structured, self-administered questionnaire using the drop-and-collect method to enhance response rates and data reliability (Hair *et al.,* 2016; Hall *et al.,* 2023; Mwaifyusi and Dau, 2022). The questionnaire consisted of sections on demographic characteristics and constructs related to the study variables: attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control, health literacy, and enrolment intention in social health insurance. All variables were measured using previously validated items and assessed on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), as supported in prior studies

(Sun *et al.,* 2024; Do & Mai, 2023; Achmadi *et al.,* 2024). Table 2 presents the summary of variables, constructs, measurement scales, and sources.

Table 1
Measurement

Variables	Constructs	Measurement	Sources
Attitude	– Perceived benefits (ATT1) – Perceived drawbacks (ATT2) – Perceived necessity (ATT3) – Past service satisfaction (ATT4) – Trust in the system (ATT5)	5-point Likert scale	Sun *et al.,* (2024); Do and Mai (2023); Mai and Mai (2023)
Subjective norms	– Family influence (SN1) – Media influence (SN2) – Community expectation (SN3) – Cultural belief (SN4)	5-point Likert scale	Brahmana *et al.,* (2018); Mamun *et al.,* (2021); Nie *et al.,* (2023)
Perceived behavioural control	– Financial capacity (PBC1) – Past experiences (PBC2) – Access to information (PBC3) – Enrolment accessibility (PBC4)	5-point Likert scale	Maurya and Yasmeen (2023); Raza *et al.,* (2020); Achmadi *et al.,* (2024)
Health literacy	– Autonomy (HL1) – Competence (HL2) – Relatedness (HL3)	5-point Likert scale	Zheng *et al.,* (2020); Caso *et al.,* (2024)
Enrolment intention	– Intend to enrol (EI1) – Recommendation (EI2) – Plan to enrol (EI3) – Consideration (EI4) – Willingness to pay (EI5)	5-point Likert scale	Mamun *et al.,* (2021); Tam *et al.,* (2021); Nie *et al.,* (2023)

Data Analysis Techniques
Data analysis in this study began with editing and coding to ensure consistency and accuracy of the responses. Descriptive statistics were then performed using SPSS Version 26 to summarise demographic characteristics of the respondents, including age, gender, and education level. This preliminary analysis helped demonstrate the representativeness of the sample and supported the validity of subsequent findings.

Thereafter, inferential analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) through SmartPLS software (Version 4.1.1.2). This method was selected due to its strength in handling complex models, its flexibility with small to medium sample sizes, and its robustness in cases where data may deviate from multivariate normality (Hair *et al.,* 2016). The inferential process was carried out in two main stages. The first stage involved assessing the measurement model to ensure the reliability and validity of the constructs.

Reliability was tested using outer loadings, Cronbach's Alpha, and composite reliability (rho_a and rho_c). At the same time, convergent and discriminant validity were evaluated using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), the Fornell-Larcker criterion, and the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio, as suggested by Hair *et al.,* (2019).

In the second stage, the structural model was analysed to test the direct effects of attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control on enrolment, and the moderating role of health literacy on these relationships. The metrics used in this stage included path coefficients, t-values, and p-values obtained through a bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 subsamples. Moreover, R^2 values were used to measure the variance explained by the model, while f^2 and Q^2 statistics were used to assess effect size and predictive relevance.

RESULTS

Response Rate

A total of 350 questionnaires were distributed to informal sector workers across five major markets in Dar es Salaam. Out of these, 342 were returned, resulting in a high return rate of 97.7%. However, after data screening, 7 questionnaires were excluded due to incompleteness or invalid responses, leaving 335 valid and usable questionnaires for analysis. This yielded an effective response rate of 95.7%, as shown in Table 3. According to Evans *et al.,* (2024), a response rate above 70% is considered very good in survey research. Mamun *et al.,* (2021) also emphasises that high response rates reduce the risk of nonresponse bias and enhance the representativeness of the data.

Table 3
Survey Response Rate

Response Category	Frequency	Percent (%)
Questionnaires distributed	350	100.0
Questionnaires returned	342	97.7
Incomplete/Invalid questionnaires	7	2.0
Valid questionnaires for analysis	335	95.7
Total response rate		95.7

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The findings in Table 4 present the demographic characteristics of the 335 informal venders who participated in the study. Most respondents (34.3%) were aged between 26 and 35 years, followed by 20.6% aged 36 to 45 years, and 20.3% aged 18 to 25 years. A smaller proportion fell within the age brackets of 46 to 55 years (13.7%) and 56 years and above (11.0%).

This age distribution suggests that a significant portion of the respondents are in their economically active years, which is relevant to the study since individuals in this age range are more likely to consider enrolling in social health insurance for both current and future healthcare needs. Moreover, the study found that male constituted the majority of respondents (61.2%), while females accounted for 38.8%. This gender imbalance may reflect the gender composition of the informal market in Dar es Salaam, where male dominance in certain occupations is more pronounced. Regarding education levels, 39.7% of the respondents had completed primary school, 36.1% had secondary or high school education, and the remaining 24.2% possessed post-secondary qualifications (certificate/ diploma or bachelor's degree). These findings suggest that a large portion of informal sector workers have limited formal education, which may influence their health literacy and understanding of health insurance schemes.

Table 4
Respondents' Profile

Demographic Variables	Response	Frequency	Percent
Age	18-25 years	68	20.3
	26-35 years	115	34.3
	36-45 years	69	20.6
	46-55 years	46	13.7
	56 +	37	11.0
	Total	335	100.0
Gender	Male	205	61.2
	Female	130	38.8
	Total	335	100.0
Level of Education	Primary School	133	39.7
	Secondary/High School	121	36.1
	Certificate/Diploma	42	12.5
	Bachelor	39	11.6
	Total	335	100.0

Descriptive Statistics

The results in Table 5 presents descriptive statistics for key constructs in the study, including attitude (ATT), subjective norms (SN), perceived behavioural control (PBC), health literacy (HL), and enrolment intention (EI) toward social health insurance among informal sector workers. Attitude items (ATT1 to ATT5) recorded means between 3.14 and 3.37, with standard deviations ranging from 1.027 to 1.169, indicating moderate agreement and a positive perception. Subjective norms (SN1 to SN4) showed means ranging from 3.14 to 3.29 and standard deviations from 1.118 to 1.187, indicating a moderate perceived social influence.

Perceived behavioural control (PBC1 to PBC4) had mean scores between 3.06 and 3.21, with lower standard deviations (0.940 to 1.061), reflecting consistent responses and moderate perceived control over enrolment decisions. Health literacy (HL1 to HL3) demonstrated lower means ranging from 2.81 to 3.13 and higher variability, with standard deviation (1.147 to 1.265), indicating modest levels of understanding health-related information. Enrolment intention (EI1 to EI5) displayed means between 3.05 and 3.25, with high standard deviations (1.205 to 1.366), implying a moderate yet varied willingness to enrol. All items ranged from a minimum of 1 to a maximum of 5, suggesting the full Likert scale was utilised across responses.

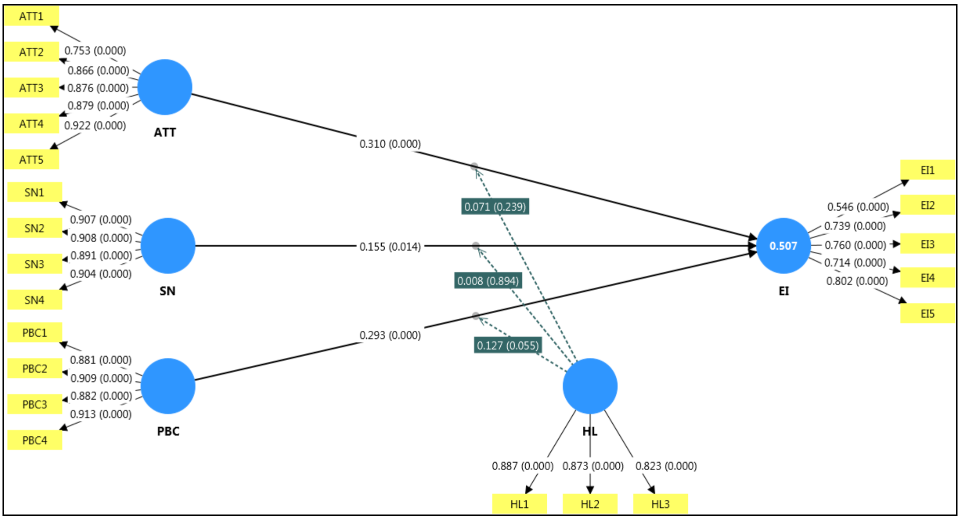
Table 5
Descriptive Statistics

Items	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev
ATT1	335	1	5	3.29	1.169
ATT2	335	1	5	3.29	1.029
ATT3	335	1	5	3.14	1.048
ATT4	335	1	5	3.37	1.072
ATT5	335	1	5	3.23	1.027
SN1	335	1	5	3.14	1.187
SN2	335	1	5	3.25	1.139
SN3	335	1	5	3.15	1.118
SN4	335	1	5	3.29	1.133
PBC1	335	1	5	3.06	.950
PBC2	335	1	5	3.12	.940
PBC3	335	1	5	3.21	1.061
PBC4	335	1	5	3.17	1.026
HL1	335	1	5	3.03	1.147
HL2	235	1	5	3.13	1.265
HL3	335	1	5	2.81	1.162
EI1	335	1	5	3.25	1.205
EI2	335	1	5	3.14	1.259
EI3	335	1	5	3.05	1.366
EI4	335	1	5	3.20	1.269
EI5	335	1	5	3.23	1.232

Measurement Model Evaluation

The reflective measurement model was assessed, following the guidelines by Hair *et al.,* (2019). Indicator reliability was evaluated through outer loadings, with all items exceeding the 0.60 threshold, except EI1 (loading = 0.546), which was removed due to insufficient reliability. This ensured that only reliable indicators were retained for subsequent structural model evaluation.

Figure 2
Smart PLS-SEM Measurement Model



The reflective measurement model in Figure 2 was further evaluated based on criteria established by Hair *et al.,* (2019), including indicator reliability, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity.

The indicator reliability assessment in Table 6 revealed that all reflective measurement items demonstrated strong outer loadings above the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Hair *et al.,* 2019), confirming adequate reliability across constructs. After the removal of one weak item (EI1), the remaining indicators for attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control, health literacy, and enrolment intention consistently showed satisfactory loadings.

Table 6
Outer Loadings Matrix

	ATT	SN	PBC	HL	EI
ATT1	0.753				
ATT2	0.866				
ATT3	0.877				
ATT4	0.879				
ATT5	0.922				
SN1		0.907			
SN2		0.908			
SN3		0.891			
SN4		0.904			
PBC1			0.881		
PBC2			0.909		
PBC3			0.880		
PBC4			0.913		
HL1				0.880	
HL2				0.872	
HL3				0.832	
EI2					0.756
EI3					0.771
EI4					0.745
EI5					0.817

After establishing indicator reliability, internal consistency reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, Dijkstra–Henseler's rho_A, and composite reliability(rho_C). As recommended by Henseler *et al.,* (2015), all constructs exhibited reliability values exceeding the threshold of 0.70. Both rho_A, and rho_C values ranged from 0.778 to 0.946, indicating high internal consistency among the items of each construct. Cronbach's Alpha values also confirmed the internal reliability of the constructs, with the lowest being 0.775 for enrolment intention and the highest being 0.924 for subjective norms. These reliability statistics are summarised in Table 7.

Table 7
Internal Consistency Reliability

Variables	Cronbach Alpha	Composite reliability(rho_a)	Composite reliability(rho_c)
ATT	0.912	0.920	0.935
SN	0.924	0.925	0.946
PBC	0.918	0.921	0.942
HL	0.827	0.829	0.896
EI	0.775	0.778	0.855

Moreover, convergent validity was confirmed through Average Variance Extracted (AVE), with all constructs exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.50 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The results in Table 8 show that all AVE values ranged from 0.597 to 0.815, indicating that each construct adequately explained the variance of its indicators.

Table 8
Construct Validity

Variables	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
ATT	0.742
SN	0.815
PBC	0.803
HL	0.743
EI	0.597

Discriminant validity was assessed using the Fornell-Larcker criterion and the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio, following Hair *et al.,* (2021). The Fornell-Larcker results in Table 9 show that the square root of each construct's AVE exceeded its correlations with other constructs, confirming discriminant validity. Moreover, all HTMT values were below the conservative threshold of 0.85, with the highest value being 0.690 between PBC and SN. These findings collectively confirm that discriminant validity was satisfactorily established for all constructs.

Table 9
Discriminant Validity – Fornell-Larcker Criterion and HTMT Ratio

Constructs	ATT (AVE)	EI (AVE)	HL (AVE)	PBC (AVE)	SN (AVE)	HTMT-ATT	HTMT-EI	HTMT-HL	HTMT-PBC	HTMT-SN
ATT	**0.861**	0.534	-0.299	0.452	0.452	–	0.631	0.345	0.495	0.497
EI	0.534	**0.773**	-0.392	0.563	0.531	0.631	–	0.488	0.666	0.628
HL	-0.299	-0.392	**0.862**	-0.430	-0.418	0.345	0.488	–	0.491	0.477
PBC	0.452	0.563	-0.430	**0.896**	0.637	0.495	0.666	0.491	–	0.690
SN	0.452	0.531	-0.418	0.637	**0.903**	0.497	0.628	0.477	0.690	–

Common Method Bias (CMB) Assessment

The study assessed common method bias (CMB) using inner model VIF values, as recommended by Hair et al. (2019). The results in Table 10 show that all VIF values ranged from 1.311 to 1.895, well below the threshold of 3.3, indicating no multicollinearity issues and confirming that CMB is not a concern. These results affirm the robustness and reliability of the structural model.

Table 10
Inner Model for Collinearity Statistics

Path	VIF
ATT -> EI	1.370
SN -> EI	1.895
HL x ATT -> EI	1.324
HL x PBC -> EI	1.794
HL x SN -> EI	1.840

Structural Model Results

The model was assessed based on multicollinearity, coefficient of determination (R^2), effect size (f^2), and predictive relevance (Q^2), in line with the guidelines provided by Hair *et al.,* (2019). Multicollinearity was assessed using VIF values. According to Kass and Tinsley (1979), VIF values below 3.3 suggest no serious multicollinearity issues. As presented in Table 11, all VIF values ranged from 1.231 to 2.927, confirming that multicollinearity does not pose a threat to the model's validity and ensuring the reliability of the coefficients.

Table 11
VIF Values

Items	VIF
ATT1	1.775
ATT2	2.737
ATT3	2.860
ATT4	2.854
ATT5	2.114
SN1	1.289
SN2	1.322
SN3	1.231
SN4	2.927
PBC1	2.717
PBC2	2.181
PBC3	2.715
PBC4	2.346
HL1	2.017
HL2	2.021
HL3	1.699
EI2	1.503
EI3	1.496
EI4	1.430
EI5	1.665

The explanatory and predictive power of the structural model was assessed using R^2 and Q^2 statistics as presented in Table 12. The R^2 value for enrolment intention was found to be 0.471, indicating that 47.1% of the variance in the dependent variable is explained by attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control, health literacy, and their interactions. According to Hair *et al.,* (2016), this R^2 value represents a moderate level of explanatory power, further supported by a significant t-statistic ($t = 9.493$, $p < 0.001$). In terms of predictive relevance, the Q^2 value of 0.427, derived through the blindfolding procedure, confirms that the model has strong predictive relevance for enrolment intention. This is reinforced by acceptable levels of RMSE (0.762) and MAE (0.608), as recommended by Hair *et al.,* (2019), which demonstrate robust out-of-sample predictive capability.

Table 12
Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

Variable	R^2	t statistic	P values	Q^2	RMSE	MAE
EI	0.471	9.493	0.000	0.427	0.762	0.608

Moreover, effect size (f^2) was used to determine the individual contribution of each exogenous variable. According to Hall *et al.,* (2023), f^2 values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 represent small, medium, and large effects, respectively. The results in Table 13 indicate that ATT ($f^2 = 0.113$) and PBC ($f^2 = 0.081$) had small-to-moderate effects on EI, while SN ($f^2 = 0.025$) had a small effect. Interaction terms including HL × ATT (0.012), HL × SN (0.015), and HL × PBC (0.017) showed only marginal moderating effects, indicating that HL contributes limited additional variance when interacting with other predictors.

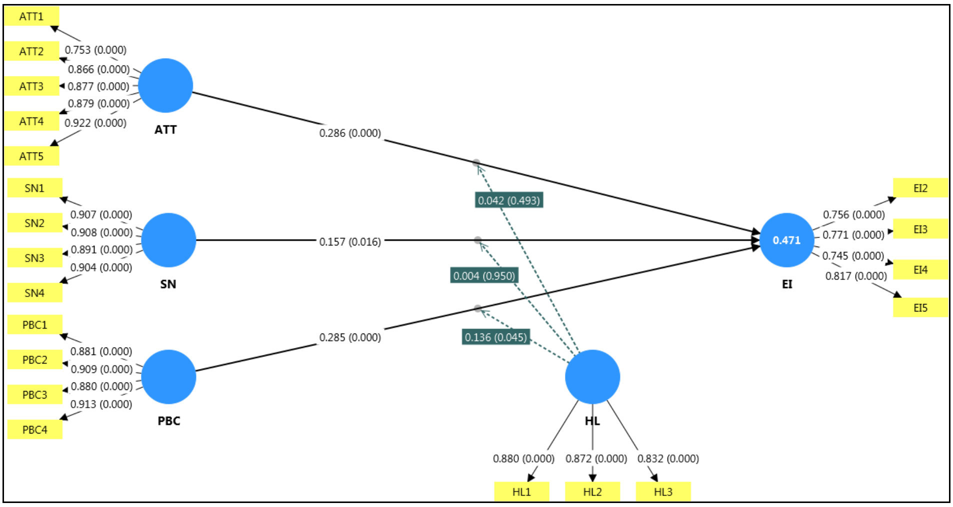
Table 13
Model Effect Size (f^2)

Path	f^2
ATT -> EI	0.113
SN -> EI	0.025
PBC -> EI	0.081
HL x ATT -> EI	0.012
HL x SN -> EI	0.015
HL x PBC -> EI	0.017

Hypothesis Testing

The model assessed both direct and moderating effects, specifically examining how attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control influence enrolment intention in social health insurance, and how health literacy moderates these relationships. As illustrated in Figure 4.2, the final model incorporates interaction terms and path relationships, with bootstrapping (5,000 subsamples) employed to assess the statistical significance of path coefficients, following Hair *et al.,* (2019) to ensure theoretical and empirical rigour.

Figure 3
The Final PLS-SEM Structural Model for Hypothesis Testing



The results in Table 14 show that attitude and enrolment intention in social health insurance are positively and significant related ($\beta = 0.286$, $t = 4.988$, $p = 0.000$). These findings indicate that a positive attitude contributes to an increase in enrolment intention in social health insurance in Tanzania. Similarly, the study found a significant positive relationship between subjective norms and enrolment intention ($\beta = 0.157$, $t = 2.412$, $p = 0.016$). This implies that informal sector workers who perceive social pressure or expectations from others (such as family, friends, or community) are more likely to express an intention to enrol in social health insurance schemes. Moreover, the results indicate a positive and significant relationship between perceived behavioural control and enrolment intention in social health insurance ($\beta = 0.285$, t = 4.232, p = 0.000). This indicates that when informal sector workers believe they have the ability, resources, and opportunities to enrol, their intention to join social health insurance increases. Therefore, hypotheses H_1, H_2, and H_3 were supported.

Regarding the moderating role of health literacy, the results indicate that only the interaction between perceived behavioural control and health literacy is statistically significant ($\beta = 0.136$, $t = 2.007$, $p = 0.045$). This suggests that health literacy strengthens the effect of perceived behavioural control on enrolment intention, implying that informal sector workers with higher health literacy are more likely to act on their confidence and ability to enrol in social health insurance schemes. In contrast, the interaction effects of health literacy with attitude ($\beta = 0.042$, $t = 0.686$, $p = 0.493$) and with subjective norms ($\beta = 0.004$, $t = 0.063$, $p = 0.950$) were not statistically significant. This suggests that health literacy does not significantly influence the effect of attitude or social pressure on enrolment intention. Therefore, Hypothesis H_{4c} was supported, while Hypotheses H_{4a} and H_{4b} were rejected.

Table 14
Path Coefficients for Attitude

Hypotheses	Path	β-values	T statistics	P-Values	Remarks
H_1	ATT -> EI	0.286	4.988	0.000	Accepted
H_2	SN -> EI	0.157	2.412	0.016	Accepted
H_3	PBC -> EI	0.285	4.232	0.000	Accepted
H_{4a}	HL x ATT ->EI	0.042	0.686	0.493	Rejected
H_{4b}	HL x SN -> EI	0.004	0.063	0.950	Rejected
H_{4c}	HL x PBC -> EI	0.136	2.007	0.045	Accepted

DISCUSSION

This study examined the drivers of enrolment intention towards social health insurance among informal sector workers in Tanzania. The direct effect results confirmed that attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control (PBC) are significant driver of enrolment intention. These findings align with the assumptions of the TPB, which posits that intention is driven by attitude, subjective norms, and one's perception of control over the behaviour (Ajzen, 1985).

Attitude was found to have a positive and statistically significant effect on enrolment intention. This finding suggests that informal sector workers who believe that social health insurance is useful, trustworthy, and worthwhile are more likely to develop the intention to enrol. This aligns with prior studies, including Sun *et al.,* (2024) in China, Mai and Mai (2023) in Vietnam, and Kazaure (2019) in Nigeria. However, this relationship may be influenced by contextual factors, as seen in Tam *et al.,* (2021) in Australia and Do and Mai (2023) in Vietnam, who found either negative or non-significant effects, due to trust issues or dissatisfaction with the local insurance systems. In the Tanzanian context, where national health insurance reforms are ongoing, building positive perceptions remains essential to stimulate voluntary enrolment.

Regarding subjective norms, the results also revealed a positive and statistically significant effect on enrolment intention. This implies that social influence from close social networks such as family members, friends, and community plays a meaningful role in shaping the intention to enrol. These findings are consistent with Mamun *et al.,* (2021) in Malaysia, Brahmana *et al.,* (2018) in Indonesia, and Nie *et al.,* (2023) in China, who found that individuals are more likely to enrol when they perceive supportive social pressure. However, other studies have shown mixed results. For instance, Huhman *et al.,* (2016) in the United States reported a negative and statistically insignificant relationship, while Azizam *et al.,* (2020) found a positive but statistically insignificant effect. These inconsistencies may stem from cultural and structural differences in how much weight individuals assign to others' opinions. In the Tanzanian informal economy, where community relationships and social networks are often strong, peer and family influence can serve as a powerful driver of health-related behaviours.

Perceived behavioural control was also found to significantly influence enrolment intention. This suggests that informal workers who believed they had sufficient knowledge, access, and financial ability to join a social health insurance scheme showed stronger intentions to enrol. The results are similar to those of Maurya and Yasmeen (2023) in India, Raza *et al.,* (2020) in Pakistan, and Nzowa *et al.,* (2023) in Tanzania, who reported a significant effect of PBC on health insurance enrolment intentions. Nonetheless, some studies have diverged from this view. Adamu (2016) in Nigeria found an insignificant relationship, while Achmadi *et al.,* (2024) reported a negative effect, which may be linked to perceived complexity of the insurance system or institutional inefficiencies in delivering services. These findings emphasise the importance of simplifying enrolment procedures and increasing perceived accessibility to strengthen perceived behavioural control among informal sector workers in Tanzania.

On the other hand, the study examined the moderating role of health literacy on the relationships between the TPB constructs and enrolment intention in social health insurance. The interaction between attitude and health literacy was found to be statistically insignificant. Similarly, the interaction between subjective norms and health literacy was also insignificant. These findings suggest that variations in health literacy levels do not meaningfully alter the influence of attitude or social norms on enrolment intention. However, a significant moderating effect was found between perceived behaviour control and health literacy. This implies that the positive effect of perceived behavioural control on enrolment intention becomes stronger among individuals with higher health literacy. The results are supported by Zheng *et al.,* (2020) and Srikanteshwara and Ilavarasu (2024), who emphasise that health-literate individuals are better able to navigate health systems and make informed decisions. Therefore, improving health literacy among informal sector workers serve as a critical factor in transforming perceived capability into actual behavioural intention to enrol.

Viewed through the integrated TPB–SDT framework, the moderating results indicate that health literacy primarily strengthens action-oriented pathways of intention formation. Consistent with TPB, higher health literacy enhances the translation of perceived behavioural control into enrolment intention by improving individuals' understanding of enrolment procedures and system requirements. From an SDT perspective, this reflects increased perceived competence and more autonomous decision-making among health-literate individuals. In contrast, attitudes and subjective norms are shaped mainly by evaluative beliefs and social influences, which appear less sensitive to differences in health literacy. Thus, the selective moderating effect underscores the complementary value of integrating TPB and SDT in explaining how cognitive capacity and motivation jointly shape health insurance enrolment intentions.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Conclusion

This study concludes that attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control significantly and positively influence enrolment intention in social health insurance among informal sector workers in Tanzania. Informal workers who perceive social health insurance as beneficial, experience supportive social pressure, and feel capable of enrolling are more likely to express stronger enrolment intentions, underscoring the relevance of the TPB in Tanzanian context. These findings highlight the importance of positive perceptions, social influence, and perceived capability in shaping insurance-related decisions.

The study further concludes that health literacy plays a selective moderating role, significantly strengthening the relationship between perceived behavioural control and enrolment intention, but not moderating the effects of attitude or subjective norms. This indicates that health literacy enhances action-oriented decision-making by enabling individuals to translate perceived capability into enrolment intention, while evaluative beliefs and social influences remain relatively stable across literacy levels.

Implications of the Study

Theoretical Implications

This study empirically strengthens the TPB by confirming the significant influence of attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control on enrolment intention in social health insurance among informal sector workers in Tanzania. Notably, this study extends the TPB by incorporating health literacy from SDT as a moderating variable. The findings indicate that health literacy enhances the effect of perceived behavioural control but not that of attitude or subjective norms, thereby offering theoretical refinement to TPB.

Practical Implications

The findings of this study have several practical implications for practitioners, particularly the management of the National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF), in designing and implementing effective social health programs in Tanzania. The significant influence of attitude and perceived behavioural control on enrolment intention suggests that the management of NHIF should prioritise initiatives that build public trust in the scheme and simplify the enrolment process. Moreover, the confirmed role of subjective norms highlights the importance of social influence. Trusted individuals can foster social pressure that supports enrolment in social health insurance. Furthermore, the moderating effect of health literacy underscores the need for management of NHIF to develop targeted, culturally appropriate educational interventions that not only convey information but also empower informal sector workers to understand and evaluate the enrolment processes.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Studies

This study acknowledges several limitations that provide direction for future research. The focus on informal sector workers within Dar es Salaam may constrain the generalizability of findings to other regions, given potential socio-economic, cultural, and contextual differences across Tanzania. Moreover, the exclusive reliance on self-reported data introduces the risk of biases such as social desirability and recall inaccuracies. Future studies are encouraged to adopt broader geographical coverage, incorporating rural and peri-urban areas to enhance representativeness. Employing mixed-methods or longitudinal designs could improve data validity and offer deeper insights into behavioural dynamics over time. Moreover, exploring alternative moderating variables such as trust in healthcare systems, or digital literacy may provide a more comprehensive understanding of the determinants influencing enrolment in social health insurance schemes.

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Understanding Pupils' Engagement in Extracurricular Programmes and Contextual Influences in Mbulu Town Council Primary Schools

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Abstract
This study examines patterns of preference and factors influencing primary school pupils' participation in extracurricular activities in Mbulu town council, Tanzania. Guided by Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, a mixed-methods approach was employed, involving 68 pupils from four primary schools selected through stratified sampling. Quantitative data were collected using a structured 5-point Likert scale questionnaire, while qualitative insights were obtained through open-ended questions. Descriptive statistics and thematic analysis were used to analyse quantitative and qualitative data, respectively. Findings indicate that pupils participate more in activities that are formally scheduled in the school timetable, well-structured, and supervised. Participation is further shaped by contextual factors, including school facilities, parental support, peer interactions, and the degree of school support for engagement. The study recommends improving infrastructure, ensuring adequate supervision, and integrating extracurricular support into school policies to create motivating, accessible, and inclusive environments that enhance pupils' holistic development.

Keywords: *Influencing factors, extracurricular activities, pupils' participation, primary school*

INTRODUCTION

Pupils' participation in school activities, particularly extracurricular activities, is crucial and influenced by a range of interconnected factors. These include the availability of school resources, supportive school policies, encouragement from teachers and parents, peer influence, pupils' personal interests and motivations, time allocated within the school schedule, and the perceived value or relevance of activities to future goals (Bouchard et al., 2022; Le, 2024). It has been revealed that participation in these activities is often voluntary and varies widely among pupils, with some actively engaging in multiple activities while others remain uninvolved (Assante & Lisman, 2023; O'Brien et al, 2024). Not only that the levels of participation differ across age groups, genders, school settings, and even between urban and rural areas due to variations in access and support (Lounassalo et al, 2025; Valcke et al, 2023). Nevertheless, the type and frequency of participation may be shaped by pupils' awareness of the opportunities available, the encouragement they receive, and the institutional emphasis placed on such activities (Assante & Lisman, 2023; Goshin et al, 2025). Similarly, Wang et al (2024) further claim that students' participation rates in extracurricular activities are influenced by various factors, including parental support and school environment. Understanding these participation patterns is essential in evaluating how extracurricular programmes contribute to pupils' overall educational experience.

Basically, the role that extracurricular activities play in pupils' welfare should not be overemphasised. Studies indicate that extracurricular activities such as sports, debates, and community services contribute to enhancing students' practical competencies, personal development, and self-confidence (Anjum, 2021; Christison, 2013; Furda & Shuleski, 2019; Phillips et al, 2021). These activities also increase students' academic performance, as well as raising their pass grades (Martínez-Vicente & Valiente-Barroso, 2020; Sari & Esa, 2017). Literature further indicates that participation in such activities inculcates skills like adherence to instructions, persistence, inner drive, goal setting, and problem-solving capabilities that significantly contribute to students' scholastic accomplishments (Neely & Vaquera, 2017; Wormington et al, 2012).

Moreover, extracurricular activities also play a significant role in pupils' holistic development, offering them opportunities to explore interests beyond the academic curriculum. For instance, a study by Fredricks and Eccles (2018) highlighted that students involved in extracurricular activities experience increased school engagement and academic achievement. The study further suggested that participation in such kinds of activities facilitates the acquisition of interpersonal skills and fosters a sense of belonging within the school community. Similarly, Blomfield and Barber (2019) found that students who engage in a diverse range of extracurricular activities tend to report higher levels of self-esteem and social competence, which are essential for their personal development. In a systematic review, Minney (2021) emphasized that after-school programmes significantly contribute to positive youth development, including academic success and social skills. Similarly, Penjor and Dorji (2022) also reported that students participating in structured extracurricular activities exhibit enhanced academic performance and social relationships, which in turn foster holistic students' development.

As noted earlier, students' participation in extracurricular activities has become increasingly influential. The rate of participation is important because it provides insight into how effectively schools engage students beyond academics. It also highlights gaps in access or inclusiveness. Furthermore, participation rates help educators and policymakers assess the impact of extracurricular programmes on students' holistic development. This is because high rates of participation indicate broad engagement, suggesting that programmes meet students' social, emotional, and developmental needs, whereas low rates may signal barriers that require attention (Kim et al, 2019). Building on this literature, recent studies in developed countries have examined the rates of student participation in extracurricular activities. These studies recognised a large proportion of students who are actively involved in such activities. For instance, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2020) reported that approximately 57% of high school students in the United States participated in at least one extracurricular activity. This level of engagement reflects a broader global trend, with students participating in sports, music, academic clubs, and community service.

Enhancing pupils' participation in extracurricular activities requires a concerted effort from different stakeholders and can involve various strategies. Christenson and Reschly (2019), for instance, advocate the importance of creating supportive environments that foster pupils' engagement in various school activities. One of the effective ways to support children's participation in extracurricular activities is to encourage them to explore a range of available activities. By exposing children to different extracurricular options, you create a room for them to discover their interests and talents. A study by Eccles and Barber (2019) found that students who were encouraged to explore various activities were more likely to find an activity they were passionate about and commit to it. This exploration phase is crucial for children to develop a well-rounded set of skills and interests.

Providing emotional support and encouragement is another essential strategy. According to a study by Grolnick and Slowiaczek (2019), children who receive emotional support from their immediate social environment are more likely to engage in school activities and exhibit higher levels of self-esteem and resilience. This support can include praising children's efforts, provide constructive feedback, and encourage them to pursue their interests. Similarly, scholars argue that assisting children with financial support is also a critical way to engage them in extracurricular activities, especially for activities that require resources such as sports equipment, musical instruments, or fees for club memberships. A study by NCES (2020), for instance, found that children from higher socioeconomic status households were significantly more likely to participate in extracurricular activities compared to their peers from lower socioeconomic status backgrounds. This highlights the importance of this kind of assistance in enabling children to access and participate in various school activities.

Despite the growing recognition of the benefits associated with extracurricular involvement, such as improved social skills, academic engagement, and holistic development, many schools continue to prioritize academic performance and examination outcomes at the expense of extracurricular programming (Ahmed, Hassan & Saeed, 2024; Hasirumane, Acharya & Pillai, 2023; Mukesh & Rajasekharan, 2022). This trend is particularly pronounced in developing countries, including Tanzania, where education systems are often characterized by limited resources, teacher shortages, overcrowded classrooms, and a strong emphasis on national examinations (Assey & Babyegeya, 2022; MoEST, 2022; Philip, 2022; UNESCO, 2023). Reports from HakiElimu (2017) and Komba and Shukia (2023) have highlighted that many Tanzanian primary schools allocate minimal time, support, or funding for extracurricular programmes, with school timetables and priorities overwhelmingly focused on examinable subjects.

Several studies in Tanzania have examined the role of extracurricular activities in supporting various aspects of students' learning and school participation. For example, Machunde and Ilomo (2022) found that extracurricular involvement in Morogoro served as a motivator for students' academic engagement. While Yintore and Lekule (2022) reported that such activities contributed to student retention in Simiyu. Similarly, Nyaisa (2022) examined challenges in managing extracurricular activities for children with physical developmental needs in Arusha.

Although these studies offer useful insights into the benefits and administrative challenges of extracurricular activities, they do not address the level of pupils' participation, nor do they examine the determinants that shape engagement. Yet participation levels and the influencing factors remain a concern globally (NCES, 2020; Onwuka, Oladele, & Zuoyu, 2019; Sari & Esa, 2017), suggesting the need for context-specific evidence. Importantly, no empirical study in Tanzania has systematically documented pupils' participation patterns in extracurricular activities, including which pupils participate, how frequently, and what school- or home-based factors influence their engagement.

This gap is even more pronounced in Mbulu town council, a district within the newly established Manyara region that faces persistent educational challenges. Research on extracurricular activities in this area is extremely limited, with only a few studies, such as Nyinyimbe and Jonas (2025), which focused on different aspects. Consequently, little is known about how local conditions, including resource constraints, school environments, and other contextual factors, shape pupils' involvement in extracurricular programmes.

To address these gaps, the present study offers a context-specific analysis of pupils' participation in extracurricular activities within Mbulu Town Council and examines the factors influencing their involvement. Specifically, it (i) assesses current participation levels, and (ii) identifies the key determinants of engagement within resource-constrained Tanzanian primary schools that have not been previously explored. By doing so, the study generates locally grounded empirical evidence. It extends the literature beyond merely confirming international trends and offers practical insights for policy formulation and school-level interventions aimed at strengthening holistic education. Specifically, the study was guided by the following research questions:

i) What are the patterns of pupils' participation in extracurricular activities in Mbulu town council primary schools?
ii) What factors influence pupils' participation in extracurricular activities in Mbulu town council primary schools?

Theoretical Framework

This study is guided by Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979), which explains human behaviour as the result of continuous interactions between children and their surrounding environments. The theory assumes that children's development is shaped by multiple, interconnected environmental systems rather than by individual characteristics alone. It further posits that children's behaviours do not develop in isolation but emerge from interactions between personal attributes and contextual forces. These forces operate across different ecological levels, including the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem, each exerting direct or indirect influence on children's experiences and opportunities.

The study draws primarily on assumptions related to the microsystem and mesosystem, as these are most relevant to pupils' participation in extracurricular activities. The microsystem emphasises children's immediate environments, particularly the school, teachers, peers, and family. This level is central to the study, as pupils' engagement in extracurricular activities occurs mainly within the school setting and is influenced by school organisation, teacher supervision, peer interaction, and parental support. The mesosystem focuses on the relationships between these immediate settings, especially home-school connections, which may reinforce or constrain pupils' participation through shared expectations and support structures.

Overall, Ecological Systems Theory provides a suitable framework for examining pupils' participation in extracurricular activities by foregrounding the role of contextual and institutional influences. The theory guides the study to focus on how school-based structures, social relationships, and supportive conditions shape participation patterns, rather than viewing engagement as a result of personal choice alone. By adopting this framework, the study is positioned to analyse pupils' participation as a product of organised school environments and social interactions within a specific educational context.

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted in Mbulu town council, located in Manyara region in northeastern Tanzania. The study area was selected because, as a newly established region, Manyara continues to experience several educational challenges. Given national concerns regarding pupils' participation in extracurricular activities, the researcher anticipated similar issues within this context. Four schools, each drawn from one of the four wards, were purposively selected based on the availability of extracurricular facilities such as playgrounds, school farms, and other spaces used for ward-level competitions. A total of 68 pupils participated in the study. Stratified sampling was employed to ensure representation across the wards, taking into account grade level, gender, and the types of extracurricular activities in which pupils were involved.

The study employed a mixed-methods approach, adopting a convergent parallel research design in which quantitative and qualitative data were collected during the same phase and analysed independently before integration (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). A single questionnaire comprising both closed- and open-ended items was used to collect data, within two weeks. The closed-ended items applied a 5-point Likert scale to capture pupils' levels of agreement with statements related to participation, motivation, and influencing factors. The open-ended items enabled pupils to elaborate on their experiences, perceptions, and challenges. To ensure validity and reliability, the instrument was pilot-tested in two primary schools with characteristics similar to those in the study sample, but these schools were excluded from the main study.

In line with the convergent parallel design, both strands of data were given equal weight. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics through the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 20, with results presented in tables of means and standard deviations. Qualitative data from the open-ended responses were analysed using thematic analysis, through which recurring views were identified and organised into meaningful sub-themes. Integration occurred during interpretation by comparing numerical patterns with narrative themes to identify areas of convergence, where both strands supported similar conclusions, and divergence, where differences emerged. This process enhanced the overall interpretation by allowing qualitative insights to clarify or expand on quantitative findings.

Although the sample size is relatively small, it was considered adequate for an exploratory study aimed at generating indicative insights rather than statistically generalisable estimates. Given the purposive selection of schools and the modest sample size, the findings should be interpreted as reflective of the participating schools rather than generalisable to all primary schools in Mbulu town council or Tanzania. Nonetheless, the results provide valuable contextual understanding that may inform future, larger-scale studies on pupils' participation in extracurricular activities.

FINDINGS

This section presents the findings of the study, which examined the patterns and determinants of pupils' participation in extracurricular activities in primary schools within Mbulu town council. The presentation first describes the participants' demographic characteristics and then explains the findings derived from both quantitative and qualitative analyses. The findings are organised according to the analytical procedures applied, and the interpretation provided focuses solely on explaining the results emerging from the data.

Respondents' Demographic Information

Presenting respondents' demographic information, such as age, gender, and class level, among others, in research is crucial. It provides readers with a clear understanding of respondents who participated in the study, providing the context in which the findings might be applicable. In this regard, Table 1 summarises participants' demographic information.

Table 1
Respondents' Demographic Information (n=68)

Demographic Variable	Code	Category	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Gender	1	Male	28	41	41
	2	Female	40	59	100
Age	1	8-10 Years	20	30	30
	2	11-13 Years	45	66	96
	3	14-16 Years	03	4	100
	4	Above 17	0	0	100
Class Level	1	STD III	09	13	13
	2	STD IV	13	19	32
	3	STD V	19	28	60
	4	STD VI	27	40	100

Source: Field Data, 2024

The findings revealed that more than half 40 (59%) of the pupils who participated in the study were female. These findings indicate that boys and girls often exhibit distinct preferences, reflecting some gender disparities among research participants. This is in line with several previous studies that indicate that female students often show greater willingness to participate in school-based surveys and educational studies, particularly in the context of primary education (Ajlouni et al, 2022; Stenberg, Sundgre & Bostedt, 2025; Turhan, 2022). The findings also revealed that all the pupils 68(100%), who participated in the study were above seven (7) years of age, which is a reasonable age for pupils to choose and provide their views on the programmes to participate in schools, including extracurricular activities. The findings further revealed that 46(68%) of the pupils who participated in the study were in standards five and six, showing that they are mature enough to provide reasons and make choices in different extracurricular activities to participate in school.

Overall, the demographic profile shows that the study involved pupils of appropriate age, gender representation, and class levels relevant to the study objectives. The majority of respondents were within the 11-13 years' age range and in upper primary classes, ensuring that participants were capable of understanding the study questions and expressing informed views. The gender distribution also reflects meaningful participation from both boys and girls. Collectively, these characteristics provide a suitable background for interpreting the findings presented in the subsequent sections.

Pupils' Participation Patterns and Preferences in School Extracurricular Activities

This subsection presents the findings related to the first research question, which sought to examine pupils' participation patterns and preferences in extracurricular activities in primary schools within Mbulu town council. Given the descriptive nature of this objective, data were collected using a structured questionnaire with closed-ended statements measured on a five-point Likert scale. The responses were later re-classified into a three-point scale. The analysis relied on descriptive statistics, specifically means and standard deviations, to summarise pupils' reported levels of participation in various extracurricular activities. The findings highlight the activities in which pupils are most actively involved and provide insights that may help schools enhance learner motivation, promote social interaction, and support holistic development. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for Pupils' Participation in School Extracurricular Activities

Extracurricular Activity	Mean	Standard Deviation
Religious programmes	2.94	0.24
Agriculture programmes	2.88	0.44
Sports and games	2.81	0.52
Academic clubs	2.72	0.59
Music and dancing	2.29	0.88
Scout activities	2.25	0.88
Student government	2.16	0.87
Volunteering activities	1.96	0.87

Key: 1 = Disagreed, 2 = Undecided, 3 = Agreed
Source: Field Data (2024)

The results presented in Table 2 show clear variations in pupils' participation across different extracurricular activities in the selected primary schools. The mean scores indicate that pupils generally agree that they participate in most of the activities listed, although the level of engagement differs by activity type. These variations suggest that certain activities may be more appealing or accessible to pupils, reflecting differences in interest, opportunity, or school support.

Religious programmes recorded the highest participation (M = 2.94, SD = 0.24), which may indicate that these activities are central to pupils' school experiences or are culturally valued within the learning environment. Agriculture programmes (M = 2.88, SD = 0.44) and sports and games (M = 2.81, SD = 0.52) also ranked highly, suggesting strong involvement in activities that are practical, physical, or part of regular school routines. Academic clubs (M = 2.72, SD = 0.59) attracted considerable participation as well, which could reflect pupils' interest in activities that support academic learning and collaborative exploration.

In contrast, relatively lower participation was observed in music and dancing (M = 2.29, SD = 0.88) and scout activities (M = 2.25, SD = 0.88), which might indicate weaker engagement in activities that require specialised interest, skills, or access to specific materials and equipment. Student government (M = 2.16, SD = 0.87) and volunteering activities (M = 1.96, SD = 0.87) recorded the lowest participation levels, possibly reflecting that leadership-oriented or service-related activities are less widely preferred among pupils.

The findings indicate that pupils' participation in extracurricular activities is uneven, with stronger engagement observed in activities that are routinely embedded in school life and daily schedules. Practical and physically oriented activities, alongside academically supportive clubs, tend to attract higher participation than leadership- or service-based programmes. Activities that require specialised resources or greater personal initiative show comparatively lower engagement. This pattern may reflect the influence of factors such as accessibility, routine integration, and perceived relevance within the school context on pupils' participation preferences.

Factors Influencing Pupils' Participation in Extracurricular Activities

Another focus of this study was to explore the key factors influencing pupils' participation in extracurricular activities within the Mbulu town council. The purpose was to gain a comprehensive understanding of the underlying conditions and circumstances shaping pupils' willingness and ability to engage in such activities. Such understanding is essential for designing strategies that enhance inclusive and meaningful participation in school-based extracurricular programmes at the primary level. To explore these factors, pupils rated various statements related to their participation, and their additional comments offered further insights into their experiences. The results are summarised in Table 3.

Table 3:
Influencing Factors for Participation in Different Extracurricular Activities

Extracurricular Activity	Mean	Standard Deviation
School environment and facilities	2.78	0.56
Activities scheduled in the school timetable	2.89	0.54
Teachers' guidance, supervision, and support	2.73	0.64
Parents' guidance and support	2.26	0.67
Peer influence	2.69	0.61
Self-choice	1.94	0.82
Potential benefits of the activity	2.08	0.79

Key: 1 = Disagreed, 2 = Undecided, 3 = Agreed
Source: Field Data (2024)

The findings summarised in Table 3 indicate that pupils' participation in extracurricular activities is shaped by a combination of school-related, social, and personal factors. The mean influence scores ranged from low to moderate, indicating that while these factors may affect participation, their impact appears to vary across different domains.

Among the influencing factors, activities scheduled within the school timetable (M = 2.89, SD = 0.54) and the school environment and facilities (M = 2.78, SD = 0.56) recorded relatively higher mean scores. These closely related factors indicate that when extracurricular activities are formally integrated into the school programme and supported by adequate facilities and a conducive environment, pupils are more likely to participate. This finding underscores the importance of institutional support and school organisation in promoting engagement in extracurricular activities.

A second cluster of factors with comparable mean scores includes teachers' guidance, supervision, and support (M = 2.73, SD = 0.64) and peer influence (M = 2.69, SD = 0.61). These results suggest that social interactions within the school setting significantly shape pupils' participation decisions. Teacher involvement appears to provide structure, encouragement, and supervision, while peers play a motivating role through companionship and shared interest, reinforcing participation through social belonging.

In contrast, parents' guidance and support recorded a lower but still moderate influence (M = 2.26, SD = 0.67). This suggests that while parental encouragement matters, its impact may be less direct compared to influences within the school environment, possibly due to the school-based nature of most extracurricular activities. Personal factors showed the lowest levels of influence. Perceived potential benefits of the activity (M = 2.08, SD = 0.79) and self-choice (M = 1.94, SD = 0.82) scored comparatively lower, indicating that pupils are less likely to participate in extracurricular activities based on individual interest or perceived long-term benefits alone. This implies that participation is driven more by external structures and social conditions than by autonomous decision-making.

Overall, the findings suggest that pupils' participation in extracurricular activities is largely shaped by school organisation, availability of facilities, and social support systems, rather than personal initiative. This highlights the critical role of schools in creating enabling environments and structured opportunities that encourage active pupil engagement.

These statistical results were further supported by pupils' qualitative responses, which provided deeper insights into how various contextual and social factors shaped their participation in extracurricular activities. Pupils frequently linked their participation to the way extracurricular activities were organised and enforced within schools. Many explained that activities were formally scheduled on the school timetable and closely supervised by teachers, which strongly influenced attendance. For example, pupil **Y** from school **B** explained that *"...pupils must attend religious clubs, sports and games, and agriculture activities in the school farms as indicated on the timetable, and responsible teachers provide close supervision…"*. In some cases, participation was motivated by fear of punishment rather than personal interest. Pupil **P** from school **A** noted that *"...there is severe punishment from supervisory teachers for pupils who are found not attending sports and games, religious sessions, and agriculture activities; sometimes our parents are even called in to witness the punishment…"*. These accounts suggest that institutional enforcement and monitoring play a central role in shaping pupils' participation, particularly in compulsory activities.

The availability of facilities and resources also emerged as a key factor influencing participation. Where facilities were adequate, pupils felt encouraged to engage more actively. For instance, pupil **M** from school **C** noted that *"…the majority of us engage in sports and games because we have plenty of playgrounds that support football, netball, basketball, and volleyball…"*. Conversely, limited resources constrained participation in certain activities. Confirming this, pupil **K** from the same school remarked that *"…we don't have enough music instruments, so most days we just sing without drums or any musical instruments, causing some pupils lose interest…"*. Similarly, the demanding nature of some activities discouraged pupils' participation. For example, pupil **Q** from school **D** explained that *"…sometimes the agriculture work is too much, especially when we are told to dig large portions…"*. As a result, some pupils become less motivated to participate when activities lack adequate resources or are perceived as too demanding.

Issues of inclusiveness further shaped pupils' participation experiences. Several pupils described situations that limited equal access to extracurricular activities. Gender-related barriers were highlighted by pupil **N** from school **A**, who explained that *"girls in our school cannot participate in football and volleyball because there is only one playground, which is mainly used by boys."* This suggests that limited facilities may unintentionally disadvantage girls' participation in sports. Concerns were also raised regarding learners with disabilities. Pupil **F** from school **D** noted that *"the facilities for learners with disabilities to participate in activities such as sports, games, music, and dancing are not available in this school,"* indicating that inadequate infrastructure restricts inclusive participation. Feelings of exclusion were also evident in leadership-related activities. For example, pupil **H** from school **B** observed that *"only confident pupils or those who are close to teachers are chosen for student government,"* suggesting that selection practices may marginalise less outspoken pupils.

However, participation was not always driven by obligation or supervision. Some pupils described enjoyment and social interaction as key motivating factors, particularly in sports and games. This was illustrated by pupil **G** from school **D**, who stated that *"…I like playing netball because it is fun and I get time to be with my friends. Even if the teacher is not around, we still go to the field after classes…"*. Such accounts indicate that intrinsic motivation and peer relationships also encourage participation, sometimes independently of formal school control.

Overall, these findings suggest that pupils' participation in extracurricular activities is largely influenced by school-related factors such as the environment, facilities, and scheduled activities, as well as social support from teachers and peers. Personal factors, including self-choice and perceived benefits, appear to have less influence. Pupils' accounts also highlight differences in experiences, showing that participation is shaped not only by availability and supervision but also by enjoyment, fairness, and support within the school context.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The findings of this study reveal that pupils' participation in extracurricular activities is shaped by a complex interplay of organizational, environmental, and interpersonal factors within the school setting. Pupils' accounts from different schools indicate that the rate of participation in preferred activities largely depends on how well activities are structured, integrated into the school timetable, and supervised by responsible teachers. This observation aligns with Prianto (2016) in Indonesia, who found that students are more likely to engage in activities that are formally organized and adequately supervised, compared to those receiving less institutional emphasis. Similarly, Carter-Thuillier et al. (2023), in Spain and Chile, reported that structured and well-coordinated sports programmes are more effective in sustaining student participation and fostering inclusion. Likewise, Mohamed and Osaki (2022) in Tanzania observed that poorly organized and minimally supervised extracurricular activities in secondary schools led to low participation and limited developmental benefits.

Moreover, the results indicate that participation in extracurricular activities is not solely driven by individual interest or ability but is strongly shaped by the broader contextual conditions in which pupils learn and grow. Consistent with Gorski (2021) and Ozodova (2025), a supportive school climate, characterized by safety, inclusiveness, supervision, and accessible spaces, significantly enhances student engagement. Their findings stress that schools investing in extracurricular infrastructure and promoting active staff involvement create conditions where pupils feel motivated and included. Similarly, the findings underscore the critical role of parents and educators in influencing participation. This aligns with Utami (2022), who observed that consistent guidance and encouragement from parents and teachers foster engagement in school-based activities, including extracurricular programmes.

Peer relationships also emerged as a crucial influence on participation, supporting findings by Bouchard et al. (2022), who reported that peer influence motivates students to engage in school activities. Pupils enjoy socializing with friends and are encouraged to join various clubs and sports. Fujiyama et al. (2021) similarly noted that peer interactions can act as either motivators or deterrents within extracurricular settings, depending on their quality and nature.

The study findings further indicate that personal factors such as self-choice and perceived benefits have relatively low influence on participation. This suggests that pupils are more likely to engage in activities due to structured schedules, supervision, and social encouragement rather than individual preference. Assante and Lișman (2023), for instance, reported that students' engagement is stronger in socially and institutionally mediated participation contexts than in activities driven solely by personal choice. This implies that intrinsic interest and perceived benefits have limited effects on participation when school-based structures and peer influences are dominant. It highlights that external factors outweigh personal preferences in shaping pupils' involvement in extracurricular programmes.

These findings can also be interpreted through Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, particularly the microsystem and mesosystem. The microsystem, encompassing children's immediate environments such as the school, teachers, peers, and family, directly shapes pupils' participation. The study's results indicate that school-related factors, scheduled activities, teacher supervision, and availability of facilities significantly influence engagement. Pupils' qualitative accounts further illustrate that activities embedded in the timetable and closely monitored by teachers enhance participation, while inadequate resources or demanding tasks reduce involvement. This aligns with the theory's emphasis on the microsystem as the primary context where children interact and experience developmental influences.

The mesosystem, representing the interconnections between immediate settings, also explains participation patterns. For instance, parental support and home-school relationships, although less influential than school-based factors, still affect pupils' willingness to engage in activities. Peer interactions reinforce participation, as pupils are motivated by companionship and shared interests. These findings demonstrate that engagement emerges not only from the school environment itself but also from the interplay between different social contexts within pupils' daily lives, consistent with the mesosystem concept of interconnected microsystems.

In light of these connections, the study findings support the theory's core assumption that children's behaviours are socially embedded and shaped by multiple, interacting contextual forces. Pupils' participation is influenced more strongly by structured factors within the school microsystem and by social relationships within the mesosystem than by individual choice or perceived benefits. This underscores the importance of understanding the social and organizational environments in which children operate and confirms that participation is a product of dynamic interactions between the child and their immediate and interconnected settings.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study examined pupils' participation patterns in extracurricular activities and the factors influencing their engagement within Mbulu Town Council. The findings show that pupils are more likely to participate in activities that are formally scheduled and well-supervised, while those lacking structure or oversight attract lower involvement. Participation is further shaped by contextual factors such as the school environment, availability of facilities, parental support, and the extent to which schools provide support for pupils to engage in these activities.

Based on these findings, schools and education stakeholders should create enabling environments for extracurricular engagement. This includes improving infrastructure, ensuring safety, providing adequate supervision, and promoting inclusive programmes that cater to diverse pupil interests. Strengthening partnerships with parents and the wider community can also enhance awareness of the developmental benefits of these activities. At the policy level, extracurricular programming should be integrated into school development plans and inspection frameworks to ensure it is recognized as a core component of holistic education rather than an optional add-on.

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From Brand Awareness to Performance in Tanzanian Telecommunication Companies: The Mediating Role of Brand Attitude and Moderating Effect of Customer Satisfaction

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Abstract
Telecommunication companies in Tanzania face intense competition, and despite substantial investments in brand visibility, many firms struggle to translate brand awareness into tangible performance outcomes. This study addresses this gap by examining how brand awareness, brand attitude, and customer satisfaction influence brand performance within the Tanzanian telecommunication sector. Guided by the Resource-Based View (RBV) and Expectancy Disconfirmation Theory (EDT), the study employed a positivist philosophy with a deductive approach and an explanatory research design. Data were collected from 314 employees across four major telecommunication companies in Dar es Salaam using a structured questionnaire. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) was applied to test the hypothesised relationships. The findings reveal that brand awareness significantly and positively influences both brand performance and brand attitude, while brand attitude also has a positive effect on brand performance. Furthermore, brand attitude mediates the relationship between brand awareness and performance. Customer satisfaction was found to selectively moderate these relationships, strengthening the effect of brand attitude on performance but not significantly affecting the brand awareness–performance link. The study contributes theoretically by integrating RBV and EDT, demonstrating that intangible brand resources drive performance but their effectiveness depends on customer experiences. Practically, the findings underscore the need for telecommunication firms to combine awareness-building initiatives with strategies that foster favourable brand attitudes and ensure high levels of customer satisfaction.

Keywords: *Brand Awareness, Brand Attitude, Performance, Customer Satisfaction, Telecommunication.*

INTRODUCTION

Brand performance is widely recognized as a key driver of business growth globally (Kurnia *et al.,* 2025), particularly in highly competitive sectors such as telecommunications where firms rely on strong brand positioning to secure customer loyalty and market advantage (Jamil *et al.,* 2025). Across Africa, the telecom industry has expanded rapidly, with mobile penetration reaching approximately 80% of the population by 2024 (Gazi *et al.,* 2024). In Tanzania, these challenges are even more pronounced as the sector continues to grow, with active SIM card subscriptions reaching approximately 92.7 million by 2025 of which are mobile connections (TCRA, 2025). Despite this expansion, no operator holds a dominant market share above 35%, indicating intense competition and limited brand differentiation (Mapunda and Kulwijila, 2025). This raises a critical concern about why telecommunication companies struggle to translate high market visibility into stronger brand performance (Mwakapugi *et al.,* 2024).

Although marketing investments within the industry have increased substantially, the persistent market fragmentation suggests that brand visibility alone may not be sufficient to drive superior performance outcomes (Pongwe and Churk, 2024). Companies continue to report challenges related to customer churn, weak preference formation, and limited emotional attachment to brands issues often linked to inadequate development of favourable brand attitudes and inconsistent customer experiences (Mwakapugi *et al.,* 2024). These realities highlight the need to investigate how brand awareness interacts with other brand-related factors to influence performance, especially in markets where service offerings are perceived as highly homogeneous. In such environments, intangible resource like brand attitude may become critical in differentiating firms and enabling them to translate awareness into competitive advantage (Jamil *et al.,* 2025).

From a theoretical perspective, the Resource-Based View (RBV) offers valuable insights into this puzzle by positing that firms achieve superior performance through their ability to develop and deploy unique resources (Inseng and Uford, 2019). Brand-related assets such as awareness and attitude meet the Valuable, Rare, Inimitable, and Non-substitutable (VRIN) criteria and are thus considered essential in shaping customer perceptions and driving performance (Barney, 1991). However, RBV alone cannot fully explain why brand awareness does not always lead to improved performance, especially in markets characterized by intense competition and rising customer expectations (Gazi *et al.,* 2024). The effectiveness of these resources depends significantly on customers' evaluative processes and their actual experiences with the brand (Inseng and Uford, 2019). To address this limitation, this study integrates Expectancy Disconfirmation Theory (EDT), which emphasizes that customer satisfaction emerges from comparisons between expectations and actual experiences (Matonya, 2018). Customer satisfaction may therefore serve as a crucial moderator that strengthens or weakens the impact of brand awareness and brand attitude on brand performance (Nunkoo *et al.,* 2025). Existing evidence supports this view, with scholars such as Shi *et al.,* (2022) and Alwan and Alshurideh (2022) showing that satisfaction amplifies the behavioural outcomes associated with brand-related constructs.

Despite the theoretical relevance of RBV and EDT in explaining brand-related outcomes, empirical evidence on the relationships among brand awareness, brand attitude, and brand performance remains inconsistent. Several studies demonstrate strong positive links, showing that brand awareness enhances both brand attitude and firm performance (Jamil et al., 2025; Kurnia *et al.,* 2025; Shaibu and Mohammed, 2025; Mante *et al.,* 2023; Troiville, 2024; Wahyudin, 2025). However, other scholars reported insignificant effects, suggesting that awareness and attitude alone may not always translate into improved performance (Hultman *et al.,* 2021; Chen and Chang, 2011). Similarly, although some studies find that brand attitude reliably predicts brand performance (Hwang *et al.,* 2022; Mmasi and Mwaifyusi, 2021; Foroudi, 2019), others present contrasting results, including negative or non-significant effects (Sharma, 2024). These mixed findings indicate gaps in understanding how brand awareness and brand attitude operate across different contexts, and why their effects vary across industries and markets, including the Tanzanian telecommunications sector.

Furthermore, recent research highlights the importance of examining how brand awareness translates into performance, suggesting that its influence often operates indirectly through psychological mechanisms such as brand attitude (Hameed *et al.,* 2023). Scholars argue that awareness alone provides only cognitive familiarity, whereas brand attitude captures consumers' affective and evaluative judgments that more strongly drive behavioural outcomes (Pratama *et al.,* 2023; Hameed et al., 2023). As a result, mediation through brand attitude is essential to understand the pathway linking awareness to performance, particularly in competitive service industries (Pratama *et al.,* 2023).

Meanwhile, the role of customer satisfaction as a moderator has gained increased attention because satisfaction shapes the strength and direction of consumer behavioural responses (Brunner *et al.,* 2025). Studies have shown that even when brand attitudes are favourable, their conversion into performance outcomes such as loyalty and advocacy depend on whether customers are satisfied with their actual experiences (Shi *et al.,* 2022; Nunkoo *et al.,* 2025). This underscores the need to incorporate both mediation and moderation mechanisms to capture the complexity of how brand-related variables influence performance in dynamic markets such as telecommunications. Therefore, this study examines how brand awareness and brand attitude influence brand performance among major telecommunication companies in Tanzania. The study further investigates whether brand attitude mediates the effect of brand awareness on performance, and whether customer satisfaction moderates the links between brand awareness, brand attitude, and brand performance.

This study offers several significant contributions. Contextually, it provides rare empirical evidence from Tanzania's telecommunications sector, a fast-growing yet underexamined market where brand-related research remains limited despite increasing competition and digital transformation. Theoretically, the study advances branding literature by integrating RBV and EDT into a unified framework, thereby explaining not only the direct effects of brand awareness and brand attitude on brand performance but also unveiling the mediating mechanism of brand attitude and the moderating influence of customer satisfaction. This dual-theory integration enriches understanding of how intangible resources interact with experiential evaluations to shape firm outcomes. Practically, the findings offer actionable insights for managers of telecommunication companies by highlighting the need to strengthen brand attitude formation and ensure consistent customer satisfaction if they are to convert high market visibility into improved brand performance. The study therefore provides a strategic roadmap for firms seeking to enhance competitive positioning in highly saturated service markets.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review

This study is anchored in the Resource-Based View (RBV), a theory that emphasises the role of internal resources as key drivers of sustainable competitive advantage. According to RBV, firms achieve superior performance by leveraging VRIN resources (Barney, 1991). In the context of this study, intangible resources such as brand awareness and brand attitude are considered critical assets that can foster differentiation, strengthen customer loyalty, and ultimately enhance firm performance (Inseng and Uford, 2019). Brand-related resources not only shape consumer perceptions but also act as strategic levers that influence how firms compete in dynamic markets such as telecommunications (Gazi *et al.,* 2024).

While RBV provides a useful lens for understanding the role of intangible assets, it has been criticised for overlooking the dynamic and relational aspects of value creation, particularly in how customers' experiences and perceptions interact with firm resources (Malhotra *et al.,* 2025). To address this limitation, the study incorporates the Expectancy Disconfirmation Theory (EDT) to account for the role of customer satisfaction. EDT posits that satisfaction is formed when customers compare their expectations with actual performance outcomes (Oliver, 1980). When experiences meet or exceed expectations, satisfaction is enhanced, which in turn strengthens the impact of brand-related resources on firm performance (Matonya, 2018). Integrating RBV with EDT therefore provides a more comprehensive framework, recognising that while brand awareness and attitude constitute strategic resources, their effectiveness is significantly shaped by the extent to which they generate positive customer experiences. This combined theoretical grounding allows the study to capture both the internal resource-based advantages and the external evaluative processes that drive performance outcomes.

Empirical Review and Development of Research Hypotheses

Brand Awareness

Brand awareness reflects the extent to which consumers can recognize and recall a brand, serving as a critical driver of consumer choice and brand-related outcomes (Kurnia *et al.,* 2025). Prior studies have reported mixed evidence regarding its relationship with brand performance. For instance, several studies (Jamil *et al.,* 2025; Kurnia *et al.,* 2025; Shaibu and Mohammed, 2025; Mante *et al.,* 2023) have established a positive and significant association between brand awareness and brand performance, highlighting its role in enhancing market competitiveness and customer loyalty. Conversely, other scholars (Hultman *et al.,* 2021; Chen and Chang, 2011) found the relationship to be positive yet insufficient, suggesting that awareness alone may not guarantee improved performance without the support of other brand-related factors. Furthermore, empirical evidence extends this relationship to brand attitude, with some studies (Troiville, 2024; Wahyudin, 2025) reporting a positive and significant influence of brand awareness on shaping consumer attitudes, while others (Paul and Bhakar, 2018; Yang and Wang, 2010) found the link to be insignificant. Guided by RBV and empirical insights, the current study proposes the following hypotheses:

H_{1a}: *Brand awareness is positively related to brand performance of the telecommunication companies.*

H_{1b}: *Brand awareness is positively related to brand attitude of the telecommunication companies.*

Brand Attitude

Brand attitude reflects consumers' overall evaluation of a brand, indicating the extent of favourability or unfavourability they hold towards it (Wahyudin, 2025). Empirical evidence largely supports a positive and significant relationship, with studies such as Hwang *et al.,* (2022); Mmasi and Mwaifyusi (2021); Foroudi (2019) showing that favourable brand attitudes strengthen brand equity and enhance market competitiveness. However, findings are not entirely consistent; Sharma (2024), for example, reported a negative and insignificant relationship, suggesting that positive perceptions do not always translate into improved performance, particularly in contexts where competitive pressures or service delivery gaps undermine outcomes. Nonetheless, given the stronger body of supporting evidence, this study proposes the following hypothesis.

H_2: *Brand attitude is positively related to brand performance of the telecommunication companies.*

Mediating Role of Brand Attitude

While the direct influence of brand awareness on brand performance has been widely examined (Jamil *et al.,* 2025; Kurnia *et al.,* 2025; Shaibu and Mohammed, 2025; Mante *et al.,* 2023), relatively few studies have investigated the mediating role of brand attitude in this relationship. Existing evidence indicates that brand attitude can serve as a critical mechanism through which awareness is translated into tangible brand outcomes. For instance, Hameed *et al.,* (2023) in Pakistan and Pratama *et al.,* (2023) in Indonesia found that brand attitude positively and significantly mediates the relationship between brand awareness and brand performance. This suggests that brand attitude operates as a pathway linking awareness to performance, reinforcing the notion that awareness alone may not be sufficient unless it fosters favourable consumer evaluations. Drawing from these insights, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H_3: *Brand attitude mediates the relationship between brand awareness and brand performance of the telecommunication companies*.

Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction refers to the degree to which a product or service meets or surpasses customer expectations, reflecting their overall evaluation of the experience with a firm's offerings (Brunner *et al.,* 2025). It is widely regarded as an important indicator of how effectively an organisation delivers value and sustains long-term relationships with its customers (Nunkoo *et al.,* 2025; Hussain *et al.,* 2025). Existing literature primarily focuses on the direct effects of brand awareness and brand attitude on brand performance, yet only a limited number of studies have examined the moderating role of customer satisfaction in these relationships. For instance, Shi *et al.,* (2022) found that customer satisfaction can strengthen the impact of brand-related factors on performance, suggesting that satisfied customers are more likely to translate their awareness and positive attitudes into supportive behaviours that enhance brand outcomes. Building on these insights, this study advances the following hypotheses:

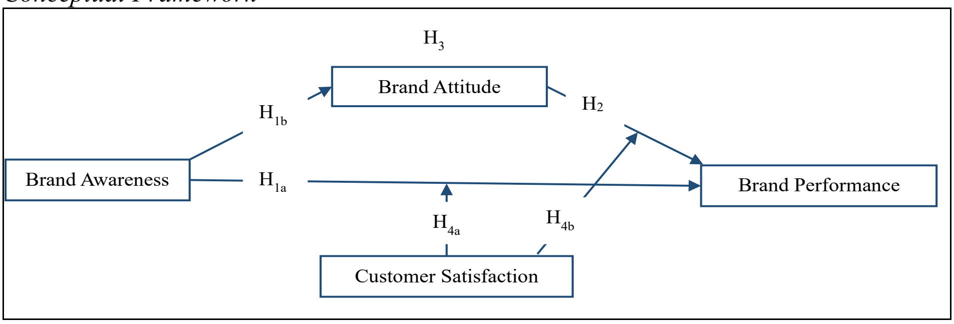
H_{4a}: *Customer satisfaction positively moderates the relationship between brand awareness and brand performance*.

H_{4b}: *Customer satisfaction positively moderates the relationship between brand attitude and brand performance*.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study is grounded in the integration of RBV and EDT, reflecting the role of intangible resources and customer experiences in shaping firm performance. The model positions brand awareness and brand attitude as key intangible resources that directly influence brand performance, consistent with RBV's assertion that unique internal assets drive competitive advantage. In addition, the framework incorporates a mediating pathway in which brand attitude channels the influence of brand awareness into brand performance, thereby recognising the psychological mechanisms through which awareness is translated into favourable outcomes. Furthermore, drawing on EDT, customer satisfaction is introduced as a moderating variable, hypothesised to strengthen the relationships between both brand awareness and brand performance, and brand attitude and brand performance, as presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1
Conceptual Framework



METHODOLOGY

Research Philosophy, Approach and Design

This study employed a positivist research philosophy, which emphasises objectivity, measurement, and hypothesis testing to establish causal relationships among variables (Dulal, 2025). Under this paradigm, the researcher assumes that social phenomena such as brand awareness, brand attitude, customer satisfaction, and brand performance can be quantified and analysed empirically to yield generalisable conclusions (Foroudi, 2019). Moreover, a deductive research approach was employed, beginning with theoretical propositions derived from the RBV and EDT, from which testable hypotheses were formulated and subjected to empirical examination. Consistent with the positivist stance, the study utilised an explanatory research design, which enables the identification and measurement of cause-and-effect relationships among variables (Goktas and Dirsehan, 2025; Mwaifyusi and Dau, 2022). The study used this design because it enables systematic data collection and statistical analysis to validate the hypothesised relationships among brand awareness, brand attitude, customer satisfaction, and brand performance in Tanzanian telecommunication companies.

Population, Sample Size and Sampling Procedures

The study targeted a population of 1,832 employees from four major telecommunication companies operating in Dar es Salaam; Vodacom, Airtel, Yas and Viettel Tanzania Limited (Halotel) which together account for about 97% of the telecom market share in Tanzania (TCRA, 2024). Employees were selected because they are directly involved in customer interactions, marketing, and service delivery, giving them first-hand knowledge of customer behaviours, preferences, and perceptions that directly influence brand performance (Wahyudin, 2025).

Building on this population, the sample size was determined based on Field (2009) guideline, which recommends 10 to 15 participants per item in multivariate analysis. Given that the study included 20 measurement items, the minimum recommended sample size was 200 respondents. However, based on Hair *et al.,* (2010), a sample of 300 respondents was deemed appropriate for Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). To ensure sufficient statistical power and accommodate possible non-responses, the sample size was increased to 375 by dividing 300 by 0.80, assuming a 20% non-response rate (Nunkoo *et al.,* 2025). The adjusted sample was then proportionally distributed across the four telecommunication companies. A stratified random sampling technique was first applied to group employees by company, ensuring that each firm was represented according to its size in the total population. Thereafter, systematic random sampling was employed within each stratum to select individual respondents, thereby ensuring proportional representation and reducing selection bias while maintaining randomness in participant selection (Slater and Hasson, 2025).

Data Collection and Measurement of the Variables

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire administered between August 31, 2023, and February 28, 2024, through the drop-and-collect method, which is widely recognised for its effectiveness in achieving high response rates in large samples (Nguyen *et al.,* 2025). A total of 375 questionnaires were distributed across the four telecommunication companies, out of which 351 were returned, representing a 93.6% response rate. After data screening to remove 37 incomplete and inconsistent responses, 314 questionnaires were retained for analysis, yielding a final usable response rate of 83.7%. This high response rate enhanced the reliability and representativeness of the collected data (Sharma, 2024).

The study measured four key constructs; brand awareness, brand attitude, customer satisfaction, and brand performance, using multi-item scales adapted from previously validated instruments in the empirical literature. All items were rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), which is widely accepted for capturing attitudes and perceptions in social science research (Foroudi, 2019; Mmasi and Mwaifyusi, 2021). Specifically, brand awareness was measured using six items (Jamil *et al.,* 2025; Kurnia *et al.,* 2025; Shaibu and Mohammed, 2025), brand attitude with six items (Foroudi, 2019; Mmasi and Mwaifyusi, 2021), customer satisfaction with three items (Matonya, 2018), and brand performance with five items (Kurnia *et al.,* 2025; Shaibu and Mohammed, 2025). In total, the measurement instrument consisted of 20 items, as presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Measurement of the Constructs

Constructs	Code	Items
Brand awareness	AW1	Our customers can clearly recall some characteristics of this brand
	AW2	The company's brand is memorable to our customers
	AW3	The company's brand is recognizable to our customers
	AW4	Our services and products are well known among customers
	AW5	Our services and products are familiar to the customers
	AW6	Our customers have enough information about company's products and services
Brand attitude	ATT1	Our customers feel confidence in our service
	ATT2	We are honest and sincere in addressing customers' concerns
	ATT3	We do not disappoint our customers
	ATT4	We make our customers happy
	ATT5	Our customers like the company's products and services
	ATT6	Our customers feel good to use our services and products
Customer satisfaction	SAT1	In my opinion, customers expect quality service from this brand
	SAT2	Based on my experience, we meet customer expectations
	SAT3	From my observation, customer experience with this brand often exceeds what they initially expected
Brand performance	PER1	Our sales volume increases over the past three years
	PER2	The number of new customers increase over the past three years
	PER3	Our customers say positive things about this brand
	PER4	Our customers repeatedly purchase this brand
	PER5	Our brand has achieved its performance targets over the past three years

Common Method Variance

Given that all data were collected from the same respondents using a structured questionnaire, it was necessary to assess the potential presence of Common Method Variance (CMV), which could bias the estimation of relationships among constructs (Rubenstein *et al.,* 2025). This study employed the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) method within the inner model, as recommended in recent methodological literature (Kock, 2015). According to Kock (2015), CMV is considered problematic when VIF values exceed 3.3. As shown in Table 2, all inner VIF values ranged from 1.300 to 2.075, which are well below the accepted threshold. These results indicate that multicollinearity is not present and that CMV is unlikely to threaten the validity of the findings in this study.

Table 2
Collinearity Statistics-Inner Model

Path	VIF
AW -> PER	2.075
AW -> ATT	1.300
ATT -> PER	1.974
AW -> ATT -> PER	1.858
SAT x AW -> PER	1.903
SAT x ATT -> PER	1.876

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM), a variance-based multivariate technique suitable for predictive modelling and exploring complex causal relationships (Hair *et al.,* 2021). The analysis followed a two-stage approach. The first stage involved assessment of the measurement model, which focused on evaluating the reliability and validity of the latent constructs. Indicator reliability was assessed using outer loadings, with a recommended threshold of 0.70 (Hair *et al.,* 2019). Internal consistency reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha, Composite Reliability (rho_A) and Composite Reliability (rho_A), where values of 0.70 or higher were considered acceptable (Mazengo and Mwaifyusi, 2021). Convergent validity was assessed through Average Variance Extracted (AVE), requiring a minimum threshold of 0.50. To ensure that constructs were empirically distinct from one another, discriminant validity was examined using both Fornell-Larcker criterion (Fornell and Larcker, 1981) and Heterotrait–Monotrait (HTMT) ratio, as suggested by Henseler *et al.,* (2015). The second stage involved the evaluation of the structural model to test the hypothesises. Path coefficients, associated t-values, and p-values were obtained using a bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 resamples, which enhances the robustness of significance testing. The model's explanatory power was assessed using the coefficient of determination (R^2), while effect sizes (f^2) was used to evaluate the magnitude and predictive contribution of each predictor to the model.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Measurement Model Assessment

The reliability and validity of the measurement model were evaluated before testing the hypothesised structural relationships as suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981). The assessment focused on indicator loadings, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity and discriminant validity. Specifically, internal consistency was measured using Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability (rho_A), and rho_C, while convergent validity was examined using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). As shown in Table 3, all indicator loadings exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Hair *et al.,* 2019), ranging from 0.779 to 0.911, demonstrating strong individual item reliability. Cronbach's alpha values ranged from 0.857 to 0.944, rho_A and and rho_C values from 0.907 to 0.955, all surpassing the minimum acceptable benchmark of 0.70. These results confirm strong internal consistency reliability across all constructs. Convergent validity was also supported, as all AVE values were above the 0.50 threshold, ranging from 0.736 to 0.781, indicating that a substantial portion of the variance in the observed indicators was explained by their respective latent constructs.

Table 3
Assessment of Reliability and Convergent Validity

Item	Loadings	Cronbach's alpha	rho_A	rho_C	AVE
Brand awareness		0.932	0.933	0.946	0.746
AW1	0.853				
AW2	0.868				
AW3	0.899				
AW4	0.837				
AW5	0.868				
AW6	0.856				
Brand attitude		0.944	0.946	0.955	0.781
ATT1	0.898				
ATT2	0.890				
ATT3	0.892				
ATT4	0.838				
ATT5	0.888				

Item	Loadings	Cronbach's alpha	rho_A	rho_C	AVE
ATT6	0.896				
Customer satisfaction		0.857	0.907	0.911	0.774
SAT1	0.885				
SAT2	0.911				
SAT3	0.842				
Brand performance		0.909	0.910	0.933	0.736
PER1	0.779				
PER2	0.907				
PER3	0.856				
PER4	0.876				
PER5	0.866				

AVE: Average Variance Extracted

Discriminant validity was assessed using both the Fornell–Larcker criterion and the HTMT ratio. According to the Fornell–Larcker criterion, discriminant validity is achieved when the square root of each construct's AVE exceeds its correlations with other constructs. As shown in Table 4, all constructs satisfied this requirement, with √AVE values ranging from 0.857 to 0.884, indicating adequate discriminant validity. Moreover, the HTMT ratios, reported in parentheses in Table 4, were all below the recommended threshold of 0.85 (Henseler *et al.,* 2015), further confirming discriminant validity among the constructs. The results indicate that the measurement model exhibits discriminant validity, suggesting that the model is suitable for subsequent structural model analysis.

Table 4
Assessment of Discriminant Validity

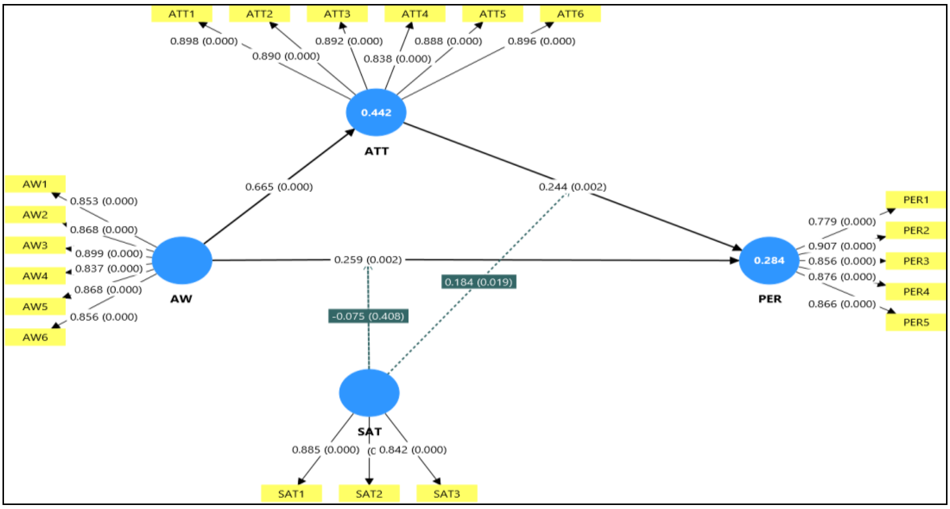
Variables	ATT	AW	PER	SAT
ATT	0.884[a]			
AW	0.707[b]	0.864[a]		
PER	0.489[b]	0.512[b]	0.857[a]	
SAT	0.445[b]	0.510[b]	0.325[b]	0.880[a]

[a]Fornell-Larcker(√AVE).
[b]HTMT ratio.
AVE: Average Variance Extracted; HTMT: Heterotrait-Monotrait.

Results of Hypotheses Testing

The structural model, illustrated in Figure 2, was tested to examine the hypothesised relationships among brand awareness, brand attitude, customer satisfaction, and brand performance. Path coefficients (β), t-values, p-values, and effect sizes (f^2) were estimated using a bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 resamples (Hair *et al.,* 2019). Multicollinearity was assessed through VIF values, all of which were below the recommended threshold of 5, indicating no multicollinearity concerns. The coefficient of determination (R^2) for brand performance was 0.284, suggesting that approximately 28.4% of the variance in brand performance was explained by the predictor constructs and interaction terms.

Figure 2
Structural Model



As shown in Table 5, brand awareness had a positive and significant direct effect on brand performance (β = 0.259, t = 3.083, p = 0.002), supporting H_{1a}, with a small-to-moderate effect size (f^2 = 0.047). Brand awareness also had a positive and significant effect on brand attitude (β = 0.665, t = 16.081, p = 0.000), supporting H_{1b}, with a large effect size (f^2 = 0.791). Brand attitude positively and significantly influenced brand performance (β = 0.244, t = 3.115, p = 0.002), supporting H_2, with a small effect size (f^2 = 0.045).

Table 5
Results from Hypothesis Test

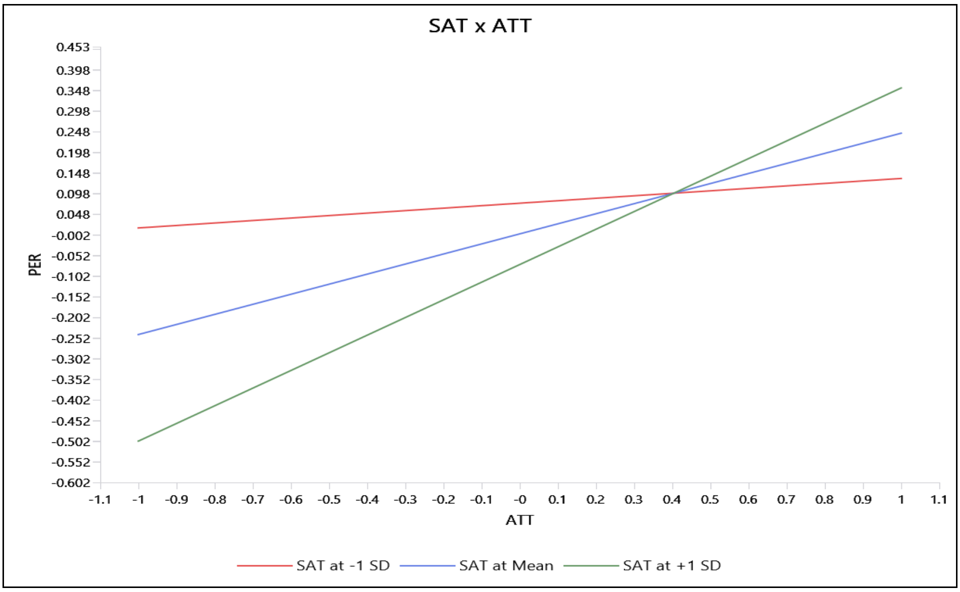
Hypothesises	Path	*β*	*t*-value	*p* values	Effect size (*f2*)	Remarks
H_{1a}	AW -> PER	0.259	3.083	0.002	0.047	Accepted
H_{1b}	AW -> ATT	0.665	16.081	0.000	0.791	Accepted
H_2	ATT -> PER	0.244	3.115	0.002	0.045	Accepted
H_3	AW ->ATT -> PER	0.162	3.070	0.002	0.047	Accepted
H_{4a}	SAT x AW -> PER	-0.075	0.828	0.408	0.003	Rejected
H_{4b}	SAT x ATT -> PER	0.184	2.351	0.019	0.024	Accepted

Note:
AW: Brand awareness; ATT: Brand attitude; SAT: Customer satisfaction; PER: Brand performance.

Beyond direct effects, the results show that the mediated effect of brand awareness on brand performance through brand attitude was significant ($\beta = 0.162$, $t = 3.070$, $p = 0.002$), supporting H_3, with a small effect size ($f^2 = 0.047$). This mediation finding highlights the critical mechanism through which brand awareness translates into improved brand performance.

The moderating role of customer satisfaction was tested using interaction terms. The results indicated that customer satisfaction significantly moderated the relationship between brand attitude and brand performance ($\beta = 0.184$, $t = 2.351$, $p = 0.019$, $f^2 = 0.024$), supporting H_{4b}. However, customer satisfaction did not significantly moderate the effect of brand awareness on brand performance ($\beta = -0.075$, $t = 0.828$, $p = 0.408$, $f^2 = 0.003$), leading to the rejection of H_{4a}, as shown in Figure 3. These results suggest that while brand awareness, attitude, and their mediated effects play a substantial role in shaping brand performance, the moderating influence of customer satisfaction is selective, enhancing some relationships but not others.

Figure 3
Moderating Effect of Customer Satisfaction



DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to examine how brand awareness, brand attitude, and customer satisfaction influence brand performance within Tanzanian telecommunication companies, guided by the RBV and EDT. The findings demonstrate that intangible brand-related resources play a crucial role in shaping performance outcomes, consistent with the RBV's proposition that valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable resources enhance firm competitiveness (Barney, 1991). At the same time, the moderating effects observed provide empirical support for EDT, which emphasises the importance of customer experiences and satisfaction (Oliver, 1980; Matonya, 2018). Together, these theoretical lenses provide a foundation for interpreting how telecommunication brands convert awareness and attitudes into performance gains.

The study revealed that brand awareness significantly influences both brand performance and brand attitude, supporting hypotheses H_{1a} and H_{1b}. This dual influence indicates that awareness operates as a foundational cognitive resource that shapes how consumers evaluate and respond to a brand. The finding aligns with prior research demonstrating that awareness strengthens customer recall, increases familiarity, and positively shapes customer evaluations (Jamil *et al.,* 2025; Kurnia *et al.,* 2025; Shaibu and Mohammed, 2025; Troiville, 2024; Wahyudin, 2025). While some studies argue that awareness alone may not always translate directly into performance (Hultman *et al.,* 2021; Chen and Chang, 2011), the current findings show that within the Tanzanian telecommunication sector, awareness remains a critical contributor to both evaluative attitudes and performance outcomes.

Building on this, the study found that brand attitude significantly and positively affects brand performance, confirming H_2. This result highlights the importance of favourable customer evaluations in driving behavioural loyalty, usage decisions, and overall brand outcomes. The finding is consistent with earlier work showing that positive attitudes enhance brand equity and market responses (Foroudi, 2019; Hwang *et al.,* 2022; Mmasi and Mwaifyusi, 2021). Although some prior studies report mixed results (Sharma, 2024), the current study demonstrates that in the Tanzanian telecommunications context, consumers who develop favourable brand attitudes are more likely to enhance brand performance through continued patronage and positive word-of-mouth. This complements the earlier finding that awareness shapes attitude, thereby establishing a logical flow from cognitive recognition to evaluative judgement to behavioural response.

The study also established that brand attitude mediates the relationship between brand awareness and brand performance, confirming H_3. This mediation effect suggests that awareness alone is insufficient; rather, its influence becomes more impactful when it generates favourable evaluations that guide customer behaviour. This finding aligns with prior research that emphasises the role of attitude as a psychological mechanism linking awareness to performance outcomes (Hameed *et al.,* 2023; Pratama *et al.,* 2023). This also reinforces the RBV perspective by highlighting that internal intangible assets generate advantage not only through direct effects but also through customer-based interpretations that strengthen the brand's market position.

Moreover, the findings regarding moderation revealed a selective influence of customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction significantly strengthened the relationship between brand attitude and brand performance, supporting H_{4b}. This outcome is consistent with EDT, which posits that satisfied customers are more likely to translate favourable evaluations into positive behavioural outcomes (Oliver, 1980; Matonya, 2018). Satisfaction thus strengthens the behavioural relevance of brand attitude by ensuring that positive evaluations are strengthened through confirmatory experiences. However, customer satisfaction did not moderate the relationship between brand awareness and brand performance, leading to the rejection of H_{4a}. This suggests that awareness exerts its influence irrespective of satisfaction levels or that satisfaction plays a more meaningful role when customers have already formed evaluative judgements rather than when they simply recognise or recall a brand. This suggest that satisfaction strengthens affective pathways more than cognitive ones.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Conclusion

This study concludes that brand awareness and brand attitude are essential intangible resources that significantly influence brand performance in the Tanzanian telecommunication sector. Brand awareness not only directly enhances performance but also strongly shapes brand attitude, which in turn contributes positively to performance outcomes. The mediating role of brand attitude further demonstrates that awareness translates into improved performance largely through favourable consumer evaluations. Moreover, customer satisfaction selectively strengthens the effect of brand attitude on performance, underscoring the importance of positive customer experiences. Therefore, the findings affirm that firms seeking sustained performance gains must strategically invest in building strong brand awareness, cultivating favourable brand attitudes, and ensuring high levels of customer satisfaction.

IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

Theoretical Implications

The study enriches theory by demonstrating that brand awareness and brand attitude function as strategic intangible resources, supporting RBV's argument that internal assets drive competitive advantage, while simultaneously highlighting that their effectiveness depends on customer experiences, as proposed by EDT. By showing that brand attitude mediates the effect of awareness on performance and that customer satisfaction strengthens some brand–performance links, the findings integrate resource-based and expectation–experience perspectives, offering a more holistic explanation of how brand-related resources translate into performance outcomes in competitive service markets.

Managerial Implications

From a managerial perspective, the findings highlight the strategic importance of integrating awareness-building initiatives with efforts aimed at shaping favourable brand attitudes. Telecommunication companies in Tanzania should avoid relying solely on promotional campaigns or visibility strategies, as awareness on its own produces limited performance gains unless customers also develop strong positive evaluations of the brand. This calls for a shift toward more holistic brand-building approaches that combine communication, service delivery, and customer engagement in ways that strengthen both cognitive and affective responses. Managers should therefore invest in messaging that not only increases recognition but also communicates brand values, credibility, and differentiation.

The results further underscore the crucial role of customer satisfaction in amplifying the behavioural impact of positive brand attitudes. Managers must prioritise consistent, reliable, and high-quality service experiences to ensure that favourable attitudes translate into actual performance outcomes such as loyalty, usage intensity, and recommendation behaviour. Importantly, since satisfaction does not strengthen the awareness–performance link, managers should recognise that visibility efforts must be complemented by operational excellence rather than assuming that awareness alone will yield performance growth. In a competitive and service-driven sector like telecommunications, firms that successfully align brand strategy with customer experience management will achieve more sustainable brand performance outcomes.

Limitations and Future Research

Despite providing valuable insights, this study is not without limitations. First, the study relied on a cross-sectional research design, which restricts the ability to establish causal relationships among the variables. Because data were collected at a single point in time, the directionality and long-term stability of the relationships between brand awareness, brand attitude, customer satisfaction, and brand performance cannot be fully confirmed. Future research should employ longitudinal or experimental designs to capture changes in brand perceptions and performance dynamics over time.

Second, the study was conducted within the telecommunication sector in Tanzania, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other industries or geographical contexts. Telecommunication services are highly competitive, technology-driven, and characterised by frequent customer interaction, which may influence how brand-related constructs operate. Researchers are encouraged to replicate the study in other service industries such as banking, insurance, or hospitality in different countries to validate the robustness and external validity of the model.

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Solidarity Beyond Borders: Understanding Local Rationales for Hosting Burundian Immigrants in Karagwe, Tanzania

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Abstract
This paper examines the motivations influencing residents of Karagwe District, Tanzania, to host Burundian immigrants, often through informal arrangements that contrast with national immigration policies. The study addresses the following question, highlighting a gap in the existing literature: How do economic, cultural, and personal factors influence the decision of residents in Karagwe District to host Burundian immigrants despite restrictive national immigration policies? This question responds to the scarcity of integrated studies that holistically examine the interplay of motivations behind informal hosting within border communities. Using a convergent mixed-methods approach, the study combines statistical analysis of 371 survey responses with thematic interpretation of qualitative data from interviews with 24 participants. The findings indicate that hosting decisions arise from a complex interplay of economic pragmatism, shared cultural heritage, and deeply rooted personal and moral convictions. Local hosts benefit from the labour and economic participation of immigrants and view hosting as an extension of traditional values and historical kinship across borders. These motivations are conceptualised through Social Capital Theory, which emphasises the role of trust, networks, and collective identity in fostering inclusive behaviour. The study concludes by recommending policy reforms that harmonise legal frameworks with the lived realities of border communities, recognising that effective governance must integrate both formal institutions and informal solidarities.

Keywords: *Cross-border solidarity, Humanitarian hospitality, social capital, Informal integration, Burundian immigrants, Karagwe District*

INTRODUCTION

Across East Africa, state borders frequently fail to align with deeply embedded socio-cultural ties connecting communities on either side. This is particularly evident in Karagwe District in north-western Tanzania, where, despite formal immigration restrictions, many residents continue to host Burundian immigrants with whom they share language, ancestry, and cultural traditions. These practices of hospitality form part of a longstanding continuum of cross-border solidarity rather than isolated incidents. This study seeks to understand the motivations underlying such hosting practices. While often dismissed by authorities as illegal or non-compliant, these decisions are driven by a combination of economic needs, historical legacies, cultural norms, and personal values. Using Social Capital Theory as a guiding framework, this paper explores how trust-based relationships and communal values influence decisions that challenge legal structures yet align with local moral codes.

This paper is informed by Social Capital Theory (SCT), which provides a compelling lens for understanding why local communities host undocumented immigrants despite associated risks. The theory emphasizes the role of social networks, trust, and shared norms in shaping collective behaviour. Initially introduced by Hanifan (1916) as the goodwill and mutual support within community life, the concept was later refined by Bourdieu (1986) and Coleman (1988). Bourdieu theorized that individuals engage in social relationships expecting tangible or symbolic returns, while Coleman highlighted how trust and social structures facilitate cooperation and collective action. In migration contexts, SCT helps explain why certain communities perceive undocumented migrants not as outsiders but as kin—particularly when shared ethnic or cultural affiliations exist. This sense of solidarity often motivates residents to offer support, driven by moral obligation and expectations of reciprocity, whether through labour, social ties, or future assistance (Putnam, 2000). In many African societies, including Tanzania, traditions of extended kinship, communal responsibility, and religious or cultural values emphasising hospitality reinforce this tendency (Mbiti, 2002). The case of Burundian immigrants in Karagwe illustrates how trust, reciprocity, and shared identity lead local communities to accommodate migrants, even amid formal state restrictions.

A growing body of empirical literature from Africa highlights the motivations behind residents' decisions to host undocumented immigrants, often rooted in economic incentives, cultural norms, and personal attitudes. Studies such as those by Maystadt and Duranton (2021) and Verwimp and Maystadt (2020) indicate that, contrary to common assumptions, the presence of refugees can generate economic benefits for host communities. Employment opportunities, business expansion, and increased market demand—particularly when international aid is involved—often stimulate local economies. Betts, Omata, and Sterck (2021) underscore the entrepreneurial potential of refugees, noting that favourable policies enable contributions through job creation and market integration. Similar findings by Ahimbisibwe and Mfitumukiza (2022), Taylor et al. (2016), and Alix-Garcia and Saah (2010) demonstrate that refugee presence, when well-managed, can enhance household welfare and stimulate trade, albeit with some pressure on local infrastructure.

Beyond economics, cultural values significantly shape attitudes toward hosting. Research by Onyedinma and Kanayo (2013), Kyalo (2012), and Agulanna (2010) highlights African traditions of communalism, kinship, and Ubuntu, which foster a moral obligation to help others, including undocumented migrants. Faith-based studies (Magezi, Sichula, & De Clerk, 2010; Gathogo, 2008) further show that religious ethics, particularly within Christian communities, promote charity and compassion toward migrants. The Overseas Development Institute (2016) and Oucho and Oucho (2012) note that empathy and communal reputation often outweigh legal considerations in shaping public attitudes. Okello and Hovil (2020) reinforce this by demonstrating that informal integration in rural Tanzania and Uganda often relies on shared ethnicity and cultural familiarity.

On a personal level, empathy, social trust, and moral conviction also motivate hosting behaviours. Dustmann, Fasani, and Speciale (2020) and Szreter and Woolcock (2022) argue that compassion and strong community bonds encourage residents to support undocumented migrants, especially where traditional hospitality norms persist. Cunningham and Heyman (2021), then Acharya and Sotomayor (2022), showed that ideological beliefs and personal relationships with migrants often lead individuals to perceive state policies as unjust, legitimising acts of hospitality as moral resistance. Brouwer and Schinkel (2020) and Ambrosini (2017) highlight how residents, particularly those active in faith or civil society groups, frame their actions as morally superior to restrictive immigration laws. While De Genova (2018) cautions against romanticizing hosting practices—noting potential power asymmetries—

research by Adepoju (2019) and Pickering (2020) affirms that hosting in Africa often stems from deeply embedded values of shared humanity rather than legal obligation.

Despite these insights, several gaps persist. Most existing studies rely on quantitative, macro-level data (e.g., Taylor et al., 2016; Maystadt & Duranton, 2021), offering a limited understanding of subjective motivations or community-level dynamics. Moreover, district-specific research in Tanzania remains scarce. Much of the literature focuses on formal refugee camps, leaving informal, undocumented hosting practices—like those in Karagwe—underexplored. The unique socio-economic and cultural conditions in Karagwe, shaped by historical migration, cross-border kinship, and limited state presence, are largely absent from academic inquiry.

This study addresses these gaps by investigating the motivations of Karagwe residents in hosting Burundian immigrants. It integrates economic, cultural, and personal dimensions to provide a holistic understanding of hosting behaviours. Specifically, it explores how social capital operates within these practices—through networks of trust, shared identity, and informal reciprocity—and how such grassroots solidarity complements or challenges state-led refugee governance.

To guide this inquiry, the following central question was posed: *How do economic, cultural, and personal factors influence the decision of local residents in Karagwe District to host Burundian immigrants despite restrictive national immigration policies?*

The conceptual framework for this study positions the decision to host as the dependent variable, shaped by three interrelated independent variables: socio-cultural factors (e.g., kinship and shared traditions), economic factors (e.g., livelihood opportunities and mutual aid), and personal attitudes (e.g., trust, empathy, and moral responsibility). Together, these dimensions help explain the underlying logic of solidarity observed in Karagwe's border communities.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a pragmatic research philosophy, supporting the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods to understand complex social phenomena. Pragmatism was deemed appropriate due to its flexibility in examining the multiple, intertwined factors—economic, cultural, and personal—that influence residents' decisions to host undocumented Burundian immigrants in Karagwe District. This philosophical orientation prioritises practical inquiry and real-world applicability (Creswell & Poth, 2017).

Research Approach

A mixed-methods approach was employed to capture both measurable trends and deeper motivations behind hosting practices. By integrating qualitative insights from interviews and focus group discussions with quantitative data from surveys, the study provided a comprehensive understanding of the informal hosting of immigrants. This approach addressed the question of how various factors influence hosting behaviour (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010).

Research Design

A cross-sectional convergent mixed-methods design was used to collect qualitative and quantitative data concurrently in time and space. This design enabled exploration of not only what motivates residents to host immigrants but also why they make such decisions, offering both breadth and depth. Collecting both types of data simultaneously facilitated effective triangulation and helped uncover previously unexamined factors influencing hosting behaviour (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019).

Study Area, Target Population, and Sample

The study was conducted in Karagwe District, Kagera Region, Tanzania. The district borders Burundi and has historically been a key location for both spontaneous and organized refugee hosting. Its geographical position and shared cultural and ethnic ties with Burundians make it an ideal context for exploring informal hosting motivations. The target population included residents of Karagwe District, particularly those who had hosted or were currently hosting Burundian immigrants. The study also involved local leaders and government officials who provided insights into broader policy dynamics and community responses to immigration.

Sampling involved both random and purposive techniques. Random sampling involved 371 survey respondents, and it ensured representation across diverse socio-economic backgrounds and levels of interaction with immigrants. Purposive sampling targeted 24 individuals with specialized knowledge, including immigration officers and community leaders. Stratification was applied based on geographical location (urban or rural), type of economic activity, and degree of engagement with immigrants.

Data Collection and Analysis Methods

Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected from primary and secondary sources using a triangulated approach involving three distinct methods. At that juncture, field surveys were administered using structured questionnaires containing both closed and open-ended items. The questionnaires were designed to capture quantitative data on respondents' socio-economic characteristics (e.g., age, gender, occupation, income), their perceptions of immigrants, and their attitudes toward hosting practices. A total of 371 surveys were distributed across urban and rural sub-wards in Karagwe District using a combination of random and stratified sampling to ensure demographic and geographic representation. Data were collected face-to-face by trained research assistants fluent in both Kiswahili and the local language, with each survey taking approximately 20–25 minutes to complete.

On top of that, key informant interviews (KIIs) were conducted using a semi-structured protocol. A total of 24 interviews were held with purposively selected participants, including local council leaders (8), village elders (6), religious figures (4), immigration officials (3), and residents with extensive hosting experience (3). Interview guides included open-ended questions exploring personal narratives, cultural and ethical reasoning, economic incentives, and perceptions of national policies. Each interview lasted between 45 and 60 minutes, was conducted in Kiswahili, and was audio-recorded with consent before being transcribed and translated into English. Additionally, two focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted with 10 influential community members (5 per FGD) to explore collective norms and community-level rationales.

Quantitative data were analysed using IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 28). Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were generated to summarise socio-demographic variables and hosting attitudes. Inferential analyses, such as correlation tests and multiple regression, were applied to examine relationships between variables such as economic status, cultural affinity, and willingness to host. Reliability of the Likert-scale instruments was confirmed via Cronbach's Alpha scores exceeding 0.7, indicating acceptable internal consistency.

Qualitative data were analysed using thematic analysis following the six-phase framework of Braun and Clarke (2006). This involved familiarisation with the data through repeated reading of transcripts and field notes; generating initial codes; searching for themes; reviewing themes; defining and naming themes; and producing a structured analytical narrative. NVivo software (Version 12) was used to facilitate coding and theme management. Key themes included "economic reciprocity," "cultural kinship," "moral duty," and "legal dissonance."

To ensure validity, method triangulation was employed by cross-verifying findings from surveys, interviews, and observations. Additionally, research instruments were pre-tested in a neighbouring district with similar socio-cultural characteristics, and adjustments were made to improve question clarity and contextual relevance. Reliability was strengthened through the training of research assistants in consistent data collection protocols and inter-coder reliability checks during the qualitative analysis phase.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were strictly followed. Research clearance was obtained from The Open University of Tanzania, followed by official permissions from authorities in Kagera Region and Karagwe District. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, who were informed of the voluntary nature of their participation and their right to withdraw at any stage. Anonymity and confidentiality were maintained throughout the study, in line with ethical guidelines for social science research (Silverman, 2016).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Respondents' Demographic Characteristics

The target population consisted of two major groups: 371 local residents of Karagwe District, including those who had hosted Burundian immigrants, and 24 local government officials and community leaders, who offered insights into broader regional policies and attitudes towards immigration. A total of 371 respondents were used to collect survey data from the targeted demography. The table below indicates the demographic characteristics of the selected sample.

Table 1
Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (N = 371)

Variable	Category	Code	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	—	215	58.0
	Female	—	156	42.0
	Total	—	**371**	**100.0**
Age	18–25 years	—	80	21.6
	26–35 years	—	125	33.7
	36–45 years	—	84	22.6
	46–55 years	—	54	14.6
	56 years and above	—	28	7.5
	Total	—	**371**	**100.0**
Education Level	Never attended school	—	30	8.1
	Primary education	—	60	16.2
	Ordinary Level (O-Level)	—	70	18.9
	Advanced Level (A-Level)	—	25	6.7
	Certificate	—	45	12.1
	Diploma	—	55	14.8
	Bachelor's Degree	—	50	13.5
	Master's Degree	—	25	6.7
	Other	—	11	3.0
	Total	—	**371**	**100.0**
Cadre	Immigration Officers	ImO	60	16.2
	Immigrant Hosts	ImH	100	26.9
	Local Government Officials	LGO	45	12.1
	Burundian Immigrants	BI	110	29.6
	Community Leaders	CL	56	15.1
	Total	—	**371**	**100.0**

Source: Field Data, 2025

This section outlines the background of the people who took part in the study, helping us understand the range of perspectives reflected in the findings. Out of the 371 respondents, 58% were male, and 42% were female. While the gender balance is fairly even, the slightly higher number of male participants may subtly influence how certain issues, such as security, economic decisions, or leadership in the hosting process, are represented in the results.

When it comes to age, the data shows that the majority of respondents were young. Over half (55.3%) were between 18 and 35 years old, suggesting that younger voices played a strong role in shaping the overall narrative. This group is likely to focus on future opportunities, employment, and the potential for long-term coexistence. That said, older respondents were also represented, offering more experienced views that may be grounded in tradition, memory of past migration waves, or established community roles.

In terms of education, there was a wide range of levels among participants. Most respondents had at least some formal schooling, with the largest groups completing O-Level (18.9%), primary education (16.2%), or diploma and certificate programs (a combined 26.9%). Around 13.5% held a university degree, and a small number (6.7%) had a Master's degree. Meanwhile, 8.1% had never attended school. This variety matters because people with different levels of education may see hosting through different lenses—some through formal policy and economic reasoning, others through lived experience, cultural values, and local knowledge. Together, these perspectives offer a more layered and realistic view of why people choose to host.

The roles that respondents play in their communities were also diverse. The study included immigration officers, local government officials, community leaders, immigrant hosts, and Burundian immigrants themselves. Interestingly, Burundian immigrants made up the largest group (29.6%), followed by those who actively host them (26.9%). These two groups are central to the issue and offer firsthand insight into what hosting means on a day-to-day level. Their views are supported by those of officials and leaders, whose experiences bring in the policy and coordination side of hosting.

Overall, this mix of ages, genders, education levels, and community roles creates a strong foundation for interpreting the study's findings. It reflects both personal and institutional viewpoints, offering a more complete picture of what drives people to welcome others into their homes and communities. However, it's worth noting that the study had relatively few respondents with advanced academic backgrounds. As a result, perspectives from scholars or policymakers may be less visible here—but could be a valuable focus in future research.

Economic Benefits Motivating Hosting

This is the first objective of the study sought to analyse the economic benefits gained by local residents that motivate them to host Burundian immigrants.

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics on Economic Benefits of Hosting Burundian Immigrants

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Hosting Burundian immigrants provides economic benefits to the host household.	371	4.39	0.632
Burundian immigrants contribute to the local economy by providing affordable labour.	371	3.98	1.104
Burundian immigrants are hosted because they help in agricultural or business activities.	371	4.04	1.079
Renting houses or land to Burundian immigrants provides a good source of income.	371	3.76	1.059
Burundian immigrants positively impact local trade and business.	371	4.29	0.817
Valid N (listwise)	**371**	—	—

Source: Field Data, 2025

The findings presented in Table 3.2 offer important insights into the economic motivations that influence local residents in Karagwe District to host Burundian immigrants. Each statement captures a distinct yet interrelated way in which hosting immigrants supports local livelihoods. The mean scores, all above 3.7, suggest a generally positive perception, while relatively low standard deviations reflect consistency in responses across participants.

Firstly, the statement "*Hosting Burundian immigrants provides economic benefits to the host's household*" received the highest mean score of 4.39. This indicates that many hosts recognize the direct, day-to-day economic advantages—such as help with farming, household labour, and informal business support. In rural Tanzania, informal economic cooperation is often essential for survival, and hosting arrangements appear to reinforce this reality. This finding challenges the common assumption that immigrants are economic burdens; instead, they are viewed as active contributors to household welfare.

Secondly, the statement "*Burundian immigrants contribute to the local economy by providing affordable labour*" had a mean score of 3.98. In areas where formal labour markets are limited, the availability of affordable and willing workers is critical. Immigrants help meet labour needs in agriculture, construction, and informal trade. While such dynamics can sometimes generate tension, particularly in competitive job markets, respondents in this study appear to view it largely as a benefit.

The third item, "*Burundian immigrants are hosted because they help in agricultural or business activities*," scored a mean of 4.04, reinforcing the earlier points. Given that much of Karagwe's economy is based on small-scale farming and informal enterprise, this labour is not only welcome—it's essential. Hosting thus becomes both a cultural tradition and a strategic response to labour shortages, especially during peak farming seasons.

The fourth statement— "*Renting houses or land to Burundian immigrants provides a good source of income*"—received a slightly lower mean of 3.76. Yet, it still reflects moderate agreement. This suggests that property rental to immigrants is a meaningful source of income, particularly in areas with established housing infrastructure. However, the slightly lower score may reflect that not all residents have property to rent, limiting direct benefit to a subset of the population.

The final statement — "*Burundian immigrants positively impact local trade and business*"—achieved a high mean score of 4.29, indicating strong consensus that immigrants contribute to local commerce. Their roles as traders, consumers, and labourers stimulate rural markets, increase demand, and broaden economic interactions across communities. Their presence enhances economic vibrancy and expands opportunities for locals involved in retail, farming, and services.

Support from Literature and Theory

The study findings are supported by recent research across Sub-Saharan Africa. For example, Maystadt and Duranton (2021) found that communities near refugee settlements in Rwanda experienced growth in employment and business opportunities. Similarly, Betts, Easton-Calabria, and Omata (2020) highlighted the entrepreneurial capacities of refugees in Uganda and Tanzania, showing that many actively contribute to job creation and market expansion. Verwimp and Maystadt (2020) noted that while competition for local resources may exist, the net economic effect on host communities is often positive, especially when development aid strengthens local markets.

The analysis is further enriched when viewed through theoretical lenses. Social Capital Theory (Putnam, 2000) posits that shared trust and networks lead to mutual benefit and cooperation. In this context, hosting immigrants reflects a social contract—hosts offer shelter or land, and in return, gain labour, income, or trade opportunities. These informal exchanges strengthen local resilience and reduce the need for formal enforcement mechanisms.

Rational Choice Theory also applies here. It assumes that individuals make decisions based on the weighing of costs and benefits. Hosting Burundian immigrants appears to be a deliberate, strategic choice: locals assess that the economic benefits—cheap labour, rental income, and trade—outweigh any risks or costs. As Kusakabe and Pearson (2020) argue, such refugee-host arrangements in Southeast Africa are often economically rational partnerships with mutual benefit at the core.

Qualitative Responses: Economic Perspectives from the Ground

To complement the survey data, interviews and focus group discussions were held with participants, including immigrant hosts (ImH), community members (CoM), local government officials (LGO), community leaders (CL), and Burundian immigrants (BI). Their reflections offer a more personal and nuanced view of the economic dynamics of hosting. One 65-year-old host from Lukole Village (ImH) shared:

> "*I have four farms—each over 14 hectares—where I grow beans, maize, bananas, and coffee. My success grew when I began hosting Burundian immigrants. I don't exploit them—we exchange labour for housing, food, and basic goods. My father started this in the 1970s; I continued in the 1990s. Some have lived here for more than 40 years. Their labour is reliable, and they are strong and trustworthy. Hosting has brought not just wealth, but long-standing friendship rooted in shared history—even before colonial borders divided us* (Interview with ImH, July 2025)."

In Omkimea village, a 47-year-old kerosene trader (CoM) explained:

> "*Most locals are moving to solar and electricity, but Burundian immigrants still depend on kerosene. If they stopped coming, my business would collapse. They're my main customers. Their economic situation is different from ours, so they still rely on traditional energy. I don't see their presence as a burden at all—it keeps my business alive* (Interview with CoM, July 2025)."

A 53-year-old landlord from Rulalo village (CoM) added:

> "*I have two houses rented out to Burundian immigrants. Here in the village, renting isn't common— people have their own homes. But immigrants stay long-term and need housing. I don't charge much, but the income is steady. Without them, those houses might stay empty* (Interview with CoM, July 2025)."

The findings from both quantitative and qualitative data clearly show that economic factors strongly influence the decision to host Burundian immigrants. These benefits—ranging from affordable labour and rental income to enhanced market activity—are deeply embedded in local livelihoods. Rather than viewing hosting solely through a humanitarian lens, the study reveals how economic pragmatism and social relationships work together to shape positive host-immigrant dynamics. These insights align with broader academic research and underline the need for policies that recognize and support local economic interdependence between host communities and immigrant populations.

Cultural Values Influencing Hosting

This section addresses the second objective of the study, which sought to examine how cultural values influence local residents' motivation to host Burundian immigrants.

Table 3
Descriptive Statistics on Cultural Values Influencing the Hosting of Burundian Immigrants

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Cultural beliefs in this community encourage hospitality and the welcoming of immigrants.	371	4.32	0.782
Burundian immigrants share similar cultural values and traditions with the host community.	371	3.95	1.090
Hosting Burundian immigrants strengthens social relationships within the community.	371	4.09	0.973
The community has a long history of welcoming immigrants from Burundi.	371	4.01	1.035
It is a moral duty to assist Burundian immigrants in times of need.	371	4.32	0.782

Source: Field Data, 2025

The findings in Table 3.3 highlight a strong cultural inclination toward hospitality and moral responsibility within the host communities in Karagwe District. Two statements received the highest mean score of 4.32: "The cultural beliefs of people around here encourage hospitality and welcoming of immigrants" and "It's a moral duty to assist Burundian immigrants in times of need." These results reflect deeply rooted values of communal care, moral obligation, and shared humanity, which shape not only interpersonal relationships but also the broader willingness to host.

Such cultural orientations are consistent with research across the region. Deardorff and Hamid (2021) emphasize the influence of Ubuntu philosophy in East Africa, which centers on mutual support and collective well-being. Similarly, Nshimbi and Moyo (2020) note that in many African societies, particularly among Bantu-speaking populations, hospitality is not just an act of kindness but a reflection of moral standing and social prestige.

Another important dimension is the strengthening of social relationships through hosting, captured in the item "*Hosting Burundian immigrants strengthens social relationships in the community*" (Mean = 4.09, SD = .973). This suggests that hosting is viewed not only as a benefit to immigrants but also as a practice that fosters community cohesion and reciprocity. This aligns with Nyamnjoh (2021), who argues that hosting practices often serve to reinforce social safety nets, affirm kinship, and sustain cultural continuity within African communities.

The fourth statement — "*My community has a long history of welcoming immigrants from Burundi*"— recorded a mean of 4.01, reinforcing the idea that these cultural practices are not recent or reactive, but historically rooted. Ngowi and Mkumbwa (2022) document cross-border interactions between Kagera and Burundi, illustrating how long-standing mobility has fostered hybrid identities and traditions of openness. In this way, the act of hosting reflects a continuum of transborder solidarity, rather than an isolated or contemporary response.

The final item — "*The Burundian immigrants share similar cultural values and traditions with us*"— scored a slightly lower but still significant mean of 3.95, with a higher standard deviation (SD = 1.090). This indicates general agreement, but also some variation in perception, possibly influenced by differences in ethnicity, language, or generational experience. As Tshitereke and Mupakati (2023) explain, perceived cultural similarity is a key factor in successful grassroots hosting, especially where formal integration mechanisms are limited.

Theoretical Reflection: Social and Cultural Capital

These findings align well with social capital theory, which emphasizes the role of networks, norms, and trust in enabling collective action (Putnam, 2000; Szreter & Woolcock, 2022). The high agreement levels on moral duty, shared values, and historical openness reflect a dense network of trust-based relationships, where cultural expectations drive action. Hosting in this context is less a formal obligation and more a community-embedded norm.

In addition, cultural capital theory (Bourdieu, 1986; Nowicka, 2021) helps explain how symbolic knowledge, values, and traditions inform behaviour. Local residents appear to draw upon a cultural repertoire that emphasizes hospitality, interdependence, and shared ethnic heritage, especially with neighbouring Burundian communities. These shared cultural assets facilitate smoother integration and mutual respect, acting as resources for both coexistence and cooperation.

As Bourdieu and Passeron (2020) argue, cultural capital is often passed on informally through family, schools, and religious institutions. In the Karagwe context, this includes values such as respect for elders, the importance of communal celebration, and responsibilities toward neighbours—all of which support a non-confrontational, inclusive approach to migration.

Qualitative Insights on Cultural Integration

To complement the quantitative findings, participants were asked: "*How do Burundian immigrants integrate into the local community's cultural and social activities*?" Responses consistently indicated that Burundian immigrants are welcomed not only due to shared heritage but also because of their ability to contribute to community life through participation in churches, ceremonies, traditional dances, and healing practices.

An Immigration Officer from Karagwe (38 years old) shared:

> "*Burundian immigrants find ways to integrate by joining local* churches*. Church leaders often embrace them warmly, treating them as special guests. This makes them feel welcomed and encourages them to stay longer* (Interview with ImO, 16 May 2025)"

A Community Leader from Chonyonyo village noted the role of entertainment in cultural acceptance:

> "*Burundian immigrants are good entertainers during our local* ceremonies*. They dance to traditional songs like Omutolo and Empamba, introduced by the Haya people. Their energy and involvement make them widely accepted, and many have earned strong reputations in our villages because of these contributions* (Interview with CoL, 12 May 2025)"

These examples underscore how cultural integration is practiced and reinforced in everyday life—through music, worship, and community gatherings. The capacity of Burundian immigrants to participate meaningfully in these spaces not only earns them social acceptance but also strengthens bonds with host communities.

Personal Attitudes Influencing Hosting

This section addresses the third objective of the study, which was to explore the personal attitudes that motivate local residents to host Burundian immigrants.

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics on Personal Attitudes Influencing the Hosting of Burundian Immigrants

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
It is a personal sense of responsibility to help Burundian immigrants.	371	4.10	1.047
Burundian immigrants deserve a safe place to live.	371	3.59	1.153
There is no harm in hosting Burundian immigrants despite legal restrictions.	371	4.11	0.865
People in this area have personal relationships (friendship, marriage, etc.) with Burundian immigrants.	371	4.02	1.112
Hosting Burundian immigrants improves my social status in the community.	371	4.32	0.782

Source: Field Data, 2025

The data in Table 3.4 provides valuable insight into how personal convictions influence the decision to host Burundian immigrants. The mean scores, all above 3.5, reflect a generally positive attitude among respondents. These findings help us understand how personal ethics, relationships, and perceived social benefits inform the hosting behaviour observed in Karagwe District.

The highest-rated item — "*Hosting Burundian immigrants improves my social status in the community*" (M = 4.32, SD = .782) — reveals a belief that hosting carries a form of social prestige or moral approval. In many rural and collectivist communities, acts of generosity enhance one's standing and are interpreted as signs of leadership or virtue. This aligns with Ager and Strang (2021), who observed that in such societies, community contribution is closely tied to social capital and status.

Closely following is the belief that "*There is no harm in hosting Burundian immigrants despite legal restrictions*" (M = 4.11, SD = .865). This suggests that many respondents prioritize moral judgment over legal limitations, especially when the law is seen as inadequate in addressing humanitarian realities. Jacobsen (2020) describes this as a form of moral agency, where communities respond based on shared ethics rather than external enforcement, particularly in contexts with limited state presence.

Another highly rated attitude — "*It's a personal sense of responsibility to help Burundian immigrants*" (M = 4.10, SD = 1.047) — underscores an internalized moral duty to assist those in need. This echoes findings by Betts et al. (2021), who found that communities in East Africa often host immigrants not out of obligation, but from a deep-seated sense of historical solidarity, religious duty, or cultural empathy.

The statement "*People around here have personal relationships (friendship, marriage, etc.) with Burundian immigrants*" (M = 4.02, SD = 1.112) also scored highly. These interpersonal bonds help reduce social distance, encourage trust, and normalize long-term cohabitation. Landau and Morand (2020) emphasize that such relationships — whether through trade, kinship, or shared community life — are key drivers of social integration and resilience in host communities.

The lowest-rated item, "*Burundian immigrants deserve a safe place to live*" (M = 3.59, SD = 1.153), still indicates moderate agreement, though with a broader spread in responses. While the notion of deservedness is acknowledged, it may be less influential than motivations rooted in personal benefit, social relationships, or community traditions. This is consistent with Bohnet and Schmitz (2022), who argue that in many rural African contexts, pragmatic or relational considerations often outweigh abstract humanitarian ideals.

These findings reflect the complex interplay of bonding, bridging, and linking social capital. According to Putnam (2000), social capital comprises the networks and norms that enable people to act collectively and support one another. The strong endorsement of personal responsibility, social ties, and reputational gain suggests bonding capital, close-knit relationships and shared values within the host community. The personal relationships between locals and immigrants point to bridging capital, which connects people across social and cultural boundaries, fostering inclusion and cooperation. Meanwhile, the high acceptance of hosting despite legal barriers may reveal a gap in linking capital, the vertical connections between community members and formal institutions. Where laws or governance structures fail to align with community values, people tend to rely on informal norms and moral reasoning. As Cleaver (2021) notes, in many African settings, informal structures, such as family networks, religious teachings, and traditional leadership — are often more trusted and effective than formal law in shaping social behaviour.

To complement the statistical findings, respondents were asked: "*What personal motivations or beliefs influence people's decision to host Burundian immigrants*?" The responses were overwhelmingly grounded in human empathy, cultural values, and spiritual beliefs. One immigrant host explained:

> "*We are all human beings. Whatever we do to others affects our* children *and grandchildren. We share the same ancestry. If someone needs help, we should give it. That's our tradition* (Interview with ImH, July 2025)"

A community member expressed a similar sentiment:

> "*One of the biggest reasons we host Burundian immigrants is our sense of hospitality. Karagwe people are known for* kindness. *When someone is suffering, you help them. You never know who might bury you in the future* (Interview with CoM, July 2025)"

Another participant reflected on the tension between law and humanity:

> "*Even though there are legal restrictions, I can't stop helping. These people didn't come here by choice. They're running from war and poverty. As a human being, I have to do something* (Interview with ImH, July 2025)"

Decision to Host Burundian Immigrants

This section presents findings related to the dependent variable of the study: the overall decision by local residents to host Burundian immigrants. Table 4.5 summarizes participants' perceptions regarding moral, cultural, and economic motivations behind this decision.

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics on Decision to Host Immigrants

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
People feel a moral obligation to assist people who flee from conflict.	371	4.39	0.632
Hosting Burundian immigrants can promote cultural exchange.	371	3.98	1.104
People believe Burundian immigrants contribute positively to the local economy.	371	4.04	1.079

Source: Field Data, 2025

The findings in Table 3.5 offer valuable insight into the key drivers behind the decision to host immigrants, as perceived by local residents. All three indicators scored above 3.9, suggesting a generally favourable disposition toward hosting Burundian immigrants, though with variations in the strength and consistency of agreement.

The strongest consensus was found in the statement: "*People feel a moral obligation to assist people who flee from conflict*" (M = 4.39, SD = .632). This high level of agreement underscores the centrality of humanitarian values in the hosting decision. It reflects the community's belief that providing shelter and support to those in distress is not just an option, but a moral imperative. As Acharya and Sotomayor (2022) argue, moral reasoning plays a critical role in refugee-hosting decisions across Sub-Saharan Africa, often driven by deeply held cultural and religious beliefs. This perspective also reflects bonding social capital, wherein strong internal ties foster solidarity and a willingness to help vulnerable others (Putnam, 2000).

The second item — "*Hosting Burundian immigrants can promote cultural exchange"* — received a mean of 3.98 (SD = 1.104), indicating moderate to strong agreement, albeit with more variation. This suggests that while many residents value the opportunity for intercultural interaction, others may be more reserved. Differences in personal experience, education, or generational views could explain the wider spread of responses. Kunz and Böhmelt (2021) note that the perception of cultural enrichment often correlates with prior bridging social capital — trust and cooperation across group boundaries. In contexts where such capital is present, cultural exchange can enhance community harmony and long-term integration.

The third statement — "*People believe Burundian immigrants contribute positively to the local economy*" — scored a mean of 4.04 (SD = 1.079), reaffirming the view that economic considerations matter. Respondents recognize immigrants as participants in agricultural labor, informal trade, and local service economies. Though not as universally emphasized as moral obligation, the economic rationale remains a practical driver of community support. As Dustmann et al. (2020) suggest, when immigration is seen as beneficial to livelihoods and local productivity, public acceptance tends to increase. In terms of linking social capital, this reflects a recognition of the role that immigrants can play within broader economic and institutional frameworks (Szreter & Woolcock, 2022).

To deepen the analysis, participants were asked: "*What personal motivations or beliefs influence people's decision to host Burundian immigrants*?" Most responses emphasized sympathy, cultural duty, and spiritual beliefs. Many residents expressed that they feel compelled to act out of shared humanity or ancestral connection, even when legal frameworks discourage it.

One immigrant host shared:

> "*We are all human beings. We come from the same ancestors. Whatever bad actions we take against others today, our children might suffer tomorrow. So, we have to take care of them* (Interview with ImH, July 2025)"

Another community member emphasized local values:

> "*One of the big reasons we host Burundians is our tradition of hospitality. Karagwe people are kind-hearted and* civilized*. When someone is struggling, they deserve help. You never know who will be there for you one day* (Interview with CoM, July 2025)"

Participants also linked their beliefs to religion and moral conscience. In response to the question "*Do you believe that Burundian immigrants should be given a safe place regardless of legal restrictions*?" many noted that religious teachings encourage helping others, regardless of their background.

An immigrant host stated:

> "*Even though there are legal restrictions, I can't stop helping. These people didn't come here by choice. They fled* because *of political and economic problems. They need help—and I have to give it* (Interview with ImH, July 2025)"

These reflections highlight how local moral reasoning often supersedes formal legal norms, especially when laws are perceived as disconnected from the community's sense of justice and tradition.

Regression Analysis

To examine how well the key factors—social-cultural values, economic benefits, and personal attitudes—predict local residents' motivation to host Burundian immigrants, a multiple linear regression analysis was conducted.

Model Summary

The regression model summary is presented in Table 4.6 below.

Table
Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.915	0.836	0.835	0.236

a. Predictors: (Constant), Social-Cultural Factors, Economic Factors, Personal Attitudes
Source: Field Data, 2025

The model yielded an R value of 0.915, indicating a very strong positive correlation between the independent variables and the dependent variable—motivation to host Burundian immigrants. This suggests that as social-cultural integration, economic opportunity, and positive personal attitudes increase, so too does the willingness among community members to host immigrants.

An R Square value of 0.836 indicates that approximately 83.6% of the variation in the motivation to host can be explained by the combination of the three predictors. This high proportion highlights the significance of these factors in shaping community attitudes. The remaining 16.4% of variation could be attributed to other influences not captured in the model, such as past trauma, political perceptions, environmental constraints, or national media narratives.

ANOVA: Model Significance

To assess the statistical significance of the overall regression model, an Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was performed. The results are presented in Table 4.7.

Table 3.7: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	97.525	3	32.508	737.411	0.000
Residual	19.063	367	0.051	—	—
Total	**116.588**	**370**	**—**	**—**	**—**

a. Dependent Variable: Decision to host immigrants
b. Predictors: (Constant), Social-Cultural Factors, Economic Factors, Personal Attitudes
Source: Field Data, 2025

The ANOVA results confirm that the regression model is statistically significant. With an F-statistic of 737.411 and a p-value of .000, there is clear evidence that the predictor variables—social-cultural factors, economic considerations, and personal attitudes—jointly have a meaningful effect on the decision to host Burundian immigrants. The very low significance level indicates that the likelihood of these results occurring by chance is extremely small.

Coefficients

Table 3.8 presents the results of a multiple linear regression analysis aimed at identifying the key factors influencing the decision of local residents to host Burundian immigrants in Karagwe District.

Table 3.8: Regression Coefficients

Model	Predictor Variable	B (Unstandardized)	Std. Error	Beta (Standardized)	t-value	Sig.
1	Constant	0.105	0.113	—	0.924	0.356
	Social-Cultural Factors	0.471	0.047	0.455	10.119	0.000
	Economic Factors	0.415	0.043	0.377	9.738	0.000
	Personal Attitudes	0.145	0.026	0.169	5.603	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: Decision to host Immigrants
Source: Field Data, 2025

Firstly, the intercept (constant) is 0.105 with a standard error of 0.113. This suggests that when all independent variables are zero, the baseline level of willingness to host immigrants is positive but not statistically significant, as indicated by a p-value (Sig.) of 0.356, which is greater than the conventional threshold of 0.05. Therefore, the constant term does not have a meaningful influence on the decision-making process in isolation.

The most influential variable is the social-cultural factors, with an unstandardised coefficient (B) of 0.471 and a standardised Beta of 0.455. This means that for every one-unit increase in the perception of social-cultural support or alignment (e.g., shared language, customs, religious ties), there is a 0.471 increase in the likelihood or strength of the decision to host immigrants, holding other factors constant. The standardised Beta value indicates this is the strongest predictor among the three variables. The high t-value of 10.119 and a significance level of 0.000 confirm that this relationship is statistically significant. This underscores the crucial role of cultural familiarity and shared social values in influencing host community behaviour.

Secondly, economic factors also show a strong positive effect, with an unstandardised coefficient of 0.415 and a Beta of 0.377. This implies that improved perceptions of economic benefits—such as job opportunities, access to markets, or mutual economic cooperation—are significantly associated with a greater willingness to host immigrants. The t-value (9.738) and significance level (p = 0.000) confirm that this effect is statistically robust. This finding highlights that economic incentives or perceived mutual gain motivate local residents to accommodate and integrate immigrants into their communities.

Finally, personal attitudes—though the weakest among the three predictors—still have a significant impact, with an unstandardised coefficient of 0.145 and a Beta of 0.169. The relatively lower Beta suggests that while individual beliefs and values matter, they play a more modest role compared to social-cultural and economic factors. Nonetheless, the variable remains significant ($t = 5.603$, $p = 0.000$), indicating that individual perceptions, empathy, and openness also contribute meaningfully to the hosting decision.

Summary of Key Findings

Overall, hosting Burundian immigrants in Karagwe is a multidimensional phenomenon driven by intertwined economic, cultural, and personal factors within a social capital framework. However, it is crucial to recognise that hosting practices are not devoid of ambivalence or costs, a perspective underscored by more critical migration scholarship. While our data highlighted predominantly positive narratives, sporadic accounts pointed to underlying tensions, such as occasional strains on household resources, concerns over market competition in specific sectors, and anxieties about legal repercussions for hosts. These underscores echo De Genova's (2018) caution against romanticising informal hospitality, reminding us that power asymmetries and the potential for exploitation can exist even within kin-like networks. The moral economy of hosting, while resilient, operates within a context of structural scarcity and legal precarity, where acts of solidarity can also entail significant material and social risks for the hosts. This critical lens tempers the overwhelmingly positive findings and underscores the complex, sometimes contradictory, reality of informal hosting arrangements.

Limitations and Directions for Further Research

This study is limited by its typical cross-sectional design, which captured motivations at a single point in time, limiting our ability to analyse how these rationales evolve as hosting relationships mature or as the broader socio-political context changes. The reliance on self-reported data also presents inherent biases. Future research would benefit from longitudinal studies tracking hosting dynamics over time to understand sustainability and change. Comparative work across different border regions in East Africa could also illuminate how varying state policies, historical relationships, and economic conditions shape similar solidarities.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals that the decision by residents in Karagwe to host Burundian immigrants is shaped by a complex interplay of economic benefits, cultural values, and personal attitudes. In response to the research question, the findings show that economic incentives such as access to affordable labour and collaborative participation in agriculture and small-scale business are significant drivers. These practical benefits enhance household livelihoods and contribute to the broader local economy, underscoring the importance of economic pragmatism in hosting decisions. Cultural and social values emerged as equally influential, reflecting the community's deeply rooted traditions of hospitality, moral responsibility, and social solidarity. Hosting immigrants is not viewed merely as an economic transaction but as an act embedded in social norms that reinforce trust, belonging, and shared identity. This cultural framing strengthens communal cohesion and validates the continuation of these practices across generations.

Additional explanation is pointed to the roles of bonding, bridging, and linking social capital. Strong bonding capital manifests in tight-knit relationships and shared values, motivating support out of empathy and moral duty. Bridging capital appears in interpersonal ties between locals and immigrants, facilitating social inclusion across cultural boundaries. However, the high acceptance of hosting despite restrictive legal frameworks highlights a gap in linking capital, indicating that formal institutional connections and governance do not always align with community values and practices. This misalignment often leads residents to rely on informal norms and moral reasoning.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions, several recommendations are proposed to enhance the sustainable hosting of Burundian immigrants in Karagwe District:

i) **Formalise Economic Integration**: Local and national authorities should recognise and support the economic contributions of immigrants by facilitating legal frameworks such as work permits and temporary employment documentation, particularly in sectors like agriculture and small-scale trade. Such formalisation will protect workers' rights, enhance productivity, and strengthen economic ties between hosts and immigrants.

ii) **Preserve and Promote Cultural Values**: Community-based initiatives that celebrate the region's traditions of hospitality and moral responsibility should be prioritised. Educational programs and intercultural exchanges can reinforce shared heritage and social solidarity, fostering greater social cohesion and inclusive attitudes toward immigrants.

iii) **Align Legal Frameworks with Local Moral Norms**: Policy reforms should bridge the gap between formal immigration laws and the community's ethical imperatives by developing community-supported immigration schemes or **humanitarian** corridors. Training for law enforcement and administrative personnel should emphasise culturally sensitive approaches to reduce tensions and encourage compassionate governance.

iv) **Strengthen Support through Civil Society and International Agencies**: Targeted interventions from NGOs and development partners should focus on enhancing community resilience, facilitating joint economic ventures, and promoting dialogue across cultural lines. Assistance programs **must** also address potential resource competition and service access challenges through participatory planning and inclusive governance.

v) By integrating economic pragmatism, cultural heritage, and moral consciousness, these recommendations **aim** to build on existing social capital within Karagwe. This approach will support both immigrant well-being and community development, ensuring that the spirit of hospitality remains a foundation for regional stability and growth.

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Dunia ya Ughaibuni: Usawiri wa Mfalme Sulemani katika Fantasia ya Adili na Nduguze ya Shaaban Robert

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Ikisiri
Shaaban Robert amepewa sifa na hata kukosolewa juu ya utunzi wa baadhi ya riwaya zake za utanzu wa kifantasia kuwa zina mwelekeo wa kukwepa ukweli na kutia chumvi, zinasifa za kukiuka uhalisia na huwaaminisha wasomaji katika mambo yasiyo ya kawaida. Moja ya kazi hiyo ni Adili na Nduguze inayoelezewa kuwa imechanganya 'jusura na fantasia'. Ni riwaya inayochukuliwa kuwa inakiuka kaida au mviringo wa maisha ya ulimwengu halisi. Hata hivyo sifa za riwaya kama hizo, kupitia mkabala wa uhalisiafifi (surrealism) wa Andre Breton, ni kazi zinazochukuliwa kuwa zina uthubutu, zinazompa mwandishi uhuru wa kujieleza bila kujali mipaka ya tajriba zilizozoeleka katika jamii yake. Hivyo, makala hii inachunguza usawiri wa Mfalme Suleimani katika fantasia ya Adili na Nduguze. Lengo la makala hii ni kubainisha fikra za ughaibu katika jamii ya Waswahili kupitia kisa cha Mfalme Suleiman na kubainisha athari ya mitholojia za kidini katika Uandishi wa Robert kupitia kisa cha Mfalme/Nabii Sulemani. Data za makala hii zilikusanywa kwa kutumia mbinu ya usomaji makini na kuchambuliwa kwa kutumia mkabala wa kimaelezo. Aidha, nadharia ya uhalisiafifi imetumika katika kuchunguza, kuchambua na kuwasilisha data na matokeo ya utafiti huu. Kwa hiyo, makala hii inachanganua na kujenga hoja kwamba riwaya ya Adili na Nduguze ni kazi ya kifantansia ambayo imechota uajabuajabu kutoka katika hazina ya mitholojia na visasili vya kidini vinavyohusu asili na hatima ya mwanadamu katika jamii ya Waswahili ambapo mipaka baina ya dunia halisi na ile ya kifantasia na wahusika halisi na wale wakifantasia inavunjwa.

Maneno makuu: *Fantasia, Mfalme Sulemani, Uhalisiafifi, Dunia ya Ughaibuni*

UTANGULIZI

Shaaban Robert anaifungua riwaya ya *Adili na Nduguze* kwa kutujengea taswira ifuatayo ya mtawala wa nchi ya Ughaibuni:

> Rai, mfalme wa Ughaibuni, alikuwa mfalme wa namna ya peke yake duniani. Alikuwa na tabia iliyohitilafiana kabisa na tabia za watu wengine wa zamani zake. Tabia yake ilijigawa katika theluthi tatu mbalimbali kama rangi ya ngozi ya punda milia. Kwa theluthi ya kwanza alikuwa msuluhifu akapendwa na watu. Kwa theluthi ya pili alifanana na Daudi akaheshimiwa kama mtunzaji mkuu wa wanyama, na kwa theluthi ya tatu alikuwa kama Suleman akatiiwa na majini (1).

Kuna masuala matatu yanayojitokeza katika simulizi la Robert juu ya mhusika mfalme-Rai, kwamba ipo dhana ya uwanda wa 'Ughaibuni' inayofasiriwa katika *Kamusi Kuu ya Kiswahili (2015)* kama 'istilahi yenye asili ya Kiarabu'- inayotokana na neno 'al-ghaib' lenye kumaanisha dunia sambamba isiyoonekana, 'ugenini au mahali kusikojulikana'(uk.1064). Hivyo ughaibuni, nchi ya mfalme Rai, ni dunia nyingine ndani ya dunia ya msingi. Suala la pili ni sifa ya mfalme Rai kufananishwa na Daudi mwenye kumiliki kundi la wanyama. Sifa hii inatugusia mtoto maarufu atokanae na Daudi ambapo kwenye andiko la *Myths and Legends of the Swahili*, Jan Knappert anatutajia 'Sulemani bin Daudi'[1] (1979:58), au Mfalme Sulemani ambaye anapambwa na sifa za uwezo wa kumiliki na 'kutiiwa na majini'. Knappert anamchambua Mfalme Sulemani kwa kina kuwa Waswahili wanaamini juu ya uwezo aliopewa na Mungu (Allah) wa hekima na maarifa, ujuzi wa nyota na lugha za wanyama. Kwa mujibu wa Knappert, Waswahili humwita Sulemani 'Nabii' (4) na kwamba Mfalme Sulemani:

> '*Commanded the spirits. The evil ones he banned to the outer confines of the earth, the good ones were employed to carry him through the skies to wherever he wished to travel, or dig up precious metals for him, and build his palaces'* (5).
> (Aliwaamrisha majini. Majini wabaya aliwafungia katika sehemu kando za dunia, wazuru aliwaamrisha kumsafirisha angani popote alipotaka kwenda au kuwaamrisha kumchimbia vito vya thamani na kumjengea mahekalu)

Sifa ya Mfalme Sulemani ya kutiiwa na 'viumbe wasioonekana kama majini' ni sifa anayopambwa nayo mhusika mfalme Rai katika Fantasia ya *Adili na Nduguze* ya Shaaban Robert. Upambaji wa riwaya ya *Adili na Nduguze* na viumbe majini unaendana na imani ya mwandishi Robert juu ya uwepo sambamba wa viumbe kama malaika, pepo, jehanamu na majini

[1] Angalia sura al-Naml katika Korani juzuu ya 27 aya 15 ambapo sifa za ufalme na unabii za Daudi na Sulemani zinabainishwa.

katika dunia halisi. Majini wanafikiri, wanakula, wanaoa, wanahasira na wanafuraha. Hata hivyo majini wanasawiriwa kuwa wananguvu zaidi kuliko binadamu (Jilani 2018).

Shaaban Robert kwa mujibu wa Wafula (1989) katika kazi yake ya 'The Use of Allegory In Shaaban Robert's Prose Works,' anatutajia sifa ya Robert kuwa ni 'Muislamu'. Wafula anashadidia juu ya mazingira ya mafunzo ya dini ya Kiislamu aliyoyapata Shaaban Robert na jinsi yanavyoakisiwa katika kazi zake za kisanaa. Mfano wa wazi ni pale katika Utenzi wa Adili, ambapo Robert alimtaka mtoto wake amuabudu 'Mungu, Mfalme na wazazi wake kama chanzo cha mafanikio yake kimaisha' (55). Wafula analiweka wazi suala la itikadi na maadili ya Robert kwa dini ya Kiislamu na kwamba Korani imemwathiri Robert kifikra. Si ajabu kwa Robert kuathirika hivyo. Madumula (2009) anahitimisha kuwa karibu riwaya zote za Shaaban Robert ni mifano ya riwaya za 'kimaadili' (64). Swali tunalojiuliza ni kwa kiasi gani mwandishi kama yeye huathiriwa na itikadi na maadili yanayomzunguka? Na je atahri hiyo ina mchango gani katika utunzi wa kazi zake za sanaa? Hitimisho la Wafula ni kwamba:

> 'Shaaban Robert's concern with these moral concepts in the abstract inspires him to write mainly about Utopian' (59) (Mtazamo wa Shaaban Robert unaojidhihirisha katika dhana za kimaadili umemuathiri kiasi cha kuandika zaidi kazi za kitopia/kifantasia).

Kazi za kitopia au kifantasia ni zipi? Kwa mujibu wa Colin Manlove ni zile zinazojishughulisha na ulimwengu zaidi ya huu wa kawaida, zaidi ya ule unaojulikana, ulimwengu usiojulikana, na zaidi ya ule unaoaminika (1). Manlove anazichukulia tanzu za kifantasia kama bunilizi zinazoibua uajabu wenye vipengele vya dunia na viumbe vinginevyo. Manlove anauchukulia uajabu wa dunia na viumbe kuwa ni kila kinachohesabika kama zaidi ya kile kinachoaminika au kufikirika katika dunia halisi. Manlove anaamini kuwa ni uhalisia usio na upendeleo unajenga fantasia ya kweli kwa sababu "only those who know one world thoroughly can make another with the inner consistency of reality". Ni wale tu wanaoifahamu dunia moja kisawasawa ndiyo wanaweza kuiunda nyengine kiuhakika) (260). Kwa Manlove anaamini kuwa, dunia ya fantasia ambayo mwandishi amekusudia kuijenga haina budi iwe halisia kama ilivyo dunia yetu (12).

Naye Rosemary Jackson anaamini kwamba fantasia haiundi dunia isiyo ya wanaadamu. Hutumia na kuchanganya vipengele vya dunia hii, "in new relations to produce something strange, unfamiliar and apparently 'new', absolutely 'other' and different" (katika mahusiano mapya ili kuunda kitu cha kigeni, kisicho cha kawaida na kipya, kilicho kingine na tofauti kabisa) (8). Jackson, anabaini zaidi kuwa chimbuko la fantasia zinatokana na visasali vya kale, sanaajaadiya, na hata ngano (4). Tahadhari anayoitoa Jackson, katika kazi yake ni kwamba dhana ya fantasia inatumiwa kiholela kumaanisha kazi za kifasihi zisizojihusisha na uhalisia, ‘realms other than the human’ (vikoa zaida ya binadamu) (Jackson, 13-14). Wajibu wa kuunda dunia nyingine ni muhimu kufanyika katika kazi za ubunilifu hususani kazi za kifantasia.

Sambamba na mawazo ya Jackson, Ann Swinfen naye anaeleza kuwa fasihi inahitaji kutumia vipengele vitokanavyo na uhalisia, katika dunia tuifahamuyo. Vipengele hivyo vinaweza kupinduliwa ili kumfanya msomaji ataharuke. Na ili kazi ya kifantasia ifanikiwe vipengele vilivyopinduliwa havinabudi viige vile vipengele vya kihalisia.

Kwa upande wa Tzvetan Todorov, mahusiano baina uhalisia au usohalisia katika matini za kifantasia ndio moyo wa fasihi. Kuna mahusiano baina ya uhalisia wa nje kama tunavyoufahamu na uhalisia anaouibua mwandishi wa fantasia. Uhalisia unatawaliwa na ‘by laws unknown to us’ (kanuni ambazo ni ngeni kwetu) (25). Kwa mantiki ya mawazo ya Manlove, Jackson, Swifen na Todorov, chimbuko la utopia au ufantasia wa kazi za Robert hautokani na ndoto zake mwenyewe bali ni athari itokanayo na anga la fikra za kighaibu za wanajamii yake na yeye ni mwakilishi tu. Anapomtaja mfalme Rai basi kivuli chake ni Mfalme/Nabii Sulemani wa kihalisia. Hivyo dunia ya ughaibu si njozi kwa Robert.

Kwa mujibu wa Richard Wafula, anambainisha Robert kuwa amelelewa katika methali, misemo na simulizi za watu wake. Umahiri na imani yake inajidhihirisha katika sanaa yake (61). Kuna dalili kuwa kimawazo ameathirika na imani yake ya Uislamu hususani jamii, viumbe na suala zima la ughaibu. Sehemu kubwa ya fikra za Robert ni masuala yanayosawiriwa katika Korani na mitholjia inayobainishwa katika kazi ya Jan Knappert ya *Myths and Legends of the Swahili.* Mfano mmojawapo wa kuathiriwa kwa Robert na mitholojia ya kidini ya Kiislamu unabainishwa na Deo Ngonyani pale anapofafanua kuwa Robert alikuwa na mtazamo wa kina wa kidini-‘deeply religious outlook’ (133). Anatutolea mfano wa jina la kimitholojia la ‘Majuju’ (Biblical Magog), ambalo amelitumia katika riwaya ya *Kusadikika* kuwa kwa mujibu wa masimulizi ya Kiislamu siku ya hukumu kiumbe huyo atakula kila kitu mpaka mawe (128). Hivyo uteuzi wake wa majina ya wahusika umekuwa ukiakisi mafundisho ya dini ya Kiislamu kwa mwandishi huyo (135).

Kupitia mitholojia ya Waswahili, kwa mujibu wa Knappert na imani ya dini ya Kiislamu, suala la uwepo wa viumbe visivyoonekana kama majini si fikra za kiutopia au za kindoto. Hivyo, imani ya uwepo wa viumbe visivyoonekana lakini vinaishi na kuvinjari katika dunia halisi na hata dunia isiyoonekana ya ughaibuni ni suala linalotilia shaka hoja ya kuwa kazi za kifantasia hususani za Shaaban Robert zina mwelekeo wa 'kukwepa ukweli na kutia chumvi', na zinasifa za kukiuka 'uhalisia' na 'huwaaminisha wasomaji katika mambo yasiyo ya kawaida'. Je, ukweli na utiaji chumvi katika fikra za Mswahili na mitholojia yake kwa ujumla ni upi? Mipaka ya uhalisia ikoje kwa Mswahili kama Shaaban Robert? Na kitendo cha kuwaaminisha wasomaji katika mambo yasiyo ya kawaida kikoje?

Angalizo la Mugyabuso Mulokozi kuwa kuna masimulizi ambayo 'huaminiwa kuwa kweli tupu na ni sehemu ya visasili vya kidini vinavyohusu asili na hatima ya mwanadamu' katika jamii fulani fulani, ikiwemo jamii ya Waswahili (230). Na kwamba mara nyingi hadithi kama hizo 'hutumika kuelezea au kuhalalisha baadhi ya mila na madhehebu ya jamii inayohusika, ni inayohitaji kuangaliwa kwa jicho pevu. Mulokozi anabaini kuwa visasili vya kidini 'hufafanua na kueleza masuala magumu yanayohusu mwanadamu kama vile asili na hatima ya mwanadamu, asili ya kifo, asili na hatima ya ulimwengu, Mungu, miungu, mizimu na uhusiano wao na wanadamu' (101). Hapa Mulokozi anatutahadharisha kuwa tuwe macho katika uchanganuzi wa kipi huhesabika kama kweli tupu na kipi kinawekwa katika kapu la kutokuaminika. Simulizi inapokuwa imeegemezwa katika visasili vya kidini, visasili ambavyo vinaakisi 'mambo yasiyo ya kawaida' basi kipengele cha kuwaaminisha wasomaji hakina budi kuangaliwa kwa jicho pevu.

Kwa kupitia mtazamo wa André Breton wa uhalisia fifi katika andiko lake la "First Surrealist Manifesto," ambapo huzichukulia kazi za kifantasia au zenye kusawiri matendo yasiyowezekana katika hali halisi hususani sifa zake za mazingira ya kimetafizikia, taswira za kinjozi au mazingira ya ajabuajabu kuwa ni uthubutu. Breton anasisitiza umuhimu wa uotaji ndoto, uhuru wa kukiuka fikara za kihalisia na kuzivinjari dunia nyingine ambapo hakuna kujiwekea mipaka ya kifikra bali kuruhusu kutanua vikoa vya uwezekeno kwa kuhoji kaida zilizozoeleka.

Hivyo, katika makala hii tunaenda mbali kidogo ya fikra za Breton, tunajenga hoja kuwa iwapo mwandishi anaisawiri jamii yenye fikra zisizo na mipaka baina ya dunia halisi na ile ya kighaibu, au kuwajadili wahusika halisi na wale wasioonekana kwa macho, basi kitendo hicho cha uthubutu ni kuakisi hali halisi ya dunia ya mwandishi huyo. Tunajiuliza swali mtambuka, je, kuna haja gani ya kumshutumu mwandishi kuvuka mipaka ya uhalisia iwapo jamii yake inaamini fikra za 'kifantasia' ambazo mwandishi ameamua kuzisawiri? Iwapo mpaka kati ya mitholojia na imani ya kidini ya mwandishi ni mwembamba, na wakati dini ni mfumo wa imani na matendo juu ya kuabudu nguvu za kiungu na ambapo mitholojia ni mkusanyiko wa visaasili, au hadithi za dini fulani au utamaduni katika kuelezea matendo, imani au tukio fulani. Uhusiano wa visasili vinavyohusu watu au vitu vya kufikirika au ambavyo haviwezi kuthibitika au mfumo wa fikira za kale ambao hauna waumini unaweza kusababisha fikra potofu kwamba visasili ni visa vya ubinifu. Hivyo waumini walio wengi hawaafiki hadithi zao zinazoshabihishwa na dini kama visaasili tu.

Kwa hiyo, hoja kwamba mitholojia za kidini zinafifia kutokana na mabadiliko ya kijamii na hususani kutokana na ukuaji wa sayansi na teknolojia kama anavyogusia Thomas Lombardo hazijaweza kushika mizizi katika jamii ya Robert. Imani ya kuwepo kwa dunia mbili tofauti na viumbe vyenye maumbile tofauti si suala la ajabu kwa jamii iliyomzunguka Robert. Ni sehemu ya mitholojia yenye mlengo wa kidini wa jamii ya Waswahili. Hivyo, tuliona kuna haja ya kufanya utafiti kuhusu dunia ya ughaibuni: usawiri wa mfalme sulemani katika fantasia ya *adili na nduguze* ya shaaban Robert. Tatizo la utafiti huu lilikuwa ni kuchunguza jinsi Mfalme Suleimani anavyosawiriwa katika riwaya ya *Adili na Nduguze*. Utafiti huu ulikuwa na malengo mahususi mawili ambayo ni: kubainisha fikra za ughaibu katika jamii ya Waswahili kupitia kisa cha Mfalme Suleiman na kubainisha athari ya mitholojia za kidini katika Uandishi wa Robert kupitia kisa cha Mfalme/Nabii Sulemani. Aidha, utafiti huu uliongozwa na maswali kwamba iwapo kauli ya Robert kuwa 'Rai mfalme wa Ughaibu, alikuwa kama Sulemani akatiiwa na majini (1)' ni kauli inayochota idhibati ya kutoka fikra za kihalisia za jamii ya Waswahili? Hivyo basi, kupitia utafiti huu tutaweza kudhihirisha jinsi usomaji huu wa Mfalme Sulemani katika *Adili na Nduguze* unavyoendeleza maarifa ya kifantansia katika fasihi ya Kiswahili. Makala hii inaonesha jinsi msanii ama mwandishi anavyoweza kutumia ubunifu wake kuwasilisha masuala ya kijamii.

DUNIA YA UGHAIBU KATIKA FASIHI YA KISWAHILI

Fasihi ya Kiswahili inahuisha na kugongelea misumari fikra za 'kighaibu' kwa wasomaji wake. Kazi ambazo si ngano au za fasihi simulizi zinajipamba na vichwa vya kighaibu na haswa ubainishaji wa uwepo wa mahali au viumbe vya 'kifantasia': '*Mzimu* wa Watu wa Kale' (Abdulla 1958), 'Ndoa ya *Mzimuni'* (Nuru) na Sofia *Mzimuni'* (Habwe 2006); 'Aliyeonja *Pepo'* (Topan), '*Pepo* ya Mabwege' (Mwakyembe 1981), 'Paradiso' (Habwe 2005) na 'Bustani *ya Edeni'* (Mbogo 2002); Kisima cha *Giningi* (Abdulla 1968) na 'Kija chungu cha Mwana wa *Giningi'* (Kitogo 2005). Hapa dhana za 'mzimuni', 'pepo', 'Paradiso, 'Eden' na 'Giningi' ni sehemu zinazogusia fikra za kighaibu. Kwa upande wa viumbe visivyoonekana kimaada tuna "Mashetani" (Hussein 1971) na *Ziraili* na Zirani (Mkufya 1999) na *Zimwi* la Leo (Wamitila 2002).

Kwa upande wa sanaa-jaadiya ya Waswahili hususani misemo na methali nayo haikuacha kurejelea dhana za kighaibu kama vile '*Mungu* si Athumani', *Zimwi*[2] likujualo halikuli likakwisha, '*Kuzimu* hakusemi siri zake', '*Kuzimu* kuna mambo' na 'kila *shetani* na mbuyu wake'. Huwa hatuhoji unjozi au ufantasia pale tunapozitumia dhana hizo za 'kighaibu' katika mazungumzo ya kawaida. Hii inaashiria kuwa matumizi ya dhana hizo za kighaibu zinaakisi fikra za kimithioljia za Kiswahili zilizoshika mashiko katika jamii.

Katika maandishi ya kiethnografia, kihistoria na hata kileksigrafia kuna masimulizi ya fikra za 'kighaibu' za Waswahili. Kazi ya Amour Abdalla Khamis (2008) ya 'Jadi na Utamaduni wa Mswahili wa Zanzibar katika Utamaduni wa Mzanzibari' anasimulia kihalisia masuala yafuatayo:

> Itikadi iliyombaya ni kwa baadhi ya Waswahili kutenda mchezo wa kwanga usiku na kupelekana Giningi. Wanga hujigeuza paka, mbwa na mifano ya wanyama mbalimbali. Uzoefu unaonyesha kuwa baadhi ya maeneo ya kusini Unguja wana tabia ya ubaya kwa kutumia pungu na chui. Eneo la Kaskazini Unguja hadi Pemba kwa tabia ya kufanyiana ubaya kwa kutumia mashetani na vizuu' (15).

Kuna dalili za uhusianishaji wa kile ambacho Amour anatugusia kinachofahamika katika mitholojia ya Kiswahili ya uwepo wa viumbe vingine 'visivyo vya kawaida' kama vile nunda mla watu, shetani, ibilisi, chunusi, popobawa, vibwengo, mazimwi, na mizimu ambao husawiriwa kama sehemu ya maisha halisi kwa mujibu wa imani na itikadi za Waswahili. Imani ya kuwepo kwa viumbe vya kifantasia ni sehemu ya

[2] KKK (1190) kiumbe dhahania anayesemekana kuwa na madhara na hutumika katka uhusika wa hadithi nyingi na ngano

imani za kitamaduni, kosmolojia, na uoni ulimwengu wa Waswahili unaooanisha vipengele vya kiasilia, kiroho na kiungu.

Uchunguzi wa dhana mbalimbali za wahusika na mandhari za ‘kighaibu’ katika Kiswahili unapewa uzito na uwepo wa tafsiri zake katika *Kamusi Kuu za Kiswahili* (2015). Mfano dhana ya ‘mzimu’ ni ‘neno la asili lenye kumaanisha mahali panapofanyiwa matambiko ambapo aghalabu huwa ni chini ya mti mkubwa au pangoni. Maskani ya watu waliokufa ambapo watu huamini kuwa kwamba wanaweza kwenda kufanya mawasiliano na wazee wao wa zamani kwa haja mbalimbali kama kuomba mvua (769).

Ufantansia katika Fasihi ya Kiswahili

Sifa ya ufantasia imegubikwa katika riwaya zipatazo nne za Shaaban Robert, Wahakiki wanazichukulia riwaya za Robert za *Kusadikika*, *Kufikirika*, *Adili na Nduguze* na *Siku ya Watenzi Wote* kuwa ni bunilizi za kifantasia. Kyallo Wamitila anazibainisha ‘riwaya hizo kuwa zinasawiri mazingira, mandhari au matukio ambayo yana msingi mkubwa wa njozi au utopia ambapo matukio ya kinjozi huwekwa kwenye msingi wa ulimwengu halisi’ na ‘hukiuka kaida au mviringo wa maisha ya ulimwengu halisi au ulimwengu wa kijarabati’ (118). Wahakiki Wafula na Njogu wao wanazibaini riwaya hizo kuwa zinasifa ya wahusika wa ‘kiajabu ajabu’, wenye ushujaa, na ni mifano ya riwaya za kilimbwende (59). Mhakiki Saidi Mohamed[3] amezitaja riwaya hizo kuwa ni riwaya zenye ‘mwelekeo wa kukwepa ukweli na kutia chumvi’ (21). Kwa upande wa Joshua Madumula yeye amezibainisha riwaya zote za Shaaban Robert kuwa ni mifano ya riwaya za kimaadili ambazo zimeandikwa kwa muundo wa kifasihi simulizi (64-65) huku akiungwa mkono na Fikeni Senkoro kuwa riwaya hizo ni zenye kubugikwa na ‘sifa za kingano’ na hekaya (54). Makala yetu yanailenga riwaya ya *Adili na Nduguze* pekee inayobainishwa na Mugyabuso Mulokozi kuwa ni riwaya yenye kuchanganya ‘jusura[4] na fantasia’ (246). Mapungufu ya riwaya za kinjozi au kifantasia, kwa mtazamo wa Senkoro ni kule ‘kukosekana kwa uthibitisho’ hivyo riwaya hizo zinasifa za kukiuka uhalisia na huwaaminisha wasomaji katika mambo yasiyo ya kawaida (99). Hata hivyo Samwel Method[5] anaenda mbali zaidi na kuzibainisha riwaya hizo

[3] Said Ahmed Mohamed 1995 Kunga za Nathari ya Kiswahili: Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers.
[4] Kwa mujibu wa Mulokozi (2017: 246), ‘jusura ni masaibu au mikasa yenye kusisimua damu ambayo mtu huweza kukutana nayo wakati wa kutekeleza jambo fulani’, mfano Adili anaposafiri na kufika katika mji wa mawe.
[5] Angalia Method Samwel (2015) *Umahiri katika Fasihi ya Kiswahil*i Dar es Salaam: Meveli Publishers Ltd

kuwa ni riwaya dhidi ya utawala wa kikoloni zilizoandikwa kwa kutumia 'lugha ya picha ya kiwango cha juu sana' (234).

METHODOLOJIA YA UTAFITI

Makala hii inahusu Dunia ya Ughaibuni: Usawiri wa Mfalme Sulemani katika Fantasia ya *Adili na Nduguze* ya Shaaban Robert. Data za makala hii zilikusanywa kwa kutumia mbinu ya usomaji makini wa Fantasia ya *Adili na Nduguze* (2010) iliyoandikwa na Shaaban Roberth. Mtafiti alisoma riwaya hiyo na kisha kukusanya data zinazohusiana na ufantansia wa Adili na nduguze katika fasihi ya Kiswahili ili kukidhi malengo ya utafiti huu. Mtafiti pia alisoma machapisho mengine yanayohusiana na mada hii katika tovuti na kwenye maktaba mbalimbali ambayo kwa ujumla wake yalisaidia kujaziliza data za utafiti huu. Makala hii imetumia mkabala wa kitaamuli katika ukusanyaji, uchambuzi, uwasilishaji na mjadala wa data na matokeo ya utafiti huu. Mkabala wa kitaamuli ni mkabala ambao data zake zinafafanuliwa kwa kutumia maelezo na si takwimu katika kuwasilisha na kujadili data za utafiti. Uwasililishaji wa data, uchambuzi na mjadala wa matokeo ya utafiti huu yanajidhihirisha katika vipengele cha 4.1 na 4.2.

UWASILISHAJI WA DATA

Kama tulivyoeleza makala hii ililenga kuchunguza usawiri wa Mfalme Suleimani katika fantansia ya *Adili na Nduguze*. Kwa kutumia mbinu za usomaji makini, mtafiti alisoma, kuchambua na kubainisha fikra za ughaibu katika jamii ya Waswahili kupitia kisa cha Mfalme Suleiman na kubainisha athari ya mitholojia za kidini katika Uandishi wa Robert kupitia kisa cha Mfalme/Nabii Sulemani.

Dunia ya Ughaibu ya Mfalme Rai na Mfalme Sulemani

Utafiti huu ulilenga kuchunguza fikra za ughaibu katika jamii ya Waswahili kupitia kisa cha Mfalme Suleiman. Utafiti huu umebaini kuwa, Shaaban Robert katika *Adili na Nduguze* ameichora ramani ya dunia kwa namna ambayo hazishii katika dunia ya wazi bali inahusisha pia dunia nyinginezo (otherworld) zisizoonekana wazi lakini zenye maumbile na viumbe tofauti kama vile majini, mtu-mnyama. Dunia hizi tofauti zake haziko mbali ingawaje zina mipaka ya *Kufikirika*. Waliopo dunia nyinginezo wanaingalia dunia ya wazi kwa ukaribu mno na wana uwezo wa hali ya juu na nguvu kupita kiasi katika kuyaingilia maisha ya waliopo katika dunia ya wazi. Kwa mfano kuna Rai ambaye ndiyo mfalme wa Ughaibuni na Watawaliwa ambao ndio raia wa ughaibuni. Mwandishi anasema;

> *Rai, mfalme wa Ughaibu, alikuwa mfalme wa namna ya peke yake duniani.*
>
> *"……Kutawala suluhu na mapenzi ya wanadamu, utunzaji wa wanyama, na utii juu ya viumbe wasioonekana kama majini hutaka uwezo mkubwa sana. Kmama hivi, fikiri wewe mwenyewe jinsi Rai alivyojipambanua mwenyewe na wafalme wengine".*

Usanifu majengo wa dunia ya ughaibuni unapewa sifa za ziada, sifa za uajabuajabu. Katika mji wa mawe, Adili alipopanda gorofani, alifika 'kulikokuwa na chumba kidogo Mlango wake ulikuwa wazi, kwa hivi aliingia ndani. Huko aliona pazia la Hariri lililotaraziwia kwa vito vya dhahabu, lulu na yakuti linaning'inia mbele yake' (25). Hivyo majengo ya aushi ya kuvutia, makasri ya ajabu, mabarabara yaliyosakafiwa na mitaa iliyopangiliwa, madaraja ya ajabu kwa ujumla usanifu majengo wa ajabu unapewa nafasi kubwa katika bunilifu za 'kifantasia' ili kumpa picha msomaji wa dunia nyengine.

Katika riwaya hizi tunaona mwandishi anavyowachora viumbe vya ughaibuni kwa kuvipamba na sifa za ziada ili kuwatofautisha na viumbe wa dunia halisi. Kwa mfano, mwandishi anatuonesha Adili akikutana na mwanamke mwenye sifa za ziada alipofika katika mji wa mawe. Alikutana na msichana ambaye 'uso wake ulikuwa umetukuka kwa uzuri uliokuwa haumithiliki' (25). Hata mavazi yake hayakuwa ya kawaida kwani 'libasi' yake haina mfano hapa duniani. Msomaji anapokuja kutambulishwa msichana huyo ambaye hana mfano wake katika dunia halisi kuwa ni jini, hashituki kwani sifa za ziada tayari zilishatangulia machoni pake. Hali hii inadhihirisha ufantansia katika ubunizi wa *Adili na Nduguze*.

Hivyo kitendo cha Adili kutembelea mji wa mawe, Ikibali katika kutembelea mji wa Janibu na jumba la liwali katika riwaya ya *Adili na Nduguze* ni maandalizi ya mwandishi ili kumtayarisha msomaji kupokea uajabu na 'ufantasia' anaojengewa kifikra. Kwa vile usanifu majengo wa tanzu za kinjozi ni ujenzi bandia, muundo wake hauna budi kuwa muundo usio wa kawaida. Hivyo, waandishi wa tanzu zenye ufantasia huibua uwezekano wa kuwa na vifaa vya usanifu majengo vinavyowafanya wajifikirishe na kuzichunguza kwa kina njia zao za kukabiliana na ulimwengu.

Usambamba wa walio na nguvu na wasioonekana haupo tu kwa viumbe visemekavyo ni majini, mizimu, mashetani, malaika n.k tukiwachukulia kuwa viumbe hao ni viumbe wa kisitiari basi picha inabadilika na kutuletea uhalisia wa maisha hapa duniani. Utafiti huu umebaini kuwa, uthubutu wa Robert ni ule wa kuwafanya wasomaji wake waone kuwa kuna mstari mwembamba baina dunia halisi na ile ya ughaibu, na kuna mashirikiano baina ya viumbe wasioonekana na viumbe maada. Kupitia *Adili na Nduguze*, Robert anawabainishia wasomaji kuwa katika dunia ya Waswahili, ufantasia si mbadala wa uhalisia. Bali ufantasia ni mlengo tata unaojidhihirisha katika maisha ya kila siku hapa duniani. Andre Breton anasisitiza umuhimu wa njozi na fikra huria na kuvunja mipaka ya fikra za kimantiki na kuzamia fikra huria ili kuibua mambo yaliyojificha. Hakuna mipaka ya mbali baina ya dunia ya mzimuni na dunia halisi. Hakuna mipaka baina ya viumbe visivyoonekana na vile vinavyoonekana. Hivyo, mkabala wa uhalisafifi unatoa leseni kwa Robert kuvunja fikra za uwepo wa mipaka ya mbali. Robert anawapa nguvu wasomaji wake kuamini yale yanayohisiwa kuwa hayawezekani kutokea.

Utafiti huu ulibaini kuwa ubunifu wa Robert katika riwaya hii, unaashiria kitendo cha mwandishi kutaka asihukumiwe kwa kuwachora wahusika majini, mizimu, mashetani n.k katika riwaya hiyo. Ni sawa na kusema kuwa kwa vile imani ya Mungu, majini, mizimu na mashetani kwa upande mmoja na imani ya miji ya kighaibu kwa upande wa pili ni mseto wa dunia mbili na aina za viumbe ambavyo vipo duniani kwa sasa. Si ndoto kwa Robert pale anaposimulia yafuatayo:

> Tukufu alimtazama msemaji akasema kwa ukali, "Nini kilichokujusulisha kusema upuzi Mrefu? Kama kwa sababu ya urefu wako ubongo wako umeyeyuka kwa jua, kaa kitako chini ya kivuli cha mizimu yetu utaburudika. Kama umerogwa, Kabwere atawakomesha waliokuroga. Riziki ya wanadamu hutoka mimeani. Kwa sababu hiyo, mimi na kaumu hii twaabudu miti. Funga ulimi wako, bwana. Usipofunga hasira ya mizimu itakuwa juu yako (29).

Hapa Robert anaisawiri dunia yake halisi ya Uswahilini, kuwa kuna imani ya viumbe vya majini, kuna imani ya marogo, na kuna imani ya kuabudu mizimu na nguvu za laana ya mizimu. Mwandishi anadhihirisha hilo kwa kusema;

> "Walakini, juu ya sifa hizo, malkia, mfalme na raia walikuwa waabudu mizimu. Mizimu yao ilikuwa miti. Miti yenyewe ni ile iliyogeuka kuwa mawe ukutani. Kawere, mganga na imamu wa mizimu hiyo alivuta mioyo ya watu wote" (uk. 27).

Hii hali si ufantasia kwa Robert na Waswahili. Unapoamini uwepo wa majini hushtushwi na kitendo cha Mrefu 'kuzunguka dunia nzima kwa sekunde moja' (29). Hushtushwi na laana ya watu wa kawaida kugeuzwa manyani, au mawe. Hushtushwi vilevile na viumbe vya dunia ya ughaibu inapowasiliana na kukutana na watu wa dunia halisi.

Hivyo, utafiti huu ulibaini kuwa kitendo cha Robert kutuanishia dunia mbili na viumbe vya aina mbili ni uthubutu wa kutufikirisha na kutupoza wasomaji juu ya kile ambacho kinaelea katika dunia halisi. Bado dunia inahitaji majibu ya kina juu ya uwepo wa mtagusano baina ya dunia na viumbe vya dunia nyingineo. Wasomaji wa riwaya za Robert zenye mkondo wa 'kifantasia' wanawezeshwa na Robert kubaini kanikinzani ya kihalisia ya wanajamii yake. Kwa mujibu wa miongoni mwa wananadharia wa mkondo wa kifantasia, Kathryn Hume anajenga hoja kuwa dhima ya utanzu wa kifantasia ni kule kuonyesha ukinzani dhidi ya kile kifikiriwacho na kinachokubalikwa na wengi kuwa ni uhalisia au uwezekano. Wahakiki walio wengi huitupia lawama utanzu huu wa kifantasia kuwa ni upo tu kama sehemu ya kuukwepa uhalisia na kuacha kusawiri yaliyowazi.

Utafiti huu ulibaini kuwa, kitendo cha Robert cha kuwafanya viumbe wasio wanadamu kama vile majini, manyani, ndege, nyoka, tandu kuwa sehemu ya maisha ya jamii ya Shaaban Robert katika *Adili na Nduguze* huonekana kama ni kitendo cha ukwepaji wa uhalisia. Hebu na tuangalia kiusambamba je, viumbe hivyo visivyohalisia vinatenda matendo yapi? Manyani-wanadamu yaliyolaaniwa, majini-nyoka na tandu, ndege mwokozi, majini mema wanakuwa wahusika muhimu katika riwaya. Viumbe wasio wanadamu wanakinzanishwa na viumbe wanadamu katika dunia mbili tofauti: dunia halisi na dunia nyinginezo. Maisha ya dunia hizi mbili yanalandanishwa. Viumbe hivyo visivyoonekana vyenye nguvu na maajabuajabu wanatumika kurekebisha maisha ya kidunia wakiwa wahusika kutokea dunia nyingine. Dunia nyingine ni makazi yanayokaliwa na viumbe visivyowanadamu au viumbe vinginevyo. Mfalme Sulemani anazifahamu lugha za wanyama, majini, ndege na ana uwezo wa kuamrisha upepo. Hivyo anautawala wa ngazi ya juu ya viumbe na mazingira yake. Katika Korani, Mfalme Sulemani anajulikana kama Nabii Sulemani, mwenye vipawa vingi. Viumbe majini wanaingilia maisha ya dunia halisi. Tofauti kubwa kati ya majini na wanadamu ni kile kitendo cha kuonekana na kutokuonekana. Majini na viumbe visivyoonekana wanauwezo wa kutenda matendo ya ajabu ajabu. Kwa mujibu wa David Johnson viumbe hivyo huweza kusaidia kuwafanya watu halisi wajione kwa ufasaha zaidi.

Athari ya Mitholojia za Kidini katika Uandishi wa Robert

Makala hii ilichunguza athari ya mitholojia za kidini katika riwaya ya *Adili na Nduguze* Uandishi wa Robert kupitia kisa cha Mfalme/Nabii Sulemani. Kwa kutumia mbinu ya usomaji makini tuliweza kubaini jinsi mwandishi alivyoathiriwa na dini ya Kiislamu na Korani katika utunzi wake wa riwaya ya *Adili na Nduguze*. Matokeo ya utafiti huu yanadhihirisha kwamba, Shaaban Robert si tu kwamba anatuundia sifa za za Mfalme Rai wa nchi ya ughaibuni huku katika jamii yake kukiwa na fikra na imani ya kuwepo katika dunia halisi ya Robert juu ya fikra ya Nabii/Mfalme Sulemani katika Korani anayesadikika alikuwa akiwatiisha majini na wanyama na hata upepo. Bado Mfalme Rai anapambwa na sifa ya kitendo chake cha kulikagua kundi lake la wanyama na kuona 'karibu mazizi yote katika miliki yake yamekwisha lipa kodi zake ila mazizi ya Janibu' na hivyo akaamuru uchunguzi ufanywe (3). Kitendo hiki kinasawiri kisa cha Mfalme/Nabii Sulemani ndani ya Korani cha Nabii/Mfalme Sulemani kukagua makundi mbalimbali yakiwemo watu, majini, na wanyama na kukuta ndege aina ya 'hudihudi'[6] hayupo katika milki yake hivyo alitaka kujua sababu ya kutokuwepo kwake.
Utafiti huu ulibaini kuwa, katika *Adili na Nduguze* mwandishi anatusawiria viumbe na miji jinsi ilivyogeuzwa mawe huku kukiwepo na kisaasili katika mitholojia za Kidini za mke wa Nabii Luti kugeuka jiwe. Katika Biblia Mwanzo 19.26 mke wa Lut aligeuzwa jiwe la chumvi alipokaidi amri ya kutokugeuka nyuma wakati wa kuangamizwa kwa mji wa Sodoma.

Vile vile utafiti huu uligundua kwamba, ughaibu unajidhihirisha pale ambapo mwandishi anaunda viumbe waliogeuzwa manyani. Kitendo hiki kinajidhihirisha katika Korani ambapo inasimulia uwepo wa viumbe waliogeuzwa manyani kwa kuvunja siku ya Sabato ambapo Sura 2 aya 65 inazungumzia laana waliopewa waumini waliovunja amri ya kutofanya kazi siku ya Sabato, wao wakaamua kuvua samaki na Mungu kuwageuza manyani. Hii inadhihrisha kuwa mwandishi anatumia visa vya Korani kuwasilisha ujumbe katika jamii yake. Matumizi haya yanatudhuhirishia

[6] Katika Korani Nabii Sulemani alibaini kutokuwepo kwa mmoja wa raia zake, ndege aina ya Hudihudi. Alitaka kujua sababu za kutokuwepo kwake. Aliporudi Hudihudi alimletea taarifa za ugunduzi wa uwepo wa mtawala anayeabudu Jua badala ya Allah. Nabii Sulemani alithibitisha maneno ya Hudihudi na akamtaka malkia huyo awache kuabudu masanamu na kumwabudu Mungu na iwapo hatakubaliana naye atamshambulia kivita. Kisa hiki kinabaishwa katika Korani, juzuu ya Al-Naml, 27, aya 20-22.

athari ya Imani ya dini ya mwandishi katika ujenzi wa visa na matukio katika uhalisia wa jamii inayomzunguka.

Lengo la makala hii ni kubainisha fikra za ughaibu katika jamii ya Waswahili kupitia kisa cha Mfalme Suleiman na kubainisha

HITIMISHO

Makala hii imejadili kuhusu Dunia ya Ughaibuni: Usawiri wa Mfalme Sulemani katika Fantasia ya *Adili na Nduguze* ya Shaaban Robert. Kipindi alichokuwa akiandikia trilojia za Kusadikika, Kufikirika na Adili na Nduguze, Robert na jamii yake alikuwa katika lindi la ukoloni mkongwe, kipindi cha ubaguzi, na unyanyasi wa wazawa na hivyo mwandishi hakuwa na budi ya kupambania hali yake na mustakbali wa wanajamii yake. Tunaweza kujenga hoja kwamba ufantasia unatoa nafasi ya mwandishi kuwa huru kifikra na kuelezea yanayomsibu kibunilifu bila ya hofu ya kutiwa misukosuko na watawala. Makala hii inachanganua na kujenga hoja kwamba baadhi ya kazi hizo za kifantasia, kama ilivyo *Adili na Nduguze*, huchota uajabuajabu kutoka katika hazina ya mitholojia na visasili vya kidini vinavyohusu asili na hatima ya mwanadamu katika jamii ya Waswahili ambapo mipaka baina ya dunia halisi na ile ya kifantasia na wahusika halisi na wale wakifantasia inavunjwa.

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Rethinking Higher Education Quality in Tanzania through Total Quality Management (TQM): Spatial Qualities and Writing Culture Dimensions

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Abstract
This paper explores the potential of Total Quality Management (TQM) philosophy in enhancing the quality of higher education in Tanzania. Using Ardhi University as the primary case and supported by contextual insights from informal settlements near Mbeya University of Science and Technology (MUST) and Teofilo Kisanji University (TEKU), the paper examines how TQM principles can be used to interpret and strengthen the spatial learning environments and writing culture that underpin educational quality in Tanzanian universities. Writing culture is positioned as a core dimension of educational quality whose development is constrained when TQM principles are weakly integrated into institutional practices. The paper is based on a review-driven, qualitative interpretive synthesis of two postgraduate dissertations, complemented by practitioner reflections from the 2019 OUTASA Young Scholars Symposium and a small supplementary questionnaire. This triangulated evidence shows that while awareness of quality issues is increasing, fragmented and compliance-oriented approaches to quality assurance, together with inadequate attention to student spatial environments, limit the formation of a robust quality culture. Spatial deficiencies such as overcrowding, insufficient lighting, and lack of dedicated paper areas are shown to weaken writing culture, especially where TQM practices are not fully institutionalized. The paper concludes that adopting TQM holistically anchored in continuous improvement, stakeholder participation, and a shared quality culture, offers a practical pathway for improving both spatial learning conditions and writing culture development. The paper contributes an integrated framework demonstrating how TQM can be operationalized to support these interrelated dimensions of higher education quality in resource-constrained contexts.

Keywords: *Total Quality Management, Writing Culture, Higher Education, Spatial Quality, and Informal Settlements.*

INTRODUCTION

Tanzanian universities face persistent concerns about the quality of learning experiences despite rising enrolment. National statistics show that growth in student numbers continues to outpace investments in staffing, facilities, and research capacity, contributing to gaps in learning quality and academic support systems (Tanzania Commission for Universities, 2023). Total Quality Management (TQM) offers a lens for interpreting these challenges through its emphasis on continuous improvement and stakeholder engagement. Yet implementation remains fragmented, and quality assurance functions as procedural compliance. Two overlooked dimensions, spatial learning environments and writing culture illustrate this gap. Writing culture signals institutional commitment to intellectual rigor, while students' physical study environments shape concentration and productivity. Acharya et al. (2025) argue that without aligning spaces, processes, and culture, TQM becomes symbolic rather than transformative.

This paper synthesizes evidence from Mpangule (2009), Kashula (2018), the 2019 OUTASA Symposium, and supplementary stakeholder feedback to show how partial TQM adoption constrains both spatial learning quality and writing development. The integrated analysis reframes existing findings through a unified TQM perspective, exposing systemic quality weaknesses and identifying opportunities for more coherent institutional improvement. To guide this analysis, the paper addresses the following overarching research question:

> *To what extent do Tanzanian higher learning institutions apply Total Quality Management (TQM) principles to improve spatial learning environments and cultivate a writing culture that reflects higher education quality standards?*

The Problem

Despite expanded access to higher education in Tanzania, concerns persist about weak graduate competencies in critical thinking, academic writing, and independent inquiry, reflecting systemic shortcomings in institutional quality cultures (Mpangule, 2009; Acharya et al., 2025). Research on student accommodation near MUST and TEKU shows that many dwellings, often converted into Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), meaning single-family houses subdivided to host multiple unrelated tenants, lack adequate design features such as privacy, ventilation, lighting, and organised study space (Kashula, 2018). These spatial deficits intersect with weak institutional strategies for cultivating a writing culture. Although internal quality assurance mechanisms exist, mentorship, writing support, and feedback structures remain fragmented (Mpangule, 2009). Broader analyses of TQM adoption similarly reveal inconsistent implementation of core principles such as continuous improvement, stakeholder engagement, and process integration (Acharya et al., 2025; Bachynski et al., 2024). This misalignment between institutional systems and students lived learning conditions contributes to uneven writing performance and academic readiness.

This paper therefore investigates the extent to which TQM principles are applied to improve spatial learning environments and writing culture within Tanzanian higher learning institutions. Specifically, the paper is guided by the following research questions: How do spatial learning environments and key TQM components influence educational quality in Tanzanian universities? What challenges affect the implementation of TQM in managing spatial quality, and how do these challenges shape writing culture among students? What institutional barriers limit the integration of TQM principles in improving learning spaces and writing development within higher education institutions?

This paper is interpretive and context-specific, drawing on purposively selected revelatory cases rather than representative samples. As such, the findings are not intended for statistical generalization but for analytical and diagnostic insight into how TQM-related processes manifest in Tanzanian higher education. The synthesis relies on existing empirical materials and practitioner reflections, which may reflect institutional perspectives at moments in time. Nevertheless, triangulation across multiple sources strengthens the credibility of the patterns identified and supports their relevance for understanding systemic quality dynamics within similar resource-constrained higher education contexts.

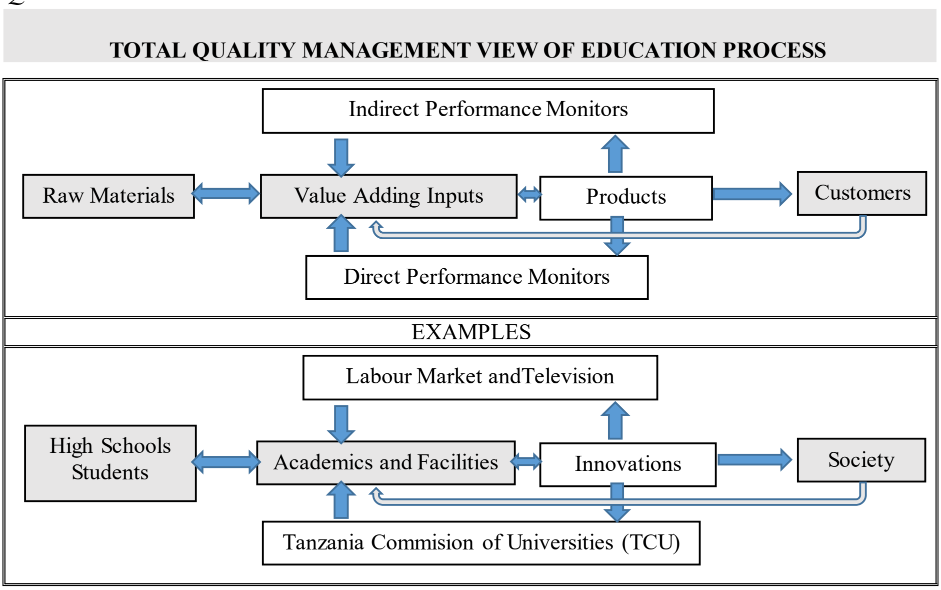
LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL ORIENTATION

This paper employs a multidimensional theoretical framework integrating Total Quality Management (TQM), Quality Culture, and Educational Space Theory. These frameworks collectively inform the interpretation of quality challenges and the potential pathways for systemic improvement in higher education.

Total Quality Management (TQM)

Figure 1 presents TQM in the higher education context is understood in this paper as a systemic, institution-wide commitment to continuous improvement, stakeholder participation, and process integration. Rather than viewing quality as a compliance function, the TQM lens positions quality as a cultural and operational process that must permeate physical environments, academic delivery, and support systems. Moreover, TQM views performance evaluation as a collective responsibility. Under this approach, both direct actors (such as regulatory bodies and university authorities) and indirect stakeholders (such as employers, parents, and the broader community) contribute to defining, measuring, and sustaining educational quality.

Figure 1
TQM view on Education Process



Source: (Cox, (1996) and (Mansor, Mahmood, Haron, & Yusof, 2007))[7]

Mpangule (2009) observed that weak integration of TQM principles at Ardhi University hindered the institution from developing a strong *quality culture*. A quality culture extends beyond procedural quality assurance; it embodies shared values, beliefs, and institutional behaviors that prioritize excellence. According to the European University Association (EUA, 2006), quality culture reflects "a shared value system, beliefs, expectations, and commitment toward quality," requiring institution-wide ownership. Similarly, Sursock and Smidt (2010) emphasize that quality must be viewed as a collective mindset rather than an administrative

[7] The idea and lesson leant from the dissertation work (Mpangule,2009)

responsibility. In this paper, writing culture is understood as a manifestation of quality culture, an outcome of institutional practices that encourage continuous learning, research engagement, and intellectual expression. Weak writing culture signals a fragmented quality culture. Therefore, embedding writing and research activities across curricula and student services is crucial for sustaining academic excellence.

Building upon Kashula (2018), the concept of *educational space* is used to link the physical learning environment with academic outcomes. Spatial quality encompasses access to quiet and private study areas, adequate lighting, furniture, and proximity to learning resources. Poor spatial conditions, particularly in off-campus housing, function as a "hidden curriculum of disadvantage," reducing concentration, creativity, and academic performance. From a TQM perspective, spatial environments must be treated as integral components of the educational process, subject to continuous monitoring, stakeholder collaboration, and improvement. Inadequate student housing not only compromises learning outcomes but also undermines institutional reputation and social equity.

In Tanzania, higher education is legally defined under the *Education Act of 2002 (2)(1)* as the instruction and training of people in various fields of learning aimed at promoting spiritual, moral, mental, and physical development to achieve national goals. According to Manneke (1998), education should cultivate both intellectual and moral dimensions to ensure holistic societal development. Higher education institutions (HEIs) serve as critical spaces for integrating diverse disciplines and advancing knowledge (World Bank, 2000). However, while Tanzania has made considerable progress in expanding access, concerns about the *quality* of education persist (Mosha, 2007). The rapid growth of universities has not been matched with corresponding investments in infrastructure, pedagogical innovation, or institutional quality systems.

The global discourse on quality management in higher education identifies Total Quality Management (TQM) as an effective framework for continuous improvement and stakeholder involvement (Douglas, 2010; Ali & Gibbs, 2016). Unlike traditional *Quality Assurance (QA)* or *Quality Control (QC)* mechanisms that focus on compliance, TQM emphasizes *system-wide improvement*, *stakeholder engagement*, and *customer satisfaction*. In the context of higher education, "customers" include students, employers, and the wider community who benefit from the institution's outputs. Mpangule (2009) demonstrated that Tanzanian universities often apply fragmented QA systems with limited feedback loops or stakeholder participation. Consequently, institutional processes fail to translate into sustained quality enhancement. Transitioning from QA to TQM requires developing a culture of quality that encompasses both tangible (e.g., infrastructure) and intangible (e.g., intellectual engagement, student satisfaction) aspects of learning.

Ultimately, quality in higher education extends beyond regulatory compliance to include the *relevance, inclusiveness, and transformative impact* of learning environments on students' personal and professional growth (Materu, 2007; Pike, 1994). Last but not the least, is the findings from the TQM meta-analysis, which revealed that quality culture, infrastructure, communication and academic processes are among the least developed TQM dimensions in HEIs, reinforcing the relevance of examining how such gaps affect writing culture and spatial learning environments (Acharya et al., 2025).

Writing Culture in this context

According to (Coulmas, 2002) writing is not merely a skill but a reflection of institutional commitment to intellectual rigor. Universities that fail to integrate writing across curricula risk producing graduates with inadequate professional competencies (Mpangule, 2009). The European University Association (EUA, 2006) defines quality culture as shared values that prioritize excellence, where writing must be embedded in teaching, research, and assessment. Effective TQM requires writing-intensive curricula, faculty training, and student support systems to foster critical thinking and communication (Lea & Street, 2006). Additionally, spatial quality impacts writing culture; poor housing conditions near campuses, as seen in Mbeya University of Science and Technology (MUST), disrupt study habits and academic performance (Kashula, 2018). Writing culture, in this paper, refers to the habitual and institutionalized practices that encourage intellectual writing, critical thinking, and communication skills among students and graduates. It goes beyond academic writing as a skill to encompass the broader societal expectation that graduates contribute productively to knowledge creation, professional development, and civic engagement. Writing culture is intricately linked to quality culture in universities, requiring supportive environments, policies, mentorship, and regular engagement with writing and research. Without a strong writing culture, the broader goals of education quality and graduate readiness remain unattainable.

Writing Culture as an Educational Output

Writing culture in higher education refers to the institutionalized practices and values that promote intellectual writing, critical thinking, and effective communication (Coulmas, 2002; Lea & Street, 2006). It is both a skill and a reflection of an institution's academic ethos. A strong writing culture enhances students' capacity to engage with knowledge critically, document ideas, and communicate in academic and professional settings. Mpangule (2009) emphasized that writing culture is an essential indicator of educational quality, yet it is often overlooked in quality assurance frameworks. Without deliberate institutional investments such as writing centers, mentorship programs, and publication opportunities, graduates risk remaining passive consumers rather than active producers of knowledge.

Coulmas (2002) describes writing as a "technology of the mind," underscoring its role in structuring thought and expression. Universities that integrate writing across curricula and research training foster a stronger sense of intellectual independence among students. The absence of such integration weakens the institutional "quality culture," resulting in graduates who lack analytical rigor and communication skills. Spatial quality directly influences writing culture. As Kashula (2018) observed, poor living and learning conditions near campuses particularly in informal student housing, undermine concentration and academic performance. Therefore, writing culture should not be treated as an isolated academic issue, but as a reflection of how well universities manage their overall learning environments under TQM principles.

Spatial Quality and Student Housing in Higher Education

Spatial quality refers to the functionality, comfort, and social inclusiveness of built environments (Nguluma, 2003; Tibesigwa, Karumuna, & Hao, 2017). In higher education, the quality of student housing significantly affects academic success, social integration, and well-being (Yunus et al., 2018; Zasina & Antczak, 2023).

In Tanzania, the rapid expansion of university enrolments has outpaced on campus student housing (Mtani & Nuhu, 2019). Consequently, many students reside off campus in informal settlements where conversion of single-family houses into Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) has become a common strategy (Kashula, 2018). These unregulated housing transformations result in noisy and overcrowded accommodations with inadequate lighting, ventilation, security, and privacy (Kashula, 2018;

Mtani & Nuhu, 2019; Sundkvist, 2010). Research indicates that such spatial deficiencies together with long commuting distances, create deprived study and learning environments and negatively impact learning outcomes and diminish writing productivity (Ogendo et al., 2020; Adeyemi et al., 2024). Moreover, the absence of institutional oversight in these informal spaces undermines accountability and safety.

Contrary to developed countries, Tanzanian policies, institutional and legal frameworks are less involved in regulating or monitoring quality of off-campus student housing (Kashula, 2018; Jones & Blakey, 2020). This gap highlights the need for a TQM-based approach that links spatial quality with academic performance indicators, ensuring that environmental conditions become integral to institutional quality management systems.

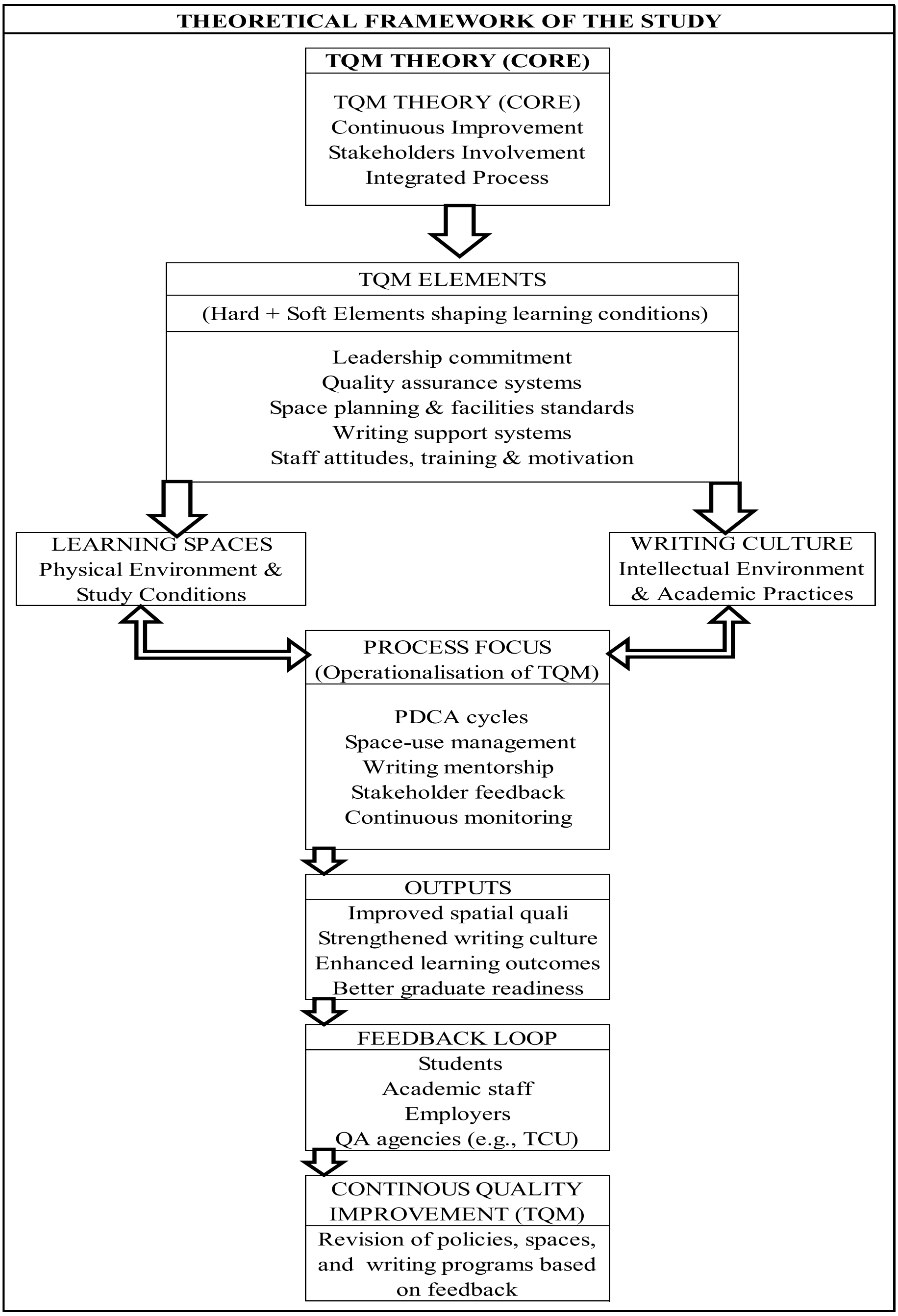
Theoretical Framework

Theoretical framework is presented in Figure 2 where it highlights that Total Quality Management (TQM) provides a systems-based approach to institutional improvement rooted in continuous enhancement, stakeholder participation, and process integration. Evidence from Tanzanian and regional higher education indicates that while universities such as Ardhi University adopted elements of TQM, implementation remains fragmented and weakly institutionalized (Mpangule, 2009; Acharya et al., 2025). Scholars argue that effective TQM requires integrated, evidence-driven quality systems and stronger stakeholder engagement, components still underdeveloped across East African institutions (Bachynska et al., 2024; Ali & Gibbs, 2016).

Spatial learning environments are an important but often overlooked aspect of educational quality. Studies around MUST and TEKU show that many students live in informal, poorly designed HMOs that hinder concentration and learning. Writing culture reflects institutional quality, but weak mentorship, limited writing support, and inconsistent feedback systems undermine students' scholarly development. These patterns show that TQM provides a useful lens for understanding how institutional processes, learning spaces, and writing practices interact, positioning spatial quality and writing development as core components of an integrated quality culture.

Figure 2

Theoretical Framework Linking Total Quality Management, Spatial Learning Quality, and Writing Culture



METHODOLOGICAL AND METHODS FRAMEWORK

This paper adopts a qualitative interpretive design and employs a revelatory case study approach to re-examine how TQM principles influence spatial learning environments and writing culture in Tanzanian higher education. A revelatory case design is appropriate where the researcher gains access to forms of evidence that have not previously been examined collectively (Yin, 2014). In line with interpretivist traditions (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016), the goal is not to test variables through statistical generalization but to interrogate how institutional processes, spatial environments, and writing practices are experienced and understood by stakeholders.

Three forms of data were synthesized: postgraduate dissertations containing empirical material from ARU, MUST and TEKU; twelve peer-reviewed presentations delivered at the 2019 OUTASA Young Scholars Symposium; and a questionnaire completed by twenty-two purposively selected university stakeholders. To minimize selection bias, the questionnaire was disseminated repeatedly via Google Forms to targeted universities and stakeholder groups directly involved in teaching, learning environments, and quality assurance processes. Distribution focused on academic staff, postgraduate students, quality assurance personnel, and academic administrators at ARU, MUST, and TEKU. Although a wider circulation was attempted, only twenty-two completed questionnaires were returned and met the paper's inclusion criteria. In keeping with qualitative interpretive and revelatory case study principles, the emphasis was placed on information-rich responses rather than sample size, with the questionnaire serving as a supplementary triangulation tool rather than a basis for statistical generalization (Patton, 2015; Creswell & Poth, 2018) The use of these multiple sources follows the logic of methodological triangulation (Denzin, 1978; Patton, 2015), allowing patterns to emerge that would not be visible within any single dataset. The integration of these materials is justified by the interpretive purpose of the study, which seeks to draw meaning across contexts rather than to measure discrete variables.

Research Orientation

This paper is informed by a critical realist orientation, which recognizes that learning environments, spatial conditions, and institutional structures exist materially but acquire educational significance through lived experience. This orientation guided the analysis toward understanding how stakeholders interpret the adequacy of study spaces, the nature of writing support, and the functioning of institutional quality systems. Accordingly, evidence drawn from dissertations, symposium reflections, and questionnaire responses was analyzed as situated accounts of how Total Quality Management (TQM) principles are enacted or neglected in everyday academic practice.

This interpretive stance shifts the analytical focus from statistical generalizability to the identification of recurring patterns of meaning across cases. For example, when a university administrator noted that "universities like ours comprise students from diverse backgrounds and ages, yet facilities remain inadequate and are not planned with these differences in mind," this testimony echoed similar concerns expressed across the three cases. Such patterned accounts enabled the paper to illuminate systemic gaps in TQM implementation rather than to quantify institutional performance.

Sampling and Participants

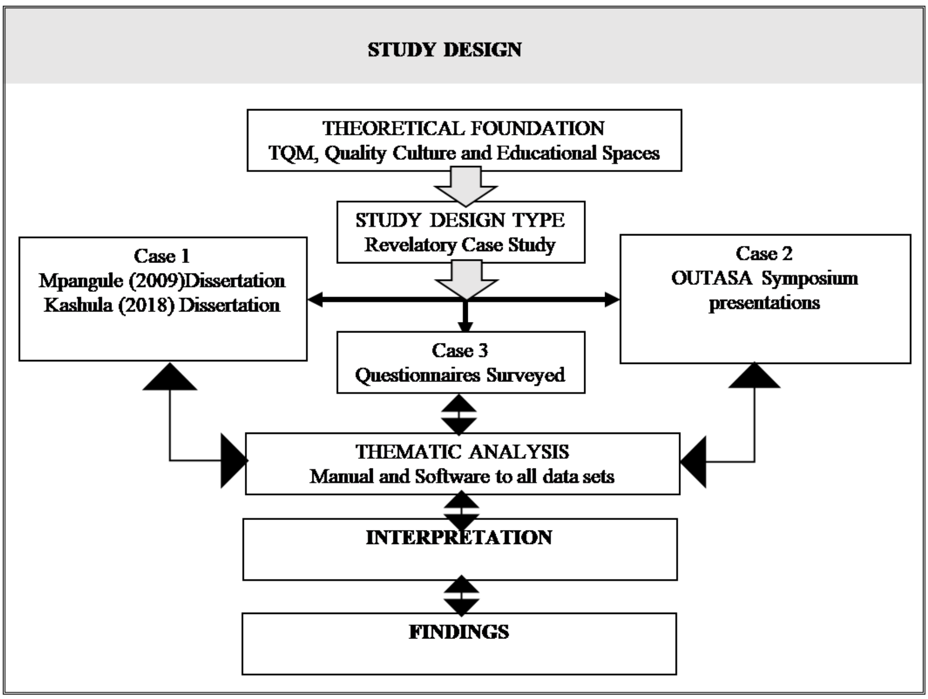
Sampling followed purposive and snowball logics to identify information-rich data sources relevant to TQM, spatial quality, and writing culture. The two dissertations were selected because they contain detailed empirical examinations of TQM practices and spatial learning conditions in Tanzanian universities. The OUTASA Young Scholars Symposium is an institutional academic forum organised by the Open University of Tanzania, in which submitted abstracts and papers undergo internal peer review before acceptance for presentation.

The symposium proceedings therefore represent vetted scholarly and practitioner reflections rather than informal opinion. In this study, OUTASA materials are treated as a complementary qualitative data source, used to triangulate and enrich interpretations drawn from primary case studies rather than to generate independent empirical claims. This approach aligns with established qualitative and revelatory case study traditions, which recognize peer-reviewed professional forums as legitimate sources of contextual and experiential evidence (Yin, 2014; Patton, 2015). The questionnaire respondents, drawn from ARU, MUST, TEKU, and Mbeya-based institutions, included students, academic staff, and administrators familiar with quality assurance practices. Their responses served to validate and contextualize patterns emerging from the document review rather than to generate statistically representative findings.

Research Design: Revelatory Case Approach

Figure 3 presents a revelatory case design as defined by Yin (2014) employed for this paper. The design is most appropriate when the researcher has access to data not widely available to the scholarly community. In this paper, the dissertations and the OUTASA symposium papers constitute rare institutional and practitioner materials that collectively illuminate aspects of TQM implementation, spatial learning environments, and writing culture that remain underexplored in Tanzanian higher education research. Treating the symposium output as an analytically equivalent third case strengthens the revelatory nature of the design, since these presentations offer empirical reflections on student learning, writing behaviour, and institutional quality practices that are not formally documented elsewhere. The design is further supported by the researchers' embedded knowledge of the institutional contexts, which provides interpretive depth. This insider perspective is not used for advocacy but rather to enhance understanding of how institutional processes and spatial conditions intersect with TQM principles in lived academic environments.

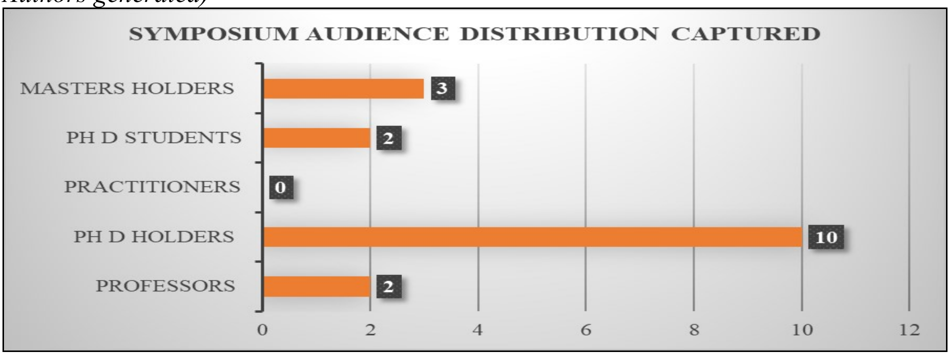
Figure 3:
Study design illustration (Source: Authors generated)



Data analysis followed a qualitative, interpretive strategy consistent with a revelatory case study design. The purpose of the analysis was to synthesize evidence from multiple sources to identify recurring patterns related to Total Quality Management (TQM) elements implementation, specifically the spatial learning quality, and writing culture in Tanzanian higher education institutions. The emphasis was on interpretive pattern recognition rather than statistical generalization.

Data preparation involved compiling and organizing three complementary datasets. First, Two completed postgraduate dissertations containing empirical findings from ARU, MUST, and TEKU. Second, twelve peer-reviewed papers and presentations from the OUTASA Young Scholars Symposium (Figure 4). Third, responses from a questionnaire administered to twenty-two purposively selected higher education stakeholders.

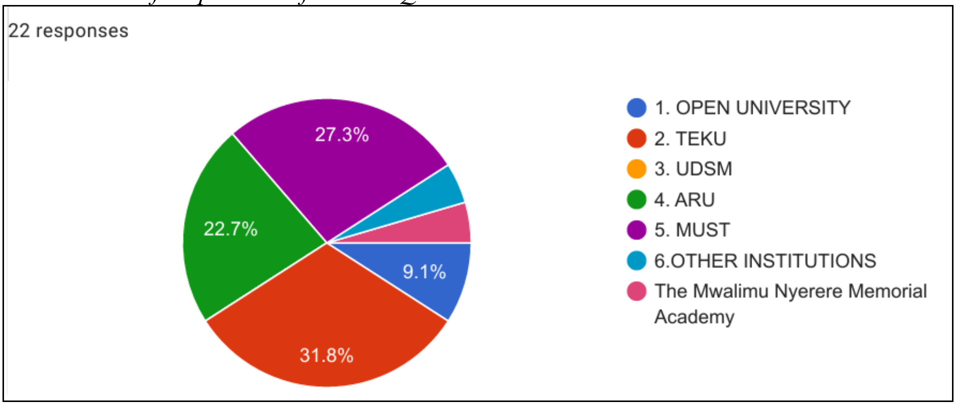
Figure 4
Population Distribution in The OUTASA Symposium Potential OUTASA (Source: Authors generated)



Questionnaire data were collected using Google Forms and initially organised through the platform's built-in analytics to generate descriptive summaries and response frequencies. The data were then exported to Microsoft Excel for cleaning, tabulation, and comparison across variables Figure 5). Textual materials from dissertations, symposium outputs, and open-ended questionnaire responses were anonymized where necessary and organised by data source and institutional context to enable systematic comparison.

The analytical approach combined thematic analysis with cross-case synthesis. Thematic analysis was used to identify recurrent patterns within and across datasets, while cross-case synthesis enabled comparison between the three revelatory cases. This approach aligns with interpretive qualitative traditions that prioritize meaning-making, contextual explanation, and pattern matching over statistical inference.

Figure 5
Distribution of respondents from the Questionnaire



The respondents were purposively selected university stakeholders with direct experiential knowledge of institutional quality processes, consistent with interpretive and revelatory case study conventions.

Coding and theme development proceeded in three stages. First, open inductive coding was applied to each dataset to identify recurring issues related to institutional processes, learning environments, and academic practices. Second, initial codes were reviewed and clustered into higher-order categories aligned with key TQM-related dimensions, including institutional commitment, continuous improvement, stakeholder engagement, spatial learning conditions, and writing support practices. Third, codes were refined through iterative comparison across cases, resulting in a set of consolidated themes that captured systemic patterns rather than isolated observations. Qualitative coding and thematic organization were supported using NVivo software, which enabled systematic management of coded excerpts, development of thematic nodes, and comparison across data sources. Figure 6 presents NVivo outputs, including coding matrices and word-frequency visualizations which supported pattern recognition and cross-case synthesis.

Following thematic coding, cross-case synthesis and pattern matching were conducted to examine how similar themes manifested across institutional and practitioner contexts. This process enabled the identification of convergent and divergent patterns and helped determine whether observed deficiencies reflected systemic rather than institution-specific issues. An interpretive benchmark of approximately 20 percent was used as a heuristic indicator to flag recurring deficiencies across themes. This benchmark functioned as an analytical guide derived from coding frequency patterns rather than as a statistical threshold.

Several strategies were employed to enhance trustworthiness and analytical rigour. Data triangulation was achieved by integrating evidence from dissertations, symposium materials, and stakeholder questionnaires. Cross-case pattern matching strengthened analytical consistency, while the use of explicit coding frameworks, thematic matrices, and software-supported audit trails linked raw data to synthesized themes. Reflexive review was applied throughout the analysis to ensure interpretations remained grounded in the data and aligned with the paper's critical realist orientation.

All analytical interpretations and substantive results derived from these procedures are presented in the Findings section, ensuring a clear separation between methodological processes and empirical outcomes.

Figure 6
Thematic density visualization from coded dissertation texts (Source: Authors' analysis). The figure illustrates the relative prominence of recurrent concepts identified through coding and thematic synthesis.

FINDINGS AND INTERPRETIVE SYNTHESIS

The findings presented here integrate three revelatory evidence sources, two postgraduate dissertations (Mpangule, 2009; Kashula, 2018), practitioner reflections from the OUTASA Young Scholars Symposium (2019), and a supplementary stakeholder questionnaire. The analysis followed an interpretive, pattern-matching logic, guided by the soft heuristic that deficiencies approaching or exceeding 20% within any core TQM pillar indicate systemic rather than isolated quality weaknesses. The findings are organised around four TQM dimensions: institutional commitment, spatial learning environments, writing culture, and stakeholder engagement.

Evidence from Mpangule (2009) and triangulated questionnaire responses show that institutional commitment to quality remains inconsistently enacted across units. While universities have formal Quality Assurance (QA) policies, their operationalization is narrow, compliance-driven, and often disconnected from daily academic practice. Staff and student involvement in quality processes was perceived as limited or symbolic. The integrated analysis revealed a 24% deficiency level in indicators linked to institutional commitment surpassing the 20% threshold, signaling systemic weakness. This fragmentation prevents the alignment of processes needed to support academic behaviours such as sustained study, reflective inquiry, and writing development.

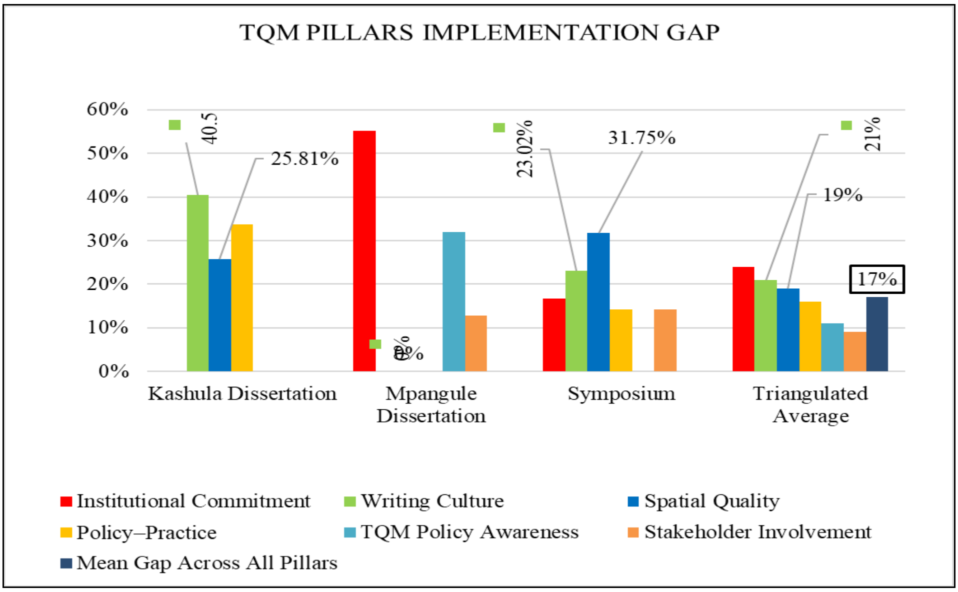
Kashula (2018) study demonstrates that many students at MUST and TEKU reside in informal settlements where family houses are converted into HMOs lacking adequate lighting, ventilation, privacy, and furniture conducive to academic work. OUTASA reflections and questionnaire inputs corroborated these concerns, highlighting persistent constraints in both physical and digital learning spaces. The analysis identified a 19% deficiency level in spatial quality, reaching the interpretive 20% threshold for systemic concern. Although spatial factors directly influence concentration and cognitive engagement, they remain outside institutional quality assurance frameworks, revealing a gap between policy focus and students lived learning conditions.

Across all evidence sources, writing culture emerged as a major area of concern. OUTASA presentations consistently highlighted difficulties of students in structuring arguments, synthesizing literature, and producing coherent written work. These weaknesses were linked to limited mentorship, inadequate structured writing practice, and inconsistent feedback within academic programs. This thematic cluster registered a 21% deficiency level, again exceeding the 20% heuristic threshold. The results show that writing culture is not simply an individual competency issue but a reflection of institutional processes that do not adequately reinforce scholarly writing as a core component of academic development.

Synthesized together, the three revelatory cases demonstrate that spatial quality, writing development, and TQM implementation are deeply interconnected. Weak stakeholder participation and fragmented process integration central, TQM pillars mean that deficiencies in physical environments and writing support systems accumulate rather than resolve. For instance, the neglect of off campus learning spaces contradicts TQM's principle of providing an enabling environment, while the absence of structured writing mentorship contradicts the principle of continuous improvement. The findings show that deficiencies across these domains reinforce one another, resulting in uneven student learning experiences and inconsistent graduate outcomes.

The interpretive synthesis confirms that Tanzanian higher education institutions face systemic, not isolated, quality challenges. Figure 7 shows that near-or-above-threshold deficiencies in institutional commitment (24%), writing culture (21%), and spatial quality (19%) collectively indicate that current quality assurance systems do not operate as integrated, improvement-driven frameworks. Instead, they function in fragmented silos, insufficiently aligned with TQM principles and disconnected from the everyday environments where students study, write, and learn. Enhancing writing culture and spatial quality requires coordinated institutional processes, stakeholder involvement, and continuous improvement cycles, conditions that are currently only partially implemented.

Figure 7
Overall TQM Pillars Implementation Gap Support



Percentages in Figure 7 are coding-derived interpretive indicators used for qualitative pattern identification and do not represent statistical prevalence.

DISCUSSION

TQM, Spatial Quality, and Writing Culture in Higher Education Quality in Tanzania

The findings confirm that Total Quality Management (TQM) principles are present in Tanzanian higher education institutions but remain unevenly embedded in everyday academic and administrative practice. Quality assurance activities continue to emphasize procedural compliance rather than continuous improvement, limiting their transformative potential. This pattern echoes earlier observations by Mpangule (2009) and aligns with recent regional analyses showing that quality systems are often weakly institutionalized within university cultures (Acharya et al., 2025; Bachynska et al., 2024).

The identified institutional commitment deficit, estimated at 24 percent, reflects a structural challenge rather than an isolated failure. Policies and quality frameworks exist, yet they are insufficiently translated into routine practices that shape teaching, learning, and student support. From a TQM standpoint, this gap indicates a disconnect between formal quality intentions and the operational processes required to sustain a shared quality culture.

The analysis highlights spatial learning environments as a persistently under-recognized component of educational quality. Evidence from Kashula (2018), reinforced by OUTASA practitioner reflections and questionnaire responses, shows that many students living in informal off-campus housing experience inadequate lighting, limited privacy, poor ventilation, and insufficient study space. These conditions constrain concentration and reflective learning, particularly for academically demanding tasks such as writing.

The spatial quality deficiency, estimated at about 19 percent and close to the study's interpretive benchmark, suggests that environmental limitations are systemic rather than incidental. These findings extend existing quality debates by demonstrating that spatial conditions function as part of the educational process itself, not merely as welfare concerns. Within a TQM framework, neglecting learning environments undermines the principle of fitness for purpose and weakens the overall quality system.

Writing culture emerged as one of the most consistently underdeveloped dimensions across all three revelatory cases. The estimated 21 percent deficiency reflects widespread challenges related to limited writing practice, inconsistent feedback, weak mentorship structures, and inadequate institutional support for scholarly communication. These challenges point to systemic issues rather than individual student deficiencies.

From a TQM perspective, writing culture reflects the effectiveness of core academic inputs, including curriculum design, assessment practices, faculty engagement, and learning support systems. When these inputs are poorly aligned or weakly coordinated, writing development deteriorates. This interpretation is consistent with the academic literacy's literature (Lea & Street, 2006) and earlier findings by Mpangule (2009), which emphasize that writing competence develops within institutional cultures that value inquiry, reflection, and continuous improvement.

A key contribution of this paper lies in demonstrating how institutional processes, spatial environments, and writing practices interact within a single quality ecosystem. The triangulated evidence shows that weaknesses in one domain tend to reinforce deficiencies in others. Limited institutional commitment constrains investment in and monitoring of learning spaces. Poor spatial conditions reduce students' capacity for sustained cognitive engagement. An underdeveloped writing culture, in turn, signals the absence of coordinated feedback mechanisms, mentorship, and improvement cycles.

Viewed through a TQM lens, these interactions illustrate why fragmented quality initiatives produce uneven outcomes. When TQM principles are only partially applied, institutions address quality issues in isolation rather than as interconnected processes. This integrated interpretation extends TQM discourse in African higher education by showing how environmental, academic, and organizational dimensions jointly shape educational quality.

The findings suggest that Tanzanian universities face systemic quality challenges rooted in fragmented institutional processes rather than isolated deficits in infrastructure or pedagogy. Deficiencies at or near the interpretive benchmark in institutional commitment, writing culture, and spatial quality indicate that current quality assurance mechanisms are insufficiently integrated to sustain meaningful improvement.

Strengthening graduate competencies therefore requires a shift from compliance-oriented quality assurance toward a holistic TQM culture. Such an approach recognizes learning spaces, both on- and off-campus, as core academic environments; embeds writing development within curricula and assessment; and actively engages students, staff, and external stakeholders in continuous feedback and improvement processes. Aligning institutional policies with students lived academic realities is essential for producing intellectually competent and professionally prepared graduates.

Results and emergent conceptual framework

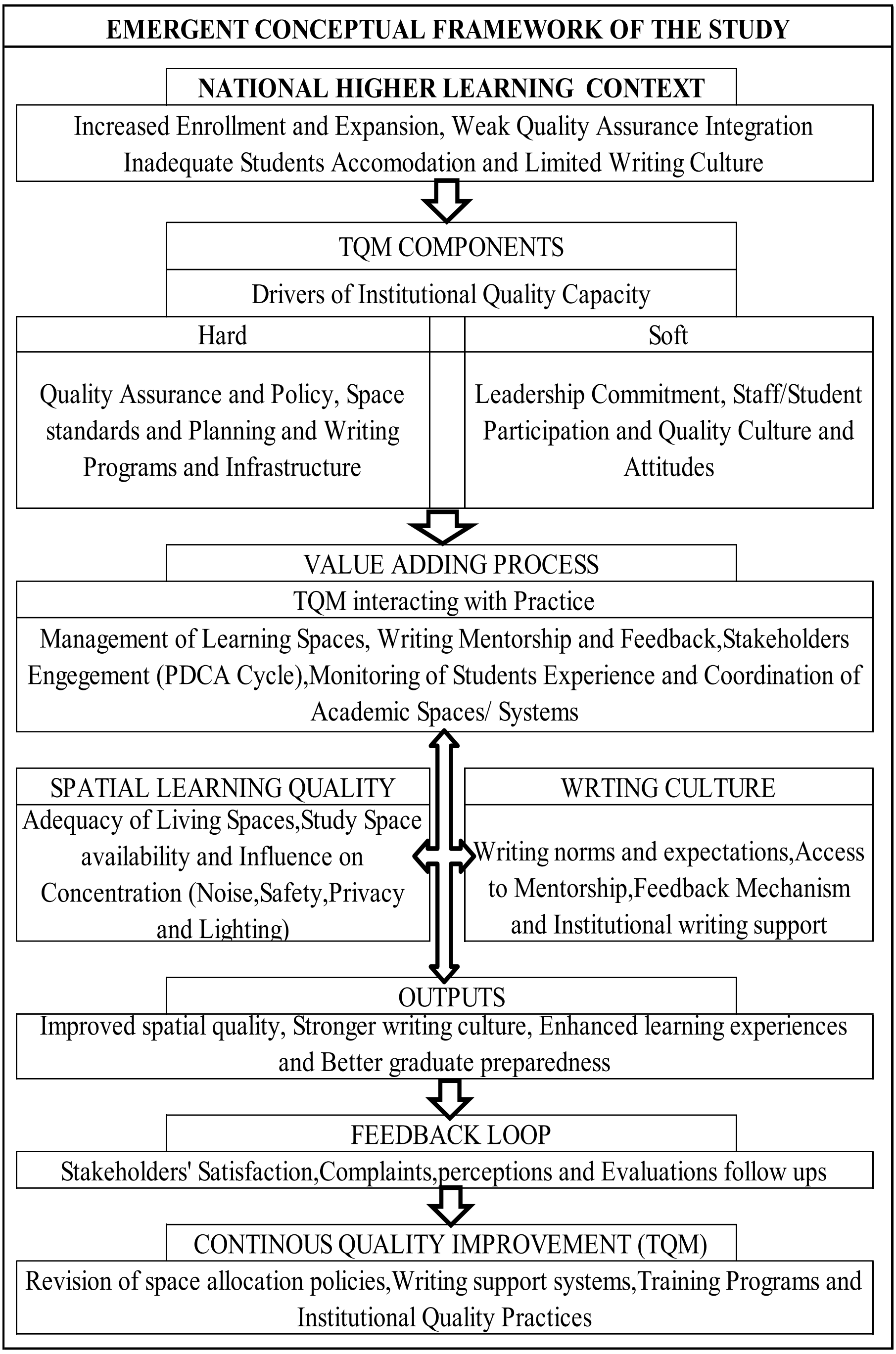
Figure 8 presents the integrated analysis of the three revelatory cases, TQM implementation at Ardhi University, spatial learning environments around MUST and TEKU, and practitioner insights from the OUTASA symposium, supports a context-sensitive conceptual interpretation of educational quality. Rather than proposing a new theory, the paper adapts established TQM principles to illustrate how institutional processes, learning environments, and academic practices interact in resource-constrained settings.

The recurring deficiencies in institutional commitment, spatial learning quality, and writing culture function as interpretive indicators of systemic misalignment. Triangulated evidence shows that limited commitment restricts the development and oversight of learning spaces, inadequate environments constrain academic engagement, and weak writing culture reflects gaps in mentorship and continuous improvement mechanisms.

Within this interpretation, TQM principles provide an enabling framework through which quality culture can be strengthened. Spatial learning environments form the physical foundation that supports academic engagement, while writing culture emerges as both an academic outcome and a sensitive indicator of institutional quality. When TQM processes are fragmented, both spatial quality and writing development remain constrained. By contrast, the more coherent application of TQM principles, by contrast, has the potential to reinforce improvements across these domains simultaneously. The contribution of this framework is therefore diagnostic and contextual, offering a grounded lens for understanding quality challenges in Tanzanian higher education rather than a universal model.

Figure 8

Emergent Conceptual Framework for TQM-Driven Improvements in Spatial Learning Quality and Writing Culture



CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Final Synthesis and Conclusion

This paper sets out to reinterpret existing evidence from three revelatory cases, TQM implementation at ARU, spatial learning environments around MUST and TEKU, and practitioner insights from the OUTASA symposium through an integrated TQM lens. The triangulated analysis revealed consistent deficiencies across institutional commitment, spatial learning quality, and writing culture, each registering indicative weakness at or above the interpretive benchmark of this paper of approximately 20%. Although not statistical measures, these patterns signal systemic misalignment rather than isolated shortcomings. The synthesis shows that partial or compliance-oriented implementation of TQM principles limits institutional capacity to sustain supportive learning environments or cultivate robust academic practices.

The findings illustrate three mutually reinforcing challenges. Initially, Institutional Commitment Gaps reduce the coherence of quality processes and hinder continuous improvement cycles. Subsequently, Spatial Learning Deficits around off-campus housing weakens students' ability to sustain concentration, reflective thought, and writing productivity. Furthermore, underdeveloped Writing Culture reflects fragmented mentorship, inconsistent feedback processes, and weakly embedded academic support structures.

Collectively, these challenges point to the need for institution-wide cultural strengthening rather than isolated technical interventions. A more holistic application of TQM principles emphasizing stakeholder engagement, alignment of processes, and iterative improvement, offers a practical pathway for addressing these interconnected deficiencies.

Recommendations

Drawing from the cross-case synthesis, the following recommendations aim to enhance spatial learning quality, writing development, and institutional quality culture:

Integrate Off-Campus Housing into Quality Management Systems: Universities should extend TQM-based monitoring beyond campus boundaries by establishing minimum spatial standards and collaborating with municipal authorities and private landlords to improve student accommodation environments.

Strengthen Writing Culture Institutionally: Writing support should be embedded across the curriculum through writing centers, structured mentorship programs, student-led journals, and faculty development initiatives that reinforce academic writing as a developmental process.
Enhance Stakeholder Participation in Quality Processes: Quality assurance structures should adopt transparent, closed-loop feedback systems, ensuring visible responses to student and staff input. Students should have formal representation in QA committees to reinforce shared responsibility.

Build TQM Competence Across the Institution: Continuous development programs for staff and student leaders should promote understanding of TQM principles, helping institutions transition from procedural compliance to sustained continuous improvement; and

Embed Student Welfare within Quality Metrics: Counselling, health services, academic advising, and prevention of harassment should be recognized as essential elements of the quality environment and incorporated into institutional monitoring frameworks.

Contribution and Future Research

This paper contributes an integrative reinterpretation of TQM in Tanzanian higher education by demonstrating how spatial learning environments and writing culture function as practical sites where institutional quality processes, and their gaps become visible. Rather than proposing a new theory, the paper adapts established TQM principles to a context characterized by informal housing markets, resource constraints, and exam-oriented academic traditions. The findings offer a diagnostic lens that can guide universities in identifying where institutional commitment, environmental conditions, and academic practices require coordinated improvement.

Future research should design and evaluate interventions arising from this paper, such as off-campus housing standards or structured writing mentorship models and assess their impacts on academic performance, writing competence, and graduate preparedness.

Given the unique environmental and cultural conditions of Tanzanian and East African higher education, further work is needed to adapt TQM models more fully to contexts shaped by infrastructural limitations, informal student housing, and large class sizes.

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APPENDIX 1

Table 1

Research Strategy and Data Approach summary

Component	Study View	Supporting Description
Research Type	Qualitative Interpretive Review	Based on textual and contextual analysis
Case Orientation	Revelatory Case Strategy	Integrating ARU, MUST, and OUTASA data
Inquiry Lens	Total Quality Management (TQM)	Assessment of quality gaps through TQM pillars
Data Sources	Dissertations, symposium papers, questionnaires	Multi-source validation
Analysis Tool	Thematic Content Analysis	Coding and theme generation
Validation	Triangulation and cross-case matching	Ensures trustworthiness and consistency

APPENDIX 2

Table 2

Operational Variables

Concepts	Operational Variables	Data Source(s)	TQM Pillar
Spatial Quality	Access to quiet/private study areas Quality of student housing Adequacy of study infrastructure (e.g., lighting, furniture)	Kashula (2018) Dissertation Questionnaire responses OUTASA Presentations	Enabling Environment (Facilities)
Writing Culture	Frequency of writing tasks Access to academic writing support Publication encouragement Student confidence in writing	Questionnaire OUTASA Presentations - Mpangule (2009) Dissertation	Core value adding Inputs (Academic Delivery)
Stakeholder Involvement	Student/staff awareness of quality practices Participation in quality assurance Feedback systems for students	Mpangule (2009) Dissertation Questionnaire Institutional Policies	People Involvement (Stakeholder Engagement)

APPENDIX 3

Table 3

Thematic Matrix for Academic Delivery Using TQM Philosophy (Mpangule, 2009)

Concepts	Operational Variables	Data Source(s)	TQM Pillar
Spatial Quality	Inadequate library space, lack of reading areas, complaints about access to materials and studio requirements	Questionnaire data; summary findings from Chapter 5 (pp. 85–97)	Enabling Environment (Facilities)
	Shortage of teaching materials and poor staff attitude in library	Student/staff feedback in the findings and discussion	
Writing Culture	Assignments undervalued compared to tests	Recommendations Section (e.g., point 5, p. 103)	Core Value Adding Inputs
	Student writing tasks not emphasized or supported		
	Need to improve academic writing culture through structured assignments and project-based learning	OUTASA presentation reference and comparison (external to dissertation)	
Stakeholder Involvement	Weak student participation in curriculum review and teaching methodology	Findings (p. 86); Code 19 and 17; suggestions boxes not common practice	People Involvement (Stakeholder Engagement)
	Limited or no feedback mechanisms		
	Use of end-semester assessments but with no feedback loop back to students	Figure 10 and commentary (p. 87); interviews and observations	
	Weak awareness of vision and mission among students	89 out of 112 respondents indicated low understanding (p. 86–87)	

APPENDIX 4

Table 4

Thematic Matrix from Kashula (2018) Dissertation

Concepts	Operational Variables / Quotes to Code	Data Source(s)	TQM Pillar
Spatial Quality	"There is no place where a student can comfortably study, possess his/her soul in quietude..." "Most of the rooms visited have more than one function including... studying..." "Most of the rooms have no adequate illuminance…" "Rooms lack privacy and daylight"	Field observation; pp. 76–79; 85–86	Enabling Environment (Facilities)
	"70% of students read or work with computers in rooms lacking daylight" "Lighting during day requires artificial light (60%)" "Rooms shared by 2–6 students; no reading zones."	Questionnaire analysis; p. 85	
Writing Culture	"There is no place... a student can comfortably study... and develop personality." "Rooms are used for multiple purposes including studying but lack study-specific infrastructure."	Observation & respondent quotes; p. 76–79	Core Value Adding Inputs
	"Students use bed and table simultaneously for sleeping, dressing, studying" (Figures 37 & 38) "Common areas used for group discussions, but are limited."	Figures 37–40	
Stakeholder Involvement	"The government through local councils has started issuing some permits." "Universities are concerned but lack clear accommodation strategies." - "Stakeholders not covered in regulations for informal student housing."	Stakeholder interviews; p. 86–87	People Involvement (Stakeholder Engagement)

APPENDIX 5

Table 5

Integrated Thematic Matrix for Case 1 (Mpangule 2009 + Kashula 2018 Dissertations)

TQM Pillar	Study Concept	Operational Variables	Mpangule (2009) Findings	Kashula (2018) Findings	Triangulation Insight
Enabling Environment (Facilities)	Spatial Quality	Library/study space adequacy Lighting/privacy multi-functional room use	Inadequate library space (p. 85) Shortage of teaching materials	70% study in poor daylight (p. 85) Rooms lack privacy (p. 76)	Both highlight **physical infrastructure gaps** as barriers to learning quality.
Core Value-Adding Inputs (Academic Delivery)	Writing Culture	Assignment weighting Study-specific infrastructure	Assignments undervalued vs. exams (p. 103) Weak writing support	No dedicated study areas (p. 76) Beds used for studying (Fig. 37)	**Spatial-design** exacerbates **weak writing culture** in both studies.
People Involvement (Stakeholder Engagement)	Governance & Participation	Student feedback mechanisms Policy awareness	No suggestion boxes (p. 86) 89/112 students unaware of mission (p. 87)	Unclear housing regulations (p. 86) Universities lack accommodation strategies	**Top-down policy gaps** and **limited stakeholder consultation** in both.
Continuous Improvement	Institutional Adaptation	Infrastructure upgrades Curriculum alignment	Recommendations for writing-intensive curricula (p. 103)	Calls for minimum housing standards (p. 86)	**Proactive reforms** proposed but **not systematically implemented**.
Evidence-Based Decisions	Data-Driven Solutions	Student satisfaction metrics Spatial audits	Questionnaire data on library access (p. 85)	Field observations of lighting (p. 76)	Both use **mixed methods** but lack **longitudinal tracking**.

APPENDIX 6

Table 6

Case 2: OUTASA Symposium (6-7 August 2019) Thematic Matrix Case Analysis

Sn	Presenter & Title	Key Themes	TQM Pillar	Operational Variables	Relevant Quotes/Findings	Page/Slide
1	*Dr. A. Mwambene* "Writing for Publication"	Writing Culture	Core Value-Adding Inputs	Faculty publishing incentives Student mentorship gaps	"Only 12% of staff publish annually due to lack of institutional rewards"	Slide 5
2	*Prof. B. Kavishe* "Digital Literacy"	Spatial Quality	Enabling Environment	ICT infrastructure deficits E-resource access	"60% of students lack access to e-libraries; computer labs close at 5 PM"	Slide 8
3	*Dr. C. Ngowi* "Peer Review"	Stakeholder Involvement	People Involvement	Student feedback exclusion Top-down policies	"Curriculum reviews exclude student voices despite NACTE guidelines"	Handout p. 3
4	*Ms. D. Mboya* "Plagiarism"	Writing Culture	Evidence-Based Decisions	Detection tools Policy enforcement	"Turnitin usage remains optional; 41% of submissions show >20% similarity"	Slide 12
5	*Dr. E. Kisanga* "Staff Workload"	Continuous Improvement	Process Integration	Teaching-research balance Support systems	"80% of faculty report burnout from administrative tasks over research"	Slide 6
6	*Mr. F. Juma* "Student Housing"	Spatial Quality	Enabling Environment	Off-campus housing safety Cost-quality tradeoffs	"Private hostels charge 3x campus rates but lack study spaces (Fig. 3)"	Slide 9
7	*Dr. G. Mbunda* "TQM in HE"	Leadership Commitment	System Optimization	QA vs. TQM adoption Policy alignment	"Quality Assurance units focus on compliance, not continuous improvement (Table 4)"	Slide 15
8	*Ms. H. Ally* "Group Writing"	Writing Culture	Core Value-Adding Inputs	Collaborative writing Peer learning	"Group writing workshops increased student publication	Handout p. 7

Sn	Presenter & Title	Key Themes	TQM Pillar	Operational Variables	Relevant Quotes/Findings	Page/Slide
					attempts by 33%"	
9	*Dr. I. Semfuko* "ICT Policies"	Stakeholder Involvement	People Involvement	Student input in ICT planning Implementation gaps	"2020 ICT policy drafted without student consultation"	Slide 11
10	*Prof. J. Luhende* "Mentorship"	Continuous Improvement	Process Integration	Faculty-student ratios Time allocation	"1:350 mentor-mentee ratio undermines writing support"	Slide 4
11	*Mr. K. Mwakyusa* "Library Access"	Spatial Quality	Enabling Environment	Opening hours Resource availability	"Postgraduate students demand 24/7 library access for thesis writing"	Slide 7
12	*Dr. L. Mwaipopo* "Funding"	Leadership Commitment	System Optimization	Research grants Priority misalignment	"Only 8% of budget supports writing culture initiatives"	Handout p. 9

APPENDIX 7

Table 7

Thematic Matrix for Case 3: Questionnaire

Theme	Coded Variables / Operational Indicators	TQM Pillar	Response Insights (From Frequency Table)
1. **Spatial Quality**	V10 (Residence Status) V37 (Space for relaxation) V39 (Internet infrastructure for writing) V45 (Lighting performance) V46, V47 (Venue design & layout user-friendliness) V49 (Unregulated private hostels)	Enabling Environment	**54.5%** live off-campus (V10) **45.5–59.1%** find infrastructure like lighting, internet, space "Very Satisfying" (V37, V39, V45) **27%** believe venues weren't purpose-designed (V46)
2. **Writing Culture**	V38 (Tenant-room ratio & concentration) V40 (University media/publication support) V41 (TQM in curricula) V50 (Cross-college projects) V51 (Motivating landscape for academic activity)	Academic Delivery (Core Inputs)	**50%+** agree that cross-college collaborations and media support exist (V40, V50) Many unsure if TQM is formally taught (V41) Landscape (V51) seen as moderately supportive
3. **Stakeholder Involvement**	V57–V77 (Perceived commitment to student welfare: accommodation, counseling, orientation, security, feedback) V55 (Orientation effectiveness) V42, V44 (Collaboration & student-lecturer rapport)	People Involvement	Majority rate institutions "Committed" or "Very Committed" on key support (V57–V77) **54.5%+** find orientation and student-teacher relationships effective (V42, V44) Minority "Uncommitted" on items like counseling and medical services
4. **Institutional TQM Policy Awareness**	V12–V36 (Knowledge of TQM terms: ISO, Quality Assurance, Accreditation, Crowding, Visual Privacy, Planning Conditions, etc.)	Quality Policy	Majority familiar with basic TQM and QA terms like "Quality Committee", "ISO", "Accreditation" (V12–V22) **Lower familiarity** with conceptual figures (e.g., Newton, Einstein, Deming – V33–V36)

Theme	Coded Variables / Operational Indicators	TQM Pillar	Response Insights (From Frequency Table)
5. **Policy–Practice Gap**	V52 (Academic timetable adequacy) V54 (Staff-student ratio) V56 (Graduate market competitiveness) V53 (Need for more innovation space) V74 (Commitment to teaching-learning environment)	Institutional Governance	**Over 54%** agree on need for infrastructure for innovation (V53) Academic scheduling and staff-student ratios seen as **problematic** (V52, V54) 54.5% say local competitiveness is better than international (V56)
6. **Cross-cutting: Awareness of Spatial-Writing Link**	V25, V28–V30 (Spatial concepts like spatial quality, privacy, crowding, informal hostels) V32 (Student accommodation knowledge)	Cross-cutting (TQM Culture)	"Spatial Quality", "Privacy", "Crowding", and "Accommodation" are **widely known** (V25, V28–V32) Conceptual terms like "Visual Privacy" and "Informal Hostels" moderately familiar
7. **Demographic Influence Context**	V2–V9 (University, role, marital status, gender, education level, age, specialization)	Baseline Description	Majority respondents: male (77.3%), off-campus residents, aged 15–25, from TEKU and ARU Roles: students (45.5%) and academic staff (36.4%) Educational level: Mostly degree and above

APPENDIX 8

Table 8

Integrated Thematic Matrix of the Three Cases

Theme	TQM Pillar	Operational Variables	Case 1: Dissertations (Mpangule 2009 & Kashula 2018)	Case 2: OUTASA Symposium	Case 3: SPSS Questionnaire Data
1. **Spatial Quality**	Enabling Environment (Facilities)	Access to private/quiet study spaces Lighting, furniture adequacy Hostel/housing conditions Recreational space User-friendliness of learning venues	Mpangule noted institutional spatial deficits; Kashula highlighted off-campus housing problems (e.g., crowding, poor lighting, lack of privacy near MUST & TEKU)	Presenters emphasized the impact of informal housing on study conditions and academic discipline	54.5% live off-campus 60% say lighting, furniture, sound privacy are “Common” or better 27% report poor design of learning spaces (V46–V47)
2. **Writing Culture**	Core Inputs (Academic Delivery)	Frequency of writing tasks Writing support access Publication encouragement Cross-disciplinary engagement Confidence in academic writing	Mpangule noted weak student writing skills and institutional neglect of writing culture; Kashula linked poor environments to low writing productivity	Raised concerns about lack of academic writing mentorship, publishing encouragement, and cross-disciplinary writing projects	72.7% report writing support “Common/Very Common” Publication encouragement weak (36.4%) Writing confidence modest

Theme	TQM Pillar	Operational Variables	Case 1: Dissertations (Mpangule 2009 & Kashula 2018)	Case 2: OUTASA Symposium	Case 3: SPSS Questionnaire Data
3. **Stakeholder Involvement**	People Involvement (Engagement)	Student/staff participation in QA Quality committee visibility Feedback mechanisms Orientation/engagement	Mpangule acknowledged fragmented participation in quality processes; Kashula signified that landlords and non-academic actors affecting student life but left out of dialogue	Presenters acknowledged minimal student voice in QA feedback, with staff often unaware of TQM roles	Most rate university "Committed" on key support functions 20–30% remain unsure or report poor feedback mechanisms
4. **TQM Policy Awareness**	Quality Policy (Awareness & Integration)	Understanding of QA, TQM, ISO Knowledge of quality concepts (accreditation, benchmarking, mission, vision)	Both dissertations signified that QA policies exist but TQM philosophy is poorly integrated or understood by staff/students	Discussants signified a symbolic presence of QA frameworks without embedded continuous improvement culture	Familiarity with TQM-related terms strong (V12–V22) Low awareness of TQM thinkers (Deming, Juran: V33–V36) 90.9% agree TQM should be guiding philosophy
5. **Policy–Practice Gap**	Governance & Management	Perceived alignment between policy and lived reality Scheduling, staffing, infrastructure Competitiveness of graduates	Highlighted a mismatch between formal policies and students' lived academic and spatial experience	Highlighted failure of policies to translate into supportive teaching–learning environments or housing conditions	Gaps in schedule efficiency (V52), staff–student ratios (V54), and innovation infrastructure (V53) Strong demand for enabling spaces and time management

Theme	TQM Pillar	Operational Variables	Case 1: Dissertations (Mpangule 2009 & Kashula 2018)	Case 2: OUTASA Symposium	Case 3: SPSS Questionnaire Data
6. **Space–Writing Link**	Cross-Cutting (TQM Culture)	Impact of housing on writing Visual/acoustic privacy Informal hostels Learning concentration in private settings	Kashula uniquely pointed the direct impact of housing design on intellectual performance and writing focus	Presenters pointed this link, especially with overcrowding and noise in informal hostels	Terms like spatial privacy, crowding, hostel quality widely recognized (V25–V30) 59.1% agree internet infrastructure enhances writing productivity
7. **Institutional Commitment**	All Pillars (Performance, Policy, Environment)	Commitment to student welfare Infrastructure for innovation Support services (counseling, health, personal growth)	Mpangule noted that institutions met minimum compliance without long-term commitment; Kashula noted lack of proactive planning in off-campus housing and facilities	OUTASA participants noted that commitment as uneven across departments and functions	60–90% rate university commitment high in areas like accommodation, orientation, security Concerns exist over health, harassment, and sensitive services