

Analysing the Effect of Training on Employees' Performance in Tanzania and Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) Public Institutions: Mediating Role of Stakeholder Involvement

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Abstract

Despite investments in training and development across public service institutions in Tanzania and Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), the effectiveness of these investments in improving employee performance and organisational outcomes has not been realised. Understanding the relationship between training interventions and performance outcomes is critical for optimising resource allocation and enhancing public service delivery. This systematic literature review examines training effectiveness and stakeholder involvement in public service institutions in Tanzania and across SSA, identifies key factors influencing training outcomes, and provides evidence-based recommendations for policy and practice. Following PRISMA 2020 guidelines, a comprehensive search of academic databases identified relevant studies published between 2020 and 2025. After extensive screening, 53 studies from 9 SSA countries were selected for analysis. The review revealed that training interventions affect employee performance in Tanzania, that stakeholder involvement in SSA emerged as a critical success factor, and that on-the-job training proved particularly effective. Contextual factors, including organisational culture, resource availability, and management support, significantly moderate training outcomes. Effective training in SSA public service requires strategic stakeholder engagement, context-sensitive design, and sustained organisational support.

Keywords: *Training effectiveness, Employee performance, public institutions, Stakeholder involvement, Sub-Saharan Africa, Systematic literature review*

1.0 Introduction

Public sector organisations in Sub-Saharan Africa face numerous barriers to providing services efficiently, including human resource constraints and challenges to organisational effectiveness (Mwamakula, 2025; Kisokola et al., 2024). In Tanzania, the public sector reform process has been launched to facilitate capacity building as an important element of institutional strengthening and good governance (Bendera & Mtey, 2024; Msuya & Munisi, 2023). Since the 1990s, the Tanzanian public service has undergone numerous reforms aimed at making services more efficient and accessible. Investments in human resources have become a major focus in recent years, enhancing employees through training and

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capacity-building opportunities to improve their abilities and organisational capability (Jaffu, 2023a; Kisokola et al., 2024). The Public Service Reform Program (PSRP) was launched in 2000. The program passed through phases from PSRP II (2008-2012) to PSRP III (2013-2018). The core component of each phase was that training would be utilised strategically to fill capacity gaps and ultimately improve service delivery outcomes (United Republic of Tanzania, 2013).

Furthermore, while there is a need for greater synthesis of the roles of stakeholders (including both trainee, supervisor, manager, training provider, and community) that can contribute to enhanced effectiveness in training (Atunga & Ng'eno, 2022; Lwilla & Nyello, 2025), participative methods have been conceptually advocated as appropriate in theory (Venturini et al., 2024; Azmat et al., 2025). However, there is limited empirical research on how this participation affects outcomes in Tanzania and other SSA contexts (Jaffu, 2023b; Gange & Barongo, 2024). Therefore, the methodological variety and differing quality levels of prior research do not provide a clear understanding of these interrelationships. Therefore, the review attempted to answer four research questions: What is the evidence on the effects of training programmes on employee performance in public service institutions in Tanzania and Sub-Saharan Africa? How does stakeholder involvement affect training effectiveness? What theoretical frameworks explain the training-performance relationship, and what patterns, contradictions, and gaps exist in the literature?

This systematic literature review will address the existing knowledge gap by gathering empirical evidence from previous studies on training effectiveness in public service organisations in Tanzania and SSA, as well as on how stakeholder participation has contributed to the success of these organisations' public services. This literature review will bring together and synthesise all relevant empirical information (from previous studies) on what works, when it works, who benefits, under what circumstances, and why or through which mechanisms, in order to gain an overall understanding of successful public service training practices. It is expected that the results of this literature review will be used to develop an evidence-based policy or practice, provide direction for future research, and improve investment returns through more effective training for public service employees, resulting in improved public service delivery. The study has the following objectives: to synthesise empirical evidence on the effects of training interventions on employee performance in Tanzania and in public institutions across SSA (2020–2025); to examine evidence on stakeholder involvement as a mediating factor in training effectiveness; and to assess the theoretical frameworks employed in studying training-performance relationships.

This review makes several contributions. Firstly, it synthesises the current empirical literature on the effectiveness of training in SSA public sectors, thereby filling a key gap in regional knowledge. Secondly, its focus on stakeholder engagement as a mediating mechanism offers new insight into how training influences performance outcomes. Thirdly, by restricting its focus to 2020–25, the review captures training practices currently underway and emerging trends, at a time when there is widespread reform within the public sector, and digital transformation is underway across much of SSA. Finally, the

review provides actionable recommendations for policymakers, HR practitioners, and other development partners who wish to improve the effectiveness of training in public organisations.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Foundations

The relationship between training and employee performance is grounded in several established theoretical frameworks.

Human Capital Theory (HCT) provides the foundational economic rationale for training investments. Building on the work of Schultz (1961) and Becker (1964), HCT posits that individuals and organisations can increase productivity and economic value by investing in education, training, and development. Training is conceptualised as an investment that enhances employees' knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs), thereby increasing their human capital stock and productive capacity (Becker, 1964; Schultz, 1961). In public service contexts, HCT suggests that training investments should yield returns in the form of improved employee performance, enhanced service delivery, and organisational effectiveness (Wambura, 2025; Nor, 2023). For instance, a Zambian public sector study shows that HRM practices, including training and development, affect performance through human capital as a mediator (Cassidy et al., 2025). While Human Capital Theory (HCT) assumes that investment in training directly translates into improved employee performance, empirical findings indicate that this relationship is not automatic and is influenced by the quality of implementation, including training needs assessment, administration, and evaluation processes (Guyalo, 2020). In this review, Human Capital Theory is applied to conceptualise training as a strategic investment in workforce capability (Mwageni & Mushi, 2024; Chindengwiwe et al., 2025; Mohamedi & Mtey, 2023).

Kirkpatrick's Four-Level Evaluation Model is a widely adopted framework for assessing training effectiveness across multiple dimensions (Kirkpatrick, 1976, 1996). The model proposes four hierarchical levels of training outcomes: (1) Reaction, participants' satisfaction with training; (2) Learning, acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attitudes; (3) Behaviour, application of learned competencies on the job; and (4) Results, organisational outcomes such as productivity, quality, and cost savings. While Kirkpatrick's model provides a structured approach to training evaluation, scholars have critiqued its linear assumptions, lack of causal mechanisms, and insufficient attention to contextual, motivational, and organisational factors influencing training transfer (Ambu-Saidi et al., 2024). Despite these limitations, the model remains widely applied in practice, particularly in public service and training evaluation contexts (Alsalamah & Callinan, 2021; Lim, 2023). Studies in this review that employ this framework examine training impacts at multiple levels, from individual skill development to organisational performance metrics (Chindengwiwe et al., 2025; Marijani et al., 2023; Kisasilla & Mutarubukwa, 2024).

2.2 Stakeholder Involvement in Training

Stakeholder engagement throughout every stage of the training design, delivery, and evaluation is becoming an increasingly important factor in assessing the impact of training within government institutions. The stakeholders typically involved in the training development process include the employees (to be trained), their supervisor(s) and manager(s), human resources professionals, and trainers/educators. Each of these groups helps ensure that the training addresses both the organisational needs and the individual aspirations of the training. There is growing research suggesting that if stakeholders are engaged effectively in the initial phase of the training development process (i.e., the training needs assessment), there will be better alignment between what the training programme intends to accomplish and the work-related expectations placed on employees by their employers (Kuhenga & Bakari, 2025; Gudeta, 2021).

Evidence further indicates that stakeholder support beyond the training event is equally important for successful transfer of training. Supervisor, peer, and organisational support have been found to positively influence the application and sustainment of acquired knowledge and skills in the workplace (Gange & Barongo, 2024; Amos, 2025). A meta-analysis by Hughes et al. (2020) found that supervisor and organisational support significantly predict training transfer and long-term training sustainment. Similarly, recent studies in public-sector settings reported that peer support, motivation to transfer, and supportive management practices enhance the effectiveness of training programmes and the application of learned competencies on the job.

Despite the growing body of evidence, important knowledge gaps remain regarding the mechanisms by which different stakeholders influence training effectiveness, the appropriate level of stakeholder participation throughout the training cycle, and the contextual factors that shape these relationships. These gaps are particularly evident in Sub-Saharan African public service institutions, where empirical research on stakeholder involvement in training remains limited (Kuhenga & Bakari, 2025). Consequently, further studies are needed to examine how stakeholder engagement contributes to training effectiveness and organisational performance in public-sector contexts (Wambura, 2025).

2.3 Training Effectiveness in Tanzania and Sub-Saharan Africa Public Service Contexts

Research on training effectiveness within public sector organisations in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) reveals a mixed, contradictory pattern of results. Although numerous studies have reported significant positive relationships between training activities and performance (e.g., Florence & Emuron, 2024; Gange & Barongo, 2024), several studies have also noted persistent challenges in public sector training systems in SSA, particularly weak training needs assessments, substandard quality of training programmes, failure to provide adequate support after formal training is completed, and limited evaluations of training outcomes (Gange & Barongo, 2024; Guyalo, 2020). The context in which training is delivered in SSA public service institutions affects the ability to assess its effectiveness, as resource-constrained settings, limited institutional delivery capacity, political pressures, and administrative weaknesses can undermine the potential for training to succeed (Sawaneh & Adesopo, 2022). Similarly, training effectiveness is often difficult to evaluate in

practice due to weak and inconsistent post-training assessment systems and organisational constraints that limit the measurement of training outcomes (Lim, 2023). Although considerable attention has been devoted by researchers to investigating the impact of training on organisational performance, the literature on training effectiveness in Tanzania and the SSA public sectors remains fragmented across disciplines, methodologies, and research standards. Additionally, no systematic review of existing evidence examining the influence of stakeholder engagement on training effectiveness in SSA public services has been conducted. Therefore, the purpose of this systematic review was to address these deficiencies.

3.0 Methodology

This systematic literature review followed PRISMA 2020 guidelines to ensure transparency and reproducibility (Page et al., 2021) and was structured using Callahan's Six Ws framework to define the scope, inclusion criteria, and synthesis strategy (Callahan, 2014). The search strategy covered four databases: Google Scholar, PubMed, Web of Science, and Scopus. The search period spanned January 2000 to March 2025 across the literature in Management, Public Administration, Health, and Multidisciplinary fields. There were three Concept Blocks, linked using Boolean Operators. Block One: Training comprised "Employee Training," "Capacity Building," "Professional Development," and "In-Service Training." Block Two: Performance included "Job Performance," "Productivity," and "Effectiveness." Block Three: Context included "Tanzania," "Public Sector," "Civil Service," and "Sub-Saharan Africa." Each database's controlled vocabulary was used to refine the search strategy. The search strategy was also enhanced through backward citation searching of included studies.

It involved both Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria. Included eligible studies were empirical (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-methods), examined training interventions and employee performance in public service contexts in Tanzania or Sub-Saharan Africa, were published in English between January 2020 and December 2025, and included peer-reviewed articles, dissertations, and theses. Excluded studies were those focused exclusively on the private sector, conducted outside Sub-Saharan Africa, non-empirical, not examining the training-performance relationship, not in English, or published before 2020.

Database searching yielded 1,544 results, reduced to 500 unique references after deduplication. Title and abstract screening identified 51 potentially eligible studies, and full-text assessment yielded 53 studies that met all inclusion criteria. A standardised data extraction template, pilot-tested across five studies, captured study characteristics (author, year, location, design, sample size), institutional context, training intervention details (type, duration, content, delivery method), stakeholder involvement, performance outcomes, theoretical frameworks, key findings, and limitations. Inter-rater reliability was assessed in 10 randomly selected studies (30% of the total) to ensure consistency in extraction.

Fifty-three studies were selected in the systematic literature review. Studies originated from nine Sub-Saharan African countries. Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Ghana, Nigeria, Zambia, Somalia and Gambia. The research methods used across the included studies varied. A total of 37 (69.8%) quantitative studies, 9 (17%) qualitative studies and 7

(13.2%) mixed-methods studies were included in this systematic review. Sample sizes for all included studies ranged from $n < 50$ (small-scale case studies) to > 300 (large surveys). While 39 (73.6%) of studies analysed data from a single organisation, 14 (26.4%) of studies analysed data from multiple organisations or compared organisations.

Thematic synthesis was conducted using Thomas and Harden's (2008) three-stage process. It involved coding findings from included studies; developing descriptive themes and organising codes into related clusters; and generating analytical themes that transcend individual studies to produce new insights, identify patterns and contradictions, and address the review questions. Throughout the synthesis, attention was paid to evidence strength and consistency, study quality, and contextual factors, enabling a comprehensive understanding of the training-performance relationship in Tanzania and Sub-Saharan African public service contexts.

4.0 Results

4.1 Effects of Training Programmes on Employee Performance

Training programmes have generally been shown to be positively related to employee performance in Tanzanian and SSA public service institutions. The majority of the research examined has demonstrated this relationship across different forms of training, organisational settings, and methods. For instance, Garavan et al. (2021) reinforce this pattern by demonstrating, through a meta-analysis, that the relationship between training and organisational performance is not uniform but is significantly moderated by temporal, institutional, and organisational contextual factors, indicating that training outcomes vary across settings. Positive correlations were demonstrated using quantitative measures, including correlation and regression studies. Mentoring was identified as highly effective for improving employee performance. Kisokola et al. (2024) found that mentoring increased employee performance. Mentorship was identified with a coefficient of .304 ($p < .001$). Msuya and Munisi (2023) reported that "training and development" had a statistically significant impact on Human Resource Performance. Lwilla and Nyello (2025) demonstrated that training had a statistically significant impact on quality of service delivered by employees working at Benjamin Mkapa Hospital. The type of training also varied in effectiveness. On-the-job training was identified as being very effective. Kisokola et al. (2024) reported that mentoring was the most effective training format ($\beta = .304$; $p < .001$) compared with other formats. Mchete (2020) demonstrated that induction training for newly hired employees led to faster adaptation, higher job satisfaction, and higher performance during their first few months of employment.

While short-term workshops and seminars are the most common training format in the Tanzanian context, they tend to be less effective due to a lack of follow-up support for employees who have received training (Msamba et al., 2023; Msangi & Mwila, 2024). The aspects of performance affected by training vary by study; however, the most commonly evaluated areas include: Task performance (quantity and quality of work produced) and Contextual performance (employee contributions to organisation-wide goals and team-oriented behaviour). Adaptive performance (ability to adapt to changing circumstances

and problem-solve) and Service delivery outcomes (citizen satisfaction and quality of service provided) are also commonly assessed. Msuya and Munisi (2023) found that training improved both Task Performance and Contextual Performance. Lwilla and Nyello (2025) reported that training improved Service Delivery Quality and Citizen Satisfaction. Qualitative studies provided additional insight into how training impacts performance. Both Mohamedi & Mtey (2023) and Mwageni & Mushi (2024) documented improvements in confidence, ability, and motivation among employees who completed training programmes. In addition, supervisors observed improvements in Work Quality, Efficiency, and Problem-Solving Ability among trained employees (Mwageni & Mushi, 2024). However, qualitative studies have also documented that the extent of training's influence on performance depends on a variety of environmental factors, including Organisational Support, Availability of Resources, and Work Environment (Jonathan, 2024).

Although there appears to be a general trend toward demonstrating a positive association between training programmes and employee performance outcomes in Tanzanian and SSA public service institutions, several studies have reported no statistically significant differences between trained and untrained employees. These findings suggest that these programmes will either fail to produce the desired changes in employee performance or, if poorly designed, be inconsistent with job expectations, or, if inadequately supported by organisational systems, may even negatively affect employee performance. For example, Kisokola et al. (2024) documented that Job Rotation decreased Employee Performance (-.069); therefore, poorly developed job rotation plans could lead to reduced productivity due to inefficiency and/or workflow disruptions.

4.2 Stakeholder Involvement in Training Effectiveness and Sustained Performance Outcomes

A critical finding emerging from the synthesis is that stakeholder involvement, particularly trainees, supervisors, and management, in training needs assessment, design, delivery, and post-training support significantly enhances training effectiveness, relevance, and sustained performance outcomes. This theme emerged across multiple studies, though often implicitly rather than explicitly. Trainee involvement in needs assessment was associated with higher training relevance and motivation. Studies that reported participatory training needs assessment processes found higher training satisfaction, engagement, and application (Nor, 2023; Cassidy et al., 2025). Conversely, studies reporting top-down training decisions without employee input frequently noted misalignment between training content and job requirements, leading to limited application and performance improvement (Msamba et al., 2023; Guyalo, 2020).

Supervisor and management involvement emerged as particularly critical for training transfer and sustained performance improvement. Studies reporting active supervisor involvement in pre-training goal setting, post-training reinforcement, and performance monitoring found stronger and more sustained training effects (Nor, 2023; Salim, 2022). Supervisors who attended training alongside their subordinates or received briefings on training content and expected outcomes were better positioned to support its application and provide relevant feedback (Nor, 2023). In contrast, studies reporting minimal supervisor involvement found limited training transfer, with employees reporting a lack of

opportunities to apply learned skills and absence of reinforcement (Msamba et al., 2023; Msangi & Mwila, 2024).

Management support and commitment to training were consistently identified as a critical enabler of training effectiveness. Studies reporting strong management commitment, as evidenced by adequate resource allocation, integration of training into strategic planning, and recognition of training achievements, found more positive training outcomes (Nor, 2023; Salim, 2022). Conversely, studies reporting weak management support found limited training effectiveness (Gange & Barongo, 2024; Amos, 2025).

Munisi et al. (2024) investigated the effects of community involvement and human resource training on tourism industry performance in Iringa, Tanzania, finding that community stakeholder engagement enhanced the relevance of training and organisational outcomes. This study provided the most direct evidence of stakeholder involvement as a mediating factor. Jaffu (2023b) examined career development as a mediating variable in the relationship between training and performance among public procurement professionals, suggesting that stakeholder support for career progression pathways enhanced the effectiveness of training. Atunga and Ng'eno (2022) examined attitudinal training and employee performance in Kenya's devolved governance system, noting that stakeholder buy-in from county assembly members and management influenced the training's implementation and outcomes.

Despite the clear importance of stakeholder involvement, the reviewed studies revealed that systematic stakeholder engagement in training processes remains limited in many Tanzanian and SSA public service institutions. Common barriers included time constraints, lack of participatory planning skills, hierarchical organisational cultures, and inadequate resources for stakeholder engagement activities (Gange & Barongo, 2024; Florence & Emuron, 2024).

4.3 Theoretical Frameworks Employed in Explaining the Training Performance Relationship

The synthesis revealed considerable diversity in the theoretical frameworks used to explain the training-performance relationship, significant theoretical fragmentation, and a substantial proportion of studies lacking explicit theoretical grounding. Theoretical frameworks employed are diverse but often implicit, with Human Capital Theory predominating.

Human Capital Theory (HCT) was the most commonly employed framework, explicitly or implicitly underpinning approximately 40% of the reviewed studies (Mwageni & Mushi, 2024; Chindengwike et al., 2025; Mohamedi & Mtey, 2023; Kisasilla & Mutarubukwa, 2024; Oluwaseun, 2023; Vivian & Mohd. Nasir, 2022). These research studies viewed training as an investment in employee knowledge, skills, and abilities. The purpose of such investment is to increase employees' productive capacity and ultimately improve organisational performance. In contrast, many studies utilising HCT treated the relationship between training and performance as direct and linear, failing to consider mediating variables, contextual factors, and potential barriers to the successful implementation and transfer of training.

Kirkpatrick's Four-Level Evaluation Model was explicitly referenced in approximately 25% of studies as a framework for assessing training effectiveness across reaction, learning, behaviour, and results levels (Chindengwike et al., 2025; Marijani et al., 2023; Kisasilla & Mutarubukwa, 2024). While Kirkpatrick's model provided a useful structure for multi-level evaluation, most studies focused primarily on the reaction and learning levels, with limited assessment of behavioural change and organisational outcomes.

4.4 Training Types Effectiveness Variation

On-the-job training was found to be the most effective training modality across all studies. The effectiveness of on-the-job training has been attributed to its contextual nature, which enhances immediate applicability to work processes and provides opportunities for both feedback and practice in authentic work settings. Kisokola et al. (2024) found that mentorship significantly enhanced employee performance (coefficient = 0.304, $p < 0.001$) at the Public Service Management and Good Governance Office in Tanzania. Chipembele et al. (2024) found that on-the-job training facilitates faster skill acquisition, greater retention of learned material, and greater transfer to actual job performance than off-the-job training methods.

Induction training for new employees was associated with faster adaptation, higher job satisfaction, reduced turnover intentions, and better early performance. Mchete (2020) found that structured induction programmes significantly improved new employees' understanding of organisational culture, policies, and role expectations, leading to faster productivity and better integration into work teams. Bendera and Mtey (2024) similarly reported that induction training enhanced the performance of new employees at TARURA and DART in Tanzania.

Job rotation and cross-functional training were associated with enhanced adaptability, a broader organisational understanding, and improved cross-departmental collaboration. Kisokola et al. (2024) found that job rotation negatively affected employee performance (coefficient: -0.069), suggesting that poorly designed rotation programmes may disrupt workflow and reduce efficiency.

E-learning and technology-mediated training were rarely reported in the reviewed studies, reflecting limited technological infrastructure and digital literacy in many SSA public service contexts. The few studies examining e-learning reported mixed results, with effectiveness contingent on access to technology, digital skills, and learner self-regulation (Omer, 2021). Indara et al. (2023) examined the moderating role of technology in the relationship between strategic training and the performance of state ministries in Kenya, finding that access to technology moderated the effectiveness of training.

The differential effectiveness of training types suggests that training investment decisions should be guided by learning objectives, competency requirements, and contextual constraints. Complex skills and behavioural competencies are best developed through experiential, contextualised approaches such as on-the-job training, mentoring, and action learning, whereas knowledge acquisition can be effectively achieved through workshops supplemented by application support.

4.5 Organisational Factors on Training Effectiveness

The most consistent theme throughout the literature review was that numerous organisational and contextual factors would moderate the success of training. That is to say, while organisations use training to develop their employees' skills, the results are heavily influenced by many factors, including, but not limited to, the organisation's overall culture, climate, and systems.

Studies have reported that supportive organisational cultures characterised by a learning orientation, openness to change, psychological safety, and recognition of learning achievements enhance training transfer and performance improvement (Nor, 2023; Cassidy et al., 2025). Conversely, rigid, hierarchical, or punitive organisational cultures inhibit the implementation of training, with employees reluctant to try new approaches or to risk making mistakes (Guyalo, 2020). Mohamedi and Mtey (2023) found that employee perceptions and attitudes toward training varied significantly across Tanzanian public organisations, suggesting that organisational readiness and culture moderate the impact of training.

Leadership support and commitment at all organisational levels were consistently identified as a critical enabler. Studies reported that when leaders actively championed training, allocated adequate resources, participated in training initiatives, and reinforced learning through policies and practices, training effectiveness was significantly enhanced (Nor, 2023; Salim, 2022). Conversely, a lack of leadership support, manifested in inadequate funding, low priority for training, and the absence of follow-up, severely constrained the effectiveness of training (Gange & Barongo, 2024; Amos, 2025).

Resource availability, including financial resources, time, facilities, and materials, significantly influenced the quality and effectiveness of training. Studies reported that resource constraints led to inadequate training needs assessment, poor training quality, insufficient training duration and materials, and an inability to provide post-training support (Msamba et al., 2023; Guyalo, 2020). Kuhenga and Bakari (2025) applied the ADDIE Model to strategic training needs assessment at Tanzania's National Health Insurance Fund, highlighting the importance of systematic, resource-supported approaches.

Post-training support and reinforcement emerged as critical for sustained performance improvement. Studies have reported that training effects dissipate rapidly without opportunities to apply learned skills, supervisor reinforcement, peer support, and the removal of barriers to application (Msamba et al., 2023; Msangi & Mwila, 2024). Effective post-training support included supervisor coaching, peer learning groups, action learning projects, performance monitoring, and recognition of application efforts (Nor, 2023; Cassidy et al., 2025). Mwageni and Mushi (2024) evaluated approaches employed by Tanzania's Ministry of Finance to enhance the effectiveness of on-the-job training, highlighting the importance of systematic needs assessment, qualified trainers, and follow-up mechanisms.

5.0 Discussion of Findings

This systematic literature review demonstrates that training significantly improves employee performance in public sector organisations across Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). The positive relationship between training and performance is evident across different countries, sectors, methodologies, and training types, although its effectiveness depends on proper planning, implementation, organisational support, and stakeholder participation. These findings are consistent with international evidence on training effectiveness (Garavan et al., 2021; Kim et al., 2022) and extend existing knowledge to the under-researched public-sector context in SSA. Furthermore, training accounts for approximately 30% of the variation in employee performance (Gange & Barongo, 2024), underscoring its practical importance while indicating that other organisational and contextual factors also influence performance outcomes.

A key contribution of the review is recognising stakeholder involvement as a crucial factor in training success. While participatory approaches to training have been widely advocated in the Human Resource Development literature (Venturini et al., 2024; Azmat et al., 2024), empirical evidence from SSA remains limited. The findings show that involving employees in training needs assessments, supervisors in post-training support, and senior management in strategic decision-making enhances the relevance of training, encourages the application of acquired skills, and improves long-term performance outcomes. These results emphasise the importance of stakeholder engagement in maximising the effectiveness and sustainability of training programmes within public sector organisations.

5.1 Training Effectiveness Across Contexts

The findings clearly demonstrate that training effectiveness varies across dimensions. Kisokola et al. (2024), Mnasi et al. (2022), and other research have shown that both mentorship and structured on-the-job training have a strong positive impact. This can be attributed to contextualised, practice-based learning supported by ongoing guidance. On-the-job induction training facilitates new employees' integration into the organisation and improves their performance through comprehensive, structured induction (Bendera & Mtey, 2024; Mchete, 2020). However, job rotation without proper preparation and/or support may disrupt workflow and, consequently, reduce efficiency (Kisokola et al., 2024). Research also indicates that training effectiveness is higher in organisations that possess a supportive culture, sufficient resources, and performance management systems (Indara et al., 2023; Mohamedi & Mtey, 2023). Further research by Mohamedi and Mtey (2023) indicated that employee perceptions and attitudes towards training varied across various public organisations in Tanzania. The findings imply that organisational preparedness and culture moderate the impact of training.

Furthermore, several studies identified that the quality of the implementation of the training program, specifically the design of the program and the quality of the delivery of the program, including post-training support, all affect the outcome of the training (Chindengwiwe et al., 2025; Kuhenga & Bakari, 2025; Mwageni & Mushi, 2024). A study conducted by Mwageni & Mushi (2024) evaluating Ministry of Finance training programmes further demonstrated the importance of conducting a systematic needs assessment of trainees, ensuring that

trainers are qualified, and establishing post-training mechanisms to provide continued support. Evidence demonstrates a consistent relationship between training and proximal outcomes (skill development and job knowledge) and intermediate outcomes (workplace efficiency and service quality). There is less evidence supporting a relationship between training and distal outcomes (effectiveness of organisations, level of satisfaction among citizens), possibly due to longer causal paths between training and these outcomes and the potential for larger influences of contextual factors such as political environment (Lwilla & Nyello, 2025; Munisi et al., 2024).

5.2 The Mediating Role of Stakeholder Involvement in Training

The limited attention to stakeholder involvement represents the most significant gap identified in this review. Only 8 of 53 studies (15.1%) explicitly examined stakeholder engagement, and even fewer analysed mechanisms of mediation. Stakeholder Theory suggests that involving diverse stakeholders in training processes should enhance effectiveness through improving training relevance by aligning content with actual needs and contexts, increasing participant motivation through ownership and voice, facilitating knowledge transfer through peer support and organisational reinforcement, and strengthening organisational commitment to performance improvement (Mchete, 2020; Mungou & Chumo, 2023).

Munisi et al. (2024) provided the strongest evidence, demonstrating that stakeholder involvement enhanced training effectiveness in Tanzania's tourism sector. However, most studies treated training as a top-down intervention without examining how stakeholder engagement might mediate outcomes. This gap has important implications for both research and practice. Empirically, it limits understanding of the mechanisms through which training influences performance. In practice, it may contribute to poorly aligned training programmes, a lack of organisational support, or failure to facilitate knowledge transfer (Akinbo & Ogah, 2025; Oluwaseun, 2023).

6.0 Conclusion

The analysis of 53 studies shows that training is associated with improved performance among employees in Tanzanian and Sub-Saharan African government agencies; on-the-job training and mentoring had the greatest positive impact. The involvement of stakeholders (trainee, supervisor, and management) was also identified as a crucial component of successful training, increasing its relevance, transferability, and long-term sustainability.

This confirms that training should never be attempted independently. The existing body of evidence clearly explains why there remains such a wide gap between expenditure on training programmes and resulting performance improvements in the public sector in Tanzania. Therefore, rather than asking "should we provide more training?" the question becomes "how can we make our current investment in training more strategic? How can we ensure that we plan and deliver training effectively? How do you support trainees after they have received training? How can you assess the influence that your organisation's training programmes have on an employee's job performance?"

7.0 Recommendations

A public service institution in Tanzania or elsewhere in SSA will need to involve all stakeholders throughout each phase of the training cycle (needs assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation) to ensure that all training programmes are context-specific and remain the institution's responsibility. Training should focus on experiential, work-based learning methods, such as on-the-job training (OJT), mentoring, coaching, job rotation, and action learning, as these have been shown to yield greater and longer-lasting performance gains than traditional workshop-style training. Training institutions also need to implement a systematic approach to providing support after formal training has ended. In addition, institutions need to establish a direct link between their training efforts and their organisation's Performance Management System (PMS). Institutions need to secure adequate and sustainable funding for all aspects of the training life cycle. Funding should be viewed as an essential component of an institution's strategy, rather than a discretionary item that can be cut back when budgets are reduced. Future research should conduct comparative analyses across organisational types, sectors, and countries to identify contextual factors that moderate training effectiveness, develop contingency frameworks, and examine the effectiveness of technology-enhanced training approaches (e-learning, blended learning, mobile learning) in SSA public-sector contexts (Indara et al., 2023).

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