

Households' Involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation and Performance of Tanzania's Conditional Cash Transfer Project: The Mediating Role of Capacity Building

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Abstract

For decades, developing countries have made sustained efforts to overcome the challenge of poverty. In this regard, Tanzania was among the countries that introduced the Conditional Cash Transfer Project targeting households identified and verified as poor. Previous studies have demonstrated the role of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) in improving the performance of community programs in Tanzania. However, limited evidence exists regarding the mediating role of community capacity building in the relationship between household involvement in M&E and the performance of these programs. This knowledge gap formed the basis of the study, which sought to establish the extent to which capacity building mediates the relationship between household involvement in monitoring and evaluation and the performance of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project. The study was guided by the Theory of Change and the Ladder of Citizen Participation. The Theory of Change emphasizes building household capacity through the provision of M&E training, while the Ladder of Citizen Participation advocates empowering households to actively participate in the monitoring and evaluation of development programs. Guided by the pragmatic research paradigm, the study employed cross-sectional and correlational research designs. Yamane's (1967) formula was used to determine a sample of 400 respondents from a target population of 61,240 households. Data were collected using questionnaires, key informant interviews, and focus group discussions. The findings established a statistically significant positive influence of household involvement in monitoring and evaluation on the performance of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project ($t = 8.229$, $p < 0.05$). However, the inclusion of capacity building as a mediating variable did not produce a statistically significant effect on project performance ($t = 1.212$, $p > 0.05$). Consequently, capacity building did not significantly mediate the relationship between household involvement in monitoring and evaluation and the performance of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project. The findings support the Theory of Change by demonstrating the importance of involving households in monitoring and evaluation to enhance their understanding of project implementation and facilitate participation in monitoring activities aimed at achieving intended outcomes. The findings are also consistent with the Ladder of Citizen Participation, which emphasizes

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empowering households by providing them with access to project performance information and involving them in decision-making processes. Although household involvement in monitoring and evaluation significantly influenced project performance, empirical evidence revealed that households received limited capacity building and were inadequately engaged in M&E activities. Consequently, many households remained unaware of project progress and were less motivated to advocate for the intended project outcomes. While capacity building did not significantly mediate the relationship between household involvement in M&E and project performance in this study, strengthening household capacity remains important for promoting community participation, inclusivity, and ownership of development interventions. Therefore, project implementers should strengthen the M&E framework by incorporating community representatives into M&E teams from the local to the national levels, thereby enhancing participation and potentially improving the long-term performance of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project.

Keywords: Households; Monitoring and Evaluation; Poverty; Performance; Conditional Cash Transfer.

I. Introduction

Monitoring and Evaluation has been evidenced as a catalyst for the performance of development projects (Valentine, Shukla, & Eugene, 2016). Reports showed that efforts to curb poverty in developing countries have not been successfully achieved compared to Asia and the Pacific, where the poverty rate declined from 62% in 1990 to 3% in 2015 (World Bank, 2018). In Africa, poverty was increasing, with the annual population growth rate rising at 2.7%. Such an increase augmented extreme poverty from 278 million in 1990 to 413 million in 2015 (Beegle & Christiaensen, 2019). Despite the existence of poverty reduction projects, Valentine, Shukla, and Eugene (2016) insisted that the management of respective organizations ignored capacity-building initiatives in M&E for beneficiaries, which could improve project performance. The absence of community capacity building in project M&E affected project performance, leading some projects to fail (Mansuri & Rao, 2003). Nduati, Luketero, Kisimbii, and Mwenda (2025) stipulated that capacity building was one of the significant catalysts for project performance and impact. Therefore, project teams should train beneficiaries on how to implement the M&E framework to enhance project performance. Capacity building was implementable if existing policies were reviewed to incorporate participatory M&E. This necessitates the provision of capacity building to ensure beneficiaries are capable of performing M&E functions through their representatives. Additionally, Nnadi and Oyama (2023) state that when beneficiaries are capacitated in M&E, they can provide their inputs from the commencement to the completion of projects, thereby improving performance. Despite the implementation of the Conditional Cash Transfer project, little documentation was found on how households are capacitated to participate in M&E. Limited information was also found regarding the capacity building of households in M&E. Hence, this motivated the researcher to establish scientific findings and recommendations on the proper way of engaging households in M&E to improve performance. Therefore, this study establishes the extent to which mediating capacity building influences the relationship between combined households' involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation and the performance of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project.

Aim and Originality of the Study

Tanzania introduced the Conditional Cash Transfer project, a publicly owned initiative intended to cover an average of 15% of people living in extreme poverty by 2025 (Mushi, Mwaita, & Makauki, 2019). Like other development projects, the literature emphasizes imparting skills to local communities in the form of financial, human, social, material, and technical education (Langran, 2002). These skills should be provided during the initial stages of project planning, monitoring, and evaluation so that the community can fully participate in community-based development projects globally. Monitoring and Evaluation in the United States of America has advanced in terms of empowering citizens to evaluate the realization of anticipated impacts of development interventions (Estrella & Gaventa, 1998). Additionally, Agrawal (2001) elaborated that community engagement in identifying priorities and implementing project plans instills the power to manage projects and increases accountability in budget planning and expenditure. Engagement of the local community was successful when members were adequately trained before joining program implementation teams. Provision of capacity building in M&E enables the community to participate systematically and professionally in measuring project performance. Communities gather information on how impacts are achieved and provide their opinions to aid decision-making and improvements (Faham, Hosseini, & Darvish, 2008). The practice of engaging households in the M&E of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer project was ineffective because the project team planned and implemented the project on behalf of beneficiaries (Dulani, 2003). Exclusion of project recipients from operations caused them

to lose interest in the project and led to misuse of financial support. Furthermore, Mitullah (2005) added that stakeholder involvement in the Local Authority Transfer Fund of Kenya was low, resulting in poor service delivery. Mugo, Keiyo, Iribe, and Rambo (2016) recommended that stakeholders needed sufficient training in M&E to enhance agricultural food crop projects in Kenya because such training would enable them to critically understand project goals, objectives, and anticipated impacts. Various studies (Noori, 2017; Rimberia, 2012; Mutale et al., 2017; Thwala, 2010; Nyaguthii & Oyugi, 2013; and Ahenkan, Bawole, & Domfer, 2013) indicated that local people's participation in Monitoring and Evaluation influenced project performance. However, these studies did not establish the role of mediating M&E capacity in project performance. Thus, previous studies provided only a general overview of Monitoring and Evaluation. Conversely, other literature by Alfred (2015), Nyonje, Ndunge, and Mulwa (2012), Barasa and Jelagat (2013), Aupe, Awiti, and Aketch (2019), Tengan and Aigbavboa (2017), and Kananura et al. (2017) examined community involvement in M&E and general project performance without highlighting the role of capacity building, despite the low literacy levels among community populations. Therefore, to ensure active participation in the Monitoring and Evaluation of their programs, capacity building was of paramount importance. This study assesses not only the involvement of households in M&E and the performance of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer project, but also whether such involvement and performance are influenced by the mediating role of capacity building. Therefore, the objective of the study was to establish the extent to which mediating capacity building influences the relationship between combined households' involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation and the performance of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project.

Gap in Literature

The Government of Tanzania established the Conditional Cash Transfer project in 2012 to ensure that by 2025, 15% of the population living in poverty would be assisted (Mushi, Mwaita, & Makauki, 2019). Instead of a decline in poverty, the rate increased, whereby in 2015 only 1,100,000 (2%) people were beneficiaries of the project (Mansuri & Rao, 2003). The poverty rate has continued to rise, whereby in 2018 it was 26%, while in 2020 the rate increased to 27.1%, and in 2021 it decreased insignificantly to 27% (World Bank, 2019; World Bank, 2022). This meant that the Conditional Cash Transfer project had a significant impact in reducing poverty among households. International organizations' reports revealed that the majority of rural people still live in extreme poverty below \$1.90 per day, while the project covers less than 3% of poor Tanzanians (World Bank, 2019; UNDP, 2018). The continental region that managed to reduce poverty was East Asia and the Pacific through the engagement of beneficiaries in the planning, implementation, and M&E of their projects, whereby the poverty rate declined from 62% in 1990 to 3% in 2015 (Beegle & Christiaensen, 2019). Various scholars evidenced that capacity building of beneficiaries in M&E had an influence on project performance (Ondieki, 2016; Mugo, Keiyo, Iribe, & Rambo, 2016; Rogito, Maitho, & Nderitu, 2020; Waithera & Wanyoike, 2015; Mesa, Rambo, & Mulwa, 2025). Therefore, when beneficiaries are trained in M&E, their participation influences project performance (Noori, 2017; Rimberia, 2012; Mutale, Masoso, Mwanza, Chirwa, Mwaba, Siwale, & Chilengi, 2017; Thwala, 2010; Nyaguthii & Oyugi, 2013; Ahenkan, Bawole, & Domfer, 2013). However, researchers' interest focused mainly on beneficiaries' participation in M&E. Other literature established the role of community involvement in projects, whereby M&E forms part of project implementation (Alfred, 2015; Nyonje, Ndunge, & Mulwa, 2012; Barasa & Jelagat, 2013; Aupe, Awiti, & Aketch, 2019; Tengan & Aigbavboa, 2017; Kananura et al., 2017). Additionally, the literature on capacity building assessed its role in project performance and sustainability. The gap in the literature lies in the generalization of the role of capacity building in projects. Furthermore, scholars established the role of capacity building as a predictor or input variable, with performance as the outcome variable. This study specifically establishes the role of capacity building as a mediating variable in the relationship between households' involvement in M&E as the predictor variable and the performance of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer project as the outcome variable. Conclusively, the study establishes the extent to which mediating capacity building influences the relationship between combined households' involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation and the performance of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project.

Literature Review and Development of Hypothesis

Capacity building of community members in managing their projects has been regarded as a catalyst for project performance, whereby Qazi et al. (2016) revealed that stakeholders would perform better if they received capacity building on how to implement M&E indicators. Community engagement in M&E and the provision of capacity building are considered among the factors that enhance the performance of development projects because beneficiaries acquire the necessary knowledge and skills. Merino and de los Ríos Carmenado (2012) stated that

capacity building equips local people at both individual and social levels to actively participate in project M&E because the skills and knowledge gained enable them to measure project goals and ensure their realization. When stakeholders are aware of the goals, objectives, and performance criteria, they can advise on areas of underperformance for immediate action and improvement. To ensure collaborative M&E implementation among citizens and project M&E teams, Cooper, Fenimore, and Nirenberg (2012) stated that project leaders are obliged to provide capacity building that enables communities to independently measure the impacts of projects on their communities. Oakley and Marsden (2004) recommended that the attainment of sustainable development requires project leaders to work collaboratively with local people to enable them to generate solutions to their own problems. If beneficiaries receive comprehensive capacity building, communities can implement the M&E of their projects and transfer M&E techniques and skills from one generation to another. In another study, Nikezic, Puric, and Puric (2012) noted that project leaders should ensure that cultural practices are respected when engaging communities in the M&E of their projects. During capacity-building activities, trainers can learn from local people's experiences regarding how cultural issues are addressed, thereby giving communities an opportunity to own the M&E process and participate fully alongside project implementation staff. This may contribute to the development of competent M&E teams that implement M&E and disseminate reports to local people using communication systems that consider beneficiaries' values and cultural practices. A study conducted in six African countries by Porter and Goldman (2013) revealed the absence of citizen involvement in government M&E systems, where M&E was centralized and implemented by government M&E officials. Additionally, Burns et al. (2015) suggested that citizen involvement can contribute to project performance if project leaders decide to empower community representatives who form M&E committees. Through experiential learning, building local people's skills in M&E systems enables them to learn and apply these skills in the M&E of their projects (2015). Organizational leadership in practicing M&E enables local people to increase their independence in undertaking M&E in the absence of external financial support. Therefore, when communities receive capacity-building workshops, community members are better able to clearly understand the changes brought about by the project. This was useful because communities could respond appropriately to improve community programs.

Theoretical Framework

The study used the Theory of Change as the primary theoretical framework, supported by the Ladder of Citizen Participation. The Theory of Change stipulates that for change to occur, there are contributory interdependencies within an initiative connecting outputs, outcomes, and impacts. The theory addresses the role of mediating capacity building and the logical linkages of impacts through the logical framework in monitoring and evaluating the performance of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project. On the other hand, the Ladder of Citizen Participation emphasizes capacitating households with respect to the M&E of the Conditional Cash Transfer Project. Control and authority are granted to citizens through capacity building from the initiation stage of projects. This framework represents progressive steps through which local community members engage in project management and develop ownership of their projects.

Significance of the Study

The study will contribute to the formulation of a Conditional Cash Transfer Project M&E framework that incorporates households through the sharing of M&E reports with project beneficiaries by using their fellow representatives who are part of the M&E team. The study will assemble evidence on the effectiveness of disseminating M&E skills to local inhabitants to improve the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project through a well-prepared M&E training manual. This scientific finding was expected to educate public authorities in Tanzania and other nations on new methodologies for disseminating M&E skills and engaging communities in verifying the implementation and performance of community projects. Notably, it was essential for communities to identify the challenges facing the Conditional Cash Transfer Project in order to address performance in a meaningful and realistic context. On the other hand, the evidence generated from this study was expected to add knowledge to government and non-government agencies on how to engage local people in managing their projects to address their socio-economic needs through the performance of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project.

II. Methodology

The researcher employed descriptive cross-sectional and correlational study designs. The descriptive cross-sectional design was used whereby the researcher selected Kagera Region for the study out of the 26 regions, as

Bhattacharjee (2012) observed that this design allows the selection of one region instead of studying all regions. Additionally, the study selected a correlational design to assess the mediating relationship between households' involvement in monitoring and evaluation and the performance of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project. Thus, the descriptive cross-sectional design provided a snapshot of the study topic, while the correlational design assessed the relationships between variables.

Quantitatively, 400 respondents were obtained as the sample for the study using Yamane's (1967) formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where n = sample size; N = population size; and e = level of precision. The sample size was determined at a 95% confidence level with a precision of 7.5% and a variability of 50%.

$$n = \frac{61,240}{1+61,240(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = 400$$

The researcher interviewed 400 household heads using structured questionnaires. These tools enabled the collection of data from a large number of respondents and incorporated all study objectives and corresponding variables for quantitative analysis. Furthermore, the researcher employed qualitative data collection tools by using focus group discussions and in-depth interviews. The researcher selected Village Committee members from eight districts to form focus group discussions. Each group consisted of ten participants, making a total of 80 respondents. Additionally, each district had one Monitoring Officer, and therefore all eight officers were selected from the eight districts for in-depth interviews due to their experience in coordinating the Conditional Cash Transfer Project.

The questionnaires were pre-tested by sampling 40 households, equivalent to 10% of the sample size. For a pilot study to be acceptable, the sample for the pre-test must be at least 10% of the total sample size (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2009). The researcher selected Geita Region purposively for pilot testing because of its proximity to Kagera Region and its similar characteristics in terms of household poverty levels. Respondents for the pilot study were selected using simple random sampling. Thus, after the pilot test, the research instruments were reviewed and refined.

Content validity was assessed using the Content Validity Index (CVI). According to Armstrong et al. (2005) and Waltz, Strickland, and Lenz (2005), a CVI value of 0.70 or higher is considered acceptable. The findings indicated a CVI of 0.775, which was accepted. Since the computed CVI exceeded the 0.70 threshold, the instrument demonstrated adequate content validity. Regarding internal consistency, the researcher used Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Reliability is considered acceptable when the coefficient is 0.70 or higher (Taber, 2018). The computed Cronbach's alpha for households' involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation was 0.765, which indicated satisfactory reliability.

Data Analysis

This section presents the return rate and demographic characteristics of respondents. Additionally, it summarizes the descriptive analysis, hypothesis testing, and qualitative data.

Return Rate

The researcher used a mixed-method approach to collect data through questionnaires, focus group discussions, and key in-depth interviews. The findings evidenced that a total of 400 households responded to the questionnaires, which is equivalent to a 100% response rate. Descriptive analysis was conducted by testing the mean and standard deviation. In addition, the researcher adopted inferential analysis using Pearson's correlation, the coefficient of adjusted R, simple linear regression, and hierarchical regression models.

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The research study assessed the age, gender, marital status, level of education, and occupation of respondents. The findings are presented in [Table 1](#).

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents.

Respondents profile	Frequency	Percent
Age		
18-26	4	1
27-35	13	3
36-44	62	16
45-53	80	20

Above 53	241	60
Total	400	100
Gender		
Male	77	19
Female	323	81
Total	400	100
Marital status		
Married	134	34
Single	1	0
Widowed	187	47
Divorced	78	20
Total	400	100
Level of education		
No schooling	191	48
Primary	206	52
Secondary	3	1
Total	400	100
Occupation		
Farmer	361	90
Small businesses	39	10
Total	400	100

Note: Author's own work

The majority of respondents, 383 (95.8%), were above 35 years of age, while only 17 (4.3%) respondents were below 35 years. Youth participation was low because the majority had migrated from rural to urban areas in search of employment and economic opportunities. Regarding gender, 77 (19.3%) of the respondents were male, while 323 (80.8%) were female. The majority of households were headed by females because of the high rate of divorce and abandonment by husbands who migrated to urban areas in search of employment.

Regarding marital status, the majority, 187 (46.8%), were widowed, while 134 (33.4%) were married and 78 (19.5%) were divorced. Furthermore, only 1 (0.3%) respondent was single. This implies that the vast majority of household heads were either married or widowed. Women were widowed because of the higher death rates among men due to old age, given that life expectancy in Tanzania was 76 years in 2025.

Regarding education level, it was generally low whereby the majority, 206 respondents representing 51%, had primary education, 191 respondents representing 47.8% had no formal schooling, while only 3 (0.8%) had secondary education. This was attributed to school dropouts resulting from the inability of household heads to pay school fees for their children. Regarding occupation, the majority of respondents, 361 (90.3%), were farmers, while 39 (9.8%) were engaged in running small businesses in rural areas.

Analysis of Capacity Building

Capacity building was measured using the following indicators: households' training on setting goals, indicators, data collection and households' training on measuring impacts. Results are shown in [Table 2](#).

Table 2. Results on Capacity Building.

SN	Item	N	SD	D	N	A	SA	M	SD
1	Households' training on setting goals	400	386 (96.5%)	5 (1.25%)	8 (2.0%)	1 (0.25%)	0 (0.0%)	1.06	0.334
2	Households' training on setting indicators	400	395 (98.75%)	4 (1.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.25%)	0 (0.0%)	1.02	0.180
3	Households training on data collection	400	388 (97.0%)	11 (2.75%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.25%)	0 (0.0%)	1.04	0.221
4	Households' training on measuring impacts	400	374 (93.5%)	13 (3.25%)	10 (2.5%)	3 (0.75%)	0 (0.0%)	1.11	0.435
<i>Means of Means</i>								<i>1.06</i>	<i>0.293</i>

Note: Author's own work

Composite mean and standard deviation (M=1.06, SD=0.293), implies that all respondents strongly disagreed in all the indicators that they were involved in capacity building. That means the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer project did not train households on undertaking M&E. Descriptive results also show that responses were concentrated around the mean and the lower level of standard deviation. That implies that the level of capacity building among households was low. The majority were not trained on how the project goal were obtained and how the performance is measured. Also, the were not trained on how to collect data and use the data to measure

the project impact. Through those facts, households were neither trained on M&E nor involved in the M&E activities.

Analysis of the Performance of Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project

Performance was measured the following indicators; number of jobs created, amount of food harvested, income earned from the harvest, households' ability to finance health care, number of hospital delivery and number of children who completed schools. Results are shown in [Table 3](#).

Table 3. Results on the Performance of Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project.

S N	Indicator	N	SD	D	N	A	SA	M	SD
1	Number of jobs created	40	148	57	6 (2%)	156 (39%)	33 (8%)	2.6	1.4
		0	(37%)	(14%)				7	97
2	Amount of food harvested	40	74 (19%)	84	0 (0.0%)	180 (45%)	62	3.1	1.4
		0		(21%)			(16%)	8	12
3	Income earned from the harvest	40	222	49	0 (0.0%)	106 (27%)	23 (6%)	2.1	1.4
		0	(56%)	(12%)				5	55
4	Households' ability to finance health care	40	273	41	1	76 (19%)	9 (2%)	1.7	1.2
		0	(68%)	(10%)	(0.25%)			7	64
5	Number of hospital delivery	40	155	55	5	171 (43%)	14 (4%)	2.5	1.4
		0	(39%)	(14%)	(1.25%)			9	45
6	Number of children who completed schools	40	110	35 (9%)	0 (0.0%)	169 (42%)	86	3.2	1.5
		0	(28%)				(22%)	3	59
Composite Mean								2.6	1.4
									39

Note: Author's own work

The mean and standard deviation indicated that responses were concentrated around the mean (M=2.60, SD=1.439), implying that respondents agreed to most indicators on performance of the project. Therefore, the majority of respondents agreed that Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project performed through creation of jobs, agricultural yields. Through agriculture the households agreed that they sold and generated income that enabled them to take their wives for hospital delivery and financed their children's education.

Test of Hypothesis

Capacity building was measured using the following; H₀: "There is no significant mediating capacity building on the relationship between combined households' involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation and performance of Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project." Hierarchical regression analysis determined the mediating influence of capacity building on the relationship between combined households' involvement in M&E and performance of Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project. Two models were applied, the first model analyzed the combined households' involvement in M&E, while the second model analyzed both combined households' involvement in M&E and capacity building. The results are presented in [Table 4](#).

Table 4. Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.381 ^a	.145	.143	.15459	.145	67.717	1	398	.000
2	.385 ^b	.149	.144	.15450	.003	1.470	1	397	.226

a. Predictors: (Constant), Combined households' involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation

b. Predictors: (Constant), Combined households' involvement in M&E, Capacity building

Note: Author's own work

The findings of Model 1 show that combined households' involvement in M&E had the Adjusted R² value of .143. This means combined involvement in M&E accounted for 14.3% of the variance in performance of Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project. The findings in Model 2 shows that when capacity building was added, Adjusted R² increased to .144. That meant combined households' involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation with addition of capacity building accounted for 14.4%. The change of Adjusted R² between Model 1 and 2 was 0.003. This means the addition of capacity building of households in Monitoring and Evaluation in combined households' involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation contributed to 0.3% additional variance in performance of Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project, which is not a statistically significant increase (p>0.05). The

coefficients of Hierarchical Multiple Regression were done to analyze mediating effect of capacity building on the relationship between combined households' involvement in M&E and performance of Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project. The results are presented in [Table 5](#).

Table 5. Coefficients of Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		95.0% Confidence Interval for B		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	0.363	0.009		40.332	0.00		
	Combined households' involvement in M&E	1.144	0.139	0.381	8.229	0.00	0.871	1.418
2	(Constant)	0.363	0.009		40.368	0.00	0.345	0.381
	Combined households' involvement in capacity building	1.058	0.156	0.352	6.769	0.00	0.75	1.365
		0.184	0.152	0.063	1.212	0.226	0.115	0.483

a. Dependent Variable: Performance of Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Proj

Note: Author's own work

The results showed that combined households' involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation ($t=8.229$, $p<0.05$) significantly influenced performance while addition of capacity building ($t=1.212$, $p>0.05$) had no significant influence on performance of Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted that the strength of the relationship between combined households' involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation and performance of Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project did not depend on mediating capacity building.

III. Discussion

The performance of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project did not depend on capacity building. However, Ondieki (2016) evidenced that effective capacity building was a catalyst for the performance of community projects, especially when beneficiaries are trained to manage their projects prior to joining the management team. Additionally, the measurement of health service delivery was performed better by stakeholders who received capacity building (Qazi, Hamad, Sarwar, & Ahmed, 2016). Therefore, households should first be capacitated before becoming part of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project M&E team. For capacity building to be effective, Mugo et al. (2016) stated that the project team must prepare a training and workshop plan, whereas the findings of this study revealed that the M&E plan had not incorporated capacity-building mechanisms for poor households. In this study, poor households had little knowledge regarding the planning and implementation of M&E. That is why Shriberg and MacDonald (2013) asserted that M&E capacity building provides knowledge that can be shared across generations to ensure projects bring impacts to communities. Additionally, Porter and Goldman (2013) viewed M&E capacity building as a means of disseminating knowledge to a few households who eventually participate in and interpret M&E reports for others using the local language. This enhances community awareness regarding project performance and the actions communities should take to ensure projects meet their goals and objectives. Some studies revealed that communities were involved in M&E, but their influence on performance was low (Mugo, Keiyoro, Iribe, & Rambo, 2016; Waithera & Wanyoike, 2015), implying that their contributions to project performance were disregarded, unlike the findings of this study where households were excluded from project M&E. The findings of Rogito, Maitho, and Nderitu (2020) and Oakley and Marsden (2004) support this study by showing that beneficiaries were not trained in M&E and therefore their participation was low.

The study recommended that capacity building of households prior to engaging them in M&E would influence project performance, as supported by Merino and de los Ríos Carmenado (2012), who explained that capacity building plays the role of equipping local people at both individual and social levels with the technical skills required to participate in M&E and ensure project goals are realized. The World Bank (2010) recommended that project leaders should provide capacity building to ensure what Nikezic, Puric, and Puric (2012) termed as avoiding the implementation of M&E without adhering to citizens' cultural values. The study by Slimane (2012) asserted that for capacity building to be successful, it should be implemented ethically and professionally, whereby the traditions and values of recipients are respected, making development projects meaningful to recipients who eventually support the realization of project goals and objectives.

IV. Conclusion

This study assessed the mediating influence of capacity building on the relationship between combined household involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation and the performance of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project. Combined household involvement in M&E accounted for 14.3% of the performance of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project. However, the addition of mediating capacity building increased this to 14.4%. This means that the addition of household capacity building in Monitoring and Evaluation contributed an additional 0.3% variance to the performance of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project, which is not a statistically significant increase ($p > 0.05$). Capacity building had no significant influence on the relationship between combined household involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation and the performance of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project. This is because households were not capacitated in M&E. It is vital for communities to be capacitated and engaged in the M&E of their projects so that they can participate in measuring performance and interpreting results to fellow local people in order to influence the anticipated changes resulting from the project.

Research Implications on the Theory

The study evidenced a significant relationship between combined household involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation and the performance of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project. However, capacity building had no effect on the association between combined household involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation and the performance of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project. The findings supported the Theory of Change regarding the importance of engaging households in Monitoring and Evaluation to clearly understand the path to performance before engaging in the assessment of project impacts. The findings revealed an insignificant influence of mediating capacity building on project performance because households were not involved in M&E as emphasized in the Ladder of Citizen Participation. Therefore, households could be capacitated through the selection of representatives from the Village Committees. This would be actualized if the M&E plan included the participation of households in the M&E Committee. Consequently, capacity building of households would play a significant role in imparting skills and knowledge on how to conduct M&E, critically measure results, and disseminate findings to the community.

Research Implications on Policy and Practice

Tanzania Development Vision 2050 emphasized engaging communities in development programs to reduce poverty. This vision reflects the findings of this study regarding the high need for poverty reduction, as stipulated in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal of ending poverty in all its forms everywhere, whereby citizen involvement was highly recommended to influence project performance. Previous studies on community projects strongly recommended the involvement of beneficiaries in planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of their projects. Through this involvement, community members in project teams participate in the verification and follow-up of project performance at the local level, which has proven to influence project realization.

The study recommends a review of existing policies on development projects to ensure they incorporate beneficiaries' representatives into project monitoring and evaluation teams. Since poor households are largely illiterate, the policy should stipulate mechanisms for periodic capacity building of community representatives in the M&E team to ensure clear understanding of project goals, objectives, activities, and the measurement of key performance indicators. Furthermore, the research findings recommend that policymakers apply a participatory monitoring and evaluation approach by engaging communities in monitoring and evaluation at the local level, since previous studies support the finding that community-based projects are more likely to perform effectively when community members participate in planning because performance information becomes more reliable when data verification teams include community representatives.

Calls for Future Research

The study revealed that capacity building had no influence on the relationship between combined household involvement in M&E and the performance of the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project. The project was implemented by the Government, whereby households were involved only in the disbursement of financial assistance and verification of M&E reports. Households were excluded from the planning and implementation of M&E, and therefore the Tanzania Conditional Cash Transfer Project did not have any policy stipulating the training and involvement of trained households in M&E. It was recommended that the project establish an M&E plan that includes a training and development component for household representatives involved in M&E.

It is recommended that future studies focus on the inclusion of households in the M&E plan and the extent of capacity building in order to assess not only the level of engagement but also the level of skills and knowledge applied by households in M&E activities. This will provide evidence regarding the mediating role of capacity building when households are capacitated to undertake M&E, unlike the findings of this study, where they were completely excluded from M&E functions.

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Author (s) Contribution Statement

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