

## Exploring the Practice of Training Needs Assessment towards Improving Quality Public Service Delivery: A Case of Tanzania Port Authority

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### ABSTRACT

*This study was confined to explore and analyze the practice of Training Needs Assessment (TNA) within Tanzania Port Authority. Specifically, the study sought to assess the current practice of Training Needs Assessment (TNA) towards improving quality public service delivery at TPA, to identify the challenges in conducting effective TNA in the organization and to establish whether training that staff attend are aligned with the TNA for quality public service delivery improvement while the study was guided by McGhee and Thayer Model. The study used descriptive research design while simple random and purposive sampling technique was used to select 67 respondents from the target population of 147 staff. On the other hand, data were collected through questionnaire and interview and data was analyzed using descriptive and content analysis respectively. The study found that the organization conducted TNA and that the employees were involved during the process. Moreover, the findings reveal that the TNA does not effectively identify the employees' skills gaps. The findings further showed that the major challenge that hinder effective TNA including lack of resources (time, budget). The study also indicated that training programs attended by staff were based on TNA results and that the skills acquired from training were relevant to job requirements, The study concluded that there is the practice of TNA at TPA despite the challenge of inadequate time. Therefore, the study recommends that allocating sufficient time and budgetary resources is crucial for supporting effective TNA activities.*

**Keywords:** Alignment of Training Programs with TNA, Challenges in Conducting Effective TNA, Current Practice of TNA, Training Needs Assessment (TNA)

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### I. INTRODUCTION

Today, many institutions emphasize on employee training needs assessment for the purpose of improving employee job performance and efficiency, skills and knowledge and others to improve and retain best talents in their organization. Institutions emphasize training need assessment so as to make their employees cope with scientific and technological changes that going on in all around the world. Training needs assessment helps to bridge the gap that exists between organizations and increases production (Ludwikowska, 2018). The importance of Training Needs Assessment (TNA) in enhancing public service delivery is a globally recognized phenomenon. As governments and public institutions strive to provide efficient and effective services to their citizens, investing in the continuous improvement of human resources through targeted training becomes paramount (Mchele, 2020).

According to studies such as McLaughlin and Kaluzny's work on "Continuous Quality Improvement in Health Care" (2016), training needs assessments are fundamental for identifying gaps in skills and knowledge, ensuring that public servants are well-equipped to meet evolving challenges (McLaughlin & Kaluzny, 2016). In the US, most federal government agencies have a training officer and resources to assess specific needs of different departments. The UK has centralized standards like Management Competency Frameworks to determine capabilities lacking in public sector managers and deliver training. China has very focused TNA and training aligned to organizational objectives under its National Training Programs (Kazi, 2020).

In the African context, where various countries face unique socio-economic challenges, the role of TNA in public service delivery is particularly crucial. The African Development Bank's 2019 report on "Enhancing Skills and Competencies for Improved Service Delivery in Africa" (2019) emphasizes the need for strategic training interventions to address the skills gap and enhance the capabilities of public servants. This underscores the regional recognition of the role played by TNA in promoting quality service delivery.

On the other hand, a country such as Nigeria has a well-structured Service Wide Training Program that assesses national, organizational and individual performance gaps (Markaki, 2021). Kenya's Kenya School of Government develops training based on TNA in diverse areas like devolution, ethics, emerging technologies (Wamwayi, 2016).

Tanzania places a strong emphasis on public service delivery as a cornerstone for sustainable development. The Tanzanian government has consistently underscored the pivotal role of effective public administration in realizing its broader development objectives. This commitment is reflected in policy documents such as the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (NSGRP), which explicitly acknowledges the critical importance of having a well-trained and motivated cadre of public servants to drive socio-economic progress (World Bank, 2020). As the country grapples with diverse challenges and seeks to address the evolving needs of its citizens, the imperative for a capable and responsive public service becomes increasingly evident.

In this context, the deployment of effective Training Needs Assessment (TNA) practices holds potential for optimizing the skills and capacities of the public service workforce to align with the goals of sustainable development. However, while the national vision recognizes the overarching significance of well-prepared public servants, the specific application of Training Needs Assessment within Tanzania, especially at the district level, warrants closer examination. It becomes essential to evaluate the existing mechanisms and practices related to TNA to ensure they align with the unique challenges and priorities faced by public sector in Tanzania. This localized scrutiny is critical for tailoring training interventions to the specific needs of public servants, thus enhancing their ability to contribute meaningfully to local development initiatives.

### 1.1 Statement of the Problem

Tanzania envisions public service delivery as a linchpin for sustainable development, echoing the global discourse on the pivotal role of capable public administration (World Bank, 2020). The Tanzanian government, through policy documents like the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (NSGRP), explicitly recognizes the crucial contribution of a proficient and motivated public service in achieving broader socio-economic goals. Despite these visionary commitments, the country faces diverse challenges in meeting the evolving needs of its citizens. There exists a pressing imperative to develop a public service workforce that is not only well-prepared but also responsive to the dynamic demands of the populace. In this context, the strategic deployment of Training Needs Assessment (TNA) practices emerges as a potential solution to optimize the skills and capacities of public servants, aligning them with the goals of sustainable development (McLaughlin & Kaluzny, 2016).

However, a critical gap exists in the application of TNA at TPA, where the effectiveness of training programs may be influenced by localized challenges and priorities. While the national vision underscores the significance of well-prepared public servants, it is crucial to scrutinize the specific application of TNA practices in diverse districts to ensure alignment with local needs. The question arises as to whether existing mechanisms and practices related to TNA are tailored to address the unique challenges faced by public entities with reference to TPA. Therefore, this study sought to investigate the adequacy and appropriateness of current TNA processes aiming to determine their effectiveness in preparing public servants to contribute meaningfully to local development initiatives

### 1.2 Research Objectives

- i. To assess the current practice of Training Needs Assessment (TNA) towards improving quality public service delivery at TPA
- ii. To identify the challenges in conducting effective TNA in the organization.
- iii. To establish whether training that staff attend are aligned with the TNA for quality public service delivery improvement

### 1.3 Research Questions

- i. What is the current practice of Training Needs Assessment (TNA) towards improving quality public service delivery at TPA?
- ii. Are there any challenges in conducting effective TNA in the organization?
- iii. Is training that staff attend aligned with the TNA for quality public service delivery improvement?

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Theoretical Review

#### 2.1.1 McGhee and Thayer Model

The McGhee and Thayer Model provides a robust framework for conducting comprehensive Training Needs Assessments (TNA) by emphasizing the alignment of training interventions with organizational objectives, operational requirements, and individual competencies. It advocates for a systematic approach to identifying and addressing gaps at multiple levels, ensuring that training programs are effectively tailored to meet both strategic goals and specific job requirements (DiStefano *et al.*, 2013). This model's foundation lies in its ability to integrate various levels of analysis, which helps in designing training programs that are both relevant and impactful, thereby optimizing training investments (Miller, 2003).

The McGhee and Thayer Model of Training Needs Assessment (TNA) is grounded in several key assumptions that shape its application. It assumes that effective training must align with the organization's strategic goals, ensuring that training programs contribute to broader organizational success (Miller, 2003). The model also presumes that TNA should be conducted systematically, involving a methodical process of identifying and analyzing needs at organizational, operational, and individual levels. Data-driven decision-making is central to the model, emphasizing that training interventions should be based on thorough data analysis to accurately address performance gaps and skill deficiencies. Furthermore, it assumes that TNA is an ongoing process requiring continuous improvement to adapt to evolving needs and goals. Involvement of various stakeholders, including managers and employees, is also crucial, as it helps in accurately identifying training needs and ensuring that training programs are relevant and well-received. These assumptions collectively guide the effective application of the McGhee and Thayer Model in assessing and addressing training needs.

### 2.2 Empirical Review

#### 2.2.1 The Current Practice of Training Needs Assessment (TNA)

Kazi (2020) puts emphasis on the fact that effective TNA practices correlate strongly with improved organizational outcomes, highlighting its importance in aligning training with strategic goals. Mohamed (2020) further supports this, demonstrating that well-aligned TNA leads to more relevant training programs and higher job satisfaction among employees. Mwakapugi (2018) adds that precise TNA helps in identifying actual training needs, thereby improving training program effectiveness and job performance.

On the other hand Nguyen, and Tran (2020) compare TNA practices globally, noting significant variations that impact training outcomes. They stress the role of skilled personnel in conducting TNA to accurately identify training needs and allocate resources effectively. McLaughlin and Kaluzny (2016) reinforce these findings by highlighting that robust TNA practices are essential for ensuring training programs address identified needs, leading to improved performance and job satisfaction.

#### 2.2.2 Challenges in Conducting Effective TNA in the Organization

The study by Shibani (2016) one of the most significant barriers to conducting frequent TNAs is budget limitations. Organizations often allocate limited financial resources to training and development initiatives, prioritizing immediate operational needs over long-term employee development. This leads to many effective TNA methodologies require specialized tools or software for data collection and analysis. Budget constraints may prevent organizations from investing in these necessary resources. Meanwhile the study by Mdegela (2018) found that skilled personnel possess the expertise necessary to accurately identify existing skill gaps within the workforce. They can analyze performance data and employee feedback to pinpoint specific areas where training is needed.

In the same trail, the study unveiled that Wamwayi (2016) contradict with the study findings of this study whereas it was found that many organizations do not prioritize training programs that equip employees with the necessary skills for conducting TNAs. As a result, there is a gap in formal education and training specifically focused on TNA methodologies and best practices. This lack of structured learning opportunities leads to a workforce that is unprepared or underqualified to perform effective analyses. There is often a general lack of awareness among HR professionals and organizational leaders about the critical importance of TNA in driving business success.

#### 2.2.3 Whether Training that staff attend are aligned with the TNA

In the Tanzanian context, studies similarly highlight the importance of TNA in various sectors. Kafwenji (2015) focuses on its role in improving teacher performance in Morogoro Municipal Council, emphasizing the necessity of regular TNA to enhance educational quality. Mdegela (2018) explores TNA's impact on public sector performance in

Dar es Salaam, indicating that effective TNA practices align training with performance needs, thereby improving efficiency and service delivery. On the other hand Markaki (2021) extends this understanding to local government and healthcare sectors respectively, illustrating that systematic TNA enhances service delivery and employee competency in these critical areas.

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Research Design

This study employed descriptive design. Descriptive research design allowed researcher to explore complex phenomena within their real-life context, providing a rich understanding of the subject matter.

#### 3.2 Target Population

Population generally refers to a group of individuals of the same species inhabiting a specific geographic area, capable of interbreeding and producing offspring. In human contexts, it pertains to a group of people residing in a particular region or sharing common characteristics (Babbie, 2013). The target population for this study included 147 working at TPA.

#### 3.3 Sample Size

In this study, the sample size of the study was determined using Yamane formula (1967) with a confidence level of 91% and margin of error of 9% (1-0.09), the formula is expressed as hereunder;

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

Where: n= is number of sample (required)

N = Total population (147) and

e = Error tolerance (level) or margin of error (0.09)

Using above formula, the sample size is calculated as indicated below;

$$147 / (1 + 147(0.09)^2) = 147 / 2.1907 = 67.101$$

Therefore, the sample size of this study was 67 respondents

**Table 1**

*Sample Distribution*

S/N	Respondents	Population	Number of respondents	Percentage of sample size
1	Senior staff	15	7	10.4
2	Operational staff	132	60	89.6
<b>Total</b>		<b>147</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>100.0</b>

#### 3.4 Sampling Techniques

The study used purposive sampling technique to select 7 senior staff and simple random sampling technique to select 60 operational staff. Purposive sampling, also known as judgmental or selective sampling, is a non-probability sampling method where researchers choose participants based on specific criteria relevant to the research study.

#### 3.5 Data Collection Instruments

Questionnaire was administered to all respondents, including senior staff and operational staff. This combination allowed for both quantitative and qualitative data collection, facilitating a comprehensive understanding of the respondents' views and experiences related to the Training Needs Assessment (TNA) at the Tanzania Port Authority. Similarly, the study conducted an in-depth interview to 7 senior staff. The task took place at the TPA offices during the working hours.

#### 3.6 Data Analysis

The study used both descriptive and content analysis methods to process the data. Descriptive analysis provided a summary of the characteristics of the data collected through questionnaires and interviews, allowing the researcher to identify trends and patterns in the responses. This method offered an overview of how respondents perceived and experienced the Training Needs Assessment (TNA) processes within the Tanzania Port Authority (TPA). Content



analysis, on the other hand, helped in systematically analyzing qualitative data from interviews, identifying key themes and insights that emerged from the responses of senior staff members.

### 3.7 Data Reliability and Validity

To ensure data reliability, the researcher applied methods like member checking and detailed documentation throughout the research process. By sharing findings with participants for feedback, the researcher verified the accuracy of the data. Additionally, achieving data saturation, where no new themes emerged, ensured that the research captured comprehensive perspectives on TNA practices. For data validity, the research instruments were reviewed by experts, including the research supervisor, to confirm that the tools accurately measured the intended variables, ensuring their relevance and accuracy.

## IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

### 4.1 The Current Practice of Training Needs Assessment (TNA) towards improving Quality Public Service Delivery at TPA

The first objective of the study sought to assess the current practice of Training Needs Assessment (TNA) towards quality service delivery at TPA. To achieve this, data were collected through a combination of questionnaires and interviews. This mixed-method approach enabled a comprehensive evaluation of how TNA is currently conducted at TPA, highlighting both strengths and areas for improvement in the process.

**Table 2**

*The current practice of Training Needs Assessment (TNA)*

Item	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	The organization conducts regular Training Needs Assessments.	2(4%)	8(16%)	14(28%)	16(32%)	10(20%)
2	Employees are involved in the TNA process.	4(8%)	10(20%)	12(24%)	16(32%)	8(16%)
3	The TNA process effectively identifies the skills gaps of employees.	16(32%)	10(20%)	10(20%)	6(12%)	8(16%)

The responses indicate that 32% agreed and 20% strongly agree that the organization conducts regular TNA, while 16% disagreed and 4% strongly disagreed. The organization does have a mixed practice when it comes to regularly conducting TNA. This suggests a need for more consistent and frequent TNA processes to ensure employee skills are up-to-date. While employees generally view the organization’s TNA practices positively, particularly the systematic approach and regular conduct, there are clear gaps in areas such as employee involvement, effectiveness in identifying skill gaps, and communication of TNA results. The presence of neutral and disagreeing responses points to the necessity of ongoing assessment and enhancement of TNA practices to better align with organizational and employee needs. The study findings are supported by Smith and Clark (2004) that as business objectives evolve, so do the skills required from employees. Regular assessments ensure that training initiatives align with current organizational goals, helping to maintain competitiveness in the market. Organizations often have limited resources for training.

Moreover, about 32% agreed and 16% strongly agreed that employees are involved, while 20% disagreed and 8% strongly disagreed. There is a need to improve employee involvement in the TNA process. Engaging employees can help the organization better understand their skill gaps and training needs. Research indicates that involving employees actively in the TNA process can significantly enhance engagement and accuracy of the assessments. When employees feel their input is valued, it not only improves the quality of TNA outcomes but also ensures that training initiatives are more effectively tailored to meet both employee and organizational goals. The study findings are supported by Kazi (2020) that employees have valuable on-the-ground experience and insights into the day-to-day challenges they face in their roles. Their involvement in the TNA process can help identify the specific skills, knowledge, and competencies needed to perform their jobs effectively.

In terms of the fact that the TNA process effectively identifies the skills gaps of employees, this item evaluates the effectiveness of the TNA process in identifying employee skill gaps. 32% strongly disagreed and 20% disagreed that the TNA process effectively identifies skill gaps, while only 12% agreed and 16% strongly agreed. In that regard, the TNA process seems to be ineffective in identifying employee skill gaps, which could lead to inappropriate or insufficient training and development programs. Effective TNA methods should accurately capture skill deficiencies and adapt to the evolving needs of the workforce. Improving communication strategies to ensure consistent and clear



dissemination of TNA results can help address this issue. Providing regular updates and feedback to employees regarding TNA outcomes can bridge the gap between identified skill gaps and the development of targeted training programs. The study findings are supported by Kafwenji (2015) that the TNA process begins with gathering data from various sources, including employee surveys, performance reviews, job descriptions, and strategic plans.

The qualitative feedback from employees at the Tanzania Port Authority reveals nuanced insights into the current practices and challenges of Training Needs Assessment (TNA). One employee noted,

*"While the organization conducts regular TNA, the frequency and thoroughness could be improved. Sometimes, it feels like a box-ticking exercise rather than a genuine attempt to understand our needs."* (Interview with P1, 12 July 2024)

This sentiment reflects the survey results, where a significant portion of employees were neutral or disagreed about the regularity of TNA, indicating room for improvement in how often and effectively these assessments are carried out. Employee involvement in the TNA process is another area with mixed perceptions. A respondent highlighted,

*"I feel that my input is rarely considered in the TNA process. It seems like decisions are made at the top without much consultation from those of us on the ground"* (Interview with P2, 12 July 2024)

#### 4.2 The Challenges in Conducting Effective TNA in the Organization

The second objective of the study aimed to identify the challenges and their causes in conducting effective Training Needs Assessment (TNA) at the Tanzania Port Authority (TPA). Data were gathered through questionnaires and interviews to provide a comprehensive view of these challenges. The survey results reveal several key issues impacting the effectiveness of TNA practices at TPA. Commonly identified challenges include inadequate employee involvement, ineffective identification of skill gaps, and communication barriers. These challenges highlight the need for addressing underlying causes such as lack of transparency, insufficient resources, and inconsistent application of TNA methodologies. Through examining these issues in detail, the study sheds light on specific areas requiring improvement to enhance the overall effectiveness of TNA within the organization.

**Table 3**

*Challenges and their Causes in Conducting Effective TNA*

Item	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
4	Lack of adequate resources (time, budget) hinders effective TNA.	4(8%)	6(12%)	12(24%)	14(28%)	14(28%)
5	There is a lack of skilled personnel to conduct TNA.	16(32%)	14(28%)	10(20%)	2(4%)	8(16%)
6	Resistance from employees affects the effectiveness of TNA.	14(28%)	12(24%)	6(12%)	10(20%)	8(16%)

The results show that 56% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with this, indicating that resource constraints are a common problem that organizations face when trying to assess their training needs effectively. This has implications for the quality and depth of the TNA process, as well as the ability to implement the necessary training programs. This entails that many public organizations in Tanzania, including TPA operate under tight budgetary constraints and do not have the financial resources to dedicate significant funds towards conducting comprehensive TNAs on a regular basis. There may also be competing priorities for the limited resources available, with TNA sometimes taking a backseat to other operational or strategic initiatives. On the other hand conducting a thorough TNA requires significant time and effort from relevant stakeholders, such as HR/training professionals, subject matter experts, and employees. Like any other public entities, TPA face challenges in allocating the necessary time and personnel resources to undertake TNA activities, especially in the face of pressing day-to-day operational demands. The study findings are supported by that Shibani (2016) one of the most significant barriers to conducting frequent TNAs is budget limitations. Organizations often allocate limited financial resources to training and development initiatives, prioritizing immediate operational needs over long-term employee development.

Moreover, the results show that 60% of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement, suggesting that the majority of organizations do have access to skilled personnel to conduct TNAs. However, the remaining 40% either remain neutral or agree that there is a lack of skilled personnel, which could hinder the effectiveness of the TNA process. Nevertheless, the study considers that Skilled personnel possess the necessary expertise in various TNA methodologies and frameworks. They are trained to select appropriate assessment tools and techniques that best fit the organization's context. This expertise ensures that the assessment is comprehensive, systematic, and tailored to the specific needs of the organization. The study findings are supported by Nguyen and Tran



(2020) that skilled personnel possess the expertise necessary to accurately identify existing skill gaps within the workforce.

Meanwhile the results are more evenly distributed, with 52% of respondents either disagreeing or strongly disagreeing, and 36% agreeing or strongly agreeing. This indicates that employee resistance can be a challenge in some organizations, but not in others. Employee buy-in and engagement are crucial for the success of a TNA, as resistance can undermine the quality and accuracy of the data collected. When organization like TPA effectively communicate the rationale behind training initiatives, employees are more likely to understand how these programs align with their personal and professional development goals. Moreover, involving employees in the TNA process fosters a sense of ownership and collaboration. The study findings are supported by Mohamed (2020) that when the objectives and benefits of TNA are clearly communicated, employees are more likely to understand its importance. This transparency helps alleviate fears and uncertainties about the training process, making employees more receptive to participating in assessments and subsequent training initiatives.

Overall, these results highlight several key challenges that organizations may face when conducting effective TNAs, including resource constraints, potential issues with personnel skills and employee resistance, insufficient management support, and concerns about data quality. Addressing these challenges can help organizations improve the effectiveness of their TNA process and ensure that training programs are tailored to their specific needs.

The qualitative feedback from employees at the Tanzania Port Authority underscores the significant challenges identified in the survey. Regarding the lack of resources, one employee commented,

*"We often don't have enough time or budget allocated for a proper TNA. It's frustrating because we can't fully address the training needs without adequate resources"* (Interview with P6, 14 July 2024)

In terms of skilled personnel, findings from questionnaire contradict with the findings from interview as it was established that the shortage of expertise is a recurring theme. One respondent mentioned,

*"There aren't enough trained individuals to conduct a thorough TNA. Most of the time, the assessments are superficial because the people conducting them aren't well-versed in what they're supposed to look for."* (Interview with P3, 14 July 2024)

#### 4.3 Whether Training that Staff attend is aligned with the TNA for Quality Public Service Delivery Improvement

The third objective of the study aimed to establish whether the training programs attended by staff are aligned with the Training Needs Assessment (TNA) results at the Tanzania Port Authority (TPA) for quality public service delivery improvement. To achieve this, data were collected through questionnaires and interviews. The analysis sought to determine the extent to which training programs are directly derived from the identified needs in the TNA. Findings from the study indicate whether there is a clear connection between the skills and competencies identified as necessary through TNA and the content and focus of the training provided. This objective is crucial for ensuring that training interventions effectively address the identified gaps and contribute to the enhancement of employee performance and organizational goals.

**Table 4**

*Whether Training that Staff Attend is Aligned with the TNA*

Item	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
7	Training programs attended by staff are based on TNA results.	4(8%)	8(16%)	14(28%)	16(32%)	8(16%)
8	The skills acquired from training are relevant to job requirements.	2(4%)	6(12%)	12(24%)	20(40%)	10(20%)
9	Employees feel more competent in their roles after attending training programs.	4(8%)	8(16%)	12(24%)	18(36%)	8(16%)

Table 4 examines whether the training that staff attend is aligned with the Training Needs Assessment (TNA) in an organizational context. The responses indicate that a relatively small percentage (32%) of the respondents "Agree" with this statement, while a significant proportion (28%) remain "Neutral." This suggests that there may be room for improvement in ensuring that training programs are more closely aligned with the identified training needs of the employees. This suggests potential inconsistencies or gaps in how training initiatives are derived from TNA findings, indicating that the linkage between TNA results and training programs may not always be clear or effective. The study findings are supported by Wamwayi (2016), that ensuring a robust and direct connection between TNA outcomes and training content is essential for maximizing training effectiveness and addressing employees' specific learning needs.

Thus, enhancing the alignment between TNA results and training initiatives is necessary to optimize the benefits of training activities for all employees.

In the same trail, the responses show that a majority (60%) of the respondents "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" with this statement, indicating that the training programs generally provide relevant skills. However, the remaining 40% either "Disagree," "Strongly Disagree," or are "Neutral," which suggests that there may be some misalignment between the training content and the job requirements. The relevance of training programs to job requirements receives generally positive feedback from respondents, with a majority affirming that the skills acquired from training are aligned with their roles. The study findings are linked to the study by Mchele (2020), training programs are effective in equipping employees with the necessary skills for their job duties. However, the presence of neutral and negative responses suggests that some employees may not perceive the training as directly relevant to their job roles. This highlights the need for ongoing assessment and refinement of training content to ensure its alignment with job-specific requirements and to address any gaps in perceived relevance.

The responses show a relatively positive trend, with 52% of the respondents "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" that employees feel more competent after attending the training programs. However, the remaining 48% either "Disagree," "Strongly Disagree," or are "Neutral," indicating that the training programs may not be consistently effective in enhancing employee competence. This entails that one of the primary reasons employees feel more competent after training is the boost in psychological empowerment. Training programs are designed to enhance knowledge and skills, which directly contributes to an employee's self-efficacy—the belief in one's ability to succeed in specific situations. When employees acquire new skills or refine existing ones during training, they gain confidence in their abilities. This newfound confidence translates into a greater willingness to tackle challenges and responsibilities at work. The study findings are supported by Mdegela (2018) that training programs provide employees with the opportunity to learn new skills, techniques, and knowledge directly applicable to their job responsibilities. Through gaining these new capabilities, employees feel more equipped to effectively perform their duties. Successfully completing a training program can give employees a sense of accomplishment and enhanced self-confidence in their abilities. Mastering new material helps them believe they can handle the challenges of their role.

The qualitative data from employees at the Tanzania Port Authority sheds light on the perceived alignment of training programs with the Training Needs Assessment (TNA). One employee expressed,

*"I feel that the training programs we attend are closely tied to the TNA results. It's evident that the topics covered in training sessions directly address the skill gaps identified in the assessments"* (Interview with P1, 12 July 2024)

This sentiment reflects the majority of respondents who agree or strongly agree that training programs are based on TNA results, suggesting a level of confidence in the alignment between training initiatives and identified needs. However, not all employees share this perspective. Another employee remarked,

*"I'm not convinced that the training programs are derived from TNA findings. Sometimes, it feels like the training is standardized and not tailored to our specific needs."*

This positive feedback echoes the majority of respondents who agree or strongly agree that training equips them with necessary skills for their roles, reinforcing the effectiveness of training initiatives in meeting job-specific requirements. However, the presence of neutral and disagreeing responses suggests that there may be variations in the perceived relevance of training among different employees or departments, emphasizing the importance of ongoing evaluation and customization of training content.

## V. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 Conclusions

The study concludes that, despite the fact that training is conducted at TPA, however, the TNA process does not effectively identify the skills gaps of employees. This is due to time limitations as well as budget limitations. Hence, addressing the challenges facing effective TNA implementation is imperative for the Tanzania Port Authority to enhance its training initiatives and support the professional development of its employees. Through tackling resource constraints, investing in skilled personnel, and fostering a culture of collaboration and openness to mitigate employee resistance, the organization can overcome these obstacles and bolster the effectiveness of its TNA practices. Furthermore, prioritizing transparency and inclusiveness in the TNA process will empower employees to contribute meaningfully, thereby enriching the quality and accuracy of TNA outcomes.

Moving forward, aligning training programs more closely with TNA findings and ensuring ongoing evaluation and adjustment of training content will be essential. This will enable the organization to better equip its employees with the skills necessary to fulfill their job requirements effectively. Additionally, adopting personalized or role-specific



training approaches can further enhance the relevance and impact of training initiatives. Through addressing these areas for improvement and building upon its existing strengths, the Tanzania Port Authority can optimize its TNA practices to support both employee development and organizational success.

## 5.2 Recommendations

The findings from the Training Needs Assessment (TNA) within the Tanzania Port Authority highlight significant gaps in skills and competencies among employees. Policymakers should prioritize the development of targeted training programs that address these specific skill deficiencies. Through aligning training initiatives with the identified needs, the authority can enhance workforce competence, leading to improved operational efficiency and productivity at the ports. The TNA results indicate a need for strategic investment in human capital development. Policies should be formulated to allocate sufficient resources towards continuous professional development and training programs. This could involve partnerships with educational institutions or private training providers to ensure that employees receive up-to-date knowledge and skills relevant to their roles, particularly in areas such as logistics management, safety protocols, and technological advancements.

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