

**FACTORS INFLUENCING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF STRATEGIC
PLANS: A MULTI-CASE STUDY OF THREE GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES
IN TANZANIA**

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTERS OF ARTS IN
MONITORING AND EVALUATION (MAME)
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS AND COMMUNITY ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
OF THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA**

2025

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certifies that he has read and does hereby recommend for acceptance by The Open University of Tanzania a dissertation titled; **“Factors influencing Effectiveness of strategic plans in Tanzania Ministries, a multiple case study of three Ministries”** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Degree of Master of Arts in Monitoring and Evaluation (MAME).

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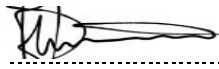
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DECLARATION

I, **Thadeo Charles Jawa**, declare that the work presented in this dissertation is my own original work and that it has been presented to any other Universities or institution for a similar or any other degree award. It is in this regard that I declare this work is originally mine. It is hereby presented in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of masters in Monitoring and evaluation (MAME).



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23/01/2025

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Date

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to all those who made strong efforts to help me reach this stage. Firstly, I would like to thank the Ministry of Information, Communication and Information Technology, particularly the Director of Policy and Planning, Mr. David Mwankenja, for their financial support. My sincere gratitude also goes to my supervisors, Dr. Felician Mutasa and Dr. Timothy Lyanga, for their thoughtful guidance, tactful approach, visionary insights, and wise advice throughout this study.

I am deeply grateful to my wife, Devotha Japhet Msigala, for her patience and understanding during the entire research process. I also extend my heartfelt appreciation to my family; my brothers Julius and Vicent, and my sisters Vengelina, Mirium, Edina, and Stela—for their prayers, encouragement, and unwavering support toward my success.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The success of this study would not have been possible without the contributions of several people. Although it is not easy to thank each one of them personally, I sincerely appreciate their support and prayerfully ask God to bless and answer their prayers. My deepest gratitude goes to my supervisors, Dr. Felician Mutasa and Dr. Timothy Lyanga, for their tactical guidance that enabled me to achieve the intended goal. I have truly learned a lot and benefited greatly from their constructive comments, insightful criticisms, wisdom, and valuable academic advice.

Nevertheless, my gratitude also goes to the Open University of Tanzania administration who allowed me to make research on the subjected matters. On top of that, I owe my gratefulness thanks to the management of ministries for their heart fully participation and responds to my questionnaires and interview during the sessions and enable the success of this work.

ABSTRACT

This study examined factors influencing the effectiveness of strategic plans in three Tanzanian government ministries: Works, Transport, and Information, Communication and Information Technology. Despite the existence of strategic plans and frameworks such as the National Monitoring and Evaluation Guidelines (2016) and the Budget Act (2014), reports from the Controller and Auditor General (2018–2023) showed that only about 65% of planned activities were completed within budget, indicating implementation challenges. Using a descriptive cross-sectional design grounded in institutional theory, the study employed a quantitative approach and collected data from 93 respondents selected through proportionate stratified random sampling. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics (Pearson correlation and regression) in SPSS. Findings revealed that institutional factors—laws, policies, procedures, and organizational culture—significantly influenced strategic plan effectiveness, with 78% of respondents confirming their positive impact. Resource availability was critical, with financial ($r = 0.824$), technological ($r = 0.735$), and human resources ($r = 0.673$) showing strong effects. Political influences had mixed impacts: weak in resource interference ($r = 0.332$) but strong in bureaucratic efficiency ($r = 0.533$), legal reforms ($r = 0.692$), and leadership commitment ($r = 0.813$). Stakeholder engagement was moderate, strong in feedback ($r = 0.794$) but limited in participation ($r = 0.213$ – 0.311). The study concludes that institutional frameworks, adequate resources, and political commitment enhance strategic plan effectiveness and recommends stronger participation, timely resource allocation, and supportive leadership.

Keywords: *Strategic Plan Effectiveness, Institutional Factors, Stakeholder Engagement, Resources, Political Influence.*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CAG	Control and Audit General
CCM	Chama cha Mapinduzi
NGOs	Non-Government Organizations
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoW	Ministry of Work
MoT	Ministry of Transport
MICIT	Ministry of Information, Communication and Information Technology
SP	Strategic plans
SPSS	Special Package for Social Science
UNDP	United Nation Development Programme
URT	United Republic of Tanzania
UNDP	United Nations Development Programs

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Strategic planning is a formal and systematic managerial process through which institutions define their vision, mission, long-term goals, and strategies for achieving them. It guides the allocation of resources, sets priorities, and establishes measures for evaluating success. The effectiveness of a strategic plan is assessed not only by the existence of the plan itself, but by its successful effectiveness—timely completion of activities within budget, achievement of stated objectives, stakeholder satisfaction, and ultimately, improvements in institutional performance, service delivery, and efficiency.

Globally, the effectiveness of strategic plans has produced mixed results. In Portugal, institutional priorities strongly influence the effectiveness of strategic plans (Machado & Taylor, 2010). In Germany, stakeholder participation is emphasized as a critical success factor (Heiss, 2017), while in the Netherlands, studies point to persistent gaps between documented plans and actual effectiveness (Brikschroder, 2014). Similarly, research from Latin America highlights that both internal organizational factors and external environments significantly affect effectiveness and outcomes (Oksana, 2019). To address these challenges, international agencies such as UNDP advocate for strategic plans to function as dynamic and adaptive roadmaps capable of responding to evolving contexts (UNDP, 2023).

At the regional level, similar patterns emerge. In Iran, six key factors political behavior, negotiation expertise, communication technologies, relationships with

external actors, regulatory effectiveness, and organizational systems were identified as determinants of strategic plan success (Souki, Beigi & Daneshfard, 2020). In addition, studies have emphasized administrative processes, inter-organizational culture, and external pressures as critical influences (Kavousi & Salamzadeh, 2016).

Within Africa, the African Union's Agenda 2063 calls for ministries to prepare "living strategic documents" aligned with citizen needs and adaptable to emerging challenges (African Union, 2015). Yet, evidence from Ethiopia shows weak correlations between strategic plans and organizational performance (Tefera & Abebe, 2024), while in Zambia, inadequate resources such as funding, skills, and time are cited as barriers to effectiveness (Mubanga & Lesa, 2024). In Kenya, leadership style and organizational culture strongly determine success (Mnjama & Koech, 2019; Maina & Omwenga, 2017), while studies from Rwanda and Uganda underscore the need for context-specific plans supported by both political and bureaucratic networks (Singirankabo, 2023; Mukiibi & Hilary, 2019).

In Tanzania, strategic planning is guided by the Public Service Act (2002), the Five-Year Development Plans, and the CAP 438 Budget Act 2014 in item of National Monitoring and Evaluation Guidelines Despite this, government ministries have consistently struggled to fully achieve their strategic objectives. Reports from the Controller and Auditor General (2018/2019–2022/2023) reveal that only about 65% of planned activities were completed on time and within budget across ministries. The three ministries of Works, Transport, and Information, Communication and ICT, for instance, have frequently experienced project delays, cost overruns, and

unaccomplished targets despite receiving the required financial and human resources. This raises critical questions about the institutional, resource-related, stakeholder, and political factors that shape the effectiveness of strategic plan effectiveness.

Therefore, while strategic plans remain central to Tanzania's governance and development agenda, their incomplete and inconsistent execution undermines ministry performance and service delivery. This study responds to this gap by investigating the factors influencing the effectiveness of strategic plans in three selected Tanzanian ministries, thereby contributing evidence to improve strategic planning practices in the public sector.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

A strategic plan is an essential tool guiding ministries toward achieving national development goals and ensuring efficient utilization of resources. The Tanzania budget Act and other regulations guidelines like Ministry of finance Annually Circular mandates all ministries to prepare and implement strategic plans aligned with the national development framework, sectoral objectives and basing on the available resources. Despite these efforts made by the Government, have the selected ministries sequentially encounter challenges in achieving the intended outcomes of their strategic plans.

Evidence from the Controller and Auditor General (CAG) shows that about 65% of planned activities were only completed timely and within budget between 2018/2019 and 2022/2023. The Ministries of Works, Transport, and Information,

Communication and ICT have been particularly affected, experiencing persistent delays, cost overruns, and unaccomplished targets.

Although government reports (URT, 2020; CAG, 2023) and previous studies acknowledge these challenges, they fall short of identifying the specific factors institutional, stakeholder-related, resource-based, or political that directly influences the effectiveness of strategic plan. For example, while the government provides financial and human resources, projects are still delayed, suggesting that additional hidden or underexplored factors may be at play. Moreover, existing studies in Tanzania have mainly described the presence of strategic plans without critically examining why effectiveness gaps persist at the ministerial level.

This lack of clarity represents a major gap in knowledge, as ineffectiveness undermines service delivery, wastes scarce public resources, and reduces public trust in government institutions. Addressing this problem requires a systematic investigation into the factors influencing strategic plan effectiveness within key ministries. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by examining the institutional, stakeholder, resource, and political factors affecting the effectiveness of strategic plans in three selected Tanzanian ministries. By doing so, it aims to generate evidence-based recommendations for improving public sector performance and accountability.

1.3 Research Objectives

1.3.1 General Objective

To investigate the factors influencing the effectiveness of strategic plans in three

ministries in Tanzania.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

- i. To examine how formal institutional factors (laws, policies, and procedures) and informal institutional factors (organizational culture and norms) influence the effectiveness of strategic plans in the selected ministries.
- ii. To assess the role of stakeholder engagement in shaping the effectiveness of strategic plans.
- iii. To analyze the influence of resources availability (financial, human, and technological) on the effectiveness of strategic plans
- iv. To explore the effects of political interference on the effectiveness of strategic plans.

1.4 Research Questions

1.4.1 General Research Question What factors influence the effectiveness of strategic plans in the selected Tanzanian government ministries?

1.4.2 Specific Research Questions

- i. How do formal institutional factors (laws, policies, and procedures) and informal institutional factors (organizational culture, Values and norms) influence the effectiveness of strategic plans in the selected ministries
- ii. In what ways does stakeholder engagement shape the effectiveness of strategic plans in the selected ministries?
- iii. To what extent does the availability of financial, human, and technological resources affect the effectiveness of strategic plans?

- iv. How does political interference, including leadership changes and bureaucratic processes, impact the effectiveness of strategic plans in the selected ministries?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is important because it addresses the persistent gaps in the effectiveness of strategic plans within Tanzanian ministries, a challenge that continues to weaken service delivery and erode public trust. The findings are expected to provide practical insights that will help policymakers and ministry officials to identify weaknesses in existing strategies and take corrective measures that strengthen accountability systems, improve resource allocation, and minimize delays in project execution. The study will also be of value to government institutions and development partners by highlighting how political interference, resource constraints, and institutional challenges affect performance, thereby guiding improvements in monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and promoting more effective collaboration.

From an academic perspective, the research contributes to the limited body of literature on strategic planning in Sub-Saharan Africa, particularly within Tanzania's public sector, and provides an empirical foundation for future studies and theoretical development. Beyond the academic and institutional audience, the study carries broader social significance by offering recommendations that can improve transparency, inclusiveness, and the quality of public service delivery. In this way, the results are expected to benefit not only ministries but also civil society organizations and the wider citizenry who depend on efficient and accountable

government institutions.

1.6 Scope, Limitations and Delimitations

This study focuses on three government ministries in Dodoma—the Ministry of Works, the Ministry of Transport, and the Ministry of Information, Communication and Information Technology because of their strategic role in national development and recurring challenges in implementing strategic plans. The scope is limited to assessing four key factors: institutional arrangements, stakeholder engagement, resource availability, and political influence.

However, the study faced some limitations. Time and resource constraints restricted the number of respondents, and the reliance on self-reported data may have introduced bias. In addition, the use of cross-sectional data means the findings reflect a single point in time rather than changes over longer planning cycles. The delimitations were intentional: the research excluded other ministries and factors outside the four under study in order to allow for depth of analysis within a manageable framework. These boundaries ensured the study remained focused, feasible, and relevant to its objectives.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview

This chapter explores the theoretical and empirical literatures relevant to effectiveness of strategic plans, focusing on the adaptability in the context of Tanzania ministries. It explores into the key theories, frameworks, and empirical evidences from previous research to establish a foundation for the present study.

2.2 Conceptual Definitions

2.2.1 Strategic Planning

Strategic planning (SP) is a structured and systematic process that involves defining an organization's vision, mission, and long-term goals, and outlining the strategies and actions required to achieve those goals (Bryson, 2018). In the context of this study, strategic planning refers to the formal processes adopted by Tanzanian ministries including the Ministry of Works, the Ministry of Transport, and the Ministry of Information, Communication and Information Technology to develop, implement, and monitor plans that are aligned with national development priorities. It emphasizes not only the formulation of strategies but also their practical execution to address sectoral needs and improve service delivery.

2.2.2 Organizational Effectiveness

Organizational effectiveness refers to the degree to which an institution successfully implements the strategies outlined in its strategic plan and achieves its intended objectives (Bigelow, 2023). For this study, effectiveness is understood as the ability of the selected ministries to translate their strategic plans into tangible outcomes,

such as improved infrastructure, enhanced service delivery, efficient use of resources, and timely completion of planned activities. Effectiveness therefore goes beyond the existence of plans on paper to assess how well they are put into practice and whether they contribute to improved ministerial performance.

2.2.3 Government Ministries

Government ministries are public institutions mandated with policymaking, regulation, and delivery of essential services to citizens. In Tanzania, ministries are central to the implementation of the national development agenda and play a crucial role in coordinating sectoral activities. Within the scope of this study, the focus is on three ministries Works, Transport, and Information, Communication and Information Technology chosen because of their strategic significance and their recurring challenges in achieving full effectiveness of their strategic plans as highlighted in the Controller and Auditor General's reports.

2.2.4 Planning Process Flexibility

Planning process flexibility refers to the capacity of an organization to adapt its strategies and plans in response to changing internal or external circumstances (Bryson, 2018). In the Tanzanian ministerial context, flexibility is vital because ministries operate in dynamic environments influenced by political priorities, budgetary constraints, and evolving citizen needs. This study considers flexibility in terms of the ability of the selected ministries to review, adjust, and update their strategic plans when necessary, integrate stakeholder feedback, and adopt innovations or reforms that enhance the effectiveness of the strategic plans

2.3 Theoretical Framework: Institutional Theory

This study is anchored in institutional theory, which emphasizes that organizations do not operate in isolation but are shaped by the broader environment of institutional factors including formal rules, legal frameworks, policies, and informal norms that define acceptable behavior. The theory suggests that the effectiveness of strategic plans is influenced not only by technical design but also by the institutional arrangements, leadership practices, organizational culture, stakeholder relationships, and political pressures within which these ministries function.

The main assumption of the theory is that organizational outcomes are determined by both formal institutions, such as policies, laws, and bureaucratic procedures, and informal institutions, such as shared norms, values, and leadership styles. Applied to this study, the theory helps explain why some ministries may implement their strategic plans effectively while others struggle despite having similar resources. For example, rigid bureaucratic structures can lead to effectiveness delaying, while adaptive leadership and supportive culture can encourage innovation and efficiency. Likewise, political interference or weak accountability mechanisms may undermine progress even when resources are available. These assumptions align with the study's objectives, which focus on identifying institutional factors, examining stakeholder engagement, assessing resource availability, and analyzing the influence of politics on strategic plan effectiveness.

Institutional theory offers several strengths. It provides a holistic perspective that captures the interplay of social, political, and structural factors rather than treating strategic planning as a purely technical process. It is also highly relevant in public

sector research, where ministries operate under strong institutional pressures, and helps explain why organizations often conform to external expectations even when this does not guarantee effectiveness.

However, the theory has notable weaknesses. Critics argue that it sometimes overemphasizes conformity to rules and norms while downplaying the role of agency, innovation, and managerial discretion in shaping outcomes. It may also appear too broad, making it difficult to isolate specific causal mechanisms. Furthermore, institutional theory does not fully account for rapid organizational change, since it tends to assume stability and gradual adaptation. Despite these limitations, institutional theory is adopted in this study because it provides the most appropriate lens for examining how formal and informal institutional factors influence the effectiveness of strategic plans in Tanzanian ministries. Its ability to integrate structural, cultural, and political dimensions offers a comprehensive framework for analyzing the barriers and enablers of strategic plan effectiveness, which is central to this research.

2.4 Empirical Analysis of Relevant Studies

2.4.1 Institutional Factors (Formal and Informal) Influencing Strategic Plan Effectiveness

Recent empirical studies highlight that both formal and informal institutional factors—laws, policies, organizational culture, and procedures—remain central in determining how effectively strategic plans are implemented. Globally, Bryson (2018) stresses that formal rules and procedures provide structure, but must be flexible enough to adapt to changing contexts. More recently, Bigelow (2023) argues that organizational

effectiveness is shaped not only by regulations but also by informal cultural norms that guide decision-making and staff behavior. These insights confirm that effectiveness depends on the interaction between written frameworks and the unwritten practices that shape effectiveness.

Regionally, new studies in Sub-Saharan Africa demonstrate similar dynamics. Souki et al. (2020) in Tehran and Kavousi and Salamzadeh (2016) emphasized that organizational culture, administrative processes, and regulatory systems strongly influence institutional performance. In Kenya, Singirankabo (2023) showed that organizational values and internal culture directly affect how ministries design and execute their strategic priorities. Similarly, Mukiibi and Hilary (2019) in Uganda found that hierarchical cultures combined with bureaucratic norms significantly impacted the pace and quality of public sector planning and effectiveness. These studies highlight those informal practices such as cultural values and leadership behavior—can be as decisive as formal regulations.

In Tanzania, recent evidence further illustrates the importance of institutional factors. Tefera and Abebe (2024) reported that weak alignment between organizational culture and formal strategies in Ethiopian institutions hindered strategic effectiveness, a challenge mirrored in Tanzanian contexts. Mubanga and Lesa (2024), while studying Zambia, reinforced those clear policies and adaptable structures were necessary to overcome rigid bureaucracy a lesson equally applicable to Tanzania ministries. Locally, Kinemo (2020) found that ineffective procedures and inadequate adherence to guidelines in municipal councils limited the success of strategic plans, while Boaz and Malisa (2023) observed that institutional values and

governance culture were crucial for improving public sector performance.

Overall, current literature confirms that both formal institutions (laws, regulations, and procedures) and informal institutions (culture, values, and norms) jointly influence strategic plan effectiveness. However, most Tanzanian studies have concentrated on agencies and local councils, leaving limited evidence at the ministerial level. This study addresses that gap by investigating how laws, policies, culture, and procedures collectively shape the effectiveness of strategic plans in three central ministries.

2.4.2 Stakeholder Engagement and Strategic Plan Effectiveness

Globally, literature consistently shows that stakeholder engagement is a decisive factor in ensuring that strategic plans move from paper to practice. Waithaka and Waiganjo (2017), in their study of Kenyan public universities, demonstrated that participatory decision-making and continuous consultation improved plan effectiveness and institutional performance. Similarly, Bryson (2018) argued that stakeholder involvement is not only a governance requirement but also a mechanism for aligning organizational goals with societal needs, thereby reducing resistance during implementation. However, despite this recognition, many organizations still engage stakeholders superficially, leading to weak ownership and limited impact.

At the regional level, Chipeta (2019) in Malawi provided evidence that tokenistic participation does little to enhance effectiveness, particularly when underlying power dynamics are ignored. He observed that when stakeholders are invited to meetings without real influence over decisions, plans often fail to achieve intended outcomes.

In contrast, studies in Rwanda (Singirankabo, 2023) revealed that ministries that adopted participatory planning models, integrating staff, civil society, and private actors at multiple stages achieved greater transparency and adaptability in their strategic plans. These contrasting findings highlight that while the principle of engagement is widely accepted, its effectiveness depends on depth and inclusivity rather than formalistic involvement.

In Tanzania, the role of stakeholder engagement remains a persistent challenge. Nyerenga (2021), examining Mbeya District Council, concluded that leadership style and organizational culture strongly influenced staff involvement. Leaders who encouraged openness and collaboration created conditions for meaningful engagement, while hierarchical structures limited participation to a small group of senior officials. Complementing this, Kinemo (2020) found that insufficient staff involvement at the formulation stage led to weak ownership during implementation in Ilala Municipality. These findings are consistent with repeated observations by the Controller and Auditor General (CAG, 2022/2023), which reported that ministries often fail to consult widely, leading to delays, poor prioritization, and limited accountability in execution.

Critically, while global and regional studies emphasize the value of inclusiveness, Tanzanian evidence reveals a persistent effectiveness gap between formal recognition of stakeholder roles and their actual involvement. Ministries often engage stakeholders through information sharing and feedback but fall short on decision-making and participatory structures (Boaz & Malisa, 2023). This suggests that engagement in Tanzanian ministries remains largely procedural, lacking the

transformative quality needed to improve effectiveness. Therefore, while stakeholder participation is widely acknowledged as crucial, the literature reveals that its success depends on the quality, depth, and timing of engagement. For Tanzania, this study contributes by critically examining not only whether stakeholders are involved, but also how they are engaged through mechanisms like meetings, feedback channels, and decision-making structures and how these shape the effectiveness of strategic plans in central ministries.

2.4.3 Resource Availability and the Effectiveness of Strategic Plans

A consistent theme in empirical literature is that the availability of resources fundamentally determines the success or failure of strategic plans. Mubanga and Lesa (2024), studying Zambian universities, demonstrated that financial resources, human capital, and organizational culture had a significant impact on effectiveness outcomes. Their emphasis on financial and human capacity echoes Salum's (2018) findings in Tanzanian executive agencies, where resource adequacy emerged as a key driver of successful planning. Both studies highlight those institutions require not only funding but also skilled personnel to sustain long-term strategies.

At the global level, Walker et al. (2010) confirmed that resource scarcity often forces organizations to focus on short-term operational concerns rather than long-term strategic goals, thereby undermining effectiveness. This international evidence reinforces local observations by Kinemo (2020), who reported that financial limitations, inadequate staff involvement, and lack of autonomy were persistent barriers in Tanzanian municipal strategic planning. The convergence of these findings suggests that resource deficits whether financial, human, or structural—

create a recurring obstacle to effectiveness strategic plans across both developed and developing contexts.

However, some variation emerges in how resource gaps are experienced. For example, Osei-Akoto and Chan (2014) in Ghana highlighted weak performance linked to underfunding and poor human capacity, recommending resource management reforms. Their conclusion aligns with Tanzanian realities but also points to a structural issue: even when resources are allocated, weak management practices may undermine their effective use. This nuance demonstrates that adequacy alone is insufficient; how resources are allocated and managed is equally critical.

Taken together, these studies demonstrate broad consensus that financial, human, and technological resources are indispensable for the effectiveness of strategic plans. Yet, they also reveal a gap: most studies tend to isolate one type of resource usually financial without examining how multiple resources interact to shape planning outcomes. Furthermore, limited evidence exists on how resource constraints affect central government ministries in Tanzania, despite repeated findings from the Controller and Auditor General (CAG) that incomplete effectiveness is often tied to budgetary and capacity shortfalls. This study addresses that gap by analyzing financial, human, and technological resources collectively, and by situating the analysis within three central ministries, thereby offering a more holistic understanding of how resource availability influences strategic plan effectiveness.

2.4.4 Political Interference on Strategic Plan Effectiveness

Globally, political dynamics have long been identified as both enablers and barriers

to strategic planning. Andrews (2017) highlighted that frequent political directive often shift institutional priorities, diverting resources away from long-term goals and undermining strategy continuity. Grindle (2010) reinforced this by demonstrating how political interference in developing countries leads to inefficiencies, delays, and frequent restructuring of public programs. These studies confirm that the success of strategic plans is highly dependent on political stability and the insulation of planning processes from short-term political interests.

At the regional level, evidence shows similar patterns. Bwalya (2020), studying Zambia, found that political interference accounted for nearly 60% of delays in the execution of public infrastructure projects, often due to resource reallocation towards politically popular activities. In Ghana, Ohemeng and Ayee (2016) argued that political interference not only slows planning but also weakens accountability, as shifting political priorities make it difficult to hold officials responsible for unachieved goals. Conversely, studies from Rwanda (Mukiibi & Hilary, 2019) show that when political commitment is stable and aligned with national development goals, interference can act positively by providing strong direction and mobilizing resources. This contrast indicates that political influence is not inherently negative; its impact depends on whether it promotes continuity and accountability or disrupts institutional processes.

In Tanzania, similar challenges are evident. Juma et al. (2018) observed that while political support can strengthen leadership commitment and mobilize resources, ministries often face disruptions when directives change with political cycles. Reports by the Controller and Auditor General (CAG, 2022/2023) consistently

highlight delays and incomplete projects linked to abrupt changes in priorities following ministerial reshuffles or new government directives. Kinemo (2020) also found that political directives frequently override technocratic planning in local government, creating a mismatch between designed strategies and actual effectiveness. More recent analyses (Boaz & Malisa, 2023) stress that while political backing can accelerate policy adoption, it often comes at the cost of institutional autonomy, leading to inconsistent effectiveness outcomes.

Critically, while the literature agrees that political interference is a major determinant of strategic plan effectiveness, it also demonstrates that its impact is not uniform. In some contexts, strong political leadership enhances strategic commitment and resource mobilization; in others, it disrupts planning through patronage, reallocation, and red tape. For Tanzanian ministries, the gap lies in understanding how political factors ranging from interference to leadership commitment interact with institutional structures to shape outcomes. This study addresses that gap by not only examining the disruptive side of political interference but also exploring conditions under which political commitment can enhance effectiveness. This directly aligns with the fourth objective: to explore the effects of political interference on the effectiveness of strategic plans in Tanzanian ministries.

2.5 Research Gap Identified

The review of theoretical and empirical literature reveals several gaps in the understanding of effectiveness of strategic plans within Tanzania ministries. Firstly, while existing studies have examined the influence of individual factors on effectiveness, such as leadership commitment (Juma, et al., 2018), resource

availability (Osei-Akoto & Chan, 2014), and stakeholder engagement (Ohemeng, 2022), there is a lack of research that comprehensively investigates the interplay of these factors within the unique institutional context of Tanzania ministries. hence, this study filled the gap by identifying the factors influencing strategic plans and show the way the strategic plans had been influenced by the identified factors.

Finally, the study ends by recommends the ministries to employ the suggested.

2.6 Conceptual Framework

This study uses a conceptual framework that links four main factors institutional arrangements, stakeholder engagement, resource availability, and political influence to the effectiveness of strategic plans in Tanzanian ministries. The framework assumes that effective planning outcomes depend on supportive policies, adequate resources, active participation, and constructive political commitment. Where these conditions are weak, ministries face delays, inefficiencies, and incomplete projects. The dependent variable, strategic plan effectiveness, is reflected in timely completion of activities, efficient use of resources, and improved service delivery. This framework therefore provides a logical basis for examining the barriers and enablers of strategic plan effectiveness in the selected ministries.

The conceptual framework shows independent variable (factors) and dependent variable (strategic plan(s)). Independent variable carries factors like institutional factors, stakeholder engagement, resource and political interference. The factors were measured via questionnaires provided to employees and administrators so as to identify the availability of such factors and others. Dependent variables carried some criteria/indicators that show the presence of positive or negative influence of

the available factors to the strategic plan. The variable was measured via questionnaire and interview.

Independent Variables

Dependent Variables

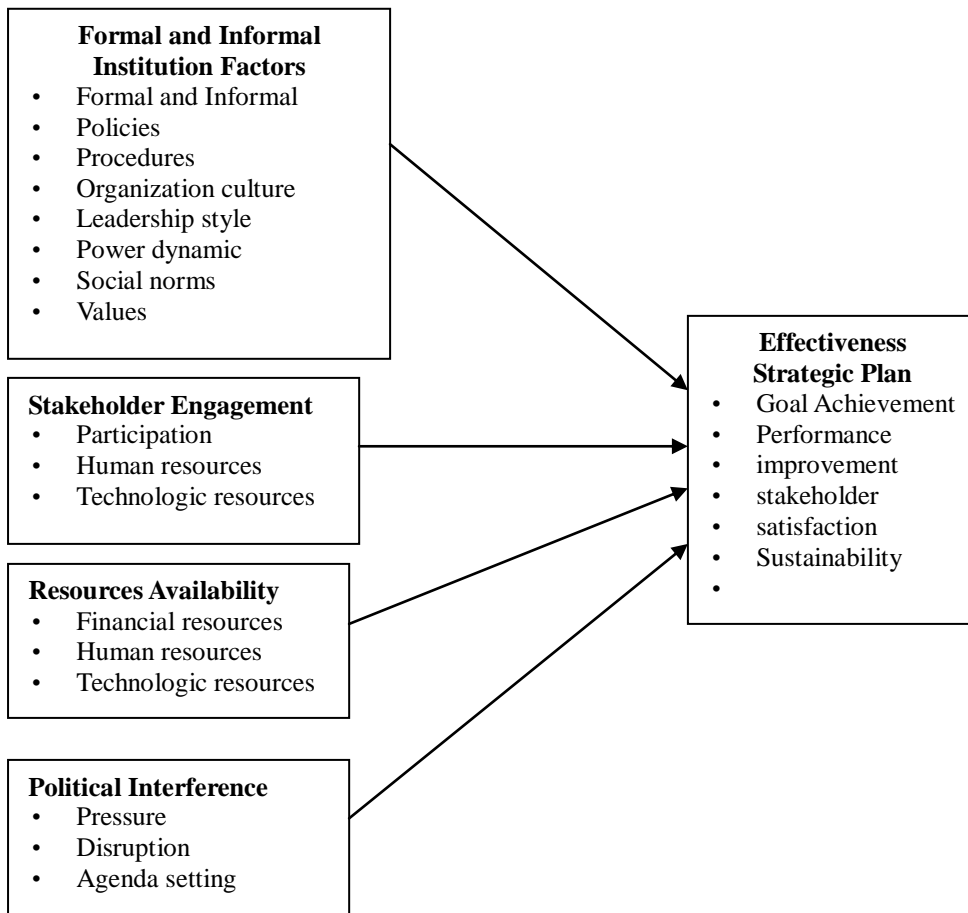


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Research Data, (2025)

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview

This chapter outlines the methodological approach employed to investigating the Institutional factors influencing effectiveness of strategic plans in three Tanzania ministries. It details the research Philosophy, research design, data collection methods, sampling strategy, and procedures for analysis, ensuring rigor and validity of the findings.

3.2 Research Philosophy

The research philosophy for this study is rooted in positivism. Positivism is a philosophical stance that emphasizes empirical observation and measurement as the primary sources of knowledge (Creswell, 2014). It posits that there is an objective reality that can be known through scientific inquiry, and that knowledge is generated through the systematic collection and analysis of data. This aligns with the study's descriptive research strategy and multiple case study design, which seek to objectively identify and quantify the factors influencing effectiveness of strategic plans within the selected ministries.

In line with positivism, this study utilizes structured questionnaires and surveys to collect quantitative data from a representative sample of ministry officials. Statistical analysis employed to identify patterns, relationships, and correlations between the identified institutional factors and the effectiveness of strategic plans. The focus on observable and measurable phenomenon, along with the use of rigorous data collection and analysis methods, ensures that the findings are objective, reliable, and

generalizable (Creswell, 2014). While acknowledging the potential limitations of a purely positivist approach, such as the potential for overlooking nuanced contextual factors, this study mitigated these limitations by triangulating data from multiple sources and employing a multiple case study design to capture the diversity of experiences and perspectives within the selected ministries. This approach will ensure a more comprehensive and balanced understanding of the research problem, while remaining aligned with the fundamental principles of positivism.

3.3 Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive cross-sectional design within a multiple case study approach. The descriptive design was suitable for systematically measuring and describing factors such as institutional arrangements, stakeholder engagement, resources, and political influence without manipulating variables. The cross-sectional nature enabled data collection at one point in time, while the multiple case study approach allowed comparison across the three selected ministries, enhancing validity and contextual understanding. This design aligns with the positivist philosophy and was appropriate for addressing the research objectives on the effectiveness of strategic plans in Tanzanian ministries.

3.4 Study Population

The study population encompasses all staff members directly involved in the strategic plans process at the three purposefully selected ministries in Dodoma, Tanzania. These ministries were chosen from a total of 26 ministries operating within the Tanzania government. The selected ministries are the Ministry of Information, Communication, and Information Technology, the Ministry of Works,

and the Ministry of Transport, chosen for their significance in national development and their representation of diverse sectors, as outlined in the Public Service Act of 2002 (UT, 2002).

A sample of 93 participants was drawn from 607 (Human Resources Report for each ministry, 2023) population of the study using a stratified random sampling technique. This approach ensures representation from each ministry and different levels of seniority (senior officials, and strategic planning unit staffs), thus capturing the diversity of roles and perspectives involved in effectiveness of strategic plans. The sample distribution across ministries will be proportionate to their respective number of staff involved in this process, as per the 2023 Human Resources Report for each ministry. This sampling strategy balances the need for a manageable sample size with the requirement for representativeness and statistical validity. It allows for a comprehensive exploration of the research problem while ensuring the feasibility and efficiency of data collection.

3.5 Study Area

The study was conducted in three ministries headquartered in Dodoma—the Ministry of Works, the Ministry of Transport, and the Ministry of Information, Communication and ICT. Dodoma was chosen because it hosts the central offices of government ministries and serves as the national policy hub, making it the most relevant location for accessing officials directly involved in strategic planning. The Controller and Auditor General's reports have repeatedly highlighted challenges in strategic plan effectiveness in these ministries, further justifying their selection. Conducting the study in Dodoma also minimized travel and logistical costs, ensuring

efficiency in data collection.

3.6 Sampling

3.6.1 Sampling Frame

The sampling frame consisted of all staff members directly engaged in the strategic planning process within the three selected ministries: the Ministry of Works, the Ministry of Transport, and the Ministry of Information, Communication and ICT. According to the 2023 Human Resources registers, this group totaled $N = 607$ individuals. The registers provided an official list of eligible participants, ensuring that only those involved in planning, budgeting, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation were considered.

3.6.2 Sampling Procedure

A two-stage procedure was applied. First, the three ministries were selected purposively because of their strategic importance to Tanzania's national development and because successive CAG reports (2018/2019–2022/2023) highlighted them as facing persistent challenges in strategic plan effectiveness. Second, within each ministry, a proportionate stratified random sampling technique was employed. The staff were stratified by ministry and by role (senior officials, mid-level managers, planning/M&E staff). From each stratum, respondents were randomly drawn using official staff lists. This ensured representativeness and minimized bias while capturing diverse perspectives across organizational levels.

3.6.3 Sample Size Determination

The sample size for the quantitative survey was determined using Yamane's (1967) formula for finite populations:

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

ere $N = 607$ and $e = 0.1$ (precision level at 90% confidence). Substitution gave

$$n = \frac{607}{1 + 607(0.1^2)} = \frac{607}{1 + 6.07} \approx 93$$

Thus, the final sample size was set at 93 respondents, distributed proportionately across the three ministries: 44 from MICIT, 35 from MoT, and 14 from MoW. This number was deemed adequate to ensure statistical validity while remaining manageable for fieldwork.

Table 3.1: Sampling Design and Sample Size

S/N	Ministry	Target Population	Sample Size	Sampling Technique	Data Collection Tool
1	Ministry of Information, Communication, and Technology (MICT)	192	44	Stratified Random	Questionnaire
2	Ministry of Works	220	14	Stratified Random	Questionnaire
3	Ministry of Transport	195	35	Stratified Random	Questionnaire
	Total	607	93		

Source: Researcher, 2024.

3.7 Data Collection Methods and Procedures

3.7.1 Primary Data Collection

Primary data was obtained directly from the selected sample of 93 ministry staff members. The main tool was a structured questionnaire, which included both closed ended Likert-scale items to capture quantifiable data and a few open-ended items for additional insights. Prior to full administration, the questionnaire was pilot tested with 10 non-sampled staff to refine clarity and wording. Data collection was

conducted using a drop-and-collect method and, where feasible, electronic submission to ensure convenience and higher response rates. Respondents were assured of confidentiality, and participation was voluntary.

3.7.2 Secondary Data Collection

Secondary data was gathered from official documents, including ministry strategic plans, monitoring and evaluation reports, performance audits, and policy frameworks such as the Tanzania National M&E Guidelines (2016) and CAG reports from 2018/2019 to 2022/2023. These documents provided contextual evidence on how strategic planning is formally structured and helped triangulate findings from the primary survey.

3.7.3 Data Collection Procedures

The data collection process followed several steps. First, research clearance and introduction letters were obtained from the relevant authorities to access the ministries. Second, with support from human resource offices, the sampling frame was confirmed and respondents identified. Third, questionnaires were distributed to selected staff members through their departments, with clear instructions and assurances of confidentiality. Completed questionnaires were collected within two weeks, and reminders were sent to non-respondents to maximize the response rate. Finally, key secondary documents were reviewed systematically alongside survey data to provide a comprehensive understanding of institutional, stakeholder, resource, and political factors influencing strategic plan effectiveness.

3.8 Data Collection Tools

The main tool for primary data collection was a structured questionnaire designed to

capture quantitative information from staff members of the three selected ministries. A questionnaire was chosen because it allows the collection of standardized responses from a relatively large number of participants, ensuring comparability across cases and suitability for statistical analysis. It is also cost-effective, time efficient and appropriate for a cross-sectional study where diverse respondents are located within different departments and levels of seniority.

The questionnaire was structured around the study objectives and comprised both closed-ended Likert-scale items and a few open-ended questions. Likert-scale items enabled measurement of the extent to which respondents agreed or disagreed with statements regarding institutional arrangements, stakeholder engagement, resource availability, political influence, and the effectiveness of strategic plans. The open ended questions provided space for respondents to elaborate on issues not fully captured by closed items, adding contextual insights.

3.9 Data Quality Assurance

3.9.1 Reliability

To ensure reliability, the questionnaire was pilot tested with 10 non-sampled ministry staff. The purpose of the pilot was to identify unclear items and to check internal consistency. Reliability was statistically assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, with a threshold of 0.70 considered acceptable (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). This provided evidence that items grouped under each construct (institutional arrangements, stakeholder engagement, resources, political influence, and effectiveness) consistently measured the same concept. This approach was chosen because Cronbach's Alpha is a widely recognized and robust measure of internal consistency

in social science research.

3.9.2 Validity

Validity refers to the extent to which the instrument measures what it is intended to measure. In this study, validity was ensured through three complementary steps. First, content validity was achieved by aligning questionnaire items with the constructs of institutional theory and with the four specific research objectives. The draft tool was reviewed by academic experts and senior planners from the selected ministries to confirm its coverage of all relevant concepts and removal of irrelevant items. Second, construct validity was established using factor analysis in SPSS to determine whether the items grouped under institutional factors, stakeholder engagement, resources, and political influence indeed loaded on their respective constructs. Third, criterion validity was assessed by examining correlations between independent factors and the dependent variable (strategic plan effectiveness).

Significant and logical correlations provided evidence that the instrument behaved as expected. These multiple steps ensured that the tool captured the intended concepts in a methodologically sound and contextually relevant way. Justification: Validity procedures were emphasized to guarantee that the collected data truly reflected the realities of strategic plan effectiveness in Tanzanian ministries, thereby strengthening the credibility of the findings.

3.10 Data Analysis Techniques

Quantitative data collected through questionnaires were coded and entered into SPSS for analysis. The analysis proceeded in three stages. First, descriptive statistics such

as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were used to summarize demographic characteristics and respondents' perceptions of institutional, stakeholder, resource, and political factors. This provided a clear overview of the data and established patterns. Second, inferential analysis was conducted using Pearson's correlation to examine the strength and direction of relationships between independent factors (institutional arrangements, stakeholder engagement, resources, political interference) and the dependent variable (strategic plan effectiveness). This method was chosen because it is appropriate for continuous variables and allows for testing associations in survey data.

Third, regression analysis was applied to determine the relative contribution of each factor to the overall effectiveness of strategic plans, thereby addressing the study's objectives with greater precision. Qualitative information from open-ended questions and documents was analyzed thematically to supplement quantitative findings and provide contextual depth. Justification: These methods were chosen because descriptive statistics capture patterns, correlation measures associations, and regression identifies predictive power, making the analysis thorough, rigorous, and aligned with the positivist design of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents demographic information of respondents including gender, working experiences and position status in an organization. It presents findings based on four research objectives as explained in chapter one that contributes to the main goal of the study. It finally presenting discussion of the findings based on its specific objectives.

4.2 Demographic Information

The demographic information of this study was based in five categories including gender, the ministry where the respondent(s) work(s), experience of respondents in their current job and job position. The result was shown under the Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Demographic Information

Main Category	Sub-Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	65	69.89
	Female	28	30.11
Ministry	Ministry of ICT	45	48.4
	Work	12	10.9
	Transport	36	38.7
Experience	Less than 1 year	6	6.5
	1 – 3 years	26	28
	4 – 6 years	21	22.6
	7-10 years	24	25.8
	More than 10 years	16	17.2
Job Position	Senior Official	33	35.5
	Mid-Level manager	42	45.2
	Strategic plans Unit	18	19.4

Source: Field Data 2024.

The demographic characteristics of respondents provide an important context for interpreting the study findings. Table 4.1 summarizes respondents by gender, ministry, years of work experience, and job position. These characteristics are significant because they shape perceptions and experiences of strategic plan effectiveness, thus linking directly to the study's objectives on institutional, resource, stakeholder, and political factors.

Gender distribution shows that males accounted for 69.9% of respondents, while females represented 30.1%. This pattern reflects the broader gender imbalance in public service employment, particularly in technical ministries such as Works and Transport. However, both male and female staffs were engaged in strategic planning processes, suggesting that effectiveness of plans is influenced by contributions from both genders. This aligns with the URT Constitution and national gender policies that emphasize inclusivity in decision-making. Therefore, the demographic profile confirms that while gender disparities persist, both groups are relevant stakeholders in the effectiveness of strategic plans.

Ministry representation shows the highest proportion of respondents from the Ministry of ICT (48.4%), followed by the Ministry of Transport (38.7%) and the Ministry of Works (10.9%). This distribution reflects differences in responsiveness and size of planning units across ministries. The fact that ICT and Transport ministries contributed the most respondents suggests stronger participation, but it does not necessarily mean that these ministries are more effective. Instead, it highlights variations in organizational engagement, which are consistent with the study's multiple case study design that compares experiences across ministries.

Work experience also provides insight into institutional knowledge and implementation capacity. Over 73% of respondents had more than three years of service, with 17.2% having over a decade of experience. This suggests that the majority were well familiar with ministerial procedures, policies, and challenges in strategic planning. According to Odera (2014), accumulated work experience enhances planning capacity and decision-making. In this study, the presence of experienced respondents strengthens the credibility of findings on institutional and resource-related factors since they are based on informed perspectives. 0774117573

Job position was another critical demographic variable. Senior officials (35.5%) were primarily responsible for setting strategic direction and resource allocation; mid-level managers (45.2%) were tasked with translating plans into operational policies and providing feedback; while planning unit staff (19.4%) focused on coordination, monitoring, and evaluation of strategies. This distribution ensures that the study captured perspectives across decision-making levels, from high-level oversight to operational execution. It also mirrors the descriptive and cross-sectional design of the study, which sought to systematically analyze perceptions from different strata of ministry staff.

Overall, the demographic profile confirms that the study drew on diverse and relevant respondents, ensuring reliability of the findings. It also shows how gender, ministry context, experience, and job position intersect with the factors influencing strategic plan effectiveness. In line with the study's objectives, these demographics highlight those institutional arrangements, resource capacities, and stakeholder roles are shaped by the backgrounds and responsibilities of those involved in planning

and implementation 4.3 Institutional Factors (formal and informal) That Affect Effectiveness of Strategic Plan

The first specific objective of this study was to examine how formal institutional factors (laws, policies, and procedures) and informal institutional factors (organizational culture and norms) influence the effectiveness of strategic plans in the three selected ministries. To achieve this, respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with various statements on a five-point Likert scale (strongly disagrees, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree). For analysis, “strongly disagree” and “disagree” were merged as *disagree*, while “strongly agree” and “agree” were merged as *agree*. The results are presented in Figure 4.1.

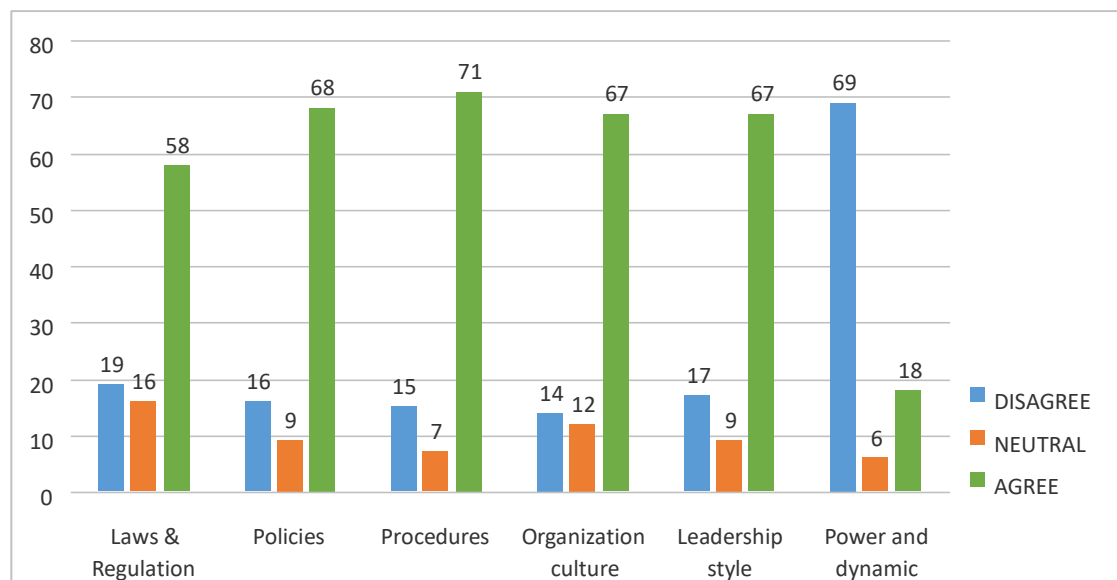


Figure 4.1: Presence of Formal and Informal Institutional Factors Across

Ministries

Source: Research Data, 2024.

The findings indicate that institutional factors play a significant positive role in shaping the effectiveness of strategic plans across ministries. More than three

quarters of respondents (78%) agreed that formal procedures derived from the *Public Service Act (2002)* and the *Public Service Employment Policy (1998)* provide a transparent and structured framework for planning. This aligns with Juma et al. (2018), who emphasized that flexible but clear procedures enhance accountability and foster strategic effectiveness.

Similarly, institutional values were highlighted by 76.9% of respondents as guiding behavior and creating a shared sense of direction. This finding resonates with Scott (2013), who observed that values serve as cultural anchors influencing organizational decision-making and outcomes. In this study, values were seen to encourage professionalism and integrity, thereby reinforcing the credibility of strategic plans. Regarding power dynamics, 75.8% of respondents disagreed that conflicts and power struggles hinder effectiveness. Instead, they reported that existing rules, norms, and informal networks channel power constructively to resolve conflicts. This finding contrasts with studies that view power struggles as barriers, but supports Ohmeng (2022), who argued that managed power dynamics can foster positive organizational change.

Policy frameworks also emerged as critical enablers, with 74.7% of respondents affirming that ministerial policies are well-aligned with national development goals. The presence of multiple policies, including the *Employment Policy (2004)*, *ICT Policy*, and the *National M&E Policy (2015)*, provided guidance and compliance standards for strategic plan effectiveness. In terms of organizational culture, 73.6% of respondents agreed that cultural practices such as hierarchy, discipline, and collaborative teamwork support strategic plan and effectiveness. The researcher also

observed that hierarchical culture encouraged clarity of roles while allowing innovation within departments. This reflects Bryson's (2018) assertion that culture significantly shapes the success of public sector strategies.

Finally, laws and regulations were recognized by 63.7% of respondents as providing clear frameworks for compliance in areas such as resource management and adoption of technology. Such legal frameworks ensure consistency in strategic plans effectiveness and minimize risks of deviation, consistent with institutional theory which emphasizes the role of formal rules in shaping organizational outcomes. The evidence demonstrates that institutional factors procedures, values, policies, culture, laws, and even power dynamics are essential in determining the effectiveness of strategic plans. This finding directly addresses the first research objective and supports the Institutional Theory underpinning the study, which argues that organizational effectiveness is largely determined by institutional structures and norms. Moreover, the consistency across ministries confirms that effectiveness is not just about resource availability but also about the institutional environment within which plans are executed.

4.3 Stakeholder Engagement and Its Role in Effectiveness of Strategic Plans

The second specific objective was to assess the role of stakeholder engagement in shaping the effectiveness of strategic plans in the three selected ministries. To address this objective, we examined four engagement mechanisms commonly used in the ministry's information sharing, regular meetings/consultations, participation in decision-making, and feedback mechanisms and related them to a composite index of strategic plan effectiveness.

Responses were collected on a five-point Likert scale and collapsed for analysis as follows: Not involved (combining *not involved* and *minimally involved*), Moderately involved, and highly involved (combining *highly involved* and *fully involved*), denoted N, M, and I, respectively. We report descriptive proportions for each mechanism and the Pearson correlation (r) between each mechanism and the effectiveness index (higher r indicates a stronger positive association with plan effectiveness). Summary results are presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Stakeholder engagement Mechanisms and Association with Strategic Plan Effectiveness

The results reveal that stakeholder engagement is uneven across ministries. Information sharing and regular meetings were reported as weak forms of engagement ($r = 0.294$ and $r = 0.213$, respectively). Respondents indicated that limited workshops and irregular communication channels hindered effective information flow, while meetings were often restricted to departmental representatives rather than inclusive of all staff. This pattern suggests that engagement remains tokenistic rather than participatory, a weakness that limits ownership of strategic plans.

Decision-making participation was also rated low ($r = 0.311$), indicating that while stakeholders are consulted, they are rarely empowered to influence final decisions. This reflects a top-down approach where policies and guidelines are pre-determined, leaving frontline staff with limited influence on effectiveness. Such findings are consistent with Chipeta (2019), who emphasized that tokenistic participation in Malawi weakened accountability and limited plan ownership.

By contrast, feedback mechanisms emerged as the strongest channel of stakeholder involvement ($r = 0.797$). Respondents reported that ministries actively collected feedback through surveys, mini-studies, and formal reporting systems, and acted upon it to improve effectiveness processes. This aligns with institutional theory, which highlights that adaptive organizations use stakeholder input as a learning tool to strengthen legitimacy and performance. The finding also mirrors Nyerenga (2021), who found that Tanzanian local authorities with effective feedback systems reported higher plan effectiveness.

Overall, the findings indicate that stakeholder engagement in the three ministries is partial and imbalanced. While feedback mechanisms are effectively used, information sharing, participatory meetings, and decision-making remain weak. This undermines the inclusiveness of the planning process and effectiveness gaps, as stakeholders who are insufficiently engaged may lack ownership and accountability. Addressing this imbalance is critical, since the study's design demonstrates that effectiveness depends not only on institutional frameworks and resources, but also on active, meaningful, and continuous engagement of internal and external actors.

4.4 The Influence of Institutional Resource in the Effectiveness of Strategic Plans

The third specific objective of this study was to analyze the influence of resource availability (financial, human, and technological) on the effectiveness of strategic plans in the selected ministries. To address this objective, respondents were asked to rate the adequacy of resources using a five-point Likert scale (from highly inadequate to abundant). For analysis, highly inadequate and inadequate were

grouped as Inadequate (I), while adequate, more adequate, and abundant were grouped as Adequate (A). The relationship between resource adequacy and plan effectiveness was tested using Pearson correlation (r).

Table 4.3: The Influence of Institutional Resource in the Effectiveness of Strategic Plans (A I Pearson Correlation (r) 2-tales)

	<i>F</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	
The influence of financial resources in the effectiveness of ministry's strategic plans	76	81.8	17	18.2	0.824
The influence of Human resources in the effectiveness of ministry's strategic plans	58	62.4	35	37.6	0.673
The influence of technological resources in the effectiveness of ministry's strategic plans	64	68.8	29	31.2	0.735

Source: Research Data, 2024.

The results indicate that all three categories of resources significantly affect the effectiveness of strategic plans. Financial resources emerged as the strongest predictor ($r = 0.824$). Ministries with adequate budget allocations were able to implement planned activities, hire qualified staff, and invest in infrastructure more successfully than those with limited funds. This reinforces findings from Walker et al. (2010), who argued that insufficient financial resources often force public organizations to abandon long-term strategies in favor of short-term survival priorities.

Technological resources also showed a strong positive influence ($r = 0.735$). Respondents reported that ICT tools facilitated data collection, monitoring, communication, and innovation in implementation. This finding aligns with Bryson (2018), who noted that technological readiness enhances transparency, efficiency,

and adaptive capacity in strategic planning processes. Human resources were also significant ($r = 0.673$), though less than financial and technological resources. Skilled and motivated staffs were reported to contribute to effective execution, problem-solving, and adaptation to changes. This echoes the findings of Osei-Akoto & Chan (2014), who emphasized that well-trained personnel are indispensable for translating strategic plans into results, particularly in resource constrained public institutions.

Overall, the findings confirm that resource availability is a decisive factor in the effectiveness of strategic plans. Financial resources provide the foundation for ensuring effectiveness, technological tools enhance monitoring and efficiency, and competent human resources ensure adaptability and execution. However, gaps in adequacy remain particularly in human and technological resources which can compromise strategic plan effectiveness, despite the presence of formal plans; the results are consistent with institutional theory, which posits those resources, together with institutional structures, shape organizational outcomes.

4.5 The Influence of Politics in the Effectiveness of Strategic Plans

The fourth specific objective of this study was to explore how political factors influence the effectiveness of strategic plans in the selected ministries. Respondents were asked to rate their perceptions using a five-point Likert scale, later grouped into three categories: Disagree (D), Neutral (N), and Agree (A). The results are presented in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: The Political influence in the Effectiveness of Strategic Plans

The political influence in the effectiveness of strategic plans	D		N		A		Pearson correlation (r) 2-tales
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>F</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	
Political interference leads to changes in priorities or resources allocation during effectiveness	37	37.6	13	14	45	48.4	0.332
Political interference negatively impacts the effectiveness of effectiveness of strategic plans	51	54.8	16	17.2	26	28	0.371
Bureaucratic process and red tape lower the effectiveness of strategic plans	14	15	68	73.1	11	11.8	0.533
Changes in laws and regulations necessitate adjustment to the strategic plans	19	20.5	26	17.2	58	62.3	0.692
Leaders demonstrate strong commitment towards the strategic plans effectiveness	17	18.3	9	9.7	67	72.1	0.813

Source: Research Data, 2024.

The results show that political interference in priorities and resource allocation was acknowledged by 48.4% of respondents but with a low correlation ($r = 0.332$). This suggests that while interference exists, its impact is limited due to strong reliance on formal laws and regulations that constrain arbitrary decision-making. This finding differs from Bwalya (2020), who reported a 60% negative impact of political interference in Zambia, but is consistent with Ohemeng & Ayee (2016), who argued that strong institutional frameworks can buffer ministries against political pressures.

Similarly, only 28% of respondents agreed that political interference negatively strategic plans effectiveness, with a weak correlation ($r = 0.371$). This may be explained by the fact that ministries actively involve political leaders in the planning process, thereby reducing conflicts and building ownership of strategic plans. When politicians are integrated early, their role shifts from obstructive interference to constructive support. By contrast, the bureaucratic process and red tape showed a stronger influence ($r = 0.533$). Respondents noted that hierarchical structures, rules,

and lengthy procedures slow decision-making but also ensure accountability in large organizations. This dual role of bureaucracy aligns with Andrews et al. (2013), who found that while bureaucracy often creates rigidity, it can enhance control and predictability in public sector planning.

The most significant political influences were changes in laws and regulations ($r = 0.692$) and leaders' commitment ($r = 0.813$). Frequent legal reforms ensure that ministries update their strategies to reflect new priorities and adopt modern tools, such as ICT, which improve monitoring and risk management. Meanwhile, leadership commitment was viewed as critical: leaders who communicated vision, mobilized resources, and regularly reviewed progress were key drivers of plan effectiveness. This supports Juma et al. (2018) and Yukl (2022), who highlight that committed leadership motivates staff, aligns resources, and ensures accountability for results.

The findings demonstrate that while negative political interference is relatively limited, political structures still strongly shape the effectiveness of strategic plans through laws, regulations, bureaucracy, and leadership commitment. Consistent with institutional theory, these results show that ministries operate within both formal frameworks (laws, bureaucratic rules) and informal pressures (leadership behavior, political engagement). Strengthening political will and ensuring consistent legal frameworks are therefore essential for improving strategic plan effectiveness in Tanzania's ministries.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Introduction

The chapter presents summary of the findings as presented and discussed in chapter four, general conclusion of the study findings and recommendations. The study main objective was to investigate factors influencing the effectiveness of strategic plans in Tanzania ministries, specifically focusing on the three Ministries which were the ministry of Work; Information, Communication and Information Technology; and Transport. The discussion relayed on the four specific objectives as follows;

5.2 Summary of the Findings

5.2.1 Institutional Factors Affecting the Effectiveness of Strategic Plans

The study revealed that several institutional factors significantly influence the effectiveness of strategic plans in the three selected ministries. A majority of respondents (78%) confirmed that ministries rely on formal and informal procedures to guide strategic plans effectiveness, while 76.9% highlighted the role of institutional values in shaping work behaviour and providing direction. Respondents (74.7%) further indicated that ministerial policies were strongly aligned with national development goals, ensuring coherence in planned activities.

In terms of organizational culture, 73.6% agreed that hierarchical structures and norms encouraged accountability and collaboration in executing strategic plans. Additionally, 63.7% of respondents acknowledged the role of existing laws and regulations in providing frameworks for compliance and resource management. On the other hand, 75.8% disagreed that power dynamics and conflicts posed a major

hindrance, noting instead that power was managed through clear rules and norms. Overall, the findings show that institutional procedures, values, policies, culture, and regulations positively supported strategic plan effectiveness, although challenges such as limited resources and political pressures continued to constrain full effectiveness.

5.2.2 Impact of Stakeholder Engagement on Effectiveness of Strategic Plans

The study found that stakeholder engagement varied across different approaches used in the ministries. Engagement was relatively low when carried out through information sharing ($r = 0.294$), regular meetings ($r = 0.213$), and decision-making participation ($r = 0.311$). In contrast, stakeholder engagement was highest when ministries used feedback mechanisms ($r = 0.794$), showing that respondents were more actively involved when their inputs were sought after implementation activities. Overall, the findings indicate that while feedback channels are strongly utilized, proactive forms of engagement such as information sharing, meetings, and joint decision-making remain limited in the ministries' strategic planning processes.

5.2.3 Relationship between Resources and Effectiveness of Strategic Plans

The study examined the influence of financial, technological, and human resources on the effectiveness of strategic plans in the selected ministries. Results showed that all three resources had a positive impact, with financial resources exerting the strongest influence ($r = 0.824$), followed by technological resources ($r = 0.735$), and human resources ($r = 0.673$). These findings indicate that the availability and adequacy of resources are critical determinants of strategic plan effectiveness.

5.2.4 Effects of Political Interference in Effectiveness of Strategic Plans

The study found varying levels of political influence on the effectiveness of strategic plans in the selected ministries. Low influence was observed in relation to changes in priorities and resource allocation ($r = 0.332$) and in negative impacts of political interference on strategic plans effectiveness ($r = 0.371$). A moderate influence was reported for bureaucratic processes and red tape ($r = 0.533$). The strongest influences were linked to changes in laws and regulations ($r = 0.692$) and to leadership commitment ($r = 0.813$), both of which were identified as significant factors shaping the effectiveness of strategic plans.

5.3 Conclusion

This study concludes that the effectiveness of strategic plans in Tanzanian ministries is shaped by a combination of institutional, stakeholder, resource, and political factors. Institutional frameworks such as procedures, values, policies, and organizational culture were generally supportive of strategic plans effectiveness, demonstrating that formal structures and norms provide stability and direction. However, the influence of these factors varied, with some ministries facing challenges in translating formal rules into consistent practice.

Stakeholder engagement was identified as a weak link, with ministries relying more on feedback mechanisms than on inclusive processes such as meetings, information sharing, or joint decision-making. This limited involvement reduced opportunities for collaboration and ownership of strategic plans. Resources emerged as a decisive determinant of effectiveness. Financial, human, and technological resources all contributed positively, with financial resources being the most critical. Ministries

with adequate funding, skilled personnel, and modern tools were better positioned to implement their plans successfully.

Political dynamics had a mixed influence. While disruptive interference in priorities and allocation was limited, bureaucratic processes, legal reforms, and leadership commitment strongly shaped outcomes. Particularly, the role of committed leadership was central to ensuring accountability, mobilizing resources, and sustaining strategic direction. In sum, the study demonstrates that the effectiveness of strategic plans depends not on a single factor, but on the interplay of strong institutions, inclusive stakeholder engagement, adequate resources, and constructive political leadership. Strengthening these elements is essential if ministries are to achieve their goals and improve service delivery.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions, several recommendations are proposed to strengthen the effectiveness of strategic plans in Tanzanian ministries. **Strengthen Stakeholder Engagement:** Ministries should move beyond limited consultation and adopt participatory approaches that involve staff, citizens, civil society, and private sector actors throughout the planning cycle. Mechanisms such as town halls, online forums, workshops, and cross-departmental committees should be institutionalized to improve inclusiveness, build ownership, and ensure diverse perspectives are reflected in strategic plans.

Enhance Resource Allocation and Capacity Building: Adequate financial resources should be guaranteed through improved budgeting and timely disbursement of funds.

At the same time, ministries need to invest in continuous professional development to strengthen the capacity of their human resources. Expanding the use of modern technology and training staff in digital systems would also enhance efficiency, transparency, and monitoring during implementation process.

Improve Institutional and Political Support: Existing policies, laws, and procedures should be reviewed to ensure they are flexible and aligned with current ministry needs. Bureaucratic processes must be streamlined to reduce delays while maintaining accountability. Political leaders should demonstrate stronger commitment by supporting resource mobilization, championing effectiveness, and safeguarding strategic plans from disruptive interference.

Recommendations for Further Research: Future studies could expand to cover more ministries or compare different levels of government to capture broader patterns of institutional, resource, and political influences on strategic planning. Researchers could also examine the role of informal networks and organizational culture in greater depth to complement the findings of this study.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MINISTRY STAFF ON EFFECTIVENESS OF STRATEGIC PLANS

Section A: Demographic Information

1. Ministry: (Please select one)

- Ministry of Information, Communication, and Technology (MICT)
- Ministry of Works
- Ministry of Transport

2. Job Title/Position:

- Senior Official
- Mid-level Manager
- Strategic planning Unit Staff
- Other (Please specify)

3. Years of Experience in Current Position:

- Less than 1 year
- 1-3 years
- 4-6 years
- 7-10 years
- More than 10 years

Section B: Formal Institutional Factors

4. Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding the influence of laws, regulations, and policies on effectiveness of strategic plans in your ministry:

Statement	1 (Strongly Disagree)	2 (Disagree)	3 (Neutral)	4 (Agree)	5 (Strongly Agree)
The existing laws and regulations provide a clear framework for effectiveness of strategic plans.					
The policies of the ministry are aligned with the national development goals.					
The ministry's procedures for effectiveness of strategic plans are transparent and well-communicated.					
Bureaucratic processes and red tape hinder the effectiveness of strategic plans.					
Changes in laws or regulations often necessitate adjustments to the strategic plans.					

Section C: Informal Institutional Factors

5. Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding the influence of organizational culture, leadership, and power dynamics on effectiveness of strategic plans in your ministry:

Statement	1 (Strongly Disagree)	2 (Disagree)	3 (Neutral)	4 (Agree)	5 (Strongly Agree)
The ministry has a culture of openness and collaboration that supports effectiveness of strategic plans.					
The leadership in the ministry demonstrates strong commitment to the strategic plans.					
The decision-making process within the ministry is inclusive and transparent.					
There are power struggles and conflicts that hinder the effectiveness of the strategic plans.					
The organizational structure of the ministry facilitates the effectiveness of the strategic plans.					

Section D: Stakeholder Engagement

6. Please rate the extent to which the following stakeholders are involved in the strategic planning process in your ministry:

Stakeholder	1 (Not Involved)	2 (Minimally Involved)	3 (Moderately Involved)	4 (Highly Involved)	5 (Fully Involved)
Ministry staff					
Citizens					
Civil society organizations					
Private sector					
Other (please specify)					

7. Please rate the effectiveness of your ministry's strategies for engaging stakeholders in the strategic planning process:

Strategy	1 (Not Effective)	2 (Slightly Effective)	3 (Moderately Effective)	4 (Effective)	5 (Very Effective)
Regular meetings/consultation					
Information sharing (reports, websites)					
Participation in decision-making					
Feedback mechanisms					
Other (please specify)					

Section E: Resource Availability

8. Please rate the adequacy of the following resources for implementing your ministry's strategic plans:

Resource	1 (Highly Inadequate)	2 (Inadequate)	3 (Adequate)	4 (More than)	5 (Abundant)

				Adequate)	
Financial					
Human					
Technological					

Section F: Political Interference

9. Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding political interference in effectiveness of strategic plans in your ministry:

Statement	1 (Strongly Disagree)	2 (Disagree)	3 (Neutral)	4 (Agree)	5 (Strongly Agree)
Political interference is a common occurrence in the effectiveness of strategic plans in my ministry.					
Political interference often leads to changes in priorities or resource allocation during effectiveness.					
Political interference negatively impacts the effectiveness of effectiveness of strategic plans.					

Section G: Understanding and Adherence to Strategic plans Goals and Objectives

10. How familiar are you with the goals and objectives outlined in your ministry's strategic plans?

- 1 (Not familiar at all)
- 2 (Slightly familiar)
- 3 (Moderately familiar)
- 4 (Familiar)
- 5 (Very familiar)

11. To what extent do you believe your daily work activities contribute to achieving the goals and objectives of the strategic plans?

- 1 (Not at all)
 - 2 (Very little)
 - 3 (Somewhat)
 - 4 (A lot)
 - 5 (Very much)
- Section H: Open-Ended Questions**

12. Please provide any additional comments or feedback you have on the factors influencing effectiveness of strategic plans in your ministry.

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APPENDIX II: CLEARANCE LETTERS



Ref. No OUT//PG2023000945

23rd August, 2024

Permanent Secretary,
Ministry of Information, Communication and Information Technology,
P.O.Box 677, 40470,
DODOMA.

Dear Permanent Secretary,

**RE: RESEARCH CLEARANCE FOR MR. THADEO CHARLES JAWA REG NO:
PG2023000945**

2. The Open University of Tanzania was established by an Act of Parliament No. 17 of 1992, which became operational on the 1st March 1993 by public notice No.55 in the official Gazette. The Act was however replaced by the Open University of Tanzania Charter of 2005, which became operational on 1st January 2007. In line with the Charter, the Open University of Tanzania mission is to generate and apply knowledge through research.

3. To facilitate and to simplify research process therefore, the act empowers the Vice Chancellor of the Open University of Tanzania to issue research clearance, on behalf of the Government of Tanzania and Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology, to both its staff and students who are doing research in Tanzania. With this brief background, the purpose of this letter is to introduce to you **Mr. Thadeo Charles Jawa**,

Reg.No: PG2023000945), pursuing Masters of Arts in Monitoring and Evaluation (MAME). We here by grant this clearance to conduct a research titled "Factors Influencing Effectiveness of Strategic Plan: A Case of Three Government Ministries in Tanzania". He will collect his data at your Ministry from 26th August 2024 to 30th October 2024.

4. In case you need any further information, kindly do not hesitate to contact the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) of the Open University of Tanzania, P.O.Box 23409, Dar es Salaam. Tel: 022-2-2668820. We lastly thank you in advance for your assumed cooperation and facilitation of this research academic activity.

Yours sincerely,

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA



Prof. Gwahula Raphael Kimamala

For: **VICE CHANCELLOR**

THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA



Ref. No OUT//PG2023000945

23rd August, 2024

Permanent Secretary,
Ministry of Transport,
P.O.Box 638, 40470,
DODOMA.

Dear Permanent Secretary,

**RE: RESEARCH CLEARANCE FOR MR. THADEO CHARLES JAWA REG NO:
PG2023000945**

2. The Open University of Tanzania was established by an Act of Parliament No. 17 of 1992, which became operational on the 1st March 1993 by public notice No.55 in the official Gazette. The Act was however replaced by the Open University of Tanzania Charter of 2005, which became operational on 1st January 2007. In line with the Charter, the Open University of Tanzania mission is to generate and apply knowledge through research.

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Yours sincerely,

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA



Prof. Gwahula Raphael Kimamala

For: **VICE CHANCELLOR**

THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA



Ref. No OUT//PG2023000945

23rd August, 2024

Permanent Secretary,
Ministry of Work,
P.O.Box. 638 40470,
DODOMA.

Dear Permanent Secretary,

**RE: RESEARCH CLEARANCE FOR MR. THADEO CHARLES JAWA REG NO:
PG2023000945**

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Yours sincerely,

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA



Prof. Gwahula Raphael Kimamala

For: **VICE CHANCELLOR**