An assessment of workplace inequalities and employees' productivity in public organizations in Tanzania

Ben Sanga

ben.sanga@yahoo.com

https://orcid.org/0009-0006-5218-8844

The Mwalimu Nyerere Memorial Academy, Tanzania

https://doi.org/10.51867/ajernet.7.2.128

ABSTRACT

Workplace inequality remains a persistent challenge in public organizations, which has not received as much attention, regardless of its consistent nature of undermining employees' motivation, performance, and the overall service delivery. Regardless of Tanzania's efforts to establish workplace policy and legal frameworks, workplace inequality practices persevere. This study examined workplace inequalities and employees' productivity in public organizations in Tanzania. Specifically, the study examined the prevalence, frequency, and effects of workplace inequalities among employees in public organizations in Tanzania. This study is guided by equity theory. The study employed a quantitative research approach and a descriptive-survey research design. The study's population involved 5,000 public employees in Kinondoni Municipality, whereby a sample of 370 employees, gathered through a stratified random sampling technique, was involved in data collection through structured questionnaires. Descriptive statistics were employed to analyze data. The study revealed the presence of a considerable prevalence of workplace inequalities among employees in public organizations in areas of access to training and development opportunities, allowances, benefits, and job promotions. As well, the study found frequent occurrence of inequality practices among employees and that the practice was usual and grew over time. Again, the perceived inequalities affected employees' morale, teamwork, collaboration, and organizational performance overall. The study recommended to the public organizations that they adopt transparent practices of human resource management so as to ensure fairness and equitable opportunities for all employees, such as equal access to training, promotion, and benefits. Other recommendations involved the use of merit-based criteria as a qualification for promotion, allowances, benefits, and training so as to consistently practice fairness among employees.

Keywords: Employees' Productivity, Fairness, Public Organizations, Morale, Workplace Inequality

I. INTRODUCTION

Inequality among employees has been regarded as a significant hindrance towards organizations' successes. Mostly, inequalities among employees are highly observed in government institution as comparing to private sector (Mdope, 2025). Matters relating to fairness, transparence, responsiveness are mention as great matters of concern that creates disparities among employees. Biases among employees extends through factors and areas relating to working experience, age, gender as well as social-demographic factors. The inequalities among employees apparently affects organizations productivity and its general welfare. However, the effects extend beyond organizations expectations. It mostly affects employees' welfares as well in areas of motivation and the overall satisfaction, which in turn, affects attainment of organizations' goals. As argued by Robbins and Judge (2018), fairness among employees has a direct association with increased rate of organization productivity as a result of employees' commitment and dedication towards their jobs. That is to say, organizations prospering highly depends on how well and fairly the employees are treated.

As valuable organizational resource, employees' welfare in regard to fairness, has been a global concern, as organizations around the world strives to resolve the issue as it has direct implication to organizational growth. Varied developed nations including United States of America, Canada, Sweden, United Kingdom and others of the like, have taken multiples mechanism and efforts to ensures inequalities among employees is minimized or totally abolished. As mentioned by Mwita and Kitole (2025), establishment of welfare policies with components such as standardized promotions and equal working environment, among others, has been regarded as key areas towards reaching fairness goal among employees. However, apart from the meaningful struggle to reach fairness standards among employees, inequality problem still persists varying in different levels of severity (Kaaria, 2024). It has been common, as further noted by Kaaria, that workers of the same job experience, skills and educational level to receive different treatments it terms of salary payment, promotion and training opportunities. The problem extends further to the complex employment system including leadership practices, recruitment and selection areas, and the overall culture of the

Licensed Under Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY-NC)

organization. Unresolved employees' matters, particularly those related to inequality cases, has larger implications to increased turnover among employees, stagnations of innovation and creativity among employees and the general reduction of organization productivity. To the larger sense, the general development of the nation is affected as well.

In developing nations and Africa in particular, inequality among employees is rooted to the weaknesses of the structure of organizations in the overall system. Matters relating to favoritism are experienced to be common, with unfair cultural practices and resistance to change as catalysts towards downing portions of employees. The studies by Morara et al. (2019), Ogah and Akinbo (2024) done in Kenya and Nigeria respectively, demonstrated that common unfair treatment among employees, with divergent level of severity, were not far from uneven salaries, low level of acknowledgement for the employees' good performance or contribution and denial of access to decision making. Opportunity for career and professional advancement through training and development, was, as well, termed as an obstacle. Normally, lack of accountability and resistance to undertake organizational restructuring tend to avoid organizational alterations as far as fair treatment among employees is concerned. The named concerned rises the clear need for examining the varying forms of employees' inequalities in public institutions. The knowledge plays an informing role towards restructuring and reforming organizational and human resource systems as far as fairness among employees is considered.

Tanzania has made a tremendous effort to address inequality related matters among employees in public organizations. Some of the steps taken involves formulation of laws and policies geared at safeguarding fairness and equal treatment among employees. As the mother laws, the Costitution of the United Republic of Tanzania (1977) has evidently demonstrated for equal opportunity in public sector. This is as well cemented by Tanzania's National Employment Policy of 2008 and the Public Service Regulations, with all of them promoting equal opportunities for public employees. However, the mentioned efforts by Tanzania have been perceived to bring less results. Practices such as unequal benefits, delayed promotions, unclear performance evaluation were noted by Public Service Commission (2022) to be common. These scenarios make serious concerns about the need for examining employees' inequalities in public organizations and how it affects their productivity in consideration of attainment of organizational goals and the general development.

Despite the esteemed steps effort by Tanzania's government in laws, policies and through regulations, inequality among employees in public sectors has been sadly persevering ununiformly. While some employees face barriers relating promotions and lack of access to professional development and training, others experiences limitations in decision making opportunities and favoritism (Kubota & Zeufack 2020; Kitole, 2025). Workplace inequalities as revealed by Public Service Commission (2022) remain a critical concern that demands serious examination. This is because, the matter not only impacts specific employees' welfares, but goes beyond to determining organizational destinies and national development at large, as any developed nation is assumed to be a result of equality of its people, including workers.

Organizational performance and fairness among workers are 'two sides of the same coin'. As other factors remain constant, workers who are valued, having higher sense of recognition, with equal chance of various opportunities in work places, are normally tending to increase level of their dedication and love to their jobs (Armstrong, 2017; Laulié & Morgeson, 2021). These situations, in turn, benefits organizations. It is hazardous for any organization with higher rates of inequalities among employees, as acts of the same results to diminishing morale, trust, damage organizational performance. Since, Tanzania, holds laws, policies and guidelines gearing at ensuring equal opportunities in public sector, the real practices as of the said directives are less known. Knowledge of the real practice in public sector on matters relating to inequality among employees is imperative for developing interventions gearing at advocating fairness among employees which results to organizational effectiveness.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Several efforts ranging from establishment of legislative measures such as Employment and Labor Relation Act of 2004 to national equity policies has been done to promote equity and fairness in public sector in Tanzania. The established mechanisms aimed at guaranteeing fair treatment, equal opportunities among employees and transparent human resource practices as well. These concerns are dreams and target of every organization which fosters for growth and development. However, the acts relating to unequal payment, unfair promotions, less involvement in decision making processed, unequal friendly working environment and limited access to processional development has yet been evident in many public organizations. These unfair treatment among employees are not only limited to the previously mentioned scenarios, but also extends to other cases such as biased allowances, benefits and workload allocations. These inequalities factually present presence of a vacuum between the demand of a policy and the actual execution. The situation brough serious doubt of the extent to which government and institutional structures are effective, in consideration to equality among employees.

Essentially, the same level of inequality practices among employees, replicates the level of organizational performance as well. This authenticity was advocated in the studies by Mdope (2025) and Urassa et al. (2024) that employees who experience unfair treatment, in most cases, reduces their rates of job satisfaction and morale, as well

Licensed Under Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY-NC)

as lessening their commitments at work. Going beyond workers levels, at institutional level as well, unfair treatment of employees may result to poor service delivery, which, in turns, weakens the overall organizational efficiency and ultimately leads to loss of public trust.

The given realities present the fact that fairness in working places in imperative. However, clear knowledge of the types, prevalence and nature, frequence and effects of employees' inequalities in public organizations in Tanzania has been less available, higher needed and the intention of the current study. Examining inequality challenges and their impact to employees' productivity gives informed knowledge and increases awareness to the policy makers, organizational managers, employees and the associated stakeholders on the necessity of putting the strong 'eye' to the particular concern.

1.2 Research Objectives

i. To examine the prevalence and nature of workplace inequalities among employees in public organizations in Kinondoni Municipality, Tanzania
ii. To determine the extent and frequency of employees' inequalities in public organizations in Kinondoni Municipality, Tanzania.
iii. To assess the effects of employees' inequalities on employees' productivity in public organizations in Kinondoni Municipality, Tanzania.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

This study is guided by Equity Theory (Adams, 1965). The theory propounds that employees assess fairness of their treatment as of the comparison to their input–output ratios with their colleagues. As further explained by the theory, input components involve effort, skills and experience, while commitment is marked as a counterpart component as well. On the other hand, output components are regarded as issues relating to rewards, recognition, promotions and professional opportunities as well. In addition, the theory believes that, the expected results of unequal payment, limited access of training and biased workload allocation, among other things, is the increased level of employees' dissatisfaction, reduced motivation and decline of the general performance, a situation which is not favorable for an organization. Emphatically, inequalities among employees highly reduced the balance between employees' contributions and that of the rewards they receive, as of the propound of the current theory. The imbalance may obviously lead to determination of employees' behavior as well as their commitment in tasks of the organization.

Equity Theory has been employed in this study as it provides framework that examines the available relationship between perceived inequality among employees and the expected performance in public organizations. The current theory, as well, assist in the process of determining the extent to which employees' perceptions of unfairness in pay and promotions, and even the treatment they receive, can undermine motivation and reduce their overall contribution to organizational goals, which are outermost desired. The present study, therefore, employed the current theory as a relevant framework which to examine the inequality among employees and how it affects employees' commitment to work and their general performance at large while asserting justice as a catalyst to reach the named targets.

2.2 Empirical Review

The study examined on the prevalence and nature of workplace inequalities within public organizations. In their studies, Armstrong (2017), Laulié and Morgeson (2021) revealed presence of unfair treatment. Both studies further explored that unequal access to training opportunities has fostered the feelings of exclusion and undervaluation among employees. Such experience has gradually eroded not only morale of employees. Organizational trustworthiness in the 'eyes' of the public, though less directly, was affected as well. Armstrong and Morgeson et al. limitedly examined on consequences of employees' inequalities in the aspects of behavior and emotions. However, the attention to the ways in which the particular employees' disparities are reflected or affecting institutional structures was less incorporated, to the extent that the current study geared at intervening the same.

Further, the studies by Mnasi et al. (2022), indicated presence of dissatisfaction among numbers of employees with regards to how the organizational management treat them in comparison to some few favored number co-workers. The imbalance treatment was, as stated by Mnasi et al., experienced in areas of allowances, staff promotion, and favoritism cases. Management, in addition, was reported to be less responsible for the said allegations in terms of taking measures. Salim (2023), in concurrence with Mnasi et al., found a similar experience whereby, employees were noted to lose hope and trust to institutions' management over the continued inequality activities. The named studies, however, put less focus on examining the present institutional mechanisms and actual management practices of diminishing inequalities among employees, as the focus of the current study.

Licensed Under Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY-NC)

As well, the study reviewed on extent and frequency of employees' inequalities in public organizations. In their study, Silidion and Rutenge (2024) found out that employees in local government authorities in Tanzania were, to the larger extent, claimed to experience favoritism along with unequal access to professional development opportunities as the key hindrances to their job progresses. As dominant areas affecting their daily employment livelihood, such inequalities strongly undermined sense of motivation and job commitment. Particular experiences were reported by International Labour Organization (2020) that perceptions of inequality that rises within public institutions were linked to the fallen commitment among employees while accelerating the rates of employees' turnover. Collectively, the studies by Silidion, Rutenge and ILO agreed that workplace inequalities occur frequently and with substantial effect to the welfare of employees. However, the named studies' scope left aside the quantification of prevalence of inequalities along with frequence of occurrence which marked the purpose of a current study.

On examination the effect of employees' inequalities on productivity in public organizations, studies had concurring issues to reveal. Shaib and Bulengela (2024)'s study found that portions of employees significantly lost a sense of attachment to the organization and their personal motivation was devastated. The situation, as further reported by the study, was influence by unequal treatment practices. The same observation was given by World Bank (2012) who found that inequality of opportunity among employees restricted the sense of togetherness and commitment, which the study suggests that access to resource and lower career advancement worsened the situation. Along with studies by Shaib and Bulengela (2024) and World Bank (2012), Van Zyl (2017) was not different as well, suggesting that employees in South African organizations 'cried' of underpayment situation and unequal compensation practice which were common, which resulted to decline of productivity among employees. The study, however, focused much on the overall effects of employees' inequality in productivity, while little was said on specific matters relating to how inequality may specifically hinder teamwork and collaboration. The current study worked on a particular study gap.

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Study Approach and Design

This study adopted a quantitative research approach to investigate employees' inequalities and their effects on performance in public organizations. Quantitative research enables the systematic measurement of variables and the use of statistical techniques to analyze patterns and relationships (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). As well, the study employed descriptive-survey design. According to Stangor (2011), descriptive-survey designs allow researchers to collect data from a large population to provide a detailed snapshot of existing conditions and trends without manipulating variables. This design facilitates the collection of first-hand information from employees regarding disparities in promotions, training, workload allocation, and recognition. The design also allowed capturing of perceptions of how the named inequalities influenced motivation, engagement, and overall performance in public organizations.

3.2 Study Area

The study was conducted in Kinondoni Municipality, located in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Kinondoni was selected due to its socio-economic significance, institutional diversity, and high concentration of public sector employees. As one of the largest municipalities in Tanzania, Kinondoni has a population of over 1.7 million people (National Bureau of Statistics [NBS], 2022), making it a hub of service delivery and administrative functions that demand a large workforce across sectors such as education, health, and local governance. This diversity, apparently, offers a rich ground for analyzing inequalities in promotions, training opportunities, workload allocation, as well as participation in decision-making. Moreover, existing studies have revealed persistent challenges in public administration within Kinondoni. For instance, Pundu (2018) observed that fragmented implementation of performance management systems reduces fairness and accountability. Similarly, Marijani (2016) emphasized structural and managerial shortcomings that limit effective employee engagement. Such evidence demonstrates that Kinondoni reflects broader patterns of inequality in Tanzania's public sector. As well, the selected study areas provide a worthy strategic case for exploring how workplace disparities affect employees' performance and institutional outcomes.

3.3 Target Population

Population of the study involved an estimation of 5,000 salaried public employees working under Kinondoni Municipal Council. These includes; municipal headquarters, ward offices, and frontline service units such as public schools and health facilities. As such, the populated employees involved permanent and fixed-term staff across core functions such as administration/human resources, finance and planning, health, education, works/engineering, community development, procurement, and internal audit at three job levels; namely senior/management, middle-level supervisors, and frontline officers. The study excluded outsourced personnel such as; security and cleaning under private contracts, interns and purely volunteer staff.

Licensed Under Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY-NC)

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

The study used a stratified random sampling technique to select respondents from the population of public employees in Kinondoni Municipality, Tanzania. The population was stratified by department/function, namely; administration and human resources, finance and planning, education, health, works/engineering, community development, procurement, and internal audit and by job bands (senior/management, middle-level supervisors, and frontline staff). Stratification ensured that all departments and hierarchical levels were proportionally represented, by capturing variations in workplace inequalities across different roles. Within each stratum, respondents were selected using simple random sampling from official staff lists provided by the Municipal Human Resource Department. Then, proportional allocation was applied to determine the number of employees sampled from each stratum, ensuring that the sample reflected the composition of the population. This method enhanced the representativeness of the data and allowed for reliable analysis of the prevalence, nature, and effects of employee inequalities on productivity within the public service in the study area.

The sample size for the study was 370 respondents as shown in Table 1. The sample size for the study was determined using Yamane's (1967) formula, whereby, finite populations at a 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error were considered:

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

where n is the sample size, N is the population size (5,000), and e is the level of precision (0.05). Substituting the values, the calculation was as follows:

$$\frac{5{,}000}{1 + 5{,}000(0.05^2)} = \frac{5{,}000}{1 + 12.5} = \frac{5{,}000}{13.5} = 370$$

Following the stratified random sampling procedure, the total sample was proportionally allocated across the various departments and job bands. The number of respondents per stratum was calculated using the formula:

$$n_h = \frac{N_h}{N} \times n$$

where n_h represents the sample size for each stratum, N_h is the population of the stratum, N is the total population, and n is the total sample size. This approach ensured that all departments and hierarchical levels were adequately represented, providing reliable and generalizable data for analyzing workplace inequalities and their impact on employees' productivity.

Table 1

Sample Allocation by Department and Job Levels

Department/ Function	Total Employees (N_h)	Sample Size (n_h)	Senior/ Management	Middle-level	Frontline Staff
Administration/HR	590	44	10	14	20
Finance & Planning	510	38	9	12	17
Education	1,190	88	20	29	39
Health	910	67	15	22	30
Works/Engineering	480	35	8	11	16
Community Development	410	31	7	9	15
Procurement	310	23	5	8	10
Internal Audit	500	34	9	15	10
Total	**5,000**	**370**	**83**	**120**	**167**

3.5 Data Collection Methods and Procedures

Data for the study were collected using a structured questionnaire administered to the selected respondents across departments and job bands/levels. The questionnaire captured information on workplace inequalities such as promotions, training opportunities, allowances and perceptions of fairness and the effects to employees' performance. The instrument was pre-tested on a small group of employees from a neighboring municipality to ensure clarity and reliability. After collection, the data were coded and entered into SPSS version 26 for processing.

3.6 Data Analysis

Data were analyzed by descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages on the prevalence and nature of inequalities, the frequency and effects of employees' inequalities on employee's productivity. The findings were presented using tables and narrative summaries to provide a clear understanding of the effects of inequality on employees' productivity.

Licensed Under Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY-NC)

3.7 Ethical Consideration

The researcher adhered to established ethical principles throughout the study. Prior to data collection, permission to conduct the research was obtained from the relevant authorities. Participants were fully informed about the purpose of the study and took part voluntarily after providing informed consent. Confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained, with participants' identities and responses kept private and used solely for academic purposes.

IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

4.1 Findings

4.1.1 The Prevalence and Nature of Workplace Inequalities Among Employees

The study examined prevalence and nature of workplace inequalities among employees in public organizations in the study area. specifically, the study examined on inequality in access to training and development opportunities, inequality in access to allowances and benefits and inequality in job promotion. The mentioned areas are presented underneath.

The study made an assessment on the inequality in access to training and development opportunities among employees in the study areas. The findings in Table 2 indicate varying perceptions of inequality in access to training and development among employees. A combined 54% of respondents reported high (34%) or very high (20%) levels of perceived inequality, suggesting that more than half of the workforce experienced significant disparities in training opportunities. meanwhile, 25% of respondents perceived no (8%) or minor (17%) inequality, indicating that a smaller proportion felt fairly treated in this regard. The remaining 20% perceived moderate inequality, reflecting some awareness of disparities without considering them extreme.

Table 2

Perception of Inequality in Access to Training and Development

Response	Frequency	Percentage
No Inequality	31	8%
Minor Inequality	63	17%
Moderate Inequality	76	20%
High Inequality	126	34%
Very High Inequality	74	20%
Total	**370**	**100%**

As well, the study's findings show that a considerable proportion of employees perceived inequalities in the allocation of allowances and benefits. As shown in Table 3, about 52% of respondents (high inequality 32% and very high inequality 20%) indicated that disparities were pronounced, suggesting that access to allowances and benefits was not fairly distributed across the workforce. Meanwhile, 22% perceived a moderate level of inequality, while only 26% (no inequality 7% and minor inequality 19%) believed that benefits were distributed fairly or with minimal disparity.

Table 3

Perception of Inequality in Access to Allowances and Benefits

Response Option	Frequency	Percentage
No Inequality	26	7%
Minor Inequality	70	19%
Moderate Inequality	81	22%
High Inequality	118	32%
Very High Inequality	75	20%
Total	**370**	**100%**

The study, similarly, examined on respondents' perception on nature and prevalence of inequalities in job promotions in the study area. As shown in Table 4, the study found that a significant proportion of employees, amounting to 52% (32% high inequality and 20% very high inequality), perceived substantial disparities in job promotions, indicating that advancement opportunities were not fairly distributed. Another 22% of respondents reported moderate inequality, reflecting some awareness of imbalances without considering them extreme. Only 25% (10% no inequality and 15% minor inequality) felt that promotions were administered fairly.

Licensed Under Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY-NC)

Table 4

Perception of Inequality in Job Promotion

Response Option	Frequency	Percentage
No Inequality	37	10%
Minor Inequality	56	15%
Moderate Inequality	81	22%
High Inequality	118	32%
Very High Inequality	74	20%
Total	**370**	**100%**

4.1.2 The Extent and Frequency of Employees' Inequalities in Public Organizations

The study assessed the extent and frequency of employees' inequalities in public organizations in the study area. Specifically, the study examined on frequency of unequal treatment in the workplace, perceived changes in inequality over time. The mentioned areas are presented hereafter. The study investigated how frequently employees experience unequal treatment in the workplace. As indicated in Table 5, a considerable number of employees reported recurring experiences of inequality. The study revealed that 36% of respondents stated that unequal treatment occurs often in their workplaces, and likewise, 22% indicated that unequal treatment occurs always. Meanwhile, 17% of respondents experienced unequal treatment sometimes, 19% rarely, and only 07% reported that they never experienced unequal treatment.

Table 5

Frequency of Unequal Treatment in the Workplace

Response Category	Frequency	Percentage
Never	26	7%
Rarely	70	19%
Sometimes	63	17%
Often	133	36%
Always	78	22%
Total	**370**	**100%**

The study was as well interested to assess employees' perceptions regarding changes in workplace inequality over time. As shown in Table 6, a notable proportion of employees reported that inequality has increased, with a combined 55% indicating slight or significant increases. Conversely, 27% perceived a decrease of workplace inequality over time, while 19% felt that the situation remained unchanged. These results are generally suggesting that many employees view inequality as a growing concern within the organization.

Table 6

Perceptions of Changes in Workplace Inequality Over Time

Response Category	Frequency	Percentage
Significantly Decreased	44	12%
Slightly Decreased	56	15%
Remained Unchanged	70	19%
Slightly Increased	115	31%
Significantly Increased	89	24%
Total	**370**	**100%**

4.1.3 The Effect of Employees' Inequalities on Employees' Productivity

The study assessed the effect of employees' inequalities on employees' productivity in Public Organizations in Kinondoni Municipality, Tanzania. Specifically, the study examined on the effect of inequality on employee morale and motivation, teamwork and collaboration and employees' productivity. The mentioned areas are presented beneath. The study examined on the effects of inequalities in the working place on employees' morale and motivation. As shown in Table 7, a significant proportion of employees, amounting to 62% (37% high effect and 25% very high effect), indicated that workplace inequality had a strong negative effect on their morale and motivation. Additionally, 19% reported a moderate effect, suggesting that some employees experienced noticeable but less severe consequences. Only 19% (5% no effect and 14% minor effect) perceived little to no impact on their morale. Overall, these findings highlight that workplace inequality significantly influences employee engagement, motivation, and overall organizational performance.

Licensed Under Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY-NC)

Table 7
Effect of Inequality on Employee Morale and Motivation

Response	Frequency	Percentage
No Effect	19	5%
Minor Effect	52	14%
Moderate Effect	70	19%
High Effect	137	37%
Very High Effect	92	25%
Total	**370**	**100%**

Similarly, the study examined on the effect of inequality among employees on their teamwork and collaborations. As shown in Table 8, the findings indicate that workplace inequality has a considerable effect on teamwork and collaboration among employees. A substantial proportion of respondents, 56% (31% high effect and 25% very high effect), reported that inequality significantly hindered collaboration within teams. An additional 19% indicated a moderate effect, suggesting that some employees experienced noticeable challenges in cooperative work. Only 25% (8% no effect and 17% minor effect) perceived little to no disruption to teamwork and collaborations in work places.

Table 8
Effect of Inequality on Teamwork and Collaboration

Response Category	Frequency	Percentage
No Effect	30	8%
Minor Effect	63	17%
Moderate Effect	70	19%
High Effect	115	31%
Very High Effect	92	25%
Total	**370**	**100%**

Likewise, the study assessed the effect of inequality within working places on the general employees' productivity. The results, as indicated in Table 9 show that workplace inequality has a notable effect on employees' productivity. A significant proportion of respondents, 61% (36% high effect and 25% very high effect), reported that perceived inequalities substantially reduced their ability to perform effectively. Another 17% indicated a moderate effect, suggesting noticeable but less severe productivity challenges. Only 22% (7% no effect and 15% minor effect) perceived little to no impact on their work output.

Table 9
Effect of Inequality on Employees' Productivity

Response Category	Frequency	Percentage
No Effect	26	7%
Minor Effect	56	15%
Moderate Effect	63	17%
High Effect	133	36%
Very High Effect	92	25%
Total	**370**	**100%**

4.2 Discussion

The findings of this study revealed presence of a considerable prevalence of workplace inequalities among employees in public organizations in the study area. In particular, the prevalence was mostly witnessed in areas of access to training and development opportunities. Allowances, benefits, and job promotions were, as well, other inequality areas experienced. More than half of the respondents, as noted by the current study, experienced high or very high levels of inequality in the mentioned areas. This indicated that either of the opportunities or rewards, or both of them, were not distributed equitably to all employees. Similar findings were reported by Muhoho and Mhina (2023). Muhoho and Mhina reported that 58 percent of employees in Arusha City Council believed that training opportunities offered to them were purposely allocated based on favoritism rather than merit, a situation which made them demoralized. Mnasi et al. (2022) as well, posed similar scenarios as of that of Muhoho and Mhina. Mnasi et al. noted presence of dissatisfaction among 61 percent of employees with regard to unfair management of allowances and benefits. In revealing the severity of the case, Mwita and Kitole (2025), Salim (2023), Armstrong, (2017), Laulié and

Licensed Under Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY-NC)

Morgeson, (2021) as well, 'came front' to reveal that inequitable practices among employees were consistent, with high frequency in areas of promotion practices. The results of the current study and that of the named literatures are probably facilitated by lower levels of economies in developing countries, which affects institutional financial capacities as comparing to the employees' demand, to the extent that few employees are unfairly favored while majority remains uncorroborated. Weak institutional structures may as well contribute to inequality practices.

On the other step, the study found that inequalities among employees occur frequently as it was not the matter of single instance. Majority of respondents reported that unequal treatment was a usual practice and at least everyone has ever experienced the same and inequality grew over time. These findings are consistent with Silidion and Rutenge (2024), who found inequality among employees as a normal practice and growing higher and higher as days go. Similarly, Kitole (2025) mentioned presence of gender-based inequalities in most of institutions. The study by Kaaria (2024) cemented the current study's findings by noting presence of employees' disengagement in public sector, a situation facilitated by increasing level of unfair treatment which results to minimal productivity. These results from the current study and that from the named scholars are obviously due to the continued organizational cultures which considers inequality as normal, while unknowingly, the impact to organizational performance in general and the image to the public, is detrimental.

In an assessment of effects of employees' inequalities on employees' productivity in public organizations, the findings showed that the perceived inequalities contributed to morale, teamwork and collaboration. Further, the disparity reached to imparting the overall organizational performance. Similar findings were concurrently reported by Shaib and Bulengela (2024) and World Bank (2012) who found that unequal treatment in public institutions was not only a serious challenge. Unfair treatment of employees reduced their motivation and denial to passionately attach themselves to their organizations. Likewise, the studies additionally, demonstrated that inequality among employees of the same organizations minimized their working spirit, creativity and innovation, and hence, their organizations remain stagnant. Overall, the findings of the current study and others of the supportive studies suggest, suggest that, workplace inequalities weaken productivity at both, individual employees, organizations and nation at large, which is not a desirable state. It is of the notable action that equitable treatment, transparent management, and inclusive governance in public organizations would certainly lead to desired organizations.

V. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

This study assessed workplace inequalities and employees' productivity in public organizations in Tanzania. Specifically, the study examined the prevalence, frequency and effects of workplace inequalities on employees' productivity. The study found presence of a considerable prevalence of workplace inequalities among employees in public organizations, while the practice was frequency taking place. Besides, actions such as inequalities in training and development, allowances, benefits and promotions were common. The mentioned inequalities, undeniably, contributed negatively to the employee's morale and teamwork as well as the general organization performance. The results suggest the need for the existing laws and policies to promote equality and general fairness among employees. Besides, the recommended directives should clearly be reflected in actual practices within organizations and that fairness among employees should not only be theoretical, but practical experience.

5.2 Recommendation

Basing on the findings of the study, several recommendations were proposed, including; public organizations to adopt transparent practices of human resource management so as to ensure fairness and equitable opportunities for all employees, such equal access of training, promotion and benefits. Other recommendations involve the use of merit-based criteria as a qualification for promotion, allowances, benefits and training, and not otherwise, so as to consistently practice fairness along the pool of organizational employees. As well, organizational management should strengthen and promote the culture of fairness, while maintaining employees' commitment, morale and increasing a sense of belongingness and attachment to the organization. Further research might explore on specific workers traits such as age, sex, working experience and professional diversities and how they influence workplace inequalities in public organizations.

Declaration of Interest

The author declares that he does not have any known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Funding Declaration

This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Licensed Under Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY-NC)

REFERENCES

Adams, J. S. (1965). Inequity in social exchange. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology, 2*, 267–299. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601(08)60108-2

Armstrong, M. (2017). *Armstrong's handbook of human resource management practice* (14th ed.). Kogan Page.

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.

International Labour Organization. (2020). *World employment and social outlook: Trends 2020*. International Labour Office. https://www.ilo.org/wesodata

Kaaria, A. G. (2024). Essential human resource metrics and analytics for sustainable work environments: Literature mapping and conceptual synthesis. *East African Journal of Business and Economics, 7*(1), 241–262. https://doi.org/10.37284/eajbe.7.1.1976

Kitole, F. A. (2025). Gender inequity in employment and wage disparities in Tanzania's mega construction projects: A case of the Standard Gauge Railway. *Discover Global Society, 3*, 48. https://doi.org/10.1007/s44282-025-00193-6

Kubota, M., & Zeufack, A. (2020). *Assessing the returns on investment in data openness and transparency* (Policy Research Working Paper No. 9139). World Bank. https://hdl.handle.net/10986/33295

Laulié, L., & Morgeson, F. P. (2021). The end is just the beginning: Turnover events and their impact on those who remain. *Personnel Psychology, 74*(3), 387–409. https://doi.org/10.1111/peps.12422

Marijani, R. (2016). *Decentralization and service delivery in local government authorities in Tanzania: A case of Kinondoni Municipal Council and Ulanga District Council* (Doctoral dissertation). University of Dar es Salaam Institutional Repository.

Mdope, D. L. (2025). Job satisfaction and employee performance in Tanzania: A study of Tanzania Institute of Education. *International Journal of Scientific Research and Management, 13*(4), 2216–2223. https://doi.org/10.18535/ijsrm/v13i04.sh01

Mnasi, H. M., Matoka, C., & Raphael, G. (2022). Mentoring practices and employee performance in local government authority, Tanzania. *Asian Research Journal of Arts & Social Sciences, 18*(4), 58–68. https://doi.org/10.9734/ARJASS/2022/v18i4403

Morara, G., Gachunga, H., Odhiambo, R., & Muchiri, R. (2019). Influence of workers' environment on equity in human resource practices in Kenya's public sector: The moderating role of organization climate. *Strategic Journal of Business & Change Management, 6*(1), 257–269.

Muhoho, J. E., & Mhina, J. A. (2023). Factors influencing community development professionals' performance at workplace in Northern Tanzania: A case of selected local government councils. *Asian Journal of Education and Social Studies, 49*(3), 53–60. https://doi.org/10.9734/AJESS/2023/v49i31134

Mwita, K. M., & Kitole, F. A. (2025). Assessing the impacts of organizational promotion policies on job satisfaction across public and private institutions in Tanzania. *Discover Psychology, 5*, 63. https://doi.org/10.1007/s44202-025-00405-9

National Bureau of Statistics [NBS]. (2022). *2022 population and housing census: Initial results*. United Republic of Tanzania.

Ogah, U. S., & Akinbo, T. M. (2024). Exploring promotion practices, impact on public servants' commitment, efficiency, responsiveness, and goal attainment in Nigeria. *World Journal of Advanced Research and Reviews, 24*(2), 2557–2571. https://doi.org/10.30574/wjarr.2024.24.2.3475

Public Service Commission. (2022). *Integrity survey report in Tanzania public service*. President's Office, Public Service Management and Good Governance.

Pundu, D. J. (2018). *Grappling with the performance management systems in the Tanzanian local government authorities: The case of Kinondoni Municipal Council* (Master's thesis). University of Dar es Salaam Library Repository.

Robbins, S. P., & Judge, T. A. (2018). *Organizational behavior* (18th global ed.). Pearson Education.

Salim, P. D. (2023). *The effect of on-the-job training on employees' job satisfaction in Tanzanian public institutions: A case of Police Criminal Investigation Unit in Morogoro Region* (Master's thesis). The Open University of Tanzania. https://repository.out.ac.tz/4169/

Shaib, A., & Bulengela, G. S. (2024). Does staff training influence employees' performance? Some reflections from Kigamboni Municipal Council, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. *Management and Economics Research Journal, 10*(1), 1–13. https://doi.org/10.18639/MERJ.2024.9900084

Silidion, B. D., & Rutenge, M. (2024). Exploring employees' perception of the effectiveness of Public Employees' Performance Management Information System: A case of the Judiciary of Tanzania. *African Journal of Empirical Research, 5*(4), 1188–1196. https://doi.org/10.51867/ajernet.5.4.97

Stangor, C. (2011). *Principles of social psychology*. FlatWorld Knowledge.

Licensed Under Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY-NC)

Urassa, A., Chaligha, A., & Kisasa, L. (2024). Assessment of socio-economic factors affecting the performance of local government employees in Tanzania: A case of Temeke Municipal Council. *International Journal of Advance Research and Innovative Ideas in Education, 10*(6), 532–555.

United Republic of Tanzania. (1977). *The Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania, 1977* (as amended). Government Printer. https://www.chragg.go.tz/uploads/documents/sw-1775046244-en-1722430404-8.%20Constitution_of_the_United_Republic_of_Tanzania_en%20%281%29.pdf

Van Zyl, G. (2017). The impact of in-house training on the diversity dimensions of employee productivity in the South African workplace. *Journal of Economic and Financial Sciences, 10*(1), 160–175. https://doi.org/10.4102/jef.v10i1.11

World Bank. (2012). *World development report 2012: Gender equality and development*. World Bank.

Yamane, T. (1967). *Statistics: An introductory analysis* (2nd ed.). Harper & Row.

Licensed Under Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY-NC)