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Monitoring and Evaluation Staff Training Practices and the institutional performance of East African Christian College in Rwanda

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Abstract
This study examined the influence of monitoring and evaluation staff training on the institutional performance of East African Christian College in Rwanda. Grounded in human capital theory, systems theory, logic model theory, and the resource-based view, the study adopted a convergent mixed-methods design. Data were collected from 89 respondents using questionnaires, interviews, and document review, and analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation, multiple regression, and thematic analysis. Results suggest that M&E staff training (B = 0.038, p = 0.542) was not statistically significant in influencing institutional performance, although it maintained a positive relationship with performance outcomes. This implies that while training is important, its effect may depend on how well it is integrated with other M&E systems and institutional processes. The study recommends that staff training should still be maintained and aligned with broader institutional systems to maximize its impact. Finally, the study suggests that future research should extend to other higher learning institutions and incorporate additional variables such as leadership, and organizational culture to provide a more comprehensive understanding of determinants of institutional performance.

Keywords: ***Monitoring and Evaluation, Staff Training, Institutional Performance, Higher Education, East African Christian College.***

1. Introduction

1.1 Background to the Study

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) has increasingly become an important mechanism for strengthening institutional performance, accountability, and evidence-based decision-making. In higher education institutions, M&E enables management to track institutional activities, assess progress against planned objectives, identify performance gaps, and use evidence to improve academic and administrative processes. However, the effectiveness of M&E systems depends substantially on the capacity of personnel responsible for monitoring, collecting, analysing, interpreting, and reporting institutional performance information. The World Bank (2022) emphasizes the contribution of effective M&E systems to institutional effectiveness, while the OECD (2021) highlights evaluation capacity as an important element of organizational learning, accountability, and continuous improvement.

M&E staff training refers to the development and strengthening of competencies among personnel responsible for M&E functions. Such training may cover areas such as data collection, indicator development, data analysis, performance measurement, report preparation, results-based management, and the use of M&E findings for decision-making. Adequately trained personnel are better positioned to generate reliable performance information and communicate findings that can support institutional planning and improvement. In higher education, this capacity is particularly important because institutional performance encompasses several dimensions, including

academic quality, staff performance, student services, administrative efficiency, research, and resource utilization.

International experience demonstrates the growing integration of M&E and institutional research within higher education. In the United States, for example, higher education institutions use institutional research and evaluation functions to support programme evaluation, student learning assessment, and quality assurance (Banta & Blaich, 2021). Similarly, South African universities have developed institutional data and evaluation capacities to strengthen evidence-based decision-making, although challenges associated with limited resources and technical capacity remain (Badat & Sayed, 2021; Motala & Vally, 2023). These experiences demonstrate that the availability of competent personnel is an important consideration in the effective institutionalization of M&E.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, however, M&E systems in higher education continue to face challenges associated with limited funding, technical expertise, and institutional capacity (African Union, 2021; Ojedeji & Dzanku, 2022). Where M&E personnel lack adequate training, monitoring activities may become predominantly compliance-oriented, limiting their contribution to institutional learning and performance improvement. In Kenya, for instance, M&E has increasingly been incorporated into institutional performance systems, although some institutions continue to experience difficulties in transforming M&E information into organizational learning and improvement (Makokha & Odundo, 2022).

In Rwanda, results-based management has been promoted across public institutions, including the education sector, while the Higher Education Council emphasizes internal quality assurance and institutional performance mechanisms (HEC, 2022; Republic of Rwanda, 2023). Nevertheless, the dissertation identifies capacity limitations as a continuing concern among private and faith-based higher education institutions. Pasted text Against this background, M&E staff training becomes particularly relevant to understanding how institutions can strengthen their capacity to generate and utilize performance evidence.

1.2 Problem Statement

Despite the increasing emphasis on M&E and institutional performance in higher education, challenges remain in ensuring that M&E personnel possess adequate skills and competencies to effectively perform their responsibilities. The original study identifies weaknesses in M&E systems among private and faith-based higher education institutions in Rwanda, including limited resources, inadequate M&E capacity, and inconsistent practical application of M&E beyond basic performance indicators. Pasted text These challenges may limit the ability of institutions to collect reliable performance information, identify operational weaknesses, and use evidence to support managerial decisions.

At East African Christian College (EACC), the effectiveness of M&E staff training is therefore an important issue because the competence of M&E personnel may determine the quality and usefulness of institutional performance information. Insufficient training may result in weaknesses in data management, performance measurement, analysis, reporting, and utilization of M&E findings. Such weaknesses can potentially affect academic quality, operational efficiency, accountability, and overall institutional effectiveness. Although previous studies have discussed M&E capacity in higher education, limited empirical attention has been given specifically to the relationship between M&E staff training and institutional performance in private and faith-based higher education institutions in Rwanda. This research paper therefore addresses the need for empirical evidence on whether investment in M&E staff training is associated with improved institutional performance at EACC. The study focuses exclusively on this relationship rather than examining the other M&E practices contained in the original dissertation.

1.3 Objective of the Study

To determine the influence of M&E staff training on the institutional performance of East African Christian College in Rwanda. Pasted text

1.4 Research Hypothesis

H_{01}: M&E staff training has no significant influence on the institutional performance of East African Christian College in Rwanda. Pasted tex.

Chapter Two: Review of Related Literature

2.1. Empirical Literature Review

In the United States, Johnson and Lee (2022) examined the relationship between M&E staff training and institutional performance in 150 public and private universities. The study aimed to determine whether professional development in evaluation competencies improved data use and strategic decision-making. Using a mixed-methods explanatory sequential design, the researchers first surveyed 300 M&E and institutional research staff and then conducted in-depth interviews with 30 administrators. Data were collected via an online questionnaire adapted from the American Evaluation Association's competencies framework and semi-structured interview guides. Quantitative data were analyzed using multiple regression, while qualitative data underwent thematic analysis. The findings revealed that institutions where M&E staff received formal, recurrent training reported 37% higher rates of evidence-informed budgeting and strategic planning. Johnson and Lee (2022) concluded that targeted M&E capacity building significantly enhances institutional performance, particularly in data-driven governance.

In Switzerland, Müller and Schneider (2021) investigated how evaluation capacity development influenced performance in higher education institutions. The study's objective was to assess whether certified M&E training programs improved performance monitoring in Swiss universities of applied sciences. Employing a quasi-experimental design, the researchers compared 12 institutions that participated in a national M&E training initiative (intervention group) with 12 matched institutions that did not (control group). The sample included 144 academic and administrative staff. Data were collected through pre- and post-intervention performance dashboards and structured staff surveys. Analysis involved difference-in-differences (DiD) modeling and ANOVA. Results showed that trained institutions demonstrated a 28% improvement in the timeliness and accuracy of performance reporting over 18 months, along with stronger integration of evaluation findings into program reviews. Müller and Schneider (2021) concluded that structured M&E training directly strengthens institutional performance by enhancing data literacy and accountability cultures.

In India, Patel and Rao (2023) explored the impact of M&E training on institutional effectiveness in 40 private universities across Maharashtra and Karnataka. The study aimed to determine whether short-term M&E workshops influenced institutional accreditation outcomes. Using a cross-sectional survey design, the researchers collected data from 200 M&E coordinators and quality assurance officers. Instruments included a self-administered questionnaire on training exposure and document review of National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) scores. Data were analyzed using Pearson correlation and logistic regression. Findings indicated a statistically significant positive association ($r = 0.64$, $p < 0.01$) between staff participation in certified M&E training and higher NAAC accreditation grades. Institutions with ≥60% of M&E staff trained were 3.2 times more likely to achieve "A" or higher ratings. Patel and Rao (2023) concluded that M&E staff training is a critical predictor of institutional performance in India's competitive higher education landscape.

In Botswana, Mokgosi and Tlhabane (2022) studied the influence of M&E capacity building on university performance in three public universities. The objective was to evaluate how a national M&E training program affected institutional planning and reporting quality. The study adopted a case study design with embedded qualitative and quantitative elements. A total of 75 staff (including M&E officers, deans, and registrars) participated. Data collection tools included document analysis of annual performance reports, focus group discussions, and structured observation checklists. Thematic analysis and content analysis were used to interpret qualitative data, while performance scores were rated using a standardized rubric. The study found that post-training, institutions showed marked improvements in logic model development, indicator alignment, and use of baseline data. Mokgosi and Tlhabane (2022) concluded that context-specific M&E training enhanced both the technical quality and strategic utility of institutional performance systems in Botswana's public universities.

In Rwanda, Niyonzima and Uwimana (2024) assessed the link between M&E staff training and institutional performance among 18 private higher education institutions, including faith-based colleges like East African

Christian College. The study's objective was to determine whether trained M&E personnel contributed to better compliance with Higher Education Council (HEC) performance standards. Using a correlational research design, the researchers surveyed 90 M&E focal persons and analyzed institutional audit reports from 2021–2023. Data collection instruments included a structured questionnaire and a performance scoring matrix based on HEC indicators. Pearson correlation and multiple linear regression were employed for analysis. Results showed a moderate but significant positive correlation ($r = 0.52$, $p < 0.05$) between staff training frequency and institutional performance scores, particularly in areas of strategic planning and student outcome tracking. Niyonzima and Uwimana (2024) concluded that investing in M&E staff training is a viable pathway to improved institutional performance in Rwanda's resource-constrained private university sector.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study was grounded in human capital theory. This theory guided the examination of how Monitoring and Evaluation staff training influences the institutional performance of East African Christian College in Rwanda.

This study is anchored in Human Capital Theory, originally developed by Becker (1964), which explains that investment in employees through education, training, and skills development enhances their productive capabilities and consequently contributes to organizational performance. The theory considers employees' knowledge, skills, competencies, and experience as forms of human capital in which organizations can invest to improve effectiveness and productivity. In the context of this study, M&E staff training represents an investment in human capital, while institutional performance represents the organizational outcome associated with enhanced employee capabilities.

M&E staff training is particularly important because effective monitoring and evaluation requires personnel who possess appropriate competencies in data collection, indicator development, data analysis, performance measurement, reporting, and evidence-based decision-making. Through training, M&E personnel can strengthen their technical and analytical capabilities and become better equipped to generate reliable performance information for institutional decision-making. Human Capital Theory therefore provides a logical explanation of how investment in M&E staff capabilities can contribute to improved institutional performance (Becker, 1964; Kim et al., 2026).

Recent empirical evidence provides support for this theoretical relationship. A meta-analysis of 159 studies involving 75,033 observations found a positive and statistically significant relationship between organizational-level training and organizational performance, with the analysis explicitly grounded in Human Capital Theory (Kim et al., 2026). Similarly, research on staff and managerial training has reported that greater investment in training is associated with higher organizational productivity, further supporting the proposition that employee skills can generate organizational-level benefits (Schwarz et al., 2026). Evidence from a broader meta-analysis also indicates that training is positively related to organizational performance, although the strength of this relationship can vary according to contextual and institutional conditions (Garavan et al., 2021).

Applied to East African Christian College (EACC), the theory suggests that investment in M&E staff training can strengthen the institution's internal evaluation capacity. Better-trained M&E staff may be more capable of collecting accurate information, analysing institutional performance, identifying gaps, preparing useful reports, and communicating evidence to management. Such capabilities can support improved planning, accountability, resource utilization, academic quality, operational efficiency, and overall institutional effectiveness. Thus, the theoretical pathway can be expressed as: M&E staff training → enhanced M&E competencies → improved use of performance information → institutional performance.

Nevertheless, Human Capital Theory does not imply that training automatically produces improved institutional performance. The translation of acquired skills into organizational outcomes may depend on the availability of resources, management support, appropriate data systems, and opportunities for trained employees to apply their competencies. The original dissertation similarly recognizes that organizational conditions can influence whether training investments generate expected performance benefits. Therefore, while contextual factors should be acknowledged, Human Capital Theory remains directly relevant to this study because it provides a clear theoretical explanation for examining whether M&E staff training influences institutional performance at EACC.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study integrates Monitoring and Evaluation staff training as independent variables that collectively influence institutional performance, the dependent variable, at East African Christian College in Rwanda. Grounded in human capital theory posits that institutional performance.

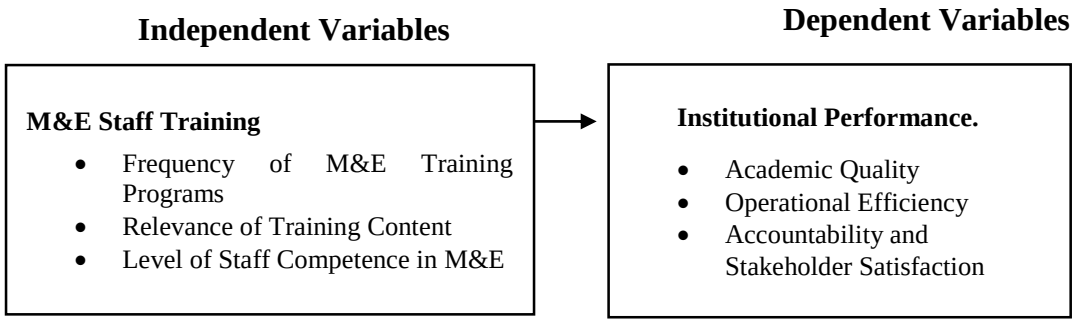


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework
Source: Researcher (2025)

The conceptual framework of this study posits that M&E staff training serves as key drivers of institutional performance at East African Christian College in Rwanda. Drawing on human capital theory, the framework links M&E staff training to enhanced data literacy and evidence use, which in turn improves decision-making and performance outcomes (Niyonzima & Uwimana, 2024).

2.5. Research Gap Identification

Although M&E has received increasing scholarly attention in higher education, a specific empirical gap remains concerning the relationship between M&E staff training and institutional performance in private, faith-based higher education institutions in Rwanda. Existing studies from Australia, the United Kingdom, South Africa, Kenya, and Tanzania generally examine M&E within well-resourced public or larger higher education institutions (Bennett & Clarke, 2022; Harrison & Tan, 2023; Mushi & Kileo, 2023; Nkosi & van der Merwe, 2022; Ochieng & Wambua, 2023). Consequently, their findings provide limited evidence about smaller faith-based institutions operating with constrained financial, technical, and institutional resources.

Within Rwanda, Niyonzima and Uwimana (2024) identified a positive relationship between M&E staff training and institutional performance, but their study considered M&E capacity across multiple private institutions rather than focusing specifically on the training-performance relationship within one faith-based college. Moreover, existing literature has largely examined M&E practices collectively or alongside other components such as planning, budgeting, and baseline surveys, making it difficult to establish the specific contribution of staff training to institutional performance.

Therefore, the present research addresses both a contextual gap and a variable-specific empirical gap by focusing specifically on how M&E staff training relates to institutional performance at East African Christian College. This focused investigation provides institution-specific evidence on whether strengthening the competencies of M&E personnel is associated with improved academic quality, operational efficiency, accountability, and overall institutional effectiveness.

3. Research Methodology

This study adopted a quantitative research approach to examine the influence of Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) staff training on institutional performance at East African Christian College (EACC) in Rwanda. The quantitative approach was appropriate because the study sought to measure respondents' perceptions of M&E staff training and determine its statistical relationship with institutional performance.

3.1 Research Design

The study employed **a descriptive cross-sectional survey design**. The design enabled the researcher to collect data from respondents at a single point in time and describe the existing level of M&E staff training and institutional performance. It also facilitated examination of the relationship between M&E staff training and institutional performance without manipulating the study variables. This design is appropriate for organizational and higher education studies where researchers seek to establish relationships among variables within their natural institutional setting (Creswell & Creswell, 2023; Sekaran & Bougie, 2023).

3.2 Target Population and Sampling

The target population comprised 114 individuals at EACC, including M&E/quality assurance personnel, academic staff, heads of departments and programme coordinators, senior administrative leaders, support staff involved in institutional reporting, and selected final-year students and student leaders. These categories were considered relevant because they interact with, implement, supervise, or experience institutional M&E processes. The study used stratified sampling to ensure representation of the different stakeholder categories. Key personnel directly responsible for M&E and quality assurance were purposively included because of their specialized knowledge, while respondents from larger groups were selected using simple random sampling. Using Slovin's formula with a population of 114 and a 5% margin of error:

$n = N / [1 + N(e^2)]$

$n = 114 / [1 + 114(0.05^2)] = 89$

Therefore, the study obtained a sample size of 89 respondents.

3.3 Research Instrument

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of sections addressing respondents' demographic characteristics, M&E staff training, and institutional performance. Items on M&E staff training assessed the adequacy, relevance, frequency, accessibility, practical orientation, and application of training. Institutional performance items focused on achievement of institutional objectives, operational efficiency, accountability, quality assurance, and service delivery. The questionnaire used a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Content and face validity were established through expert review and pilot testing. Experts in M&E and higher education research reviewed the questionnaire to determine whether its items adequately represented M&E staff training and institutional performance. A pilot test was conducted using respondents from a comparable higher education institution outside EACC. Feedback from the pilot study was used to improve clarity and remove ambiguous items. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. The M&E staff training scale obtained an alpha coefficient of 0.784, while institutional performance obtained 0.823. Both values exceeded the commonly accepted threshold of 0.70, demonstrating satisfactory internal consistency (Taber, 2021; Mohajan, 2022). Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the relevant authorities. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study and provided informed consent before completing the questionnaire. Questionnaires were administered physically and/or electronically, depending on respondents' accessibility. Completed questionnaires were checked for completeness, coded, and securely stored for analysis.

3.4 Data Analysis and Presentation

Quantitative data were coded and analyzed using SPSS version 28. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were used to summarize M&E staff training and institutional performance. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was used to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between M&E staff training and institutional performance. Simple linear regression analysis was

used to determine the extent to which M&E staff training predicts institutional performance. Statistical significance was assessed at $p \leq 0.05$. The regression model was expressed as: $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \varepsilon$

Where Y represents institutional performance, X_1 represents M&E staff training, β_0 is the constant, β_1 is the regression coefficient for M&E staff training, and ε represents the error term. Regression assumptions, including normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, and absence of influential observations, were assessed before interpreting the regression results.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

The study observed informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality, anonymity, privacy, and freedom from coercion. Participants were informed that they could withdraw from the study without penalty. Personal identifiers were excluded from the research report, and collected data were securely stored using password-protected electronic files and protected physical records. The study also observed Rwanda's applicable data protection requirements and maintained proper citation of all scholarly sources to avoid plagiarism.

4 Presentation of Findings

The analysis focuses on examining how monitoring and evaluation staff training influence the institutional performance of East African Christian College in Rwanda..

4.1 Descriptive Statistics on M&E Staff Training

This section presents the descriptive statistics on Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) staff training. It examines respondents' views on how staff training in M&E influences institutional performance at East African Christian College in Rwanda.

Table 1: Respondents views on M&E Staff Training

Statement on M&E Staff Training	SD	D	NS	A	SA	Mean	Std Dev.
The college regularly provides training programs related to Monitoring and Evaluation for staff.	2.4%	2.4%	0.0%	47.0%	48.2%	4.36	0.820
The M&E training provided equips staff with relevant skills for effective performance monitoring.	2.4%	0.0%	0.0%	49.4%	48.2%	4.41	0.733
Training in M&E improves staff competence in data collection and reporting.	0.0%	0.0%	3.6%	43.4%	53.0%	4.49	0.571
Staff trained in M&E are able to make better evidence-based decisions.	1.2%	0.0%	0.0%	61.4%	37.3%	4.34	0.610
M&E training has contributed to improved accountability within the institution.	1.3%	0.0%	0.0%	49.4%	49.4%	4.46	0.631
The knowledge gained from M&E training is effectively applied in daily institutional activities.	2.4%	0.0%	0.0%	55.4%	42.2%	4.35	0.723
Composite mean						**4.40**	
Composite Std dev.							**.681**

Source: **Study data (2026)**

Table 1 presents respondents' views on Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) staff training and its influence on institutional performance at East African Christian College in Rwanda. The findings indicate strong agreement that the college regularly provides M&E training programs (mean = 4.36, SD = 0.820), with 95.2% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing. Similarly, respondents affirmed that the training equips staff with relevant skills for effective performance monitoring (mean = 4.41, SD = 0.733), while a majority also agreed that M&E training improves staff competence in data collection and reporting (mean = 4.49, SD = 0.571).

Further, the results show that a significant proportion of respondents agreed that staff trained in M&E are able to make better evidence-based decisions (mean = 4.34, SD = 0.610), and that M&E training contributes to improved accountability within the institution (mean = 4.46, SD = 0.631). The high levels of agreement suggest that training plays a crucial role in strengthening transparency, responsibility, and decision-making processes.

Moreover, respondents agreed that the knowledge gained from M&E training is effectively applied in daily institutional activities (mean = 4.35, SD = 0.723), reinforcing the practical relevance of such training programs. The composite mean of 4.40 and standard deviation of 0.681 indicate an overall strong positive perception of M&E staff training among respondents.

4.2 Descriptive Statistics on Institutional Performance

This section presents the descriptive statistics on institutional performance at East African Christian College in Rwanda. It examines respondents' views on various indicators used to measure institutional performance in relation to monitoring and evaluation practices. Table 17 summarizes the level of agreement or disagreement with statements on institutional performance using frequencies, percentages, mean scores, and standard deviation.

Table 2: Respondents views on Institutional Performance

Statements on Institutional Performance	SD	D	NS	A	SA	Mean	Std Dev.
The college consistently achieves its academic goals and objectives.	1.2%	0.0%	6.0%	42.2%	50.6%	4.41	0.716
The quality of teaching and learning at the college has improved over time.	0.0%	2.4%	6.0%	32.5%	59.0%	4.48	0.722
Institutional resources are efficiently utilized to support academic and administrative functions.	1.2%	2.4%	0.0%	42.2%	54.2%	4.46	0.738
Administrative processes at the college are timely and effective.	0.0%	9.6%	2.4%	50.6%	37.3%	4.16	0.876
The college demonstrates accountability and transparency in its operations.	0.0%	0.0%	10.8%	31.3%	57.8%	4.47	0.687
Stakeholders (students, staff, and management) are satisfied with the college's overall performance.	1.2%	1.2%	2.4%	44.6%	50.6%	4.42	0.718
Composite mean						**4.40**	
Composite Std dev.							**.743**

Source: **Study data (2026)**

The results show that respondents agreed that the college consistently achieves its academic goals and objectives (mean = 4.41, SD = 0.716), while an even higher level of agreement was observed regarding improvement in the quality of teaching and learning over time (mean = 4.48, SD = 0.722). Additionally, respondents confirmed that institutional resources are efficiently utilized to support academic and administrative functions (mean = 4.46, SD = 0.738). Further analysis indicates that respondents agreed that administrative processes at the college are timely and effective (mean = 4.16, SD = 0.876), although this item recorded relatively more variation compared to others. Respondents also strongly agreed that the college demonstrates accountability and transparency in its operations (mean = 4.47, SD = 0.687), highlighting the institution's commitment to good governance practices.

Moreover, the findings reveal that stakeholders, including students, staff, and management, are generally satisfied with the college's overall performance (mean = 4.42, SD = 0.718), indicating a positive institutional climate. The composite mean of 4.40 and standard deviation of 0.743 reflect an overall high level of agreement among respondents regarding institutional performance. This suggests that the college is performing well across key dimensions such as academic achievement, governance, and stakeholder satisfaction.

4.3 Correlation and Regression Analysis

This section presents the results of the correlation analysis, which was conducted to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between monitoring and evaluation staff training and institutional performance at East African Christian College in Rwanda.

Table 3: Correlation Matrix

		M&E Staff Training	Institutional Performance
Institutional Performance	Pearson Correlation	.200	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.070	
	N	83	83

Source: **Study data (2026)**

The findings indicate that M&E staff training has a weak positive relationship with institutional performance (r = 0.200, p = 0.070), which is not statistically significant at the 0.05 level, although it shows a positive trend. These findings are consistent with recent studies emphasizing the interdependence of M&E components in strengthening organizational performance systems (Kusek & Rist, 2023).

Table 4: Combined Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.650[a]	.422	.392	.16102	1.925

a. Predictors: (Constant), M&E Staff Training
b. Dependent Variable: Institutional Performance

Source: Study data (2026)

The results indicate a strong positive correlation between the independent variables and institutional performance (R = 0.650), while the coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.422$) shows that approximately 42.2% of the variation in institutional performance is explained by M&E staff training. The adjusted R^2 value of 0.392 further confirms that the model provides a good fit after accounting for the number of predictors. Additionally, the Durbin-Watson statistic of 1.925 suggests no serious autocorrelation issues in the residuals, indicating the reliability of the regression results.

Table 1: Coefficient results for all Variables

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Unstandardized Coefficients Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.182	.457		2.587	.012
	M&E Staff Training	.038	.062	.055	.612	.542

a. Dependent Variable: Institutional Performance

Source: **Study data, (2026)**.

The overall regression equation can be represented as: Institutional Performance = 1.182 + 0.038 M&E Staff Training. The findings indicate that the constant term is statistically significant (B = 1.182, p = 0.012), suggesting a baseline level of institutional performance even in the absence of the predictors. M&E staff training shows a positive but non-significant effect on institutional performance (B = 0.038, p = 0.542), implying that while training is beneficial, it does not independently predict performance in this model.

4.4 Responses from Interview Guide

The interview findings indicate that staff training in M&E, respondents *indicated that "training has significantly improved their ability to collect, analyze, and interpret data for decision-making and performance monitoring."* They further noted that trained staff are more confident in using M&E tools and generating reliable reports for institutional planning.

5 Discussions of Findings

This section provides a detailed interpretation and discussion of the study's findings, comparing the empirical results from East African Christian College (EACC) with existing contemporary literature.

The study found that while respondents held a strong positive perception of M&E staff training at EACC (composite mean = 4.40), the inferential analysis revealed that M&E staff training has a positive but statistically non-significant direct effect on institutional performance ($B = 0.038, p = 0.542$). This finding suggests that although training enhances individual competencies in data collection and reporting, it does not independently drive institutional performance unless it is embedded within a broader, supportive organizational ecosystem.

This outcome aligns with recent empirical observations in the East African context. Niyonzima and Uwimana (2024) noted that in Rwandan private higher education institutions, M&E training often yields minimal

performance gains when it is not accompanied by adequate data infrastructure, leadership engagement, or follow-up support. Similarly, K'Obonyo (2023) argued that evaluation capacity building must be integrated with systemic enablers, such as planning and budgeting, for training to translate into tangible organizational outcomes. Furthermore, the OECD (2021) emphasizes that training should be viewed as a supportive mechanism rather than a standalone intervention; without the authority to act on the skills acquired, trained staff may remain underutilized. Therefore, at EACC, M&E training acts as a foundational enabler that strengthens other M&E components (as shown by its significant correlation with planning and baseline surveys), but it requires systemic integration to directly impact overall institutional performance.

6 Conclusions and Recommendations

This paper provides insights into the role of M&E staff training in enhancing the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation practices. In this regard, M&E staff training plays a supportive but important role in strengthening institutional performance. The findings show that while training enhances staff skills, competence, and understanding of monitoring and evaluation processes, its direct impact on institutional performance is limited when considered independently. However, it remains essential in building capacity and improving the effectiveness of other M&E functions within the institution.

The study recommends that East African Christian College should strengthen the implementation of M&E staff training by ensuring regular, structured, and practical capacity-building programs for all relevant staff. The institution should also enhance M&E planning processes by ensuring that plans are clearly documented, well communicated, and fully aligned with institutional goals.

At the policy level, the study recommends that higher education institutions should institutionalize mandatory M&E training frameworks to ensure continuous capacity development for staff involved in monitoring and evaluation. Future studies should consider expanding the scope of this research by including other higher learning institutions in Rwanda to enable comparative analysis of monitoring and evaluation practices across different contexts. Further research could also examine additional variables such as leadership commitment, organizational culture, and ICT adoption in M&E systems to determine their influence on institutional performance. In addition, longitudinal studies are recommended to assess the long-term impact of M&E practices on institutional performance over time. Moreover, future research may adopt a mixed-methods approach to gain deeper qualitative insights into how M&E practices are implemented and experienced by different stakeholders within educational institutions.

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