# Mapping public finance research productivity and scholarly impact in Tanzania: A 26-year bibliometric analysis

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## ABSTRACT

Public finance is a critical domain for Tanzania's social-economic development, especially in public service delivery, making it an important area of scholarly inquiry. However, a systematic evaluation of its research productivity, intellectual structure and scholarly impact has been limited. This study maps the public finance research productivity and scholarly impact in Tanzania over a 26-years (2000-2025), focusing on publication trends, research productivity, citation impact and thematic evolution. The study was guided by Competitive Advantage Theory. A total of 272 publications were retrieved from the Dimensions.ai database and analysed using Microsoft Excel and VOS viewer software. The findings show a steady growth in publications, with a pronounced acceleration after 2016 and peak output in recent years. Journal articles dominate scholarly communication. Citation analysis shows a highly skewed distribution, with internationally affiliated researchers getting highly citation impacts than Tanzanian researchers. However, productivity patterns reveal that Tanzanian researchers contribute a larger share of the overall research output and account for many of the most prolific authors. At the institutional level, a divergence between productivity and impact is observed: where as local institutions, especially Mzumbe University and the University of Dar es salaam, lead in productivity, institutions such as Ifakara Health Institute demonstrate stronger citation impact, reflecting the role of specialization and international collaboration. At the country level, Tanzania, United States, South Africa and the United Kingdom are highlighted as most dominant contributors in terms of productivity and citation impact. Highly cited studies are largely interdisciplinary, linking public finance to broader development issues such as taxation, governance, health financing, and rural livelihoods. Thematic analysis highlighted macroeconomic issues, including economic growth, debt and budget deficits, indicating a problem-oriented research agenda. Overall, the findings reveal a maturing yet uneven research system characterized by a persistent productivity-impact gap. The study underscores the need for strengthening international collaboration, enhancing research visibility and promoting policy-relevant and high-impact scholarship to improve both citation performance and practical policy influence in Tanzania.

**Keywords:** Bibliometrics Analysis, Public Finance, Research Productivity, Scholarly Impact, Tanzania

## I. INTRODUCTION

Public finance is a cornerstone of modern states that influences how governments raise revenue, spend money, control public debt and provide essential public services. Effective public finance management generally being recognized as a critical for inclusive growth, fiscal sustainability and accountability (World Bank, 2024; International Monetary Fund, 2023). Subsequently, public finance research plays a significant role in informing fiscal policy reforms in taxation, budgeting, debt management and governance systems. Globally shows public finance research has grown tremendously over the past three decades (Detthamrong et al., 2024). Bibliometric evidence from advanced economies suggests long-term expansion of output, alongside increasing focus on fiscal sustainability, debt dynamics, fiscal transparency and performance based on budgeting, this due to supported by strong institutional productivity and collaboration networks (Donthu et al., 2021; Maulana et al., 2026). Research in developing countries also increased compared to last ten years, through unevenly, with focus on domestic revenue mobilization, tax compliance and debt sustainability (Judijanto, 2025). But, structural constraints such as fragmented collaboration and limited visibility in global level persist (Dakhil, et al., 2024). African studies reveal increased research that focuses on fiscal policy since 2000 but limited intra-African research collaboration (Alex et al., 2023). In Tanzania context, public finance remains essential to its development agenda as the government finances infrastructure and social services while maintaining fiscal discipline (Tanzania Ministry of Finance and Planning, 2022). The 2025/26 financial budget projects expenditure of approximately TZS 56 trillion amid revenue pressures linked to illicit financial flows and tax administration challenges (Tanzania Ministry of Finance, 2025; Tanzania Revenue Authority, 2025), underscoring the need for strong



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and evidence-based research. Tanzania Public finance research has evolved from early fiscal stabilization studies in the 1990s to more comprehensive work on taxation and fiscal governance, with increasing international collaboration (Kweka & Morrissey, 2000; Fjeldstad, 2024). Bibliometric analysis is a systematic approach for assessing research productivity, impact, collaboration patterns and thematic evolution within a discipline (Donthu et al., 2021; Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017). The application of bibliometric method enables objective to map intellectual development and publications trends, citations, co-authorship networks, and keyword structures. Such evidence is useful for informing research policy, institutional strategy and funding priorities.

Despite over three decades of public finance scholarship in Tanzania, no study has systematically mapped its bibliometric profile, productivity and scholarly impact. Existing analyses are focussed on general business and research management. There is little attention to the specific output of the public finance. Therefore, knowledge about research growth trends, prolific authors, citation performance and thematic evolution remains fragmented. Hence, a comprehensive bibliometric analysis of public finance research is required to inform research strategy, strengthen evidence-based fiscal policy, and align future scholarship with national development priorities.

### 1.1 Statement of the problem

Public finance research is an important basis for evidence-based policy reforms in budgeting, taxation and fiscal governance that are key for economic development (Word Bank, 2024; International Monetary Fund, 2023). Nevertheless, most bibliometric studies focused developed countries contexts, with limited attention to country-specific research systems such as Tanzania (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017; Donthu et al., 2021). In Tanzania, mostly previous studies primarily focused on general research outputs instead of public finance specific scholarship (Kavishe et al., 2021; Shemahonge et al., 2022; Mang'ana, 2025). As a result, there is limited evidence on publication trends, citation impacts, most contributors and thematic development in this field. Therefore, this study addresses this contextual and methodological gap through conducting a comprehensive bibliometric study of 26 years of public finance research in Tanzania.

### 1.2 Research Objectives

i. To examine the growth of public finance publications and citations in Tanzania from 2000 to 2025.
ii. To determine the publications productivity and citations impacts of public finance research in Tanzania from 2000 to 2025.
iii. To examine the conceptual and thematic structure of public finance research in Tanzania from 2000 to 2025.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Theoretical Review

#### 2.1.1 Competitive Advantage Theory by Michael Porter (1990)

Competitive Advantage Theory, by Michael Porter in his Competitive Advantage Theory of Nations, state that a better performance is not simply a matter of resources endowments but rather a matter of their planned configuration and effective utilization (Porter, 1990). The theory highlights an innovation capacity, institutional quality, human capital and network integration as a pillar of sustained competitiveness. Porter's "Diamond Model" further outlines four interconnected determinants of the competitiveness: factor conditions, demand conditions, related and supporting industries and firm strategy, structure and rivalry. In this study, the theory provides an analytical lens to analyses disparities of competitiveness in public finance research productivity and citation impacts in Tanzania by measuring individual researcher, institutions and country-level competition. Publications outputs and citations performance are read as indicators of competitive positioning within the global knowledge economy.

### 2.2 Empirical Review

#### 2.2.1 Growth of Public Financial Publications and Citations

Bibliometric evidence reports that there has been a steady increase in the global research output on public financial management since the early 2000s, with faster growth observed after 2010. But even with these results seems the participations of African countries like Tanzania is still limited and is hardly examined separately (Maulana et al., 2026). In a Similar vein, growth patterns are stated in studies focusing on taxation, revenue mobilization, and governance (Judijanto, 2025). Contrarywise, low publication outputs in some academic institutions have been linked to high teaching loads, poor collaboration, and lack of publishing skills (Uwizeye et al., 2022).

Previous studies show that Tanzania institutions recorded prolonged periods of low publications output. Evidence from the School of Business at Mzumbe University shows very few publications outputs between 2007 and 2011, this due to a limited awareness and publishing skills, followed by gradual improvement after 2012 (Shemahonge



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et al., 2022). However, no bibliometric study has systematically examined public finance research productivity in Tanzania over the period 2000-2025, particularly in terms of publication growth trends and citation impacts.

### 2.2.2 Publications Productivity and Citations Impact in Public Finance Research

Publications productivity is usually measured by number of publications per author over specific period of time (Contas et al., 2010). The evidence reveals that finance-related fields recorded with highly productive authors and core journals such as Finance Review, International Tax and Public Finance, and public Budgeting and Finance (Tijjani et al., 2020; Woldeamanuel &Kebede, 2025). The United States, United Kingdom and Germany lead in taxation and public finance research, although participation from developing economies seems to be increasing (Judijanto, 2025).

Citations impact is an indication of influence and quality of scientific output and often measured based on citation-based indicators (Aksnes et al., 2019). According to Judijanto, (2025) reported highly cited work on fiscal transparency are located within developed economies, with one paper garnering as much as 749 citations. The United States is among countries where clearly identify the most productive authors, institutions, country and journals. However, the research productivity and citations impact to public finance research in Tanzania have not been identified, this limiting understanding of national scholarly productivity and impacts.

### 2.2.3 Conceptual and Thematic Structure of Public Finance Research

The Keyword co-occurrence mapping revealed that tax policy, revenue mobilization, and governance are main themes in international tax policy and public finance research. The evidence indicates through emerging clusters related to sustainable development and public finance research as well as green finance are emerging clusters within the same research theme (Maulana et al., 2026). In the same to Idah et al. (2025) who reported a fiscal decentralization, local government finance, and governance efficiency as dominant emerging themes in local government finance research. Keyword co-occurrence analyses further show the six major thematic clusters that are shaping the subject matters including taxation and economic development, taxation and sustainability, taxation and fiscal policy, taxation and health, tax administration, and taxation and local government (Wordeamanuel & Kebede, 2025). Despite these contributions, there is no empirical studies that explore keyword co-occurrence analyses of public finance specific research in Tanzania.

## III. METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Research Approach and Design

This study utilizes a quantitative bibliometric research design to systematically examine the growth of public finance publications, research productivity, scholarly impact and thematic evolution of public finance research in Tanzania. This design involves the structured collection, measurement and statistical analysis of bibliographic and citations data. Bibliometrics research approach uses mathematical and statistical techniques to quantify, classify and evaluate publication patterns, citations, usage, institutional affiliations, authorship, co-authorship networks and keywords on large literature datasets (Sife & Lwoga, 2014). This method suits multidisciplinary fields like public finance, economics, governance, development, and policy, enabling reproducible insights into research productivity, impact, authorship and thematic evolution (Ziegler, 2009).

### 3.2 Data Collection and Extraction

#### 3.2.1 Data Source

The data in this study were searched and retrieved from the Dimensions database.ai, it an open and comprehensive research information database that integrates publications metadata, citation data, and persistent identifiers across multiple disciplines (Hook, et al., 2021). Dimensions was selected because its wide-range of peer-reviewed literature in the field of economics and public finance, in addition to its capacity to both local and international co-authorship publications related to Tanzania (Herzog et al., 2020). The database combines openly available data with curated records from proprietary sources, making it suitable for large scale bibliometric study.

#### 3.2.2 Search Strategy and Procedure

A structured search strategy and procedure was adopted to ensure exhaustive yet accurate search of public finance literature related to Tanzania. The search keywords generated effectively in describing the scope of the study and capture important thematic areas within public finance. The search was intended to identifying scholarly outputs whose titles, abstracts, or keywords which contained relevant public finance themes. Define the geographical scope was considered, where the term “Tanzania” was added to the search query. Additionally, the term “Zanzibar” was used in the search so as to ensure the inclusion of publications that specifically mentioned Zanzibar without mentioning



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Tanzania. This was done based on the historical and political background of the Tanganyika and Zanzibar united in 1964 to form the United Republic of Tanzania.

Boolean operators were employed to increase precision and sensitivity of the search strategy. The operator "OR" was used to group synonymous public finance concepts, while "AND" was used to link these concepts with the geographical context. Parentheses and phrase searching were also applied to further refine the search results. The search was conducted on a single day to minimize the effects of database updates and to increase reproducibility. The search criteria were designed to include peer-reviewed scholarly publications such as journal articles, book chapters, conference proceedings, monographs, and edited books and exclude non-research-based outputs such as pre-prints. The temporal scope of this study covered publications from 2000 to 2025. The selected keywords were retrieved from Dimensions database (https://www.dimensions.ai/). Dimension database comprises a metadata from millions of publications across disciplines, including both closed- and open-access content, and offers more comprehensive journal coverage compared to other databases such as Web of Science and Scopus (Singh et al., 2021).

The final search string used in the Dimensions database was ("public finance" OR "government budget" OR "public expenditure" OR "fiscal policy" OR "Public revenue " OR "public debt" OR "taxation" OR "government spending" OR "budget deficit") AND ("Tanzania" OR "Zanzibar") These search terms designed to capture a broad yet focused set of publications addressing public finance themes relevant to Tanzania.

A total number of 326 publications were initially searched from the Dimensions database based on titles, abstracts, and keywords. Subsequently, a screening process was thoroughly conducted to make the dataset more relevant. Firstly, publications were assessed based on temporal relevance (2000-2025), resulting in the exclusion of 29 records that fell outside the define time scope, leaving 297 publications. Secondly, filtering records by publication type was used to retain only peer-reviewed and scholarly outputs including journal articles, book chapters, conference proceedings, monographs, and edited books, although excluding pre-prints and other non-scholarly materials. This step let to the exclusion of the 25 publications. Following this screening process, the final dataset included only 272 publications, which were considered suitable for subsequent bibliometric analysis. This screening process were used consistently to ensure transparency, reduce potential bias, and enhance the reliability of the dataset. The search and data extraction process from Dimension database was conducted on 30th January 2026, and all retrieved records were exported in CSV format and securely stored on the computer as a basis for analysis.

### 3.3 Data Analysis

The cleaned bibliometric dataset was analysed using the Microsoft Excel program and VOS viewer software (version 1.6.20). The Microsoft Excel was selected because of its effectiveness in the computation and summary of descriptive statistics such as documents types, annual publication trends, research productivity, and citation patterns. The software also chosen due to its capacity to organize and present the data through tabulation and graphical representation (Aria& Cuccurullo, 2017).

The VOS viewer was applied in visualize and generate relationships between dataset including co-authorship, co-citations and keyword co-occurrence networks. These visualizations help to facilitate the identification of prominent researchers, institutions, countries, and major research themes (keywords) within public finance field in Tanzania. The software uses a mapping technique to illustrate relations between different variables (Qudah et al., 2023). This software enabled a structured and comprehensive data visualization analysis of publication patterns, collaboration trends, and thematic development within the dataset.

## IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Publication Output and Types

This section presents the distribution of scholarly out by publication type. The analysis is restricted to peer-reviewed and formally published outputs including journal articles, book chapters, conference proceedings, monographs and edited books. This because these formats are subject to editorial control and peer review that ensuring scientific credibility and policy reliability. However, non-peer-reviewed materials such as pre-prints were not included as they represent preliminary findings (Hicks et al., 2015).

Over the 26-years period, a total of 272 publications on Tanzanian public finance were identified. As detailed below, journal articles were predominant form of scholarly communication with 213 publications (78.3%), Book chapters 33 publications (12.1%), Monographs 21 publications (7.7%), Edited books 3 publications (1.1%) and Proceedings 2 publications (0.7%). This dominance of journal articles mirrors findings from other African bibliometric studies, which reported that journals articles remain the principal vehicles for policy-relevant social science research due to their visibility, citation potential and acceptance by research evaluation systems (Ondari, 2007).



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### 4.2 Growth of Public Finance Publications and Citations

This section examines the temporal evolution of publications and their corresponding citations to map the growth trajectory of the public finance research in Tanzania. Using full counting method, Figure 1, illustrate the annual distributions of the publications and citations. Cumulatively, the 272 publications were authored by 724 researchers and garnered a total of 3140 citations. This translates to an annual average of approximately 10 publications and 121 citations per year.

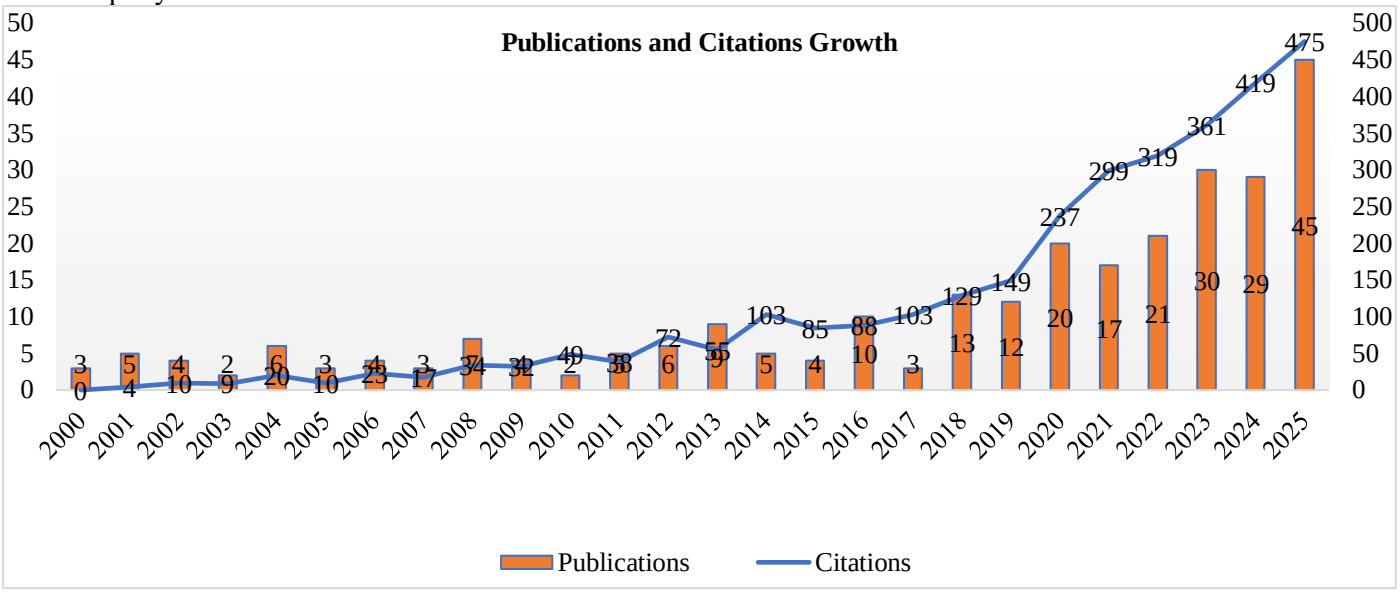



**Figure 1**

*Growth Trends of Public Finance Publications and Citations in Tanzania from 2000 to 2025*

From the finding above, indicated two distinct phases in the development of public finance research in Tanzania. The phase one is 2000-2015 where was characterized by low and erratic outputs, mainly involving to single-digit publication counts and relatively poor citation impacts. This is due to aligns with broader Sub-Saharan African trends, where limited research funding, inadequate doctoral training programs and limited global citations networks constrained scholarly productivity (Mitchell et al., 2020). In the case of Tanzania, inadequate digital presence and weak research dissemination system contributed further to poor international visibility (Lwoga & Sife, 2013). Similarly, Onyancha, (2020) indicated economics and finance studies in Sub-African remained underrepresented in major indexing databases, resulting in poor citation performance. These operational constraints describe the subdued growth observed during the early phase.

In contrast, in phase two (2016-2025), recorded with significant growth in terms of publications and citations publications and citations with peak research outputs published in 2023-2025. The peak year was 2025 which recorded 45 publications and 475 citations, while the followed peak year were 2023 (30 publications; 361 citations) and 2024 (29 publications; 419 citations). Such development aligns with continental evidence to which the growth of African research productivity after 2015, explained by an increasing in international collaboration, enhanced research networks and broader journal indexing (Heleta & Jithoo, 2023; Maulana et al., 2026). Moreover, the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals by the United Nations in 2015, increased need for empirical evidence on fiscal governance and domestic revenue mobilization, stimulating public finance scholarship (Maulana et al., 2026). This means that, the observed trends indicated the change in the structure of the research development to more networked, policy responsive and internationally visible research environment.

### 4.3 Publications Productivity and Citation Impacts of Public Finance Research

Research impacts represent the scholarly influence, quality, visibility ad recognition of research productions, typically measured through citation-based indicators (Bornmann & Daniel, 2008). Nevertheless, Research outputs productivity measures the quantitative output (quantity) of the scholarly work generated by a specific researcher or institution within a given period (Abramo & D'Angelo, 2014). This subsection discusses research impacts and productivity based on authors, articles, institutions, countries and journals.

#### 4.3.1 Global Distribution of Most Cited Researchers

The results show highly skewed citation pattern where a few scholars account for a large share of global citation impact. O. H. Fjeldstad leads recorded with 351 citations, highlighting strong and sustained influence in public finance research. Followed by Frank Ellis and H. A. Freeman holding the second position each recorded with 323 citations,



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demonstrating that high-impact publications can generate substantial scholarly recognition. Other highly cited scholars, including W. Anseeuw, J. Chamberlin, A. Chapoto, T. S. Jayne and R. Kachule, each with 260 citations, further emphasize the concentration of citation influence among a small group of researchers. Meanwhile, A. Merima (149 citations) and J. Borghi (119 citations) this reflects moderate but prominent scholarly impact. Therefore, the results suggest that global citation influence in public finance research is concentrated among a pattern also observed in recent bibliometric studies indicating cumulative citation advantage between prolific authors (Bornmann & Danniel, 2008).

**Table 1**

*Global Distribution of Mosted Cited Researchers*

| Rank | Researcher | Affiliation | Citations |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | O. H. Fjeldstad | Christian Michelsen Institute, Norway | 351 |
| 2 | F. Ellis | University of East Anglia, Norwich | 323 |
| 3 | H. A. Freeman | ICRISAT, United Nations Avenue, Nairobi, Kenya | 323 |
| 4 | W. Anseeuw | Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Italy | 260 |
| 5 | J. Chamberlin | International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center, Kenya | 260 |
| 6 | A. Chapoto | Africa Network of Agricultural Policy Research Institutes | 260 |
| 7 | T. S. Jayne | Michigan State University, United States | 260 |
| 8 | R. Kachule | Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources in Malawi | 260 |
| 9 | A. Merima | Christian Michelsen Institute, Norway | 149 |
| 10 | J. Borghi | London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, United Kingdom | 119 |

### 4.3.2 Most Cited Researchers in Tanzania

Though global rankings reveal a benchmark where a localized analysis is important to identify the internal leaders of most influential researchers within the national context. The findings shown that the most cited Tanzanian researcher is H. Masanja from the Ifakara Health Institute recorded with 118 citations. He is followed by C. Mbuya from the Ministry of Health and H. Mshinda from Tanzania Academy of Science (TAAS), both also recording 118 citations. The fourth position is held by A. Kuwawenaruwa followed by S. Makawia both from the Ifakara Health Institute and G. S. Mtei from Results for Development (R4D) both have been cited 89 times each as shown in table 2. The results further revealed that the Ifakara Health Institute dominate the top ranking by contributing three researchers among the top ten. This pattern suggests a concentration of research capacity and impact within a few well-established institutions particularly those with stronger research infrastructure and international collaboration networks. It was observed that research impact in developing countries often clustered within a limited number of high-performing institution (Ioannidis et al., 2025). This finding supported by Theory of Competitive Advantage, showing that continued competitiveness relies on innovation capacity, institutional quality, human capital and collaboration network. For example, based on high human capital, collaboration network and research quality enabled Ifakara Health Institute to dominate in Top ten and Top researchers (Masanja H. With 118 citations) to achieve a superior competitive position.

**Table 2**

*Most Cited Researcher in Tanzania*

| Rank | Researcher | Affiliation | Citations |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | H. Masanja | Ifakara Health Institute | 118 |
| 2 | C. Mbuya | Ministry of Health in Tanzania | 118 |
| 3 | H. Mshinda | The Tanzania Academy of Sciences - TAAS | 118 |
| 4 | A. Kuwawenaruwa | Ifakara Health Institute | 89 |
| 5 | S. Makawia | Ifakara Health Institute | 89 |
| 6 | G. J. Mtei | Results for Development (R4D) in Tanzania | 89 |
| 7 | B. Klaassen | International School of Tanganyika Clinic | 79 |
| 8 | F.A. Kitole | Mzumbe University | 70 |
| 9 | J.M. Abdallah | Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA) | 59 |
| 10 | N. Doggart | Tanzania Forest Conservation Group (TFCG) | 59 |

### 4.3.3 Most Cited Articles

The most influential articles indicated the key thematic areas that have garnered the most scholarly attention. The top cited article was “Rural livelihood and poverty reduction strategies in four African countries” ranked first with a total of 323 citations, followed by “Africa's changing farm size distribution patterns: the rise of medium-scale farms” recoded with 260 citations and “To pay or not to pay? Citizens’ attitudes toward taxation in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, and South Africa” which cited 149 times. The findings shown these articles are not narrowly focused on fiscal mechanics



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but rather on the intersection of public finance with broader development issue like poverty, governance, taxation morale and citizens engagement. This indicates the most impactful research is that which connects fiscal policy to its real-world social economic consequences. This observation concurs with Hicks et al. (2015), who argued that socially relevant and interdisciplinary research often achieves greater visibility because it resonates with global policy also shape agendas. Therefore, while thematic relevance enhances citation performance, structural publications factors recognizing that high citations reflect both intellectual merit and publication ecosystem advantages. Therefore, these results tend to address cross-sectorial development themes such as rural livelihoods, taxation morale, corruption and health financial equity.

**Table 3**

*Most Cited Articles.*

| Rank | Titles | References | Citations |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Rural Livelihoods and Poverty Reduction Strategies in Four African Countries | Ellis, F & Freeman, H. A., 2004 | 323 |
| 2 | Africa's changing farm size distribution patterns: the rise of medium scale farms | Jayne, *et al.*, 2016 | 260 |
| 3 | To pay or not to pay? Citizens' attitudes toward taxation in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, and South Africa | Ali, M.; Fjeldstad, O. & Sjursen, I., 2014 | 149 |
| 4 | Child survival gains in Tanzania: analysis of data from demographic and health surveys | Masanja *et al.*, 2008 | 118 |
| 5 | Taxation, coercion and donors: local government tax enforcement in Tanzania | Fjeldstad, O., 2001 | 104 |
| 6 | The political economy of grand corruption in Tanzania | Gray, H. S., 2015 | 100 |
| 7 | Inequalities in the use of secondary prevention of cardiovascular disease by socioeconomic status: evidence from the PURE observational study | Murphy, *et al.*, 2018 | 94 |
| 8 | Who pays and who benefits from health care? An assessment of equity in health care financing and benefit distribution in Tanzania | Mtei, *et al.*,2012 | 89 |
| 9 | Over-diagnosis of malaria by microscopy in the Kilombero Valley, Southern Tanzania: an evaluation of the utility and cost-effectiveness of rapid diagnostic tests | Harchut, *et al.*,2013 | 79 |
| 10 | Global health 2050: the path to halving premature death by mid-century | Jamison, *et al.*,2024 | 72 |

### 4.3.4 Global Distribution of Most Cited Institutions

The results indicated that the university and international research institutes contribute significantly to high-impact output. The University of Zambia is at the top of the list recorded with 344 citations followed by University of Pretoria with 298 total citations and Michigan State University which had produced 287 citations. While Tanzanian institutions such as the Ifakara Health Institute (255 citations), Ministry of Health and Social Welfare in Tanzania (158 citations), University of Dar es salaam (146 citations) and Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences (136 citations) appear prominently in top fifteen position globally, however, international institutions tend to exhibit higher average citation rates. This finding supports the argument that institutional research performance is multidimensional and shaped by resources, collaboration networks and publication strategies (Lwoga & Sife, 2013). These findings imply that strengthening institutional research infrastructure and international collaboration management is critical for enhancing citation impact without reinforcing dependency dynamics.



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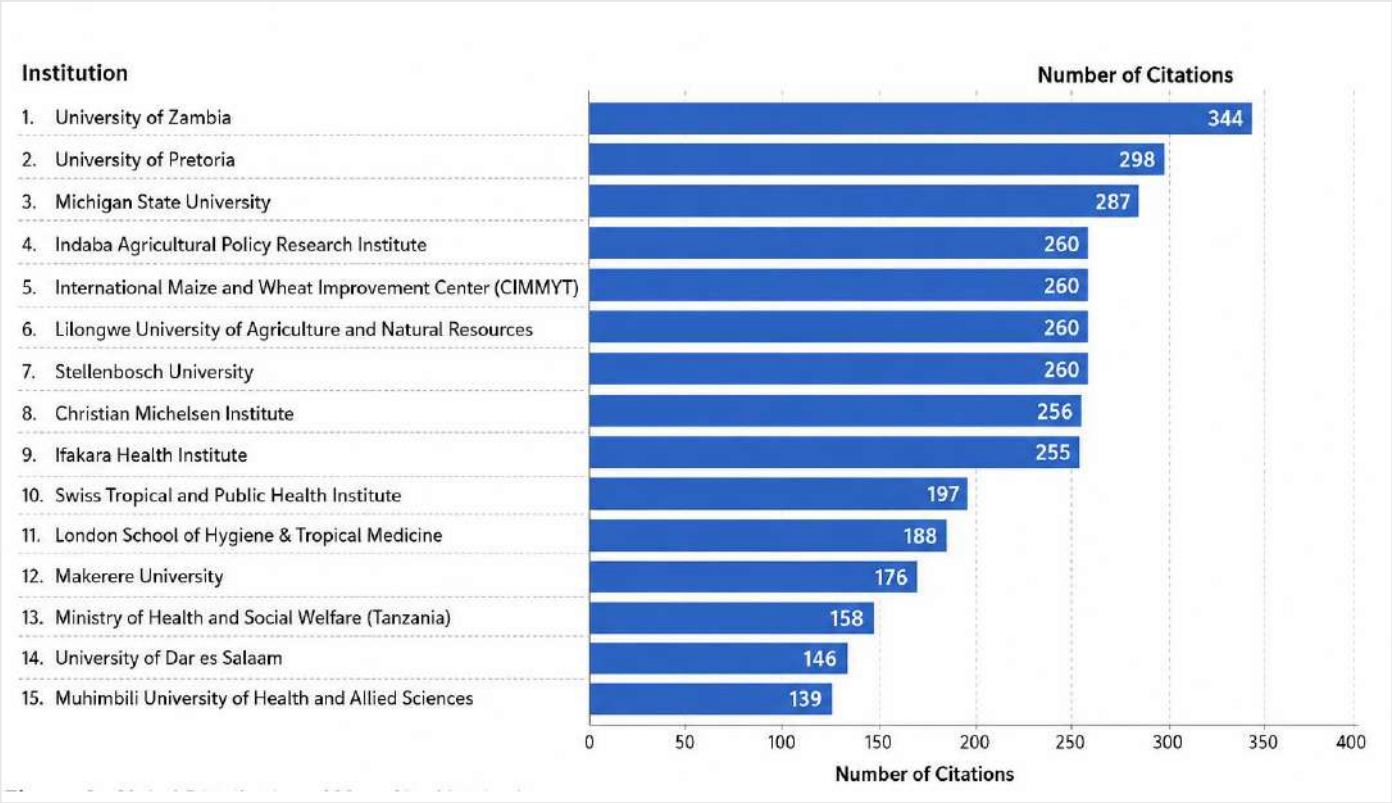



**Figure 2**
*Global Distributions of Most Cited Tanzania.*

### 4.3.5 Most Cited Institutions in Tanzania

While the global ranking provides an international benchmark, it is imperative to examine the performance of domestic entities to understand the international capacity within Tanzanian context. The findings shown that the Ifakara Health Institute ranked first with a total 255 citations, reflecting its strong research visibility and influence. It was followed by the Ministry of Health and Welfare in Tanzania, which recorded 158 citations. The University of Dar es salaam occupied the third position with 146 citations while the Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences ranked fourth, with 139 citations. Both World Health Organization Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and Mzumbe University shared the fifth position, each attaining 118 citations see Figure 3.

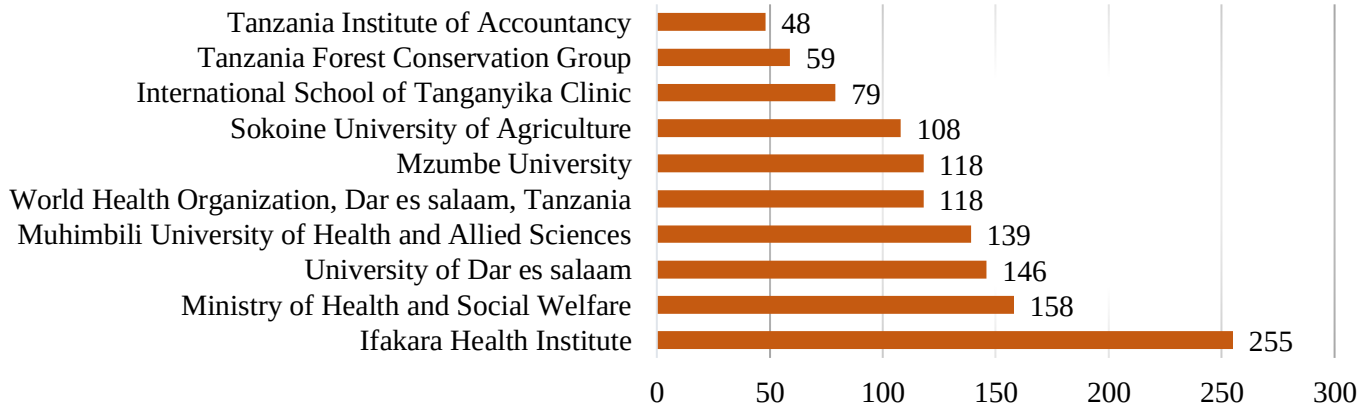



**Figure 3**
*Most Cited Institutions in Tanzania*

The findings revealed that the Ifakara Health Institute leads in citation performance followed by Ministry of Health and Welfare in Tanzania, and the University of Dar es salaam. The dominance of health-related institutions suggests a strong research focus and higher international collaboration in the health sector, which increase citation impacts compared to other fields. A similar pattern is observed for another health organizations which are Muhimbili



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University of Health and Allied Sciences and World Health Organization in Tanzania, which also attains high citations impact. Thus, these results suggest the need to strengthen research capacity and promote collaboration in underrepresented sectors to balance institutional citation performance and enhance overall national research visibility.

### 4.3.6 Global Distribution of Most Productive Researchers

Table 4 illustrates the scholarly productivity of researchers within the public finance domain as it relates to Tanzania. The data revealed that E. Mwakalila (Mzumbe University) and O. H. Fjeldstand (Christian Michelsen Institute, Norway) are the most prolific contributors with each recording 6 publications. They are followed by F. A. Kitole of Mzumbe University with 4 Publications. The remaining researchers in top ten category demonstrate a consistent output level with 3 publications each (see Table 4). This distribution shows the key individuals driving the volume of knowledge production within this specific research area. The findings signify a concentrated level of research productivity among the small group of scholars, particularly those affiliated with Mzumbe University and various international research institutes. This concentration suggests that the volume of scholarly output is largely driven by international research environments and established academic collaborations. The results support the perspective of Shemahonge et al. (2022), who argue that research performance is multidimensional.

**Table 4**

*Global Distribution of Most Productive Researchers*

| Rank | Researcher | Affiliation | Publications |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | E. Mwakalila | Mzumbe University | 6 |
| 2 | O. H. Fjeldstad | Christian Michelsen Institute, Norway | 6 |
| 3 | F. A. Kitole | Mzumbe University | 4 |
| 4 | G. Ahaibwe | Norwegian University of Life Science | 3 |
| 5 | H. J. Amukugo | University of Namibia | 3 |
| 6 | G. Asiki | African Population and Health Research Center, Kenya | 3 |
| 7 | J. Borghi | London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, United Kingdom | 3 |
| 8 | A. Erzse | University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa | 3 |
| 9 | T. A. Ngoma | Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences, Tanzania | 3 |
| 10 | S. A. Karim | Johns Hopkins University, United States | 3 |

To further examine authorship dynamics, an overlay visualization was generated using VOS viewer;

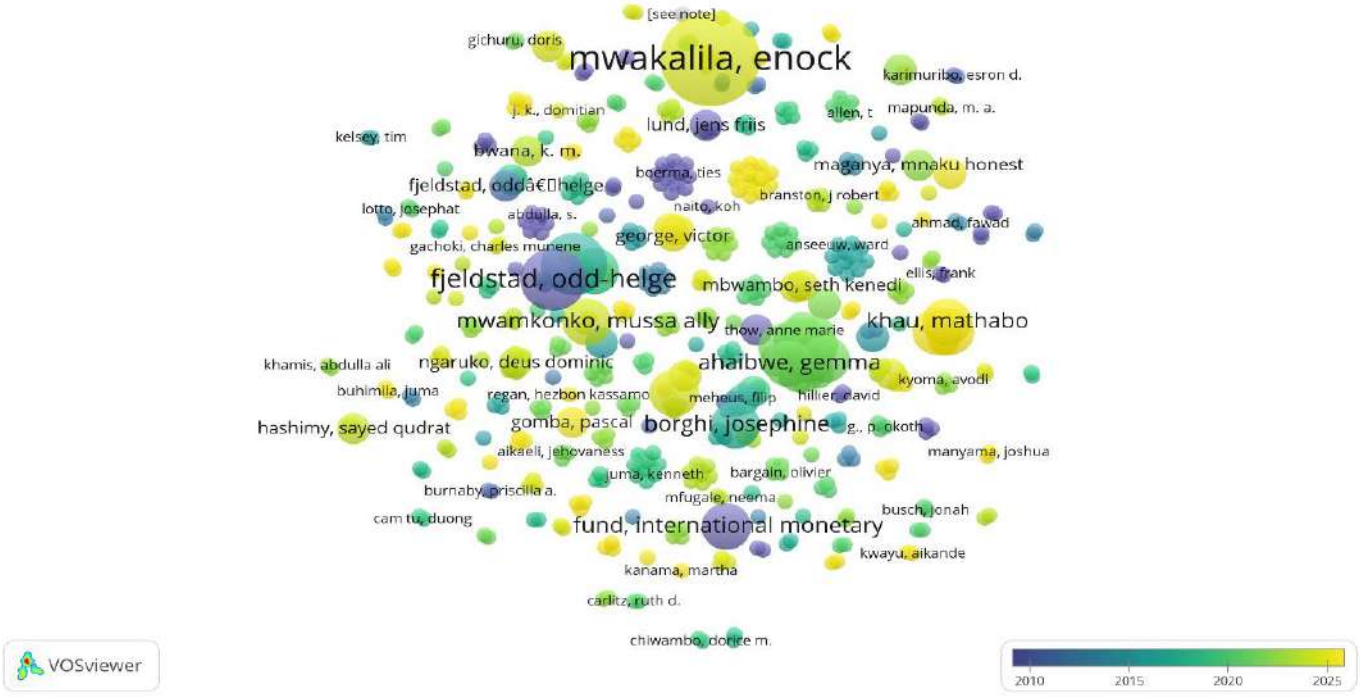



**Figure 4**

*Researcher Productivity and Temporal Overlay Visualization*



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The overlay map reveals both structural prominence and temporal evolution. Node size reflects publication volume, while color indicates the average publication year. Yellow Nodes (Emerging/Recent Contributors): Large yellow nodes like E. Mwakalila and K. Mathabo represent researchers with significant recent activity. This color indicate that these scholars are driving the current discourse in public finance and economic growth within the 2020-2025 period. Green/Teal Nodes (Established Contributors): Researchers such as G. Ahaibwe and M. A. Mwamkonko appear in green, indicating a steady presence in the mid-period of this dataset (roughly 2018-2021). Purple/Dark Blue Nodes (Foundational Contributors): Foundational researchers like H. O. Fjeldstad and organizations like the International Monetary Fund (IFM) are shown in darker hues. These nodes represent earlier, seminal works that provide the framework for current studies. Thus, the authorship structure demonstrates an expanding's and increasingly dynamic research community, with strong domestic production anchored at Mzumbe University and amplified impact through international partnerships.

### 4.3.7 Most Productive Researchers in Tanzania.

To provide focused insight into national capacity, this section isolates domestic data to highlight the most prolific scholars within Tanzania public finance research ecosystem. The findings show that E. Mwakalila from Mzumbe University is the most prolific researcher with a total of 6 publications. He is followed by F. A. Kitole also from Mzumbe University who has published 4 publications. The third position is held by T. A. Ngoma from Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences with 3 publications. Similarly, J. S. Mgejwa from Institute of Accountant Arusha and M. A. Mwamkoko from University of Dodoma shared the fourth position each with 3 publications (see Table 5). Moreover, the University of Dodoma appears to have higher representation in the top ten list with three researchers followed by Mzumbe University with two researchers. Notably, however, Mzumbe University leads in terms of the most prolific individual researcher. These findings are consistent with the argument of Abramo, D'Angelo and Soldatenkova (2017) who show that research productivity is highly skewed with a small share of researchers producing most of the output. This suggests that a few key researchers significantly drive public finance research output in Tanzania, highlighting the importance of strengthening mentorship, collaboration and research capacity among emerging scholars to enhance overall productivity.

**Table 5**

*Most Productive Researchers from Tanzania*

| Rank | Researcher | Affiliation | Publications |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | E. Mwakalila | Mzumbe University | 6 |
| 2 | F. A. Kitole | Mzumbe University | 4 |
| 3 | T. A. Ngoma | Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences, Tanzania | 3 |
| 4 | J. Mgejwa | Institute of Accountancy Arusha (IAA) | 3 |
| 5 | A. Mwamkonko | University of Dodoma | 3 |
| 6 | K. M. Bwana | College of Business Education | 2 |
| 7 | V. George | University of Dodoma | 2 |
| 8 | P. Gomba | Agriculture Capital Organization | 2 |
| 9 | H. H. Samboja | Zanzibar University | 2 |
| 10 | M. H. Maganya | University of Dodoma | 2 |

### 4.3.8 Global Distribution of Most Productive Institutions

At the institutional level, Mzumbe University ranked first with a total of 10 publications followed by University of Dar es salaam with 9 publications lead in publications volume, this reflecting their mandate in public finance training and research in Tanzania. Nevertheless, international institutions exhibit substantially higher average citation per article. However, institutions with fewer publications exhibit substantially higher citation counts, indicating stronger scholarly influence despite comparatively lower output. This disparity suggests structural differences in research infrastructure, international collaboration networks and journal visibility. Similar pattern has been observed in Su-Saharan Africa, where institutions embedded in global research consortia tend to attain high citation performance due to co-authorship networks and international indexing advantages (Hicks et al., 2015). For instance, Ifakara Health Institute demonstrates remarkably higher citation performance relative to its publication volume, implying that specialize institutions can generate substantial impact when focussing on a niche policy domain such as health financing. Therefore, these findings reinforce the argument that institutional research performance is shaped not only by publications volume but also by visibility strategies, partnership ecosystem and integration into global knowledge network (Lwoga & Sife, 2013). The results collaborate with the Competitive Advantage Theory, showing that top institutions such as Mzumbe University, University of Dar es salaam and Makelele University gained their competitive edge through strong innovation capacity, human capital, institution quality and network integration compared to other institutions.



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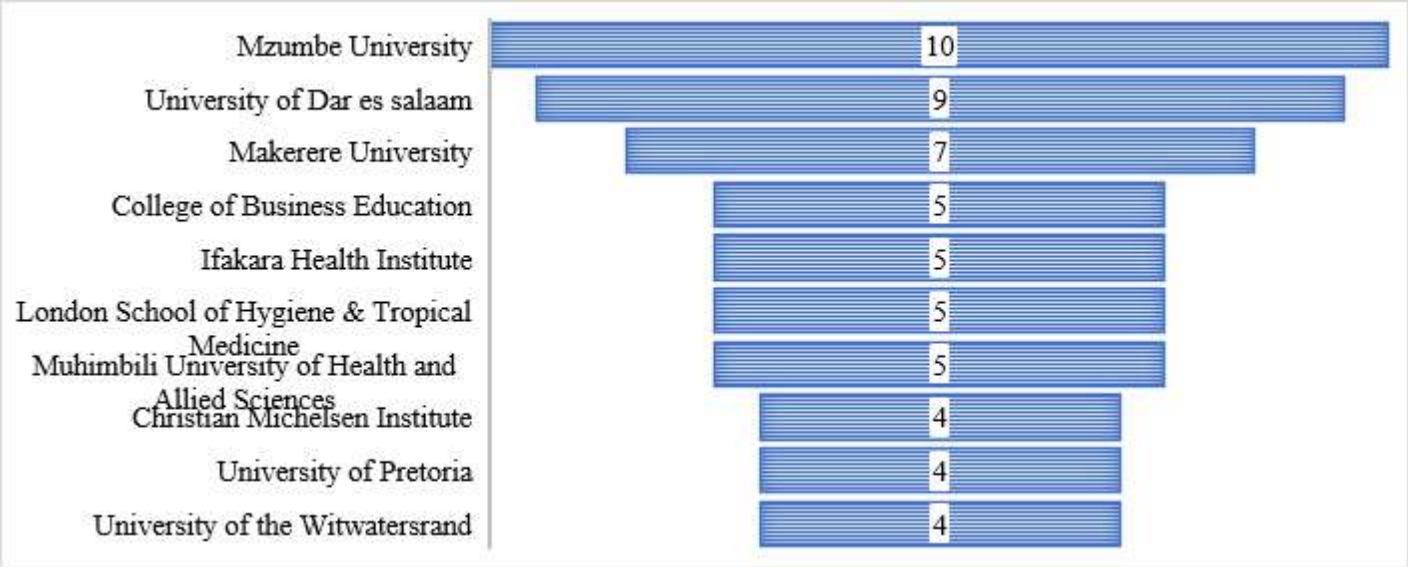



**Figure 5**
*Global Distribution of Most Productive Institution*

### 4.3.9 Most Productive Institutions in Tanzania

This analysis filters the global dataset to spotlight domestic institutions that serve as the primary engines of scholarly output within the country. Figure 6 shows the two public universities on a top ten organizations; Mzumbe University leads with 10 publications followed by University of Dar es Salaam with 9 publications. These are followed by the College of Business Education, Ifakara Health Institute and Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences, each contributing 5 publications. Notably, Mzumbe University and University of Dar es Salaam also maintain their first and second position in global organizational ranking, reinforcing their leadership in public finance research within Tanzania. These finding align with the Wagners (2009) who emphasizes that research productivity is often concentrated in a few leading institutions serve as key centres of public finance research in Tanzania. This highlighting the need for policy efforts to strengthen research capacity and collaboration across other institutions to broaden national research productivity and impacts.

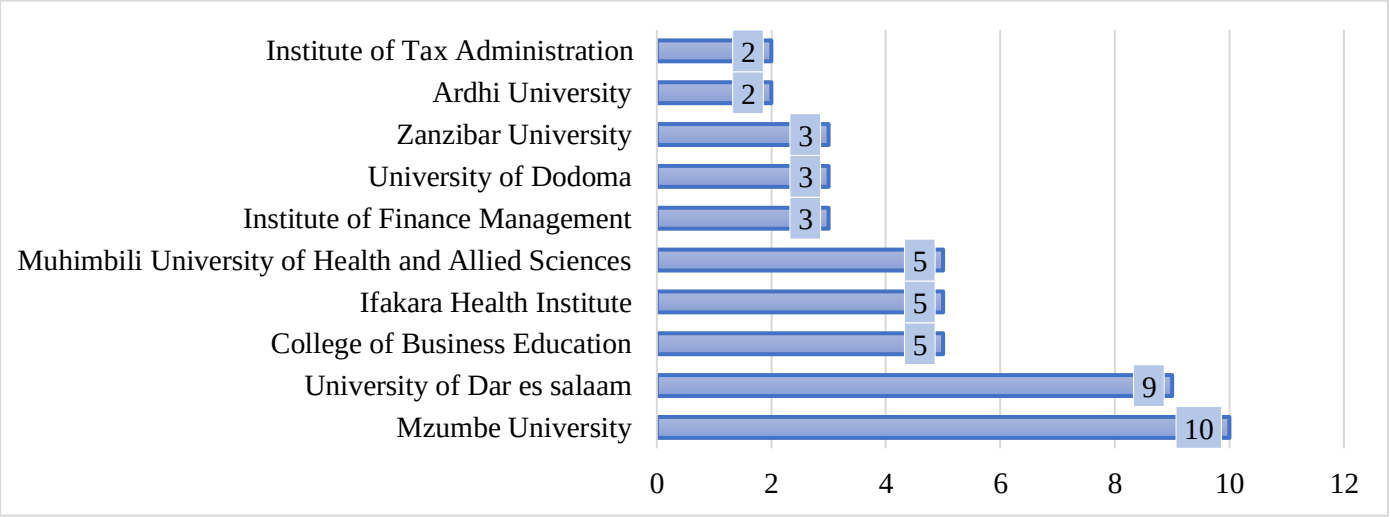



**Figure 6**
*Most Productive Institutions in Tanzania*

### 4.3.10 Most Country Productivity and Citations

At country level, the results revealed that the Tanzania leads in publications output with 49 publications and cited 774 times, demonstrating strong domestic engagement in public finance research. This is followed by United States which has 21 publications however leads in terms of citation impacts with 911 citations. The South Africa holds a third position with 14 publications and cited 531 times followed by United Kingdom recorded with 13 publications where cited 423 times. These four countries both highlighted as a dominant contributor in terms of productivity and citations



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impacts see Table 6. Tanzania dominates top ranked in terms of number of publications, however in citation count holds a strong second position this indicating that productivity impact gap where the United State dominate in terms of citation impacts. This finding suggests that while local research is being conducted, its visibility and impact are significantly amplified through international partnerships. This distribution reflects asymmetries in global knowledge production where global north countries benefit from stronger findings systems, journal control and citation networks (Hicks et al., 2015).

**Table 6**

*Most Country Productivity and Citations*

| Rank | Country | Publications | Citations |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Tanzania | 49 | 774 |
| 2 | United States | 21 | 911 |
| 3 | South Africa | 14 | 531 |
| 4 | United Kingdom | 13 | 423 |
| 5 | Uganda | 8 | 177 |
| 6 | Kenya | 7 | 104 |
| 7 | Norway | 6 | 358 |
| 8 | China | 5 | 188 |
| 9 | Denmark | 5 | 210 |
| 10 | Switzerland | 5 | 416 |

Geographical mapping of most country productivity and citations in public finance research in Tanzania

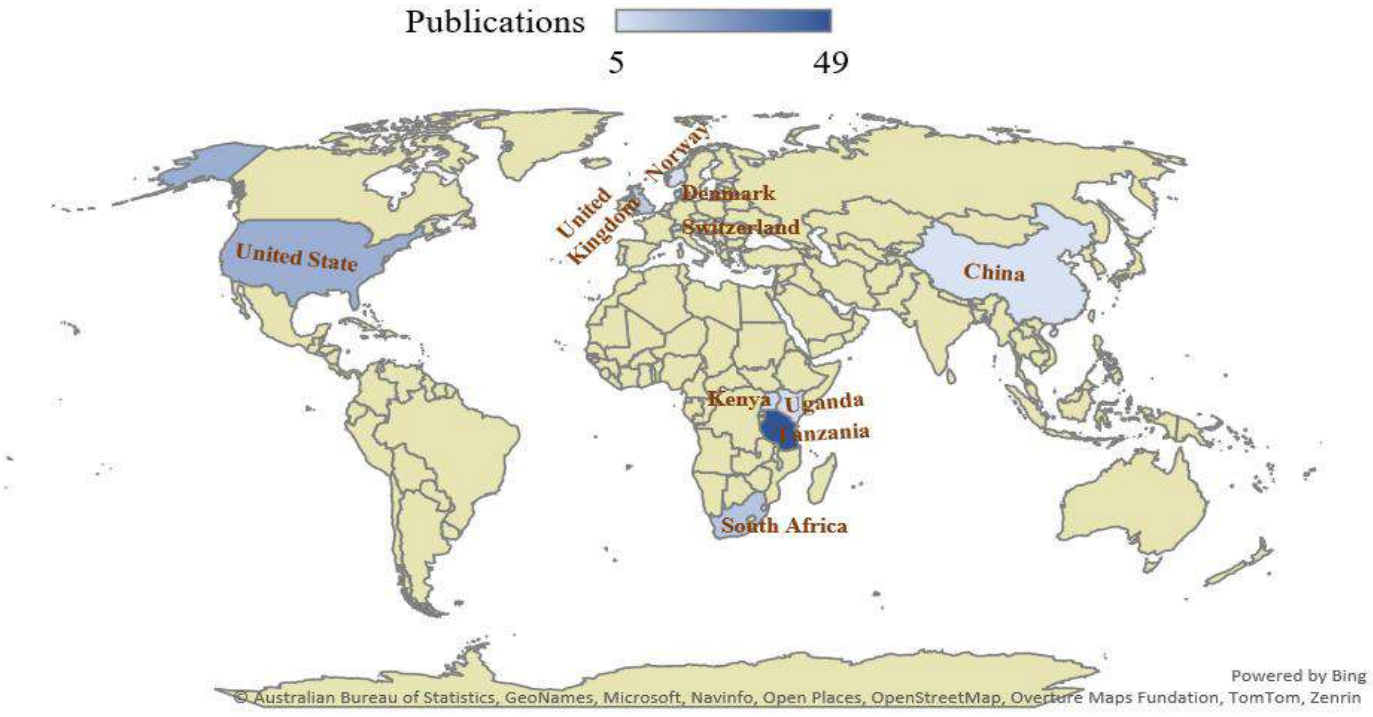



**Figure 7**

*Geographical Mapping of Most Country Productivity and Citations in Public Finance Research in Tanzania*

### 4.3.11 Most Published Journal

The findings shown a strategic tension in African research dissemination. Public finance research has been published in different local and international journals. Findings in Table 7 shows the list of the top 10 journals in which public finance scholars published their paper articles. The Tanzania Economic Review ranked the first position which host the majority of 6 publications, enhancing accessibility for domestic audiences. However, internationally indexed journals yield significantly higher citation impact, reflecting a persistent trade-off between local relevance and global research visibility (Confraria et al., 2017). This pattern highlights a strategic dilemma for scholars, publishing locally ensures domestic reach whereas publishing internationally maximizes research influence and citation performance (Onyacha, 2021).



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**Table 7**
*Most Published Journal*

| Rank | Sources/Journals | Publications | Citations |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Tanzania Economic Review | 6 | 3 |
| 1 | Cogent Economics & Finance | 4 | 8 |
| 2 | RA Journal of Applied Research | 4 | 0 |
| 3 | Journal of Economics Management and Trade | 4 | 30 |
| 4 | Science Mundi | 4 | 8 |
| 5 | Tanzania Journal for Population Studies and Development | 4 | 1 |
| 6 | Global Health Action | 3 | 85 |
| 7 | NG Journal of Social Development | 3 | 8 |
| 8 | World Development | 3 | 212 |
| 9 | Asian Journal of Economic Business and Accounting | 3 | 2 |
| 10 | IMF Country Report | 3 | 6 |

### 4.4 Conceptual and Thematic Structure of Public Finance Research

The conceptual and thematic structure of public finance research in Tanzania was examined using keyword co-occurrence analysis. The bibliographic data were analysed using VOS viewer software to visualize relationship among keywords extracted from publication titles, revealing major research themes and their conceptual connections. The dataset contained 4,372 unique keywords. In the network visualization, node size represents frequency of occurrence while link thickness reflects total link strength-indicating the number of publications in which two keywords co-occur as shown in figure 8 bellow.

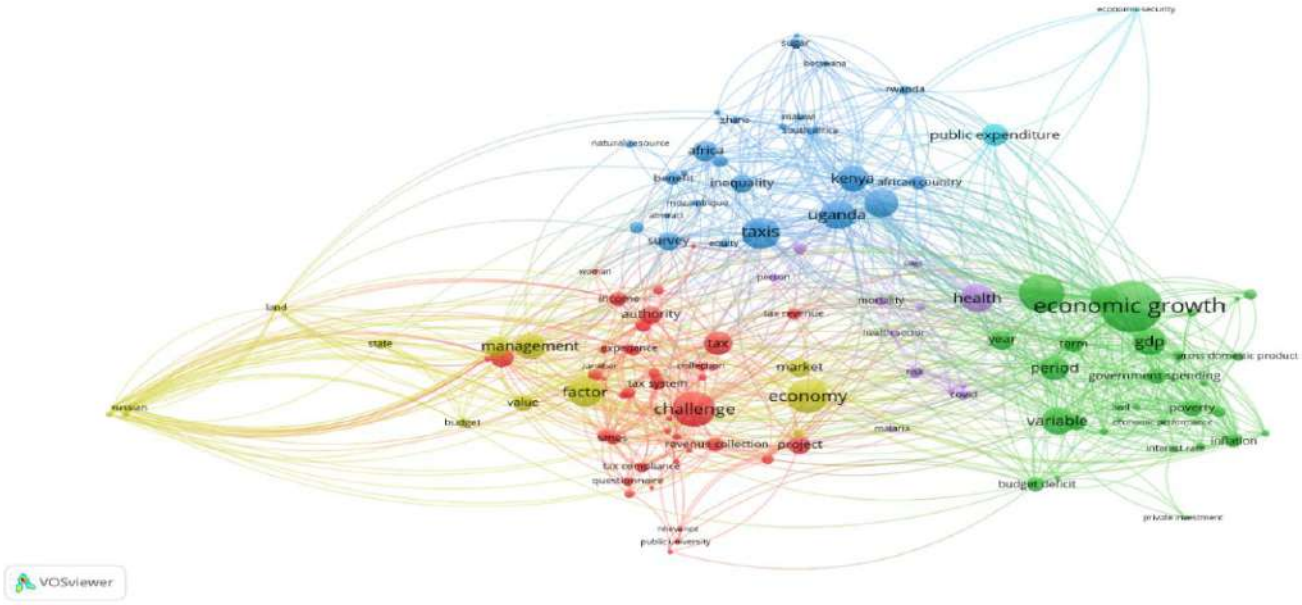



**Figure 8**
*Keyword Co-occurrence Network Visualization (Overlay View)*

The network visualization (Figure 8) reveals a structured and interconnected thematic landscape. The ten most frequently occurring keywords include Economic Growth (114 occurrence), Challenge (79 occurrence), Economy (75 occurrence), Debt (51 occurrence) and Africa (45 occurrence). The prominence of economic growth confirms that macroeconomic performance constitutes the central objective of the research field. However, the high occurrence of the term challenge indicates that the literature is strongly problem-driven focusing on fiscal and institutional constraints. This micro-fiscal emphasis aligns with recent African bibliometric evidence showing that public finance scholarship on the continent is dominated by themes of microeconomic stabilization, debt sustainability and fiscal performance (Maulana et al., 2026).

The visualization figure 8 identifies four primary thematic clusters distinguished by color; Green Cluster (Economic Performance and Macroeconomic Outcomes); this is most dominant cluster, anchored by economic growth.



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It includes closely connected terms such as GDP, government spending, inflation, poverty, budget deficit and economic performance. This cluster reflects the quantitative and econometric orientation of the literature emphasizing growth dynamics and fiscal sustainability. Red Cluster (Institutional and Operational Fiscal Challenges); cantered on challenge and tax, this cluster includes revenue collection, tax compliance, authority, management and tax system. This cluster highlights administrative barriers and institutional capacity constraints affecting public finance performance. Blue Cluster (Regional and Comparative Fiscal Policy); this cluster is anchored by Africa and contains country-specific notes such as Uganda and Kenya, along with public expenditure, inequality and taxes. This cluster situates Tanzania public finance research within a broader East African and continental discourse. Yellow Cluster (Governance, Management and Systematic Drivers); this bridging cluster includes economy, factor, budget and market. The cluster highlights systemic governance determinants that mediate between policy design and economic outcomes. The density visualization further highlights area of thematic concentration and intellectual intensity within the field.

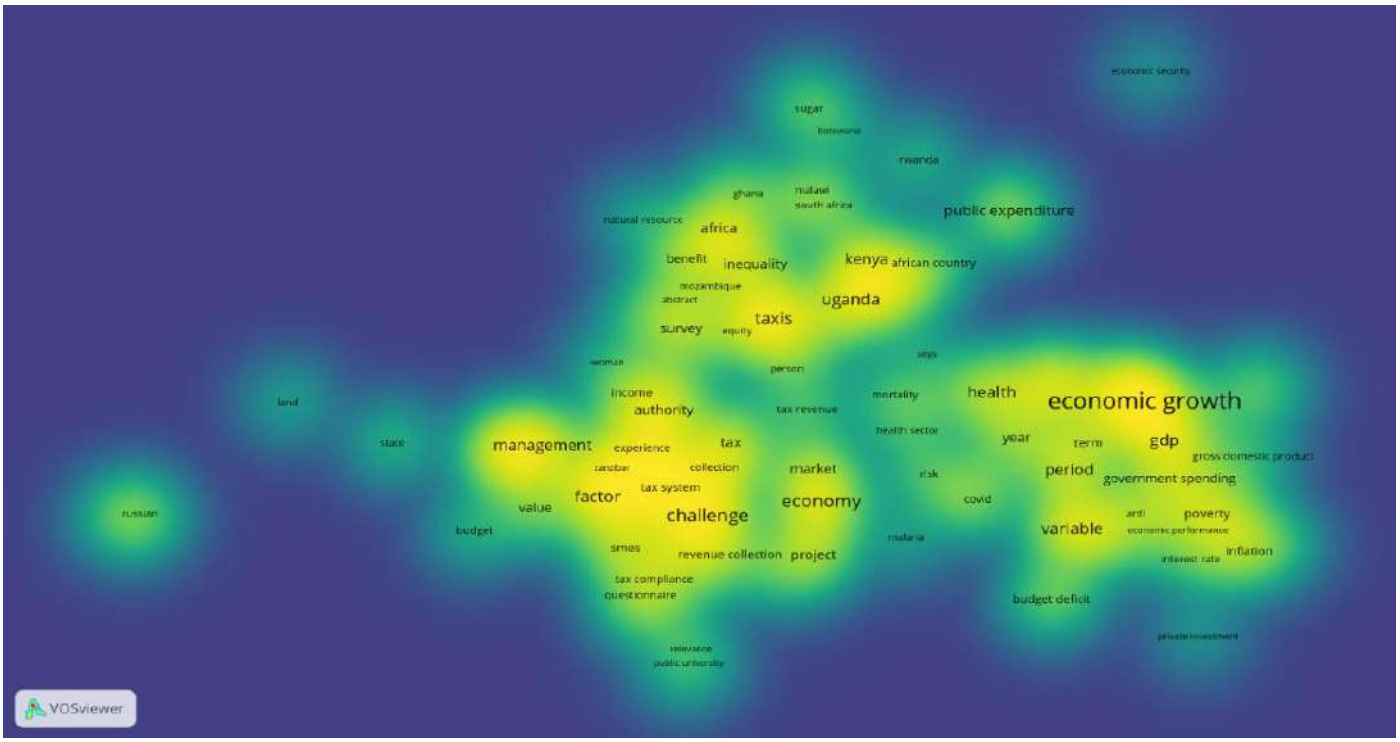



**Figure 9**
*Keyword Co-occurrence Density Visualization (Density View)*

As shown in Figure 9, the highest density concentrations appear around the economic growth, challenge, economy and taxes. The bright yellow zones indicate areas with the strongest keyword clustering and highest research intensity. This confirms that macroeconomic growth, fiscal challenges and tax administration from the core research nexus in Tanzanian public finance scholarship. Therefore, Tanzanian public finance research is microeconomic orientation institutional and administrative focus, regional contextualization within Africa, governance-centred analytical linkages and strong policy-driven.

## V. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 Conclusion

This study provides a comprehensive bibliometric analysis of public finance research in Tanzania from 2000 to 2025. The results demonstrate that research productivity has evolved from a prolonged low-output phase into a period of sustained growth, especially after 2016. Journal articles constitute the dominant mode of knowledge dissemination, reflecting their importance in scholarly communication and research evaluation systems. While Tanzania leads in publication output, citation impact is concentrated among a relatively small number of researchers, institutions, and countries, indicating persistent disparities in scholarly influence.

The analysis also shows that highly cited research is often interdisciplinary and closely connected to broader development concerns includes taxation, public expenditure, governance, and health financing. In addition, keyword co-occurrence patterns reveal highly degree of focus on macro-fiscal issues including economic growth, public debt, and budget deficits which positions Tanzanian public finance research within the context of development and policy


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issues in Africa. Although the observed positive growth, the irregular distribution of citations still highlights problems with international visibility, collaboration networks, and access to high-impact publication outlets.

### 5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, sustained investment in public finance research is crucial to maintain the steady publications growth trends and support early-career researchers. Strengthening regional and international collaboration is also important for improving the citations impact, global visibility and overall quality of Tanzanian public finance scholarship. Tanzania Researchers should be encouraged to publish in internationally indexed and open-access journals improve research dissemination and accessibility of the research findings. In addition, promoting interdisciplinary research that link public finance with broader development outcomes which may increase scholarly work relevance, influence and practical contribution. Future bibliometric studies should further examine the research collaboration patterns of public finance in Tanzania and explore the relationship between public finance research outputs and their uptake in policy formulation and implementation in Tanzania.

### Declaration of Interest

The authors declare that they do not have any known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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