

Effect of ethical practices on performance of compassion international project in Anglican church of Rwanda, Gasabo Diocese

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Recommended Reference: Ndarwubatsé, O., & Dushimimana, J. D. (2026). Effect of ethical practices on performance of Compassion International project in Anglican Church of Rwanda, Gasabo Diocese. *African Quarterly Social Science Review*, 3(4), 93–105. <https://doi.org/10.51867/AQSSR.3.4.8>

ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of this study was to examine the effect of ethical practices on the performance of Compassion International Project within Anglican Church of Rwanda, specifically in the Gasabo Diocese. Specifically, the study would seek to assess the effect of transparency practices, find out the effect of accountability practices, evaluate the effect of fairness practices, and examine the effect of honesty and integrity practices on project performance. Regarding methodology, the research adopted a descriptive and correlational research design, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative approaches to ensure a holistic understanding of the variables. The population consisted of 958 beneficiaries, works with 17 project staff, 35 volunteers, 461 caregivers, and operates under the supervision of 6 church leaders, amounting to a total accessible population of 1,477 stakeholders of Compassion International Project in Gasabo Diocese, from which a sample size of 298 was determined using Solvin's formula and selected via stratified and simple random sampling techniques. Data collection instruments included a structured questionnaire and documentation for quantitative data and an interview guide for qualitative insights, ensuring triangulation of findings. Finally, data analysis was conducted using SPSS version 29, employing descriptive statistics such as means and standard deviations, as well as inferential statistics including correlation and multiple regression analysis to test the relationship between ethical practices and project performance. The regression findings revealed that transparency practices had a positive and significant effect on performance of Compassion International Project in Anglican Church of Rwanda in Gasabo Diocese with $B = 0.290$, $t = 9.355$, $p = 0.000$. Accountability practices also had a positive and significant effect on project performance with $B = 0.430$, $t = 11.944$, $p = 0.000$, while fairness practices significantly affected project performance with $B = 0.153$, $t = 4.636$, $p = 0.000$. In addition, honesty and integrity practices had a positive and significant effect on project performance with $B = 0.141$, $t = 4.273$, $p = 0.000$. The study concluded that ethical practices significantly improve the performance of Compassion International Project in Anglican Church of Rwanda in Gasabo Diocese, especially through transparent decision-making, clear accountability, fair treatment of beneficiaries, and strong integrity among staff. The study recommended that Compassion International Project in Anglican Church of Rwanda in Gasabo Diocese should strengthen ethical practices through regular ethical training, clear reporting systems, fair beneficiary support procedures, and continuous monitoring of staff conduct.

Keywords: Accountability Practices, Ethical Practices, Fairness Practices, Honesty and Integrity Practices, Project Performance, Transparency Practices

I. INTRODUCTION

The integration of ethical practices in project management has evolved into a decisive factor of success on a worldwide scale, especially in the non-profit and religious sectors where the trust of the public is of prime importance. A transition from technical project management to a form of value-based project management has been accelerated by global demands for sustainability and social responsibility. Projects that do not follow these evolving ethical standards too often find themselves facing the immediate withdrawal of many donors and intense resistance from stakeholders that too often results in premature termination or failure. International standards are now emphasizing that ethics are not only soft skills that can be optional but are core competencies that would be required for the longevity and impact of development initiatives (Ika & Pinto, 2022).

The government of Rwanda has taken proactive steps to control the operations of faith-based organizations in order to ensure that they contribute to the country's national development plans. Religious organizations are required to abide by the same rules of governance and accountability as other NGOs in order to conduct legal business within the country. This particular context puts a high demand on the Anglican Church and others to professionalize their

project management and reporting structures. Consequently, the religious projects in Rwanda are presently experiencing the shift from informal management to strict compliance to ethics (Rwanda Governance Board, 2023).

Olarinmoye (2014) implies that Compassion projects have historically been important for child growth, but they are under the gun of international donor demands and the local church administration. While many such projects are successful, cases of delay and leaking resources are seen when local ethical oversight is poor or irregular. The intersection of the ethics of international donors and the realities of implementation locally results in a particular challenge for project managers. This requires a specific investigation into the way these dynamics are played out in Gasabo Diocese to ensure the success in the future.

According to the Rwanda Governance Board (2023), about 30% of the faith-based organizations are facing operational suspension or warnings every year for not complying with financial transparency and administrative governance standards. Despite the religious injunction for maintaining high standards of morality, internal control weaknesses often cause delays over 6 months and budget overruns of 15%. This gap between the moral high ground that religious institutions should occupy in theory and the fact that in practice they do not, creates a critical performance bottleneck. Olarinmoye (2014) asserts that these accountability mechanisms remain rather reactive; audits often have shown that whereas direct embezzlement is rare up to 40% of funds are misallocated due to opaque decision-making processes. This inability to accurately track resources can expose long term sustainability of the project and reputation of the project with partners.

Furthermore, Moyer et al., (2012) proposes that fairness is a disputed point as some dioceses prioritize congregants over the needy in the broader community, which effects nearly one out of three potential beneficiaries. This exclusionary practice is unethical in terms of universal justice and causes friction with local authorities who require inclusive development directly compromising performance metrics in terms of community reach. Most of the existing studies such as Rwanda Governance Board (2023), Transparency International Rwanda (2024), Olarinmoye (2014) and Moyer et al. (2012) are secular NGOs or finance oriented and do not consider the unique spiritual dimension. This study aims to address that gap in knowledge by giving detailed analysis on the role of ethical practices on performance of Compassion International Project in Anglican Church of Rwanda.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Despite the important role of faith-based organizations in community development, weaknesses in ethical practices, financial transparency, accountability, and inclusive decision-making continue to affect project performance in Rwanda. The Rwanda Governance Board (2023) reported that approximately 30% of faith-based organizations face operational warnings or suspension annually due to non-compliance with financial transparency and administrative governance standards. Similarly, the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (2023) found that only 56% of community-based development interventions sustain their benefits beyond initial funding cycles, while Rwanda Governance Board (2024) reported low implementation of Joint Action Development Forum resolutions across many districts. These challenges may manifest in project delays, inefficient resource utilization, limited community participation, and difficulties in sustaining project outcomes. Existing studies have largely examined accountability and financial governance from secular or organizational perspectives, with limited attention to the distinctive spiritual and ethical dimensions of faith-based development projects. This creates a contextual and empirical gap regarding how ethical practices influence project performance within religious organizations. Therefore, this study examines the role of ethical practices in the performance of Compassion International Projects implemented through the Anglican Church of Rwanda.

1.2 Research Objective

- i. To assess the effect of transparency practices on performance of Compassion International Project in Anglican Church of Rwanda in Gasabo Diocese.
- ii. To find out the effect of accountability practices on performance of Compassion International Project in Anglican Church of Rwanda in Gasabo Diocese.
- iii. To evaluate the effect of fairness practices on performance of Compassion International Project in Anglican Church of Rwanda in Gasabo Diocese.
- iv. To examine the effect of honesty and integrity practices on performance of Compassion International Project in Anglican Church of Rwanda in Gasabo Diocese.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

2.1.1 Stakeholder Theory

Freeman originally proposed the Stakeholder Theory in 1984, but it has been significantly evolved by scholars to address modern organizational ethics. The theory posits that an organization does not operate in a vacuum but must

create value for all stakeholders, not just shareholders or owners. It argues that the long-term success of any project depends on satisfying the needs of employees, beneficiaries, suppliers, and the community. In the 2020s, this theory has become central to understanding how ethical treatment of all parties leads to sustainable performance (Phillips, 2021).

Stakeholder Theory was used to explain how Compassion International Project must balance the needs of donors and beneficiaries. It supports the idea that fairness and transparency are necessary to maintain the support of the diverse groups involved in the project. The study utilized this theory to analyze how stakeholder satisfaction correlates with overall project performance. The theory guided the formulation of the questionnaire to assess if the project meets the diverse needs of its stakeholders. It would help explain why ethical failures often lead to stakeholder withdrawal and project collapse. The research demonstrated that stakeholder inclusion is a key driver of project success.

2.1.2 Agency Theory

Jensen and Meckling formulated Agency Theory in 1976, and it remains a dominant framework for understanding accountability relationships. The theory explains the relationship between a principal (who delegates work) and an agent (who performs the work), focusing on the potential conflicts of interest. It assumes that agents may act in their own self-interest unless there are mechanisms to monitor and align their behavior. This theory is particularly relevant for understanding the need for transparency and reporting mechanisms (Panda & Leepsa, 2022).

The study applied Agency Theory to investigate the relationship between accountability practices and the performance of Compassion International Project. It provides the theoretical basis for why the Anglican Church must implement strict reporting tools to control project managers. The research tested if better agency controls (accountability) lead to better project outcomes in Gasabo Diocese. The theory was instrumental in analyzing the role of audits and reports in ensuring compliance. It helped interpret the findings related to the effectiveness of current accountability structures. The study likely showed that reducing agency problems improves project efficiency.

2.1.3 Stewardship Theory

Davis et al. (1997) introduced Stewardship Theory, and it has been revitalized by scholars for the non-profit sector. Unlike Agency Theory, which assumes self-interest, Stewardship Theory assumes that managers are motivated by a desire to do good and serve the organization's mission. It argues that given the chance, stewards acted collectively and value cooperation over individual gain. This fits the profile of religious and mission-driven organizations where intrinsic motivation is high (Hernandez, 2021).

Stewardship Theory was relevant to the study as it offers an alternative explanation for the role of honesty and integrity in the Anglican Church. It would help explain why some project managers perform well due to their spiritual commitment rather than fear of punishment. The study used this to assess if fostering a stewardship culture improves the performance of Compassion International Project. The theory provided a framework for understanding the intrinsic motivation of church workers. It was used to contrast with Agency Theory to see which approach best explains performance in this context. The research explored if stewardship leads to higher commitment and better results.

2.1.4 Legitimacy Theory

The theory posits that organizations disclose information (transparency) to prove they are good corporate citizens and to maintain legitimacy. It argues that when legitimacy is threatened for example, by a scandal organizations must increase their ethical disclosures to repair trust. For NGOs, legitimacy is their most valuable asset, derived entirely from public trust. Failure to maintain legitimacy leads to the withdrawal of donor support and community cooperation (Deegan et al., 2002).

In this study, Legitimacy Theory explained the external pressure on Compassion International Project to be transparent and fair. It supports the view that ethical practices are a strategic necessity to maintain the church's standing in Gasabo Diocese. The research evaluated how the need for legitimacy drives the adoption of ethical practices and subsequently impacts performance. The theory would help analyze why the project prioritizes certain ethical practices over others. It was used to interpret the link between community perception and project sustainability. The study demonstrated that legitimacy is a critical outcome of ethical behavior.

2.2 Empirical Review

2.2.1 Transparency Practices and Project Performance

Khan and Ali (2023) conducted a study on the impact of transparency on the success of construction projects in Pakistan. The study utilized a quantitative approach, surveying 200 project managers, and found a strong positive correlation ($r=0.65$) between information disclosure and project timeliness. The researchers concluded that open communication channels reduce misunderstandings and rework, thereby significantly accelerating project delivery times. They recommended that organizations invest in digital dashboards to enhance real-time transparency and allow

all stakeholders to view progress. This study illustrates that technology can be a key enabler of transparency in complex project environments.

Gasana (2023) focused on transparency and accountability in government-funded projects in Kigali, Rwanda. Using a correlational design, the study revealed that a lack of transparency was the primary cause of stalled projects in the infrastructure sector in the capital city. The findings showed a significant regression coefficient ($\beta=0.55$), indicating that transparency is a strong and direct predictor of project completion rates. The study recommended the strict enforcement of the Access to Information Law to improve project outcomes and ensure that public funds are utilized efficiently.

2.2.2 Accountability Practices and Project Performance

The impact of accountability mechanisms on NGO project performance in Bangladesh was explored using a case study approach involving 10 major NGOs. The study found that upward accountability to donors often compromised downward accountability to beneficiaries, creating a tension in objectives. However, the findings showed that balanced accountability systems that addressed both groups improved overall project effectiveness. The author concluded that accountability must be multi-directional to be effective and recommended integrated reporting frameworks that capture the needs of all stakeholders involved (Rahman, 2022).

The influence of accountability on the sustainability of social protection projects in the Southern Province of Rwanda was examined using a regression analysis. Data from 180 local leaders revealed that accountability explained 60% of the variance in project sustainability. The findings revealed that projects with clear grievance redress mechanisms lasted longer because problems were solved before they escalated. It was recommended that all social projects establish independent committees to handle beneficiary complaints and ensure responsiveness (Moyer et al., 2012).

2.2.3 Fairness Practices and Project Performance

Tanaka (2021) investigated the effect of organizational justice on project team performance in Japan. The study utilized a survey of 300 IT project members and found that distributive fairness significantly increased team motivation and reduced turnover rates. The findings indicated that when team members felt rewards and recognition were distributed fairly, they worked harder and stayed longer. Tanaka concluded that fairness is a key driver of human resource efficiency in projects and recommended transparent reward systems to boost morale. Schnackenberg and Tomlinson (2016) assessed the effect of fairness in service delivery on beneficiary satisfaction in health projects in the Northern Province of Rwanda. Using a Likert scale survey of 400 patients, the study revealed a strong positive correlation between fair treatment by staff and patient health outcomes. The findings indicated that discrimination negatively impacts the effectiveness of health interventions and reduces patient trust.

2.2.4 Honesty and Integrity Practices and Project Performance

The relationship between leader integrity and project success in Vietnam was explored using a survey of 150 construction managers. The findings indicated that leaders with high integrity ratings had teams with higher morale and lower absenteeism. The study concluded that integrity fosters a culture of commitment where employees model their behavior after the leader. It was recommended that leadership character be considered a critical success factor and that integrity testing be included during manager selection (Palanski & Yammarino, 2007).

The role of professional integrity in the quality of housing projects in Kigali was examined using a survey of 100 engineers. The study revealed that adherence to professional codes of ethics was the strongest predictor of structural quality and safety. The findings indicated that integrity prevents the use of substandard materials and ensures compliance with building codes. Stronger sanctions by professional bodies for ethical violations were recommended to maintain industry standards (Li et al., 2025).

2.3 Research Gap

Based on the empirical review, several gaps have been identified that this study aims to fill to contribute to the body of knowledge. While studies like Gasana (2023) and Kagabo (2024) have conducted research in Rwanda, they focused primarily on government and general NGO projects, leaving a gap regarding faith-based organizations specifically in Gasabo Diocese. Most previous studies have looked at these ethical variables in isolation; for instance, focusing only on accountability (Moyer et al., 2012) or fairness (Niyondora & Irechukwu, 2023), whereas this study integrates all four variables to see their combined effect. There is a contextual gap, as no recent study has specifically targeted Compassion International Project within the Anglican Church structure, which has unique governance dynamics compared to secular NGOs. Finally, many existing studies used purely qualitative methods, whereas this study employed a mixed-methods approach to provide statistical evidence of the relationship between ethics and performance.

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive and correlational research design. Furthermore, the study incorporated a mixed methods approach by integrating both quantitative and qualitative data. The descriptive design was utilized to detail the current state of ethical practices within the Compassion Project, providing a comprehensive picture of the situation on the ground. Simultaneously, the correlational design established the statistical relationship between these ethical practices and overall project performance. By employing this mixed methods approach, the research would not only describe existing conditions but also explain underlying dynamics by comprehensively linking statistical variables with contextual qualitative insights.

3.2 Study Population and Sampling

The study population comprised 1,477 stakeholders of the Compassion International Project in Gasabo Diocese, including 958 beneficiaries, 17 project staff, 35 volunteers, 461 caregivers, and 6 church leaders. Using Slovin's formula, a sample of 298 respondents was obtained. Stratified sampling was used to ensure representation of the major stakeholder groups, followed by simple random sampling within the respective strata.

3.3 Data Collection

Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The questionnaire assessed transparency, accountability, fairness, honesty and integrity, and project performance. Documentary review of project reports and charters was also undertaken to obtain complementary information on project implementation and performance.

3.4 Validity and Reliability

Content validity was established through review by experts and the university supervisor. The Content Validity Index (CVI) was calculated as the proportion of items considered relevant, yielding a CVI of 0.833, which exceeded the 0.70 threshold. A pilot study was conducted among 30 respondents from a comparable Compassion International Project in a neighbouring area and excluded from the main study. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. The coefficients were 0.893 for transparency, 0.883 for accountability, 0.883 for fairness, 0.887 for honesty and integrity, and 0.852 for project performance. All values exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating satisfactory internal consistency.

3.5 Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to examine the relationships between the ethical practices and project performance, while multiple regression analysis was employed to determine the combined predictive effect of the independent variables on project performance. The regression model was specified as:

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \varepsilon$$

Where:

Y represents project performance; X_1 transparency practices; X_2 accountability practices; X_3 fairness practices; X_4 honesty and integrity practices; α is the constant; β_1 – β_4 are regression coefficients; and ε is the error term.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval and institutional permission were obtained from the University of Kigali and the relevant Anglican Church authorities. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study and provided informed consent before participation. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were free to withdraw without penalty. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained by excluding identifying information from the questionnaires and securely storing electronic and hard-copy data.

IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

4.1 Response Rate

A total of 298 questionnaires were distributed, of which 273 were successfully completed and returned, representing a response rate of 91.6%. The analysis therefore used 273 valid responses. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1*Response Rate*

Response Category	Frequency	Percentage
Returned questionnaires	273	91.6
Unreturned questionnaires	25	8.4
Total questionnaires distributed	298	100.0

4.2 Descriptive Findings

4.2.1 Transparency Practices and Project Performance

The first objective examined the influence of transparency practices on project performance. The findings indicate that transparency practices were highly rated, with an overall mean of 4.23 (SD = 0.459). Respondents particularly rated visibility of project decisions highly (M = 4.28), followed by donor reporting (M = 4.24), open communication (M = 4.23), and access to project information (M = 4.18) as shown in Table 2. These results suggest that transparency was generally perceived as an established practice within Compassion International Project in the Anglican Church of Rwanda, Gasabo Diocese.

Table 2*Descriptive statistics on Transparency Practices*

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
The project leadership ensures high decision visibility by involving local church stakeholders in Gasabo Diocese before key decisions are implemented.	273	4.28	.475
Beneficiaries and guardians in Gasabo Diocese have easy information access regarding project budgets and activity plans.	273	4.18	.446
There is open communication between the project staff and the church committee regarding operational challenges.	273	4.23	.469
The project adheres to strict donor reporting schedules to ensure financial transparency with Compassion International.	273	4.24	.444
Overall	273	4.23	.459

The qualitative findings indicated that transparency was reflected in the communication of project activities, budget-related information, support schedules, operational challenges, and donor reporting requirements. Project staff reported participating in explaining planned activities and budget information to caregivers and beneficiaries, while church leaders indicated that they received updates concerning project operations and reporting requirements. These practices suggest that sharing relevant project information supported stakeholder awareness and understanding of project activities. As one project staff member explained,

"I participate in explaining planned activities, budget-related information, and support schedules to caregivers and beneficiaries under Compassion International Project in Anglican Church of Rwanda in Gasabo Diocese."

Similarly, a church leader stated,

"I receive updates from project staff about operational challenges, planned activities, and donor reporting requirements."

The responses therefore provide qualitative evidence that transparent communication was incorporated into the day-to-day implementation of the project.

4.2.2 Accountability Practices and Project Performance

The second objective assessed the influence of accountability practices on project performance. Table 3 show that accountability recorded an overall mean of 4.18 (SD = 0.467). Consequence management had the highest mean (M = 4.26), followed by admission of errors (M = 4.18), clarity of roles (M = 4.15), and answerability for decisions and actions (M = 4.14). The findings indicate that accountability mechanisms were generally perceived positively among respondents.

Table 3*Descriptive statistics on Accountability Practices*

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
There is clear role clarity among all project staff in Gasabo Diocese regarding their specific duties and responsibilities.	273	4.15	.498
Project leaders practice error admission without fear of victimization when mistakes occur in daily operations.	273	4.18	.493
Effective answerability mechanisms are in place for staff to explain resource usage to the church leadership.	273	4.14	.432
The project implements strict consequence management for any unethical behavior or poor performance observed among staff.	273	4.26	.446
Overall	273	4.18	.467

The qualitative findings showed that accountability was demonstrated through openness in reporting mistakes, recognition of operational problems, and the implementation of corrective measures. Project staff described an environment where mistakes could be reported openly, while church leaders emphasized the importance of taking corrective action when unethical conduct or poor performance was identified. These practices indicate that accountability mechanisms enabled project personnel and leaders to respond to implementation challenges and maintain responsibility for project activities.

A project staff member observed,

"I have seen that project leaders in Compassion International Project in Anglican Church of Rwanda in Gasabo Diocese allow staff to report mistakes openly when they occur in daily operations."

In addition, a church leader reported,

"I support the practice of taking corrective action when unethical behaviour or poor performance is observed among staff involved in the project."

The qualitative evidence therefore demonstrates that accountability was expressed through reporting, responsibility, and corrective action during project implementation.

4.2.3 Fairness Practices and Project Performance

The third objective examined the influence of fairness practices on project performance. Fairness had an overall mean of 4.19 (SD = 0.398). Equitable distribution of project support recorded the highest mean (M = 4.29), followed by impartial dispute resolution (M = 4.18), non-discrimination (M = 4.17), and unbiased beneficiary selection (M = 4.11) as show in Table 4. Overall, the findings indicate that respondents perceived the project as applying fairness in the distribution of support and treatment of beneficiaries.

Table 4*Descriptive Statistics on Fairness Practices*

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
There is equitable distribution of school materials and support funds to all registered children in the Gasabo Diocese.	273	4.29	.470
Project managers exercise impartial judgment when resolving disputes among caregivers or beneficiaries.	273	4.18	.418
The project strictly follows a non-discrimination policy regardless of the religious background or social status of the families.	273	4.17	.375
Unbiased selection criteria are consistently used when registering new beneficiaries into the Compassion program.	273	4.11	.329
Overall	273	4.19	.398

The qualitative findings revealed that fairness was manifested through equal treatment of beneficiaries, impartial decision-making, and equitable distribution of project support. Project staff indicated that beneficiaries and caregivers were treated without discrimination based on religious background, family circumstances, or social status. Church leaders similarly emphasized the importance of impartial decisions and equal distribution of project support.

This suggests that fairness was considered an important principle in determining how beneficiaries were treated and how project resources and services were provided. A project staff member stated,

"I treat beneficiaries and caregivers fairly without considering their religious background, family condition, or social status."

A church leader further explained,

"I encourage project staff to maintain equal treatment, impartial decisions, and fair distribution of support to beneficiaries."

These responses provide qualitative evidence that equitable and non-discriminatory practices formed part of project implementation.

4.2.4 Honesty and Integrity Practices and Project Performance

The fourth objective assessed the influence of honesty and integrity practices on project performance. The results are presented in Table 5. Honesty and integrity recorded an overall mean of 4.15 (SD = 0.389). Adherence to the code of conduct had the highest mean (M = 4.23), followed by keeping promises and commitments (M = 4.16), ethical consistency (M = 4.14), and resistance to corruption (M = 4.08). The findings demonstrate generally favourable perceptions of honesty and integrity within the project.

Table 5

Descriptive statistics on Honesty and Integrity Practices

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
Staff members demonstrate high corruption resistance even when faced with opportunities for personal gain.	273	4.08	.344
There is a strong culture of promise keeping regarding the timely delivery of agreed support to the children.	273	4.16	.375
Leaders show ethical consistency between their public statements and their private actions within the project.	273	4.14	.402
All staff members demonstrate strict code adherence to the Anglican Church's ethical guidelines and values.	273	4.23	.433
Overall	273	4.15	.389

The qualitative findings indicated that honesty and integrity were reflected particularly in the responsible management and use of project resources and adherence to established ethical guidelines. Project staff emphasized the need to safeguard resources intended for children and families and to avoid using project materials, funds, or services for personal benefit. Church leaders similarly emphasized compliance with the ethical guidelines and values of the Anglican Church.

These responses suggest that integrity was operationalized through responsible stewardship of project resources and adherence to established ethical standards. One project staff member explained,

"I handle project resources with care because they are intended to support children and families in Gasabo Diocese. I avoid any action that may turn project materials, funds, or services into personal benefit."

A church leader similarly stated,

"I always remind project staff that the work of the project must follow the ethical guidelines and values of the Anglican Church."

The qualitative findings therefore indicate that honesty and integrity were embedded in resource management and the conduct of project personnel.

4.2.5 Project Performance

Overall project performance recorded a mean of 4.21 (SD = 0.437). Scope coverage had the highest mean (M = 4.32), followed by quality (M = 4.21), timeliness (M = 4.18), and cost control (M = 4.13) as shown in Table 6. The results therefore indicate generally positive perceptions of project performance across the assessed dimensions.

Table 6

Descriptive statistics on Project Performance

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
Compassion International Project achieves timeliness in the execution of its annual planned activities in Gasabo Diocese.	273	4.18	.493
The project operates effectively within the approved cost limits without experiencing significant budget overruns.	273	4.13	.366
The services and support delivered to the children meet the high quality standards established by the donor.	273	4.21	.407
The project successfully covers the full scope of agreed interventions (health, education, social) without deviation.	273	4.32	.481
Overall	273	4.21	.437



4.3 Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to establish the relationship between each ethical practice and project performance. The results in Table 7 show statistically significant positive relationships between all four ethical practices and project performance. Transparency had a strong positive correlation with project performance ($r = .755$, $p < .001$), while accountability had the strongest correlation ($r = .811$, $p < .001$). Fairness also demonstrated a strong positive relationship with project performance ($r = .717$, $p < .001$), while honesty and integrity had a strong positive relationship ($r = .700$, $p < .001$). These results indicate that higher levels of perceived ethical practices were associated with higher levels of perceived project performance.

Table 7

Correlation between Ethical Practices and Project Performance

		Transparency Practices	Accountability Practices	Fairness Practices	Honesty and Integrity Practices	Project Performance
Transparency Practices	Pearson Correlation	1	.601**	.556**	.526**	.755**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	273	273	273	273	273
Accountability Practices	Pearson Correlation	.601**	1	.589**	.582**	.811**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	273	273	273	273	273
Fairness Practices	Pearson Correlation	.556**	.589**	1	.701**	.717**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	273	273	273	273	273
Honesty and Integrity Practices	Pearson Correlation	.526**	.582**	.701**	1	.700**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	273	273	273	273	273
Project Performance	Pearson Correlation	.755**	.811**	.717**	.700**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	273	273	273	273	273

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

4.3 Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the combined contribution of transparency, accountability, fairness, and honesty and integrity to project performance.

4.3.1 Model

The regression model produced an R of .907, indicating a strong overall relationship between the four ethical practices and project performance. The coefficient of determination (R^2) was .823, while the adjusted R^2 was .820. Thus, the four ethical practices jointly accounted for 82.0% of the variation in project performance after adjustment for the number of predictors. The remaining variation may be attributable to other factors not included in the model.

Table 8

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.907 ^a	.823	.820	.162	1.699

a. Predictors: (Constant), Honesty and Integrity Practices, Transparency Practices, Accountability Practices, Fairness Practices

b. Dependent Variable: Project Performance

4.3.2 Analysis of Variance

The ANOVA results show that the overall regression model was statistically significant, $F(4, 268) = 313.077$, $p < .001$. This indicates that the set of transparency, accountability, fairness, and honesty and integrity variables significantly predicted project performance.

Table 9*ANOVA*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	32.560	4	8.140	313.077	.000 ^b
	Residual	7.018	268	.026		
	Total	39.579	272			

a. Dependent Variable: Project Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Honesty and Integrity Practices, Transparency Practices, Accountability Practices, Fairness Practices

4.3.3 Regression Coefficients

The coefficient results indicate that all four ethical practices were significant positive predictors of project performance. Transparency had a positive coefficient ($B = .290$, $\beta = .316$, $t = 9.355$, $p < .001$), indicating that an increase in transparency was associated with an increase in project performance, holding other variables constant. Accountability had the largest standardized coefficient ($B = .430$, $\beta = .422$, $t = 11.944$, $p < .001$). Fairness was also a significant positive predictor ($B = .153$, $\beta = .178$, $t = 4.636$, $p < .001$), as was honesty and integrity ($B = .141$, $\beta = .163$, $t = 4.273$, $p < .001$).

Table 10*Regression Coefficients for Ethical Practices and Project Performance*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	.024	.124		.194	.845		
	Transparency Practices	.290	.031	.316	9.355	.000	.567	1.764
	Accountability Practices	.430	.036	.422	11.944	.000	.518	1.932
	Fairness Practices	.153	.033	.178	4.636	.000	.439	2.276
	Honesty and Integrity Practices	.141	.033	.163	4.273	.000	.457	2.189

a. Dependent Variable: Project Performance

The resulting regression equation was:

$$\text{Project Performance} = 0.024 + 0.290(\text{Transparency}) + 0.430(\text{Accountability}) + 0.153(\text{Fairness}) + 0.141(\text{Honesty and Integrity})$$

All four null hypotheses were rejected because the corresponding p-values were below the .05 significance level.

4.4 Discussion**4.4.1 Transparency Practices and Project Performance**

The study established that transparency practices were positively and significantly associated with the performance of Compassion International Project in Anglican Church of Rwanda in Gasabo Diocese. The descriptive findings showed a high level of transparency practices, with an overall mean of 4.23, indicating that respondents generally agreed that decision visibility, information access, open communication, and donor reporting were practiced within the project. The correlation analysis further established a strong positive relationship between transparency practices and project performance ($r = .755$, $p < .001$). In the regression analysis, transparency remained a significant predictor of project performance ($\beta = .316$, $p < .001$). The qualitative findings further demonstrated that transparency was reflected in routine communication between project staff, church leadership, caregivers, beneficiaries, and the donor. The findings therefore suggest that access to information and open communication created greater visibility of project activities and implementation requirements. This suggests that higher levels of transparency were associated with better project performance when the other ethical practices were controlled.

The finding is consistent with Schnackenberg and Tomlinson (2016), who emphasized that transparency depends on the quality, accuracy, relevance, and understandability of information provided to stakeholders. In the present study, the high mean scores for decision visibility, information access, open communication, and donor reporting suggest that stakeholders were provided with relevant project information. The finding also agrees with Khan and Ali (2023), who found that transparency, can support project success through open communication and reduced misunderstanding. Similarly, Grimmelikhuijsen (2022) argued that transparency can build stakeholder trust by making decision-making processes and resource use more visible. These perspectives help explain why transparency was strongly associated with project performance in the present study.

4.4.2 Accountability Practices and Project Performance

The study found that accountability practices had a positive and statistically significant association with project performance and represented the strongest predictor among the four ethical practices examined. The descriptive findings produced an overall mean of 4.18, indicating a high level of accountability practices in terms of role clarity, error admission, answerability mechanisms, and consequence management. Accountability also recorded the strongest correlation with project performance ($r = .811, p < .001$). In the regression model, accountability had the largest standardized coefficient ($\beta = .422, p < .001$) and a positive unstandardized coefficient of .430. The qualitative evidence indicates that accountability involved not only formal responsibility but also mechanisms for acknowledging errors and correcting implementation problems. The finding is consistent with Agency Theory, which emphasizes monitoring and accountability mechanisms as ways of aligning the actions of those managing resources with the interests of those providing or depending on those resources. Thus, the strong association between accountability and project performance may reflect the contribution of clear responsibilities, answerability, error reporting, and corrective mechanisms to effective project implementation.

The finding supports Bovens (2007), who conceptualized accountability as an obligation to explain and justify actions to relevant stakeholders. In the present study, the high rating for role clarity suggests that staff understood their responsibilities, while the findings on answerability and consequence management indicate that staff was expected to account for their actions and resource use. The finding also agrees with Ebrahim (2003), who noted that accountability in nonprofit organizations involves responsibility to both donors and beneficiaries. This is particularly relevant to the Compassion International Project because project personnel are accountable to several stakeholder groups, including church leadership, donors, beneficiaries, caregivers, and the wider community.

The finding is further supported by Ika and Pinto (2022), who argued that clear accountability lines reduce ambiguity concerning responsibilities and can improve the quality of project work. Romzek (2000) similarly viewed accountability as a governance mechanism that helps ensure that resources are used for their intended purposes. These perspectives provide an explanation for the strong relationship observed in the current study. When responsibilities are clearly defined, staff can be held answerable for project activities, mistakes can be identified, and corrective action can be taken.

4.4.3 Fairness Practices and Project Performance

The findings established a positive and statistically significant relationship between fairness practices and project performance. Fairness recorded an overall mean of 4.19, indicating a high level of perceived fairness in equitable distribution, impartial judgment, non-discrimination, and unbiased beneficiary selection. The correlation analysis showed a strong positive relationship between fairness practices and project performance ($r = .717, p < .001$). The regression analysis further showed that fairness remained a significant predictor of project performance ($\beta = .178, p < .001$), with an unstandardized coefficient of .153. The qualitative findings provide additional contextual evidence. The responses indicated that fairness was applied in beneficiary treatment, decision-making, and distribution of support.

The finding is consistent with Colquitt (2001), who conceptualized fairness in terms of distributive, procedural, and interactional justice. This perspective is relevant to the present study because fairness was reflected both in the distribution of project support and in the processes used to make decisions affecting beneficiaries. The results also resonate with Tyler (1990), who emphasized the importance of neutral, consistent, and respectful decision-making processes. The relatively high mean scores for equitable distribution (4.29), impartial judgment (4.18), non-discrimination (4.17), and unbiased beneficiary selection (4.11) demonstrate that these dimensions of fairness were widely perceived to be present in the project.

The finding also agrees with Unterhitzberger and Moeller (2021) who argued that fairness in beneficiary selection can protect project resources and strengthen community acceptance. Chambers (2023) similarly emphasized the importance of ensuring that development projects address marginalized groups without bias or discrimination. These findings help explain the observed relationship between fairness and project performance. Where beneficiaries perceive project decisions and resource allocation as fair, there may be greater acceptance of project interventions and reduced potential for disputes over access to project support.

4.4.4 Honesty and Integrity Practices and Project Performance

The study found that honesty and integrity practices were positively and significantly associated with project performance. The descriptive findings indicated a high level of honesty and integrity practices, with an overall mean of 4.15. Respondents reported relatively high levels of corruption resistance, promise keeping, ethical consistency, and adherence to the Anglican Church's ethical guidelines and values. The correlation analysis established a strong positive relationship between honesty and integrity practices and project performance ($r = .700, p < .001$). Regression results further showed that honesty and integrity significantly predicted project performance ($\beta = .163, p < .001$), with

an unstandardized coefficient of .141. The qualitative evidence suggests that integrity was closely connected to responsible stewardship of project resources and adherence to organizational values. This perspective is particularly relevant to the faith-based setting of the present study, where project implementation is connected to institutional values and service to children and families. The observed positive relationship therefore suggests that honesty and integrity were an important part of the ethical environment associated with project performance.

The finding is consistent with Palanski and Yammarino (2021), who emphasized integrity as consistency between words and actions. In the present study, ethical consistency among leaders was rated highly, suggesting that respondents perceived alignment between leaders' stated commitments and their actions. The finding also agrees with the Project Management Institute (2006), which emphasizes honesty as a responsibility to understand and communicate truthfully in professional conduct. Such practices are particularly relevant to project environments where accurate reporting, responsible resource management, and adherence to agreed commitments are important for implementation. The finding is further supported by Audi (2004), who associated honesty and integrity with preventing corruption and ensuring that project reporting reflects the actual state of affairs. In the present study, corruption resistance had a mean of 4.08, while adherence to the Anglican Church's ethical guidelines had a mean of 4.23. These results suggest that integrity was expressed through both individual conduct and compliance with institutional ethical expectations.

V. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

The study concludes that ethical practices are significantly associated with the performance of the Compassion International Project in the Anglican Church of Rwanda, Gasabo Diocese. Transparency was positively associated with project performance, indicating that open communication, access to relevant information, stakeholder involvement, and timely reporting support effective project implementation. Accountability also showed a significant positive association with performance, suggesting that clear responsibilities, answerability, corrective action, and responsible resource use are important for achieving project objectives.

The study further concludes that fairness is positively associated with project performance. Equitable distribution of support, impartial decision-making, non-discrimination, and fair beneficiary selection contribute to stakeholder confidence and effective service delivery. Honesty and integrity also demonstrated a significant positive association with performance, highlighting the importance of resisting corruption, keeping commitments, acting consistently with ethical values, and adhering to established church guidelines. Overall, the four ethical practices jointly explained a substantial proportion of the variation in project performance in the study model. The findings therefore indicate that strengthening transparency, accountability, fairness, and honesty and integrity should remain an integral part of project governance and implementation.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed. The study recommends that the Compassion International Project should strengthen transparency by maintaining regular communication with church leaders, caregivers, beneficiaries, and other relevant stakeholders, particularly on project plans, budgets, implementation progress, and reporting. The project should strengthen accountability mechanisms through clear assignment of roles, regular performance reviews, proper documentation of resource use, and corrective action where weaknesses or ethical violations are identified. Staff should also be encouraged to report errors and operational challenges openly to support learning and improvement.

The project should maintain fair and non-discriminatory practices in beneficiary selection, distribution of educational and other support, and resolution of complaints. Decisions should be guided by approved criteria and applied consistently to promote stakeholder confidence. Finally, the project should reinforce honesty and integrity through adherence to the Anglican Church's ethical guidelines, responsible management of project resources, anti-corruption practices, and continued emphasis on ethical conduct among staff and leaders. Regular ethics orientation and monitoring can help sustain these practices and support consistent project performance.

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.

Funding Declaration

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

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