



Consultants' Ethical Dilemmas and Project Performance: Evidence from Paved Trunk Roads in Dar es Salaam and Tabora Regions of Tanzania

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Abstract

Paved trunk road projects in Tanzania, notably in Dar-es-Salaam and Tabora, frequently encounter delays, cost overruns, and quality deficiencies. Consultants—critical in ensuring design compliance and quality assurance—often face ethical dilemmas arising from institutional weaknesses, conflicting interests, and political or external pressures. This study examines how such dilemmas influence project performance, with a specific focus on political, institutional, behavioural, and socio-economic factors. Employing a cross-sectional design and mixed methods approach, data were collected from 289 respondents, including consultants, contractors, engineers, and public officials. Multiple linear regression analysis was used to assess the relationship between ethical dilemmas and project performance indicators. Findings reveal that institutional and behavioural factors significantly influence ethical dilemmas among consultants. Institutional factors—such as enforcement of codes, transparency, and accountability—exerted the strongest positive impact on project performance ($\beta = 0.857$, $p < 0.001$), underscoring the value of robust governance frameworks. Conversely, behavioural factors—such as greed, lack of integrity, and peer pressure—negatively affected performance ($\beta = -0.221$, $p < 0.001$), highlighting the consequences of personal misconduct. Political factors had a moderate yet significant effect ($\beta = 0.120$, $p = 0.010$). Overall, ethical dilemmas exhibited a negative association with project performance ($\beta = -0.144$, $p = 0.006$), contributing to inefficiencies and quality shortfalls. The findings align with virtue ethics theory, affirming the importance of institutional integrity and moral character. The study recommends strengthening ethical oversight mechanisms and implementing comprehensive institutional reforms to address consultant-related ethical dilemmas and enhance project outcomes.

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Introduction

The construction industry is widely recognised as a vital engine of economic growth and a cornerstone of socio-economic transformation in developing countries (Kuoribo et al., 2021; Mwankusye et al., 2025). It comprises three key sub-sectors: building construction, infrastructure development (such as roads and highways), and specialised trades (Shah & Alotaibi, 2018). Due to its multidisciplinary and collaborative nature, this industry involves various stakeholders—including clients, contractors,



consultants, regulators, and financiers—whose collective actions significantly influence project outcomes regarding cost, time, quality, productivity, safety, and stakeholder satisfaction (Seninde et al., 2021). Among these sub-sectors, the construction of transportation infrastructure—particularly roads—plays a crucial role in connecting rural and urban economies, facilitating trade, and improving access to essential services such as healthcare, education, and markets. Globally, well-planned road networks contribute to job creation, reduce travel costs, attract investment, and support urban mobility and sustainability (Wubet et al., 2021; Liu & Zhang, 2023).

In Africa, road infrastructure is vital for national development, enhancing connectivity, stimulating economic activities, and providing a foundation for social inclusion (Mwankusye et al., 2025; Ndyalusa & Kitula, 2023). However, the road construction sub-sector faces significant ethical challenges. These challenges include bribery, fraudulent procurement processes, falsification of project data, inflated costs, and inadequate enforcement of safety and quality standards (Malle et al., 2022). Studies have shown that poor project performance—evidenced by delays, cost overruns, and substandard work—is not solely due to technical or resource-related issues but is also strongly linked to unethical behaviour and professional misconduct by key actors (Gislar, 2019; Irfan et al., 2020).

Tanzania, like many developing nations, prioritises road construction as a critical enabler of economic growth. The country's road network spans approximately 181,000 kilometres, with trunk and regional roads under the jurisdiction of the Tanzania National Roads Agency (TANROADS), while district and feeder roads are managed by the Tanzania Rural and Urban Roads Agency (TARURA) and respective local authorities (Mwankusye et al., 2025). Road development is firmly embedded in strategic national frameworks such as the National Development Vision 2025, the Five-Year Development Plans (FYDPs), and the 2020 CCM Election Manifesto. The sector contributes approximately 8.4% to the national GDP (United Republic of Tanzania [URT], 2021). Between 2020 and 2023, the Tanzanian government allocated over TZS 4.0 trillion for road construction, rehabilitation, and maintenance (URT, 2021). Despite this substantial investment, numerous performance challenges persist. Reports from the National Audit Office (NAOT) highlight recurring issues such as cost overruns, project delays, and compromised road quality. These shortcomings are often linked to unethical decisions made by key stakeholders, particularly consultants, who play a central role in ensuring design integrity, quality assurance, and contract supervision (NAOT, 2021; 2022).

Consultants are expected to provide objective technical advice and ensure that construction works comply with design specifications, contractual conditions, and national standards (Mwankusye et al., 2025). However, evidence indicates that they often encounter ethical dilemmas that compromise their independence and judgment. Ethical dilemmas arise when professionals face competing interests, unclear responsibilities, or situations where personal gain conflicts with public duty (Mwankusye et al., 2025). If left unresolved, these dilemmas can result in unethical decisions that adversely affect project outcomes. Numerous studies (Ebekozi et al., 2021; Hashim et al., 2021) have shown that ethical dilemmas among consultants are influenced by a combination of individual attitudes, socio-economic conditions, organisational culture, and political context. Factors such as income level, professional experience, and education have been linked to consultants' ethical resilience (Kadir et al., 2022). Additionally, political interference, lack of accountability, and institutional inefficiencies exacerbate ethical misconduct (Zulu & Muleya, 2018; Kissi et al., 2020).

Although several studies have explored ethics in construction, the specific ethical dilemmas faced by consultants—particularly in Tanzanian road construction—remain underexamined. Most literature tends to focus on contractors, clients, or procurement officers, overlooking the unique pressures faced by consultants (Mwankusye et al., 2025). This study addresses this gap by examining how



behavioural, socio-economic, institutional, and political factors contribute to consultants' ethical dilemmas and how these dilemmas, in turn, affect project performance.

Theoretical perspective

The virtue theory of ethics informs our study by providing a lens to understand the ethical dilemmas faced by consultants in Tanzania's road construction sector. Unlike rule-based or consequentialist theories, virtue ethics emphasises moral character, highlighting honesty, courage, justice, and wisdom in ethical decision-making (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 350 BCE/2009; MacIntyre, 2007). For Aristotle, a virtuous person acts rightly, at the right time, and for the right reasons. In the realm of public infrastructure consultancy, ethical behaviour extends beyond regulatory compliance to encompass internalised virtues such as fairness, transparency, responsibility, and accountability – key traits of professional integrity. This framework holds particular relevance in Tanzania, where consultants often contend with limited resources, political interference, and conflicts of interest. Virtue ethics addresses such institutional vulnerabilities by shifting focus from external enforcement to internal moral conviction, advocating for the development of ethical competence. In environments with weak oversight and political pressure, the moral character of consultants can significantly influence project outcomes. This study applies virtue ethics to examine how personal morality and organisational culture shape ethical decision-making. It investigates how individual virtues aid consultants in resisting unethical practices and building ethical resilience. Moreover, it emphasises the role of ethical leadership and institutional integrity in promoting a values-driven organisational culture. By embedding ethics through leadership, mentorship, and reflective practice, virtue ethics presents a viable path to improved governance, enhanced performance, and the long-term sustainability of road infrastructure projects in Tanzania.

Materials and methods

Study area

The study was conducted in Dar es Salaam and Tabora, Tanzania. These two towns were chosen for their significance in road construction and the associated ethical dilemmas. Dar es Salaam, hosting 81% of Tanzania's consulting firms, serves as the country's commercial hub and is home to major government-funded road projects such as the BRT Phase 2, Morogoro Road expansion, and Ubungo Interchange, with a cumulative value of 552 billion TZS (TANROADS, 2021). Audit reports (NAOT, 2021) highlighted ethical issues in project execution within the city. Additionally, Tabora was selected for its substantial infrastructure investments, with over 541.74 billion TZS allocated between 2016 and 2021 for significant road works, including the Nyahua-Chaya and Urambo-Kaliua roads. Reports by NAOT (2018–2021) and PPRA (2018/2019) identified considerable ethical challenges and financial mismanagement in the region, reinforcing its relevance to the study.

Research design and approach

This study employed a cross-sectional research design to collect quantitative and qualitative data from twelve districts across two regions, providing a snapshot of stakeholder behaviours and practices within the road construction sector (Kothari, 2009). A mixed-methods approach was adopted, integrating structured surveys and in-depth interviews to ensure methodological triangulation (Creswell, 2014; Mwonge & Naho, 2022). The quantitative strand facilitated statistical analysis of behavioural influences on consultants' ethical dilemmas, while the qualitative strand offered rich contextual insights. As emphasised by Mwonge and Naho (2024), the strength of this approach lies in its ability to address the limitations inherent in any single method by combining complementary forms of data collection and analysis.



Population, sampling, and sample size

The target population included Project Managers (RE), Quantity Surveyors, Highway Engineers, Structural Engineers, and Material Engineers from 288 registered consulting firms. The sample size was determined using Yamane’s formula (1967) with a 5% margin of error, resulting in a required sample of 314 respondents. Additionally, a systematic sampling method selected 62 firms, utilising a sampling interval of five. One respondent from each professional category was chosen from each firm, totalling 310 participants. Within the firms, respondents were selected using a lottery method, while purposive sampling identified three key informants from TECU and the ERB Registrar for qualitative interviews.

Data type, sources and collection methods

This study utilised primary and secondary data sources to ensure comprehensive and robust findings. Primary data was collected through structured questionnaires and in-depth interviews with consultants and regulatory officials, providing quantifiable insights and nuanced perspectives on ethical dilemmas in road construction. These methods were crucial for capturing the behavioural dimensions and decision-making challenges of key sector actors. In contrast, secondary data was gathered from authoritative sources, including audit reports, policy documents, and prior empirical studies. These documents served two main purposes: *first*, to contextualise the primary data within existing regulatory frameworks and historical patterns, and *second*, to validate the primary findings through cross-referencing with documented cases of ethical issues in infrastructure development, thus creating a triangulated basis for analysis (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Mwonge & Naho, 2021).

Data analysis

We employed Covariance-Based Structural Equation Modelling (CB-SEM) to analyse the quantitative data obtained through structured questionnaires. CB-SEM was particularly suitable for evaluating complex causal relationships among latent behavioural constructs influencing consultants’ ethical dilemmas (Mwankusye et al., 2025). To ensure the robustness and validity of the measurement model, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was used to assess the adequacy of the hypothesised factor structure and the reliability of observed indicators. In addition to the quantitative approach, a complementary qualitative strategy was adopted to explore the subjective experiences and contextual realities underlying ethical decision-making. This analytical process involves consultants and their implications for road construction project performance.

In the context of this study, the structural model was mathematically specified as follows:

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_{1i} + \dots + \beta_k x_{ki} + \mu_i \tag{1}$$

were:

Y_i represents the dependent variable measuring ethical dilemmas encountered in road construction projects;

β_0 denotes the intercept;

β_i are the estimated coefficients;

x_i refer to the independent variables; and

μ_i is the error term representing unobserved influences of Y_i .



Focusing on the four key explanatory variables under investigation, the model was further specified as:

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 BF + \beta_2 SEF + \beta_3 IF + \beta_4 PF + \mu_i \quad (2)$$

where:

BF refers to behavioural factors (such as greed, personal integrity, and peer pressure);

SEF denotes socioeconomic factors (such as income levels, and economic incentives);

IF stands for institutional factors (such as regulatory oversight, and organisational ethics codes);

PF represents political factors (such as political interference, and corruption).

Ethical considerations

This study was conducted in accordance with relevant ethical guidelines and institutional approvals to ensure the protection of participants throughout the research process. Ethical approval was obtained from the Mzumbe University Research Committee prior to data collection, as indicated in the clearance letter (Ref. No. PhD/SOB/MZC/165/T.21/18). Additionally, informed consent was secured from all respondents, with clear explanations provided regarding the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, and the confidentiality of responses. Participants were assured that their data would be used solely for research purposes and anonymised to protect their identities.

Results and discussion

Response rate

Out of the 310 questionnaires distributed throughout the study area, 289 were fully completed and returned, leading to a substantial response rate of 93.23%. The remaining 21 questionnaires (6.77%) were excluded from the final analysis due to significant missing data, in accordance with established methodological protocols (Schutt, 2019; Msambali & Mwonge, 2023). Such a high response rate greatly enhances the study's statistical power and minimises the potential for nonresponse bias, which is often a critical concern in survey-based research. Consequently, the findings derived from the remaining responses are considered more reliable, representative, and generalisable to the broader population of interest (Msambali & Mwonge, 2024). This level of engagement from participants also reflects the relevance of the research topic to the target population, further reinforcing the strength of the empirical evidence.

Demographic characteristics of respondents

Understanding demographic variables was essential to this study, as these characteristics may influence how consultants perceive and respond to ethical dilemmas in road construction projects. Factors such as gender, age, experience, and education level provide meaningful insights into consultants' decision-making behaviours and performance outcomes.

Gender distribution of respondents

As shown in Figure 1, gender played a significant role in this study because ethical judgement and decision-making styles can differ between male and female professionals due to varying life experiences, socialisation, and professional approaches. We aimed to demonstrate that understanding gender dynamics provides deeper insight into how consultants perceive and respond to ethical dilemmas, which, in turn, affects project performance.

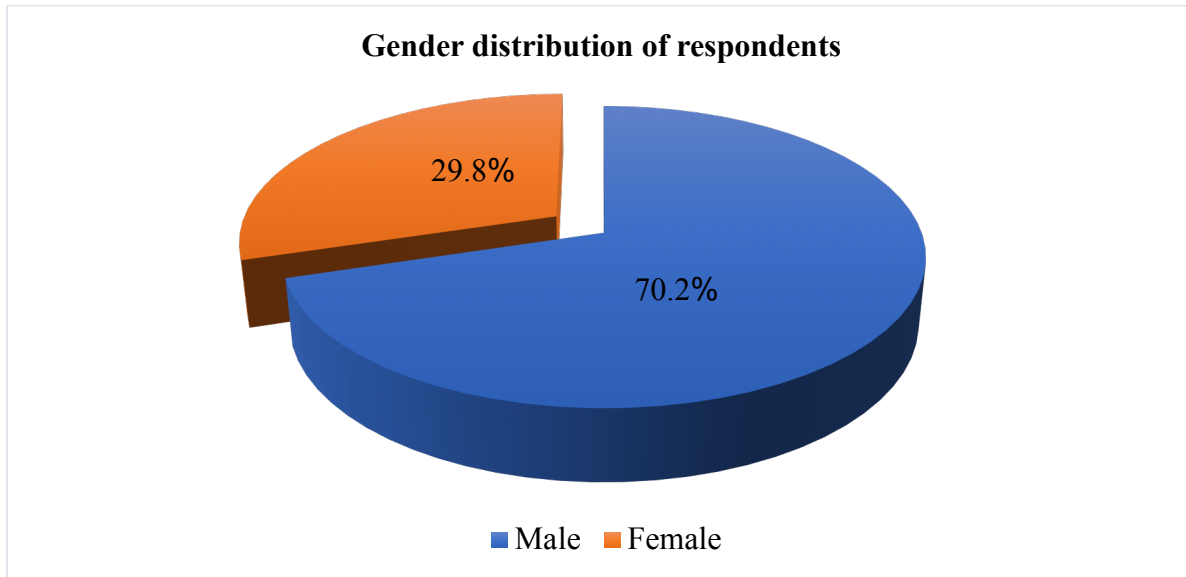


Figure 1: Gender distribution of respondents

Source: Research Findings (2024)

Figure 1 indicates that most respondents were male (203, 70.2%), while females comprised 86 (29.8%). This highlights a typical gender imbalance in the road construction sector. Such disparity can influence ethical perspectives and decision-making styles. Fostering gender inclusivity could enrich ethical diversity, promote balanced judgement, and improve project outcomes through diverse experiences and values.

Age of respondents

We included the respondents' ages because they often correlate with professional experience, ethical maturity, and decision-making capacity. Our aim was to understand the age distribution among consultants and to assess how different career stages perceive and handle ethical dilemmas. The results are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Age of respondents

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
22-35	58	20.1
36-49	96	33.2
50-63	131	45.3
Above 63	4	1.4
Total	289	100.0

Source: Research Findings (2024)

Table 1 shows that most respondents (45.3%) were aged between 50 and 63 years, followed by those aged 36 to 49 (33.2%), 22 to 35 (20.1%), and those over 63 (1.4%). The significant representation of senior professionals indicates a wealth of experiential knowledge. Their accumulated expertise and decision-making skills greatly influence ethical responsiveness and project performance, underscoring the importance of experience in shaping ethical standards within the sector.

**Education attainment**

Educational background plays a vital role in influencing ethical awareness, critical thinking, and professional judgement. As shown in Table 2, we sought to analyse education levels to examine how academic backgrounds shape consultants' abilities to identify, assess, and respond to ethical dilemmas, ultimately impacting project performance.

Table 2: Educational attainment

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Diploma/ Technician	45	15.6
Bachelor's Degree	144	49.8
Master's Degree	86	29.8
Doctorate (PhD)	1	0.3
Other	13	4.5
Total	289	100.0

Source: Research Findings (2024)

Table 2 shows that 49.8% of respondents hold a Bachelor's degree, 29.8% hold a Master's degree, 15.6% have a Diploma, 4.5% have other qualifications, and only 0.3% hold a PhD. The high proportion of university-educated consultants indicates a technically proficient workforce. Education enhances critical thinking and adheres to ethical norms, which are essential for ethically sound and performance-driven consultancy in road infrastructure projects.

Experience in road projects

Experience in road construction is vital as it demonstrates a professional's practical knowledge, technical skills, and ability to navigate industry challenges. With additional years in the field, individuals enhance their problem-solving abilities, improve their project management skills, and adapt to new technologies, all contributing to more efficient and successful project execution. The detailed results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Experience in road projects

Experience	Frequency	Percentage
<5 years	64	22.1
5–10 years	93	32.2
11–20 years	86	29.8
>20 years	46	15.9
Total	289	100.0

Source: Research Findings (2024)

Table 3 indicates significant variation in the respondents' years of experience in road consulting. Approximately 32.2% had 5–10 years of experience, 29.8% had 11–20 years, 22.1% had less than 5 years, and 15.9% had over 20 years. Greater experience likely enhances familiarity with recurring ethical issues and the institutional mechanisms for addressing them. Since ethical dilemmas are often complex, experienced consultants may exhibit more nuanced ethical judgement, which can influence both individual and project-level outcomes.

Illustratively, one key informant from TANROADS attested that:

... I have about 8 years of experience in road construction under TANROADS. This has helped me understand the underlying factors influencing project performance... Engineer KII, TANROADS



Regression results

The regression analysis examined how political (PF), socio-economic (SEF), behavioural (BF), and institutional (IF) factors explain variations in ethical dilemmas in road construction projects. These predictors were selected based on empirical evidence and theoretical relevance. Ethical decision-making is influenced by governance, regulation, financial constraints, professional conduct, and organisational culture—all of which affect project outcomes. The regression model results, which highlight these factors' significance in shaping consultants' ethical challenges, are summarised in Table 4.

Table 4: Summary of the regression model

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson	Shapiro-Wilk
1	0.939 ^a	0.882	0.880	0.27606	1.89	0.908

a. Predictors: (Constant), PF, SEF, BF, IF, ED

Source: Research findings, (2024)

Table 4 illustrates that the model possesses a high coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.882$). This signifies that the identified predictors collectively explain approximately 88.2% of the variance in ethical dilemmas among consultants. The adjusted R^2 value of 0.880 indicates a strong fit for the model, accounting for the number of explanatory variables utilised. The standard error of the estimate (0.27606) is notably low, demonstrating consistency between the observed and predicted values. Moreover, the Durbin-Watson statistic of 1.89 falls within the acceptable range (1.5–2.5), suggesting that autocorrelation is not a significant issue in the residuals. Additionally, the Shapiro-Wilk test value of 0.908 indicates that the residuals closely follow a normal distribution, confirming the model's statistical robustness.

Moreover, the results of the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) provide critical insights into the internal consistency and explanatory power of the regression model, acting as an essential diagnostic tool for evaluating the overall statistical significance of the model. These findings are summarised in Table 5.

Table 5: ANOVA Test Results

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	160.876	5	32.175	422.201	0.000 ^a
	Residual	21.567	283	0.076		
	Total	182.443	288			

a. Predictors: (Constant), BF, SEF, IF, PF, ED

The ANOVA results confirm the robustness of the regression model in explaining variations in ethical dilemmas. The regression sum of squares (160.876) significantly exceeds the residual sum (21.567), indicating strong explanatory power. An F-statistic of 422.201 and a p-value of 0.000 demonstrate that the model is statistically significant at the 95% confidence level. This suggests a very low probability that the results occurred by chance, affirming the predictive relevance of BF, SEF, IF, and PF in influencing ethical dilemmas (ED).

Additionally, to further examine the impact of ethical dilemmas on the performance of road construction projects, a structural equation modelling approach was adopted. In this model, ethical



dilemmas served as the dependent variable, while BF, SEF, IF, PF, and ED were considered as the explanatory variables. The structural coefficients obtained from this analysis are presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Coefficients of regression model

Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.
		β	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.878	0.364		2.415	0.016
	BF	-0.221	0.049	-0.199	-4.523	0.000
	SEF	0.014	0.060	0.005	0.232	0.817
	IF	0.857	0.045	0.703	18.888	0.000
	PF	0.120	0.047	0.060	2.587	0.010
	ED	-0.144	0.052	-0.112	-2.784	0.006

Behavioural Factors (BF): The regression results indicate a statistically significant negative relationship between behavioural factors and project performance ($\beta = -0.221, p = 0.000$). This negative coefficient suggests that unethical behaviours—such as favouritism, bribery, collusion, and negligence—significantly undermine the successful implementation of road construction projects. This finding is consistent with previous studies showing that the moral integrity and ethical behaviour of stakeholders are critical determinants of project outcomes (Kuoribo et al., 2023; Ofori-Kuragu et al., 2020; Mwankusye et al., 2025). From the perspective of virtue theory, this emphasises how the lack of virtuous traits—such as honesty, fairness, and diligence—at the individual level can diminish overall project performance.

Socio-Economic Factors (SEF): Socio-economic factors were found to be statistically insignificant ($\beta = 0.014, p = 0.817$), indicating no meaningful statistical contribution to variations in project performance. This finding suggests that while socio-economic conditions may influence broader developmental outcomes, they may not directly impact the operational or ethical dimensions of road project execution in the context of this study. Similar observations have been made by Mwankusye et al. (2025), who noted that institutional and behavioural dynamics often override socioeconomic considerations in determining project effectiveness.

Institutional Factors (IF): Institutional factors emerged as the strongest predictor in the model, with a high positive coefficient ($\beta = 0.857, p = 0.000$) and a standardised Beta value of 0.703. This suggests that effective institutional frameworks—such as policy clarity, regulatory enforcement, transparency mechanisms, and internal control systems—significantly enhance the performance of road construction projects. Through the lens of virtue theory, institutions are not merely structures for enforcing rules but moral ecosystems that socialise individuals into ethical conduct. When institutions embody and promote virtues—such as justice, accountability, and trust—they foster conditions that are conducive to ethical decision-making and sustainable project delivery.

Political Factors (PF): Political factors demonstrate a positive and statistically significant effect on project performance ($\beta = 0.120, p = 0.010$). Although the effect size is moderate, the results indicate that political stability, policy support, and low levels of interference can create a favourable environment for ethical project execution. However, the findings from interviews uncover the dual nature of political involvement:



... political interference plays a significant role in influencing [ethical dilemmas] as contractors may be pressured by politicians to complete projects for political interests, which might pressure them to forsake their professional conduct...

This insight supports Pezoa's (2017) research, which indicated that the politicisation of public works can either enhance or hinder performance based on the quality of political engagement. Ethically, the presence of virtuous political leadership—grounded in prudence, justice, and public interest—is crucial for mitigating the risks of undue influence and moral compromise.

Ethical Dilemmas (ED): Ethical dilemmas demonstrated a significant negative association with project performance ($\beta = -0.144$, $p = 0.006$), suggesting that an increase in ethical ambiguities—such as conflicts of interest, fraud, and lack of accountability—undermines the successful execution of road construction projects. This finding aligns with the theoretical premise that moral uncertainty disrupts professional judgement and coordination (Mwankusye et al., 2025). According to virtue theory, ethical dilemmas emerge when there is a failure to cultivate the practical wisdom (phronesis) necessary for resolving complex moral issues.

Policy and practical implications

The findings of this study provide important policy implications for stakeholders engaged in road construction projects in Tanzania and comparable contexts.

First, **strengthening institutional frameworks is essential**. Institutional factors notably enhance project performance by improving ethical responsiveness. Policymakers should bolster regulatory enforcement, internal audits, and oversight bodies to encourage accountability, transparency, and ethical discipline.

Second, **addressing unethical behaviour necessitates stronger enforcement and focused training**. Professional organisations must implement stringent disciplinary measures and incorporate ongoing ethics training to foster a culture of integrity among consultants.

Third, **balancing political engagement is crucial**. While political support can facilitate project implementation, excessive interference risks undermining ethical standards. Clear boundaries must be established to maintain professional autonomy in technical decision-making.

Fourth, **addressing ethical dilemmas as performance barriers is crucial**. These dilemmas impede project outcomes and must be tackled through transparent procurement, defined accountability lines, and protection for whistleblowers. Establishing ethical guidelines and independent ethics committees can help alleviate these challenges.

Finally, **promoting gender inclusivity and experiential learning is essential**. Given the current gender imbalances and the predominance of experienced professionals, policies should encourage women's participation in engineering and consultancy. Mentorship programmes and knowledge-sharing initiatives should also be implemented to leverage the ethical insights of seasoned professionals.

Conclusion

This study examined the connection between consultants' ethical dilemmas and the performance of paved trunk road construction projects in Tanzania, emphasising political, institutional, behavioural, and socio-economic factors. Utilising a robust dataset and analytical tools, the findings pinpointed institutional and behavioural dimensions as key determinants of ethical dilemmas that negatively affect project performance. Institutional factors—such as regulatory frameworks, policy enforcement, and transparency—positively influenced outcomes, highlighting the necessity for strong governance structures to promote ethical practices. Conversely, behavioural issues like corruption, favouritism,



and negligence considerably obstructed performance. Political factors had a moderate yet positive effect, indicating that while political support can enhance accountability and resource allocation, excessive interference can undermine ethics and delivery. Socio-economic factors were statistically insignificant, implying minimal direct impact on ethical challenges in this sector. Overall, ethical dilemmas were closely tied to reduced project performance, emphasising the importance of ethics in achieving sustainable infrastructure outcomes. This study offers valuable empirical insights into the limited literature on construction ethics in Sub-Saharan Africa, providing guidance for policymakers, regulators, and practitioners seeking to enhance professional conduct and project outcomes in road infrastructure development.

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