



Volume 5	Issue 3	March (2026)	DOI: 10.47540/ijqr.v5i3.2407	Page: 230 – 240
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Exploring Barriers to Academic Staff Promotion: Insights from Tanzania Higher Learning Institutions

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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords: Academic Staff Promotion, Publication Barriers, Tanzanian Higher Education.

Received : 29 November 2025

Revised : 22 March 2026

Accepted : 25 March 2026

ABSTRACT

Climbing the academic ladder poses substantial challenges for many of the academicians in the Tanzanian higher learning institutions. Yet, research on promotion barriers remains scarce. Using Bourdieu's Capital Theory, this qualitative case study aims to explore the barriers that impede academic staff promotion in Tanzanian higher learning institutions. Using purposive sampling, data were collected via in-depth interviews, document reviews, and observations. The findings show multiple, interlocking constraints. Heavy teaching and postgraduate supervision drain time capital and reduce research productivity and networking. Resource shortages and poor infrastructure reflect limited economic capital and restrict access to research tools and support. Lengthy, opaque promotion procedures and repeated re review of work already published in reputable journals undermine symbolic capital. Low intrinsic motivation points to gaps in embodied cultural capital and a misaligned habitus. Through Bourdieu's lens, these dynamics block the conversion of time and funds into publications, recognition, and collaborative networks, hindering staff advancement. Policy recommendations: protect dedicated research time; allocate research funds more equitably; upgrade physical and digital infrastructure; accept publications from preapproved reputable journals without redundant re review. Future research should quantify these effects across more institutions and examine staff perceptions of repeated re review and its impact on morale, timelines, and career progression.

INTRODUCTION

Promotion of academic staff in higher education depends on three core functions, namely teaching, research, and consultancy/community engagement, and most institutions privilege research productivity under the "publish or perish" paradigm (Amutuhair, 2022; Chatio et al., 2024; Çakir et al., 2024; Rowley et al., 2022; Van Dalen, 2021). Despite this expectation, evidence from Tanzania indicates prolonged stagnation in academic ranks and low promotion rates (Fussy, 2017, 2024; Makulilo, 2021; Msuya, 2023). The shortage of senior academics (professors and associate professors) is particularly pronounced and is exacerbated by sectoral differences such as extended retirement ages in public universities and heavy reliance on part-time staff in private

institutions (Fussy, 2024; Mgaiwa & Poncian, 2016; Mgaiwa, 2023).

The literature offers multiple, sometimes conflicting, explanations for delayed promotion. One strand attributes slow advancement to weak research cultures and low intrinsic motivation among staff (Fussy, 2024). Another point to insufficient mentoring and limited guidance on reputable publication outlets, which can push academics toward predatory journals and compromise promotion outcomes (Makulilo, 2021). A third perspective emphasizes structural constraints—particularly excessive teaching loads and limited research time—that undermine research productivity (Fussy, 2019; Mahundu, 2022; Mushemeza, 2016). These differing emphases indicate that promotion barriers operate at both

individual and institutional levels, calling for an integrated analysis of how these factors interact.

Several Tanzanian studies have examined related issues—career development among female academics (Tarimo & Swai, 2024), promotion experiences (Msuya, 2023), salary effects on promotion (Ngalomba, 2022), self-leadership and research efficacy (Ndiango, 2025), and publication challenges (Makulilo, 2021). However, few studies provide a comprehensive, theory informed account of the institutional and individual barriers that explain prolonged stagnation and delayed promotion. In particular, limited empirical evidence exists on how multiple barriers interrelate and how they are experienced by academic staff within Tanzanian universities.

This study addresses that gap. It aims to explore and analyze the institutional and individual barriers that impede timely publications and career advancement among academic staff in Tanzanian higher learning institutions. Guided by the central question, which is What are the institutional and individual barriers that impede timely publications and academic staff promotion in Tanzanian higher learning institutions? Drawing on lived experiences from two universities, it documents how heavy teaching loads, resource and infrastructure deficits, weak mentoring, and opaque promotion procedures interact to delay publications and promotions. The findings offer context-specific, actionable recommendations for university leaders and policymakers—both in Tanzania and in similar settings—to accelerate research productivity, shorten promotion timelines, and strengthen equity and institutional research capacity.

This study is framed around Bourdieu's conceptualisation of capital (economic, cultural, social, and symbolic) and habitus, which directs attention to how resources, networks, recognition, and dispositions shape academic trajectories (Andriani & Christoforou, 2016; Grenfell, 2009; Power, 1999; Siisiainen, 2003). Using Bourdieu's lens allows the research to move beyond isolated explanations to examine how time constraints, resource shortages, mentoring deficits, and procedural practices jointly reproduce inequalities in promotion. For example, heavy teaching loads reduce embodied and institutionalised cultural capital (research output and credentials); limited funding and infrastructure reflect constrained

economic capital; weak networks and mentoring signal deficits in social capital; and redundant review processes and opaque criteria can erode symbolic capital (recognition and prestige). This integrated approach provides a coherent theoretical basis for understanding the interplay between structural conditions and individual agency in shaping promotion outcomes.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative case study design to produce an in-depth, contextually grounded account of institutional and individual barriers to academic promotion in Tanzanian public universities. The case study approach was appropriate for examining complex, situated phenomena (promotion processes and lived experiences) within their real-world institutional settings (Cleland et al., 2021; Steiner & Posch, 2006). Two purposively selected public universities (University A and University B) served as bounded cases, enabling cross-case comparison while preserving local dynamics.

Sampling used purposive selection to recruit the participants with direct experience of promotion processes. The final sample comprised 50 participants: 36 academic staff (3 Professors, 8 Associate Professors, 15 Senior Lecturers, 10 Lecturers), 5 administrative staff (including the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Acting Directors of Human Resources, Research & Publications, and Postgraduate Studies), and 4 academic association leaders. The inclusion criteria required a minimum of two years' service at the institution and experience with promotion applications or administration. Sample size was guided by the goal of achieving thematic saturation across ranks and roles; recruitment continued until no new themes emerged from successive interviews.

Data collection employed multiple sources to facilitate triangulation. Semi-structured interviews were conducted in person and recorded as handwritten notes; interview guides explored workload, resources, mentoring, promotion procedures, and lived experiences. Documentary review included promotion handbooks, promotion committee minutes (where available), policy documents, and institutional reports to contextualize formal criteria and procedures. Non participant

observations of faculty offices and noticeboards documented workspace conditions and informal interactions that affect research time. Ethical approval was secured from the relevant institutional review boards. Participants gave informed consent, and confidentiality was maintained through pseudonyms and aggregated reporting.

Data analysis followed a manual thematic procedure. Handwritten interview notes and observation records were typed and organized in Excel alongside documentary excerpts. All materials were read repeatedly to develop familiarity. Initial codes were generated deductively from the literature and the research questions, then enriched inductively from the data. Coding and code grouping were carried out in Excel: similar codes were clustered, compared across the participants and cases, and iteratively organized into candidate themes. Themes were reviewed and refined to ensure internal coherence and distinctiveness, with representative notes and document extracts linked to each theme in the spreadsheet. A colleague independently reviewed a subset of typed notes and coding; any discrepancies were resolved through discussion to refine the codebook. Analytic memos and an audit trail of coding decisions were maintained throughout.

Reliability and validity (trustworthiness) were addressed through several measures. Triangulation across interviews, documents, and observations bolstered construct validity. An independent review of a subset of coded notes enhanced coding reliability. Reflexive memos documented the researcher's positionality and decisions, while the audit trail supported procedural transparency and dependability. Together, these measures responded to the reviewers' concerns by clarifying the research design, justifying sampling choices, detailing the analytic procedure, and demonstrating steps taken to ensure data reliability and validity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Heavy Teaching Workload and Time Constraints

Heavy teaching workload and time constraints emerged as a significant barrier to academic staff promotion. The research revealed that the majority of the participants reported heavy workloads, with the intensity increasing in relation to the academic

rank. This challenge was manifested differently across academic disciplines.

The burden of the workload was evident in the participants' experiences as one participant noted that: "I have three courses to teach both undergraduate and Post graduate students. In one of the courses, we have more than 2000 students. Although I am not alone, it is really heavy workload" (Interview with one of the Academic staff, from University B). Another participant emphasized that: "Most of my time is invested in teaching, marking and filling results in excel sheet before being uploaded rather than research and consultancy" (Interview with one of the Academic Staff, from University A). The acting Director of Human Resources at the University B clarified that, "Sincerely, currently, we have a deficit of academic staff to meet the student-academic staff ratio required" (Interview with Acting DHR University B).

The workload policy for academic staff includes multiple responsibilities beyond classroom teaching. They must prepare lecture slides, develop and grade tests, and release coursework results within strict deadlines. Additionally, they are responsible for preparing and marking university examinations. Academic staff also supervise student projects, dissertations, and theses. They attend postgraduate presentations, including proposal presentations, pre-viva voce, and viva voce. Furthermore, they review proposals and dissertations, supervise fieldwork, and engage in consultancy work and community service.

Participants from both University A and University B indicated that, as an academic member of staff climbs the academic ladder, the amount of workload increases. As a result, academic members of staff at the rank of Professor, Associate Professor, and Senior Lecturers reported having a heavy workload. The study also found that the student-academic staff ratio seemed to be very high.

These accounts show that heavy teaching and postgraduate supervision are systemic constraints that reduce time and cognitive capacity for research — a key pathway to promotion. They operate through three linked mechanisms. First, time is displaced by intensive teaching, marking, and administrative reporting. Second, resource inequalities across units, driven by high student-staff ratios, limit research opportunities. Third, a

cumulative burden of supervision, examinations, and committee work creates persistent time scarcity. Together, these factors lead to lengthened or uneven promotion outcomes.

These findings are in line with a recent report from The Citizen, which shows that the shortage of academic staff in Tanzania is 44% in higher learning institutions (HLIs), of which there is a need of employing more personnel so as to operate efficiently (Ubwani, 2024, February 9). Previous studies in Tanzania have also reported insufficient numbers of academic staff in higher learning institutions (Fussy, 2017; Mgaiwa, 2023).

These findings align with Ngalomba's (2022) report that academic staff spend less time on research activities. In Nigeria, Jacob (2020) noted that lecturer shortages often lead to high teacher-student ratios, while Jacob et al. (2021) highlighted the burden of managing large classes on academic staff. Similarly, Kadikilo et al. (2024) found that Tanzanian HEIs face comparable challenges, with workloads affected by staff shortages and mismanagement, ultimately hindering research quality.

Applying Bourdieu's framework clarifies how workload functions as a structural constraint on capital accumulation. Heavy teaching and administrative duties limit "time capital" (a practical dimension of cultural capital), restricting opportunities to produce research outputs that confer the cultural and symbolic capital required for promotion. Unequal duty allocations reproduce inequalities: staff in better-resourced departments can convert time and funding into publications (cultural capital) more readily, thereby accruing symbolic capital and improving promotion prospects. Institutional expectations about teaching loads and invisible labour shape staff dispositions (*habitus*), normalizing overtime and unpaid personal investment, which in turn reproduces inequitable access to promotion.

To reduce these burdens, institutions should consider implementing sabbatical leave programs to provide dedicated time for research and publication (Yun, 2025). Sabbaticals can help faculty deepen academic expertise, expand professional networks, and develop social capital through collaboration and international knowledge sharing (Armenakyan et al., 2022; Gardner, 2022; Suchikova & Nazarovets, 2025). Institutions should also follow

recommendations such as those by Orfan et al. (2024) for balancing teaching and research time and avoiding excessive course loads to enhance productivity.

Resource Constraints and Infrastructure Limitations

Resource constraints and infrastructure limitations emerged as significant challenges affecting academic staff promotion prospects across the universities studied. The findings reveal a complex interplay of financial, physical, and technological constraints that collectively impact research productivity and academic advancement.

With regard to the funding challenge, which manifested in diverse ways, the study findings revealed that academic staff rely on personal funds, project grants, PhD sponsorships, and postdoctoral fellowships. This financial burden was evident in the participants' experiences, with one affirming, "Funds for publications are still a problem. However, sometimes I use money from my pocket for research activities, which is really a burden" (Interview with Academic Staff, University B). In contrast, another participant stated, "...it was easy for me to publish due to a postdoc scholarship..." (Interview with Academic Staff, University A), highlighting stark differences in research productivity based on funding access.

All in all, the availability of research funding varied between the two universities. With regard to University A, quite a good number of Academic Staff had access to external project funds, as one participant explained that, "...almost all my publications are from projects. We received funds from ... often times..." (Interview with one of the Academic staff, from University A). In addition, others secure funds from sources like Denmark, REPOA and the World Bank. In comparison, the University B had allocated at least, Tsh 400 million per year as research funds for junior academic staff, although the acting Director of Research, Publications and Innovations Coordination Center (DRPICC) acknowledged that the amount secured was insufficient. University B had also invested significantly in financing PhD studies, as a pathway to increasing research output and publications amongst junior Academic Staff in different disciplines across the university.

On the other hand, physical infrastructure limitation was an additional barrier, as per the study

findings. The study revealed inadequate office space and basic facilities, with the researcher observing academicians sharing cramped offices lacking essential amenities like proper storage and bookshelves. As one academic staff member at University A lamented, “This is just a laboratory... we are four in the office, of which concentration on crucial issues is a challenge” (Interview with one of the Academic staff, from University A). Similarly, at University B, one of the academic staff stated that, “... we are three in the office, of which the situation brings about a lot of interference thus making it difficult to concentrate on research activities” (Interview with one of the Academic staff, from University B).

On a similar note, the physical environment also posed a significant constraint that directly impacted the ability of the academic staff to concentrate and engage in research activities. At both universities, some academic staff reported having to share offices, which led to significant interference and a lack of privacy, particularly when it came to the issue of student supervision. While office sharing presents opportunities for teamwork, information sharing, collaboration, and co-authoring manuscripts, it simultaneously creates challenges for concentration and privacy. Additionally, the lack of appropriate consultation spaces for adult learners pursuing master's and PhD degrees has implications for research productivity, which eventually affects promotion prospects.

Furthermore, technological infrastructure posed a significant challenge, particularly internet connectivity. Despite the availability of internet services on both campuses, the majority of Academic Staff complained about unreliable internet connectivity, especially during working hours. On this, one participant stated that, “Sincerely, the internet facility is available but is very slow and thus it is unreliable... unless you either come early in the morning or stay in the office till late hours when a good number of the Academic Staff will not be in the office”. (Interview with one of the Academic staff, from University B). Another academic staff member grieved that, “Yes, we have internet facility within the campus, but it is on and off, candidly not reliable at all. To a large extent, I normally use my modem ...that costs about TZS100,000/= per month”. (Interview with another Academic staff member from University B).

The study findings reveal that the prevailing situation hampers the Academic Staff's ability to access research materials and engage in the global academic community. To cope with the situation, some of them arrive early or work until late hours, while others use personal funds to purchase internet bundles, incurring monthly internet costs ranging from TZS 50,000 to TZS 150,000.

The findings of this study indicate that financial shortfalls force academics to use personal funds, limiting equitable research opportunities and outputs. Poor office conditions and overcrowding undermine focused research and effective student supervision. Unreliable internet access imposes extra costs and working hours, constraining participation in global scholarship and slowing promotion.

Previous studies in Tanzania, such as those by Kadikilo et al. (2024), highlighted how inadequate research funding impacts professional development activities. These findings align with broader regional challenges, including government research funding falling below 1% of the GDP in Nigeria (Jacob et al., 2021) and pervasive low research productivity across Africa due to funding constraints (Uwizeye et al., 2022). Furthermore, Simisaye (2019) emphasizes that in South-West Nigeria, financial limitations significantly impede academic staff research productivity, restricting their ability to pursue innovative projects and secure essential resources.

Previous studies in Tanzania have reported unstable and unreliable internet connectivity within higher learning institutions (Mwakyusa & Ngwebeya, 2022; Ndibalema, 2022). The problem of slow, unpredictable, and sometimes weak internet is not unique to Tanzanian universities; it has been reported in other universities in Kenya (Shisakha et al., 2024; Wekullo et al., 2024) and Nigeria (Sawyer-George et al., 2023).

Interpreted through Bourdieu, these constraints function as limits on capital accumulation. Limited economic capital (insufficient research funding) blocks the production of cultural capital (publications, grants, supervised theses). Poor physical and temporal conditions prevent the conversion of available time into productive research and restrict opportunities to form social capital through collaboration. Unreliable internet and delayed outputs hinder symbolic capital

accumulation (recognition, citations). Institutional norms and habitus that normalize self-funding and unpaid overtime reproduce these inequalities, enabling better-resourced individuals and departments to accumulate the capital necessary for advancement while disadvantaging others. To reduce unequal promotion outcomes, institutions should protect dedicated research time and allocate research funds more equitably. They should also upgrade office and consultation spaces and ensure reliable internet access so that resources can be converted into cultural, social, and symbolic capital.

Promotion Process Challenges

During the study, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor of University A and the Acting HR, who was the representative of University B, along with the Academic Staff leaders, revealed that the promotion procedures for academic staff were clearly outlined in the university's staff promotion handbooks. These guidelines adhere to the harmonized scheme of services for the Academic Staff in public universities and their constituent colleges, as prepared by the Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU).

Despite the efforts made to standardize and streamline the promotion process, the study identified significant institutional challenges affecting academic career advancement. Participants expressed frustration regarding the unpredictability and delays associated with the promotion procedures. On this, one participant noted that, "the process is not predictable... to me, it took a long time unnecessarily" (Interview with one of the Academic staff, from University A). Another participant pointed out on the publication requirements, stating that, "the issue is to make sure that an Academic Staff member publishes in a reputable journal and has quite a good number of required articles" (Interview with one of the Academic staff, from University B).

On the same vein, delays in the promotion process were a recurring theme among the participants. One academic staff member from University A shared that, "Actually, I was supposed to be promoted in 2014, but due to the reviewer's delay, I was promoted in 2015" (Interview with one of the Academic staff members from University A). Another staff member from University B noted that, "The evaluation process takes so long. For instance, I submitted my papers in November 2012, but the

process ended in October 2013" (Interview with one of the Academic staff, from University B). Thus, the study found that reviewers are not compensated for their work, making the review process voluntary, which may unnecessarily contribute to these delays in feedback.

The situation becomes even more complex when external reviewers are involved, particularly for professorial ranks. Academic staff seeking promotion to Associate Professor and Professor levels, respectively, submit their publications for review in batches to reduce congestion. However, the process of preparing publications takes years to accomplish. Moreover, feedback remains unpredictable as the academic staff may publish in credible, high-ranking journals yet receive poor evaluations, adding to their frustration. This arbitrary evaluation system raises questions about the legitimacy of the review process, particularly when publications in internationally recognized journals indexed in Scopus, DOAJ, or published by reputable outlets such as Taylor & Francis and Elsevier are subjected to re-evaluation by individual reviewers whose assessments may contradict their established academic standards.

Furthermore, changes in institutional guidelines significantly impact promotion prospects for academic staff. For example, in 2016, University A began implementing the "Up the Ladder" policy to align with the harmonized scheme set forth by TCU. Consequently, some academic staff found themselves ineligible for promotion under the new criteria, which discouraged collaborative research and point-sharing unless research was multidisciplinary and equally distributed. This policy shift exemplifies how sudden changes in field rules can arbitrarily redistribute symbolic capital, benefiting those already positioned advantageously while penalizing others who had invested in different strategies based on previous criteria. The research also revealed a multi-layered evaluation process involving several stages: departmental assessment, college-level scrutiny, human resources committees, and final approval by university councils. Each stage presents potential points of delay and uncertainty in the promotion journey. Bourdieu's concept of "field" illuminates how these multiple hierarchical levels create numerous positions of power where gatekeepers exercise discretionary judgment, making success

dependent not merely on merit but on one's ability to mobilize social capital and align with institutional habitus—the internalized understanding of unwritten rules and expectations.

These findings align with previous studies on academic promotion challenges. Msuya (2023) in Tanzania identified significant dissatisfaction among the academic staff regarding awareness of the institutional promotion criteria and standards, noting that a lack of clarity creates opportunities for administrative mishandling of the process. Similarly, a study in Kenya by Kebenei et al. (2023) criticized promotion processes in public universities for their lack of transparency, often influenced by nepotism and ethnic politics—factors that negatively impact both job performance and staff morale.

The findings reveal a promotion system burdened by unnecessarily lengthy procedural challenges that reflect broader struggles over capital distribution within the academic field. While many academic staff perceive the system as fair, given that TCU has provided clear guidelines and procedures for those climbing the academic ladder, in practice, the process is not smooth, characterized by delays and frustrations due to multiple layers and several evaluation steps.

This study recommends that institutions establish pre-approved lists of trusted journals (e.g., those indexed in Scopus, Web of Science, DOAJ, or published by Taylor & Francis, Elsevier, and other reputable publishers with rigorous peer-review processes). Publications in these recognized outlets should be accepted without additional internal and external review, as it seems contradictory for individual institutional reviewers to question articles already vetted by internationally renowned peer reviewers and editorial boards. This reform would reduce redundancy, minimize delays, and acknowledge the symbolic capital already conferred by publication in high-quality journals.

Moreover, addressing these inequities requires clear communication of promotion criteria, standardized and streamlined evaluation processes, fair compensation for reviewers, and structural reforms that democratize access to social, cultural, and institutional capital. It is only through such comprehensive changes that universities can create transparent, equitable promotion systems that

disrupt rather than reinforce the existing stratification within academia.

Personal Motivation and Resource Investment

The study findings revealed that personal motivation and resource investment emerged as determinants for the Academic Staff promotion success. The majority of the participants admitted the significance of individual effort and dedication for promotion milestones, manifested through substantial investments of personal time and resources beyond regular working hours and institutional support.

The importance of personal initiative was clearly articulated by participants. As pointed out, “I use my extra hours for publications; otherwise, it is not easy to write manuscripts without going an extra mile” (Interview with the Academic staff, from University A). Another participant emphasized their strategic use of personal time, stating that, “Personally, I use weekend time and personal leave to write my articles, of which I have been so successful”. (Interview with the Academic staff, from University B). These testimonies highlight how successful academics actively create opportunities for research and writing, often sacrificing personal time to achieve their career goals.

In that regard, it was established that intrinsic motivation was essential for an Academic Staff member to publish as the secretary from the University B explained, “...of course, promotion by publications under the pressure of extra workload, one needs individual efforts, otherwise it is challenging” (Interview with the Secretary from University B). Another academic staff member from University B elaborated that, “Personally, I have to work until late hours and even during weekends and holidays to be able to publish” (Interview with the Academic Staff from University B). Surprisingly, one Academic Staff member shared that, “As an administrator, I have to work until late hours and I decided to use my money to purchase a generator so that power cuts cannot interfere with my timetable” (Interview with the Academic staff, from University A). Generally, the majority of the academic staff interviewed often times spend money from their own pockets during their preparations for publications, covering costs such as traveling, accommodation, hiring research assistants, data analysis, language editing, and even

publication fees in open-access journals. As one participant stated, “For some articles...I spend money from my pocket to publish” (Interview with an Academic staff member from University A).

These findings align with the existing literature on academic motivation and success. For instance, studies by Trevino & DeFreitas (2014), Sharma & Sharma (2018), and Sarami &Hojjati (2023) support the importance of intrinsic motivation in academic achievement. However, Roberts (2022) gives a crucial insight by noting that intrinsic motivation alone is insufficient for academic advancement, since a sophisticated combination of factors is required, including strategic planning, adherence to institutional guidelines, and willingness to invest extra time and personal resources in research and publication activities.

These findings align with Bourdieu's theory by showing that personal motivation and resource investment serve as forms of cultural capital that enhance academic promotion prospects. This underscores the importance of individual agency in a system that favors those with more financial means and time. However, the heavy reliance on personal effort also highlights systemic inequalities, as not all staff have equal access to the resources needed for success, illustrating how social stratification can impede equitable academic advancement.

The findings reveal a complex interplay between personal agency and institutional support in academic career advancement. This raises key questions about equity in academic success, since not all staff members have the capacity to invest personal funds or time outside of regular working hours. Thus, there is a need for a more balanced approach where institutional support complements personal motivation, potentially leading to more equitable and sustainable paths to academic promotion.

CONCLUSION

This study explores the barriers to academic staff promotion in two Tanzanian public universities using Bourdieu's capital theory. Heavy teaching and administrative duties drain time, capital, and limit research opportunities. Combined resource shortages, poor infrastructure, and opaque promotion procedures block capital conversion and favour the well-connected staff. Theoretically, the

study reframes promotion problems as failures of capital accumulation and conversion, linking individual coping practices (self-funding, overtime) to an institutional habitus that reproduces hierarchies.

Practically, institutions should protect dedicated research time, allocate funds equitably with targeted support for junior staff, improve physical and digital infrastructure, recognise reputable external publications without redundant internal re review, compensate reviewers, and establish formal mentorship programs to build social capital. Methodologically, the qualitative, triangulated design and theory guided second analytic cycle revealed procedural and dispositional mechanisms often missed by quantitative metrics. Generalisability is limited by the study's focus on two public universities. Future research should include private institutions, adopt mixed methods to quantify effects, explore gendered and disciplinary differences in capital accumulation, and undertake regional comparisons across East Africa. In addition, future studies should examine how requiring additional internal reviews of already published articles affects academics' morale, timelines, and career progression. Addressing material, temporal, and procedural barriers to capital conversion is essential to make promotions fairer and to strengthen Tanzania's academic research capacity.

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