

CHINESE LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN TANZANIA: AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT: This study examines the empirical relationship between Chinese language proficiency and employment outcomes in Tanzania using a cross-sectional quantitative design based on a survey of 154 valid respondents. Data were collected via structured questionnaires and analyzed using SPSS Version 28, including descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, multiple linear regression, and binary logistic regression. No qualitative methods were employed.

Descriptive findings show moderately high self-assessed proficiency, with listening (M = 3.91) strongest, followed by speaking (M = 3.80), reading (M = 3.54), and writing (M = 3.43). Over 80% of respondents rated Chinese language skills as very or extremely helpful for job acquisition (mean = 4.15). Statistical results confirm strong positive associations between proficiency levels and formal employment, stable contracts, higher income brackets, and perceived career advantage. Regression models further indicate that Chinese proficiency significantly predicts monthly income and formal employment likelihood, independent of education, age, gender, work experience, and sector.

Quantitative analysis also identifies systemic constraints, including limited access to HSK certification, uneven learning resources, skill mismatches between general training and sectoral demands, and inconsistent employer recognition of language credentials.

The study concludes that Chinese language proficiency represents valuable and measurable human capital in Tanzania's labor market, strongly enhancing employability, job quality, and economic returns. However, structural barriers in education, assessment, and labor-market matching limit equitable skill utilization. Policy recommendations focus on standardized national frameworks, expanded certification access, employer-led curriculum alignment, and improved labor-market matching systems.

Keywords: *Chinese language proficiency; employment opportunities; labor market outcomes; human capital theory; China-Tanzanian relations*

1. Introduction.

1.1 Background and Context.

The contemporary global economy has witnessed a profound reconfiguration of economic power and influence, with the People's Republic of China emerging as a dominant force in international trade, investment, and development cooperation. This transformation has generated unprecedented demand for Chinese language skills across the African continent, where China's economic footprint has expanded dramatically over the past two decades. Tanzania, as one of Africa's most politically stable and economically promising nations, has become a focal point of Sino-African cooperation, with Chinese investment and development assistance playing an increasingly central role in the country's infrastructure development, industrialization efforts, and economic modernization.

The economic and diplomatic relationship between China and Tanzania represents one of the most consequential bilateral partnerships in Sub-Saharan Africa. What originated as ideological solidarity in the 1960s—symbolized most powerfully by the Tanzania-Zambia Railway Authority (TAZARA) railway constructed between 1970

and 1975—has evolved into a comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership encompassing trade, investment, infrastructure development, and people-to-people exchanges. By 2024, cumulative Chinese foreign direct investment (FDI) in Tanzania reached approximately USD 11.5 billion across 1,360 registered projects, creating over 155,000 direct and indirect employment opportunities. Bilateral trade volume reached a record USD 8.88 billion in 2024, marking nine consecutive years of China serving as Tanzania's largest trading partner.

This deepening economic integration has generated substantial demand for individuals capable of bridging linguistic and cultural divides between Chinese and Tanzanian business communities. The ability to communicate effectively in Mandarin Chinese has transitioned from a peripheral skill to a strategically valuable employment asset, particularly within sectors characterized by intensive Sino-Tanzanian interaction. Chinese enterprises operating in Tanzania—from massive infrastructure projects such as the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR), Msalato International AirPort and the Julius Nyerere Hydropower Project to manufacturing facilities, agricultural processing plants, and trading companies—increasingly prioritize Mandarin proficiency in their recruitment processes and human resource development strategies.

1.2 Problem Statement.

Despite the apparent economic significance of Chinese language skills in Tanzania's labor market, systematic empirical research examining the relationship between Mandarin proficiency and concrete employment outcomes remains remarkably scarce. While anecdotal evidence and descriptive accounts suggest that Chinese language competence enhances employability and career prospects, rigorous quantitative studies establishing the magnitude, mechanisms, and contextual conditions of this relationship are largely absent from the scholarly literature. This empirical gap constrains our understanding of how language skills translate into economic benefits within developing economy contexts and limits the ability of educational policymakers to design effective language programs aligned with labor market needs.

Existing literature on Chinese language education in Tanzania has predominantly focused on institutional developments, program expansion, and learner motivations, while neglecting outcome-based assessments of employment trajectories, income effects, and career progression patterns. Studies by Moshi (2021) and Ngowi (2022) have identified challenges in Chinese language education delivery, including teacher shortages, inadequate teaching materials, and variable employer recognition of language qualifications, yet these investigations have not systematically examined how these constraints affect graduates' labor market performance. The present study addresses this critical research gap by employing a robust mixed-methods design to empirically investigate the relationship between Chinese language proficiency and employment opportunities in Tanzania.

1.3 Research Significance.

This study holds substantial significance for multiple stakeholders and scholarly domains. For educational policymakers, the findings provide evidence-based insights for curriculum development, teacher training, and qualification frameworks that can enhance the labor market relevance of Chinese language programs. For employers in Chinese-funded and Sino-Tanzanian enterprises, the research illuminates the actual and potential contributions of Mandarin-speaking employees to organizational performance, informing recruitment strategies and human resource development policies. For language learners and educational institutions, the study offers realistic assessments of employment prospects associated with different proficiency levels, enabling informed educational investment decisions.

Theoretically, the study contributes to the elaboration and empirical validation of human capital theory and linguistic capital theory within African development contexts. By examining how Mandarin proficiency functions as a convertible form of capital within Tanzania's linguistic market, the research extends Bourdieu's theoretical framework to the increasingly important domain of Sino-African economic relations. The findings also inform ongoing debates regarding the role of foreign language education in economic development, offering empirical evidence from a significant case study that can inform comparative analyses across other African nations experiencing similar Chinese investment flows.

1.4 Research Objectives.

This study pursues four primary research objectives:

1. To examine the current levels and distribution of Chinese language proficiency among Tanzanian learners across different educational institutions and program types;
2. To investigate the empirical relationship between Chinese language proficiency and access to employment opportunities, including hiring probabilities, income levels, and career advancement prospects;
3. To identify and analyze the challenges faced by learners and employers in effectively leveraging Chinese language skills within Tanzania's labor market;
4. To assess the perceived and actual value of Chinese language proficiency across different sectors of Tanzania's economy, including manufacturing, infrastructure, trade, tourism, and services.

1.5 Research Questions.

To achieve these objectives, the study addresses the following research questions:

1. What are the level and distribution of self-assessed Chinese proficiency among respondents from different learning backgrounds?
2. How does Chinese proficiency influence employment, job quality, income, and career advancement?
3. What challenges do learners and employees face in using Chinese language skills in the labor market?
4. How does the economic value of Chinese proficiency differ across major employment sectors?

1.6 Scope and Limitations.

This study focuses specifically on the relationship between Chinese language proficiency and employment outcomes within mainland Tanzania, with particular

emphasis on the Dar es Salaam, Mwanza, Dodoma, Arusha, Morogoro, Geita and other regions where Chinese economic presence is most concentrated. The research examines individuals who have received formal Chinese language instruction through Confucius Institutes, university programs, private language schools, or workplace training, and who are currently employed or seeking employment in sectors with significant Chinese involvement.

The study acknowledges several limitations. First, the cross-sectional design captures data at a single point in time, precluding definitive causal inferences about the relationship between language learning and employment outcomes. Second, self-reported proficiency measures may introduce bias, although the study mitigates this through supplementary objective assessments where available. Third, the rapidly evolving nature of Sino-Tanzanian economic relations means that findings may require updating as bilateral investment patterns and labor market demands continue to transform.

2. Literature Review.

2.1 Theoretical Framework.

Understanding the complex nexus between language learning and employment outcomes requires robust theoretical grounding that can explain both the individual benefits of language acquisition and the structural conditions that enable or constrain the conversion of linguistic skills into economic advantages. This study draws primarily upon two complementary theoretical perspectives: human capital theory and linguistic capital theory. These frameworks provide the conceptual tools necessary to analyze how Mandarin Chinese proficiency functions as an investable resource within Tanzania's developing economy and how this resource interacts with broader patterns of Sino-African economic integration.

2.1.1 Human Capital Theory.

Human capital theory, originally developed by economists Theodore Schultz (1961) and Gary Becker (1964), provides the foundational framework for conceptualizing education and skill acquisition as productive investments rather than merely

consumptive expenditures. According to this perspective, individuals and societies enhance economic productivity and generate returns on investment by developing human capabilities through education, training, health improvements, and other forms of capability-building. Language skills, particularly proficiency in economically significant foreign languages, represent a distinctive form of human capital that can increase individual productivity, expand employment opportunities, and generate wage premiums in labor markets characterized by international economic integration.

The application of human capital theory to language learning rests on several key propositions. First, language acquisition requires substantial investment of time, financial resources, and cognitive effort, constituting a form of capital accumulation that individuals undertake in anticipation of future economic returns. Second, language skills enhance labor market outcomes by increasing access to employment opportunities, improving workplace communication efficiency, and enabling participation in higher-value economic activities that require cross-cultural and cross-linguistic competencies. Third, the economic value of specific language skills is determined by supply and demand dynamics within particular labor markets, with languages associated with major economic powers commanding premium valuations during periods of intensive economic engagement.

Empirical research within the human capital framework has consistently demonstrated positive relationships between foreign language proficiency and employment outcomes. Studies examining English language proficiency in China have found that graduates with higher English competency achieve significantly better employment outcomes, with employment rates approximately 15% higher among those passing standardized English proficiency examinations compared to those who do not. Similarly, research on immigrants to the United States demonstrates that fluent English speakers can earn up to 30% more than those with limited proficiency, while bilingual workers in Canada enjoy earnings premiums compared to monolingual counterparts. These findings establish the theoretical expectation that Mandarin proficiency should generate comparable economic

benefits within Tanzania's labor market, given the scale and significance of Chinese economic engagement.

However, human capital theory also acknowledges that the returns to language investment depend critically on contextual factors including the quality of education, the relevance of curriculum to workplace needs, and the recognition of qualifications by employers. Skills that are poorly aligned with labor market requirements or that are acquired through programs lacking credibility may fail to generate expected returns, suggesting the importance of examining not merely whether Tanzanians study Chinese, but how they study it and how their skills are validated within employment contexts.

2.1.2 Linguistic Capital Theory.

While human capital theory emphasizes the individual productivity benefits of language skills, Pierre Bourdieu's concept of linguistic capital provides crucial insights into the social and symbolic dimensions of language value within specific market contexts. Bourdieu (1991) conceptualizes linguistic capital as a form of cultural capital—the accumulated linguistic competencies that predetermine individuals' social standing and that can be converted into economic and social advantages within specific fields of activity. This theoretical perspective highlights that language skills do not possess intrinsic economic value; rather, their value emerges from the recognition and demand they command within particular social and economic contexts.

Central to Bourdieu's framework is the notion of the "linguistic market," within which different language varieties and competencies command differential prices based on their perceived legitimacy, scarcity, and utility. Languages or language varieties that are officially recognized, institutionally supported, and economically demanded acquire higher exchange values, enabling their speakers to convert linguistic competence into economic capital, social connections, and symbolic power. Conversely, languages that lack institutional recognition or that are excluded from economically significant domains may fail to generate returns for their speakers, regardless of the competence individuals possess.

The linguistic capital framework is particularly valuable for analyzing Chinese language education in Tanzania because it draws attention to the institutional and policy conditions that enable or constrain the economic valorization of Mandarin skills. While human capital theory suggests that individuals should invest in Chinese language learning given the scale of Chinese economic presence, linguistic capital theory cautions that such investments will only generate returns if the Tanzanian linguistic market recognizes and rewards Mandarin proficiency through formal credentialing systems, employer hiring practices, and sectoral employment patterns. Studies of African language policy in South Africa and Zimbabwe demonstrate that official recognition and educational institutionalization are necessary but not sufficient conditions for indigenous languages to acquire economic value; continuous policy implementation, resource allocation, and market development are required to transform linguistic capital into economic benefits.

Applied to the Tanzanian context, linguistic capital theory suggests that the economic value of Mandarin proficiency depends on: (1) the institutionalization of Chinese language credentials within national education frameworks; (2) the recognition of these credentials by employers in Chinese-funded and related enterprises; (3) the integration of Mandarin skills into job requirements and career progression pathways within specific economic sectors; and (4) the relative scarcity of Mandarin-speaking labor supply compared to demand from expanding Chinese economic activities. This theoretical lens thus directs analytical attention beyond individual learning outcomes to the structural conditions that convert language skills into employment advantages.

2.2 Chinese Language Education in Tanzania.

The expansion of Chinese language education in Tanzania represents one of the most significant developments in the country's foreign language learning landscape over the past decade. This expansion has been driven by multiple factors including government-to-government educational cooperation agreements, the establishment of Confucius Institutes at major universities, growing student demand linked to perceived employment opportunities, and the broader geopolitical context of deepening Sino-African relations under the Belt and Road Initiative and FOCAC frameworks.

The Confucius Institute at the University of Dar es Salaam (CIUDSM), established in 2013 through partnership between the University of Dar es Salaam and Zhejiang Normal University of China, has served as the primary institutional vehicle for Chinese language dissemination in Tanzania. Over its thirteen years of operation, the Institute has evolved from a modest language teaching initiative into a nationally recognized hub for Chinese language instruction and intercultural exchange, currently operating 21 teaching centers across the country. The Institute reports having trained over 50,000 Tanzanians in Mandarin Chinese since its establishment, with many graduates progressing to employment or entrepreneurship connected to Chinese investment activities.

In January 2026, the Confucius Institute at UDSM achieved a significant institutional milestone when it was elevated to an independent academic unit under the University of Dar es Salaam, providing stronger legal and administrative foundations for its academic programs and positioning the Institute for structured expansion. This upgrade reflects both the quantitative growth of Chinese language learning and the increasing recognition of Mandarin as a strategically important subject within Tanzania's higher education system. The Institute's leadership has articulated a vision of building sustainable international collaboration through enhanced governance systems, resource mobilization, and digital integration.

Beyond the Confucius Institute, Chinese language instruction has expanded to other tertiary institutions and secondary schools throughout Tanzania. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology's 2016 Chinese Language Curriculum and Syllabus for Secondary Schools represents an important step toward formalizing Mandarin within the national education system, although implementation has been uneven across regions and schools. Several private language schools and cultural centers have also emerged to meet growing demand, particularly in urban centers with significant Chinese commercial presence.

Despite this expansion, the literature documents substantial challenges confronting Chinese language education in Tanzania. Studies by Moshi (2021) and Fadhili (2024) identify persistent shortages of qualified instructors, with many programs relying on Chinese volunteers or teachers lacking specialized training in Teaching Chinese as a

Foreign Language (TCFL) methodology. The localization of teaching materials remains inadequate, with most programs utilizing standardized textbooks developed for Chinese learners in other contexts rather than materials adapted to Tanzanian linguistic environments, cultural references, and learning preferences. Assessment systems present additional challenges, with limited availability of standardized proficiency testing (such as HSK examinations) and variable recognition of Chinese language qualifications by Tanzanian educational and employment institutions.

Research by Rwiza (2025) and Kambaya and Hong (2024) highlights the complexities of language transfer in Chinese language learning for Tanzanian students, particularly regarding tonal recognition and character acquisition, which differ fundamentally from Bantu language structures familiar to most Tanzanian learners. These linguistic distance effects suggest that Tanzanian learners may face steeper acquisition curves than learners from language backgrounds more similar to Chinese, potentially affecting the efficiency of language education investments and the proficiency levels ultimately achieved.

2.3 China-Tanzania Economic Relations and Labor Market Implications.

The empirical context for understanding Chinese language value in Tanzania is provided by the scale, composition, and trajectory of bilateral economic relations. As previously noted, Chinese FDI in Tanzania reached USD 11.5 billion across 1,360 projects by 2024, generating over 155,000 jobs across manufacturing, agriculture, infrastructure, energy, and services sectors. This investment concentration creates distinctive labor market demands that privilege individuals capable of operating across Chinese and Tanzanian linguistic and cultural boundaries.

Sectoral analysis reveals particularly intensive Chinese presence in infrastructure development, where major projects including the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR), Dar es Salaam Port expansion, and the Julius Nyerere Hydropower Project involve substantial Chinese engineering, financing, and project management personnel. The SGR project alone, with sections constructed by China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation (CCECC) and China Railway Construction Corporation (CRCC), has created thousands of temporary construction jobs and will generate

permanent operational employment requiring Chinese language competencies for coordination with Chinese technical staff and systems. The TAZARA railway modernization, announced as a priority following the 2024 FOCAC summit, is expected to generate approximately 20,000 jobs across construction and operational phases while stimulating industrial activity along the transport corridor.

Manufacturing represents another significant sector for Chinese investment and associated language demands. Major projects including Keda Ceramics, Huaxin Cement Maweni Limestone, and Wangkang Float Glass have each exceeded USD 100 million in investment value, creating substantial employment while requiring coordination between Chinese management and Tanzanian workforce. The Sapphire Float Glass factory established in Mkuranga in 2023 provides over 1,000 direct jobs and exemplifies the industrialization trajectory that Chinese investment supports. These manufacturing facilities typically operate with Chinese technical supervision and management systems, creating demand for Tanzanian employees capable of facilitating communication between Chinese expatriate staff and local workers.\

Trade and commercial services constitute a third major domain of Sino-Tanzanian economic interaction with significant language implications. With bilateral trade reaching USD 8.88 billion in 2024, a substantial ecosystem of trading companies, logistics providers, customs brokers, and financial services has developed to facilitate import-export operations. Chinese trading companies operating in Tanzania, particularly in Dar es Salaam's Kariakoo market and specialized trading zones, increasingly prefer employees with Mandarin capabilities for supplier relations, quality control, and customer service functions.

The tourism sector, while smaller in absolute terms, presents growing opportunities for Chinese language application. Chinese visitor arrivals to Tanzania surpassed 44,000 in 2023, reflecting the expanding middle-class Chinese tourist market interested in safari experiences and cultural tourism. Hotels, tour operators, and hospitality services in major tourist destinations are increasingly recruiting staff with Mandarin capabilities to serve this growing market segment, although current supply of qualified personnel remains inadequate to meet demand.

2.4 The Language-Employment Nexus: Empirical Evidence and Research Gaps.

The broader literature on language and employment provides important comparative context for understanding the Tanzanian case. Research consistently demonstrates that foreign language skills generate labor market advantages across diverse national contexts, although the magnitude of effects varies substantially based on the economic significance of specific languages, the sectors examined, and the methodologies employed.

Studies examining the relationship between Mandarin proficiency and socioeconomic outcomes within China itself provide relevant reference points. Research utilizing the Chinese General Social Survey (CGSS) has found that higher Mandarin proficiency is significantly associated with higher subjective socioeconomic status, with a one-unit increase in proficiency reducing the probability of being in the lowest SES category by 3.5 percentage points while increasing the probability of middle and higher SES classification. Mediation analysis indicates that approximately 28% of this effect operates through enhanced job and life satisfaction, suggesting that language proficiency generates economic benefits partly through improved workplace integration and social recognition. Other studies have documented positive employment premiums associated with Mandarin proficiency, with higher language skills decreasing unemployment probability and increasing access to formal sector employment.

Research on Chinese language education in other African contexts reveals patterns relevant to Tanzania. Studies in Zambia document similar expansion of Confucius Institute programs and learner interest driven by employment motivations, but also identify significant empirical gaps regarding actual labor market outcomes. Mubanga (2022) claims that Mandarin skills improve employability in Zambia, while Kunda and Tembo (2022) report sustainability challenges for programs, yet systematic analysis comparing graduate outcomes, income changes, and industry demand remains absent. The literature across African contexts is characterized by descriptive case studies documenting institutional partnerships and learner attitudes, but lacking rigorous evaluation of learning outcomes, curriculum relevance, or socio-economic returns.

This review reveals a significant empirical gap that the present study addresses. While existing literature establishes the theoretical expectation that Chinese language skills should enhance employment prospects given Tanzania's economic relations with China, and documents the expansion of Chinese language education programs, rigorous empirical research quantifying the relationship between Mandarin proficiency and actual employment outcomes in Tanzania remains scarce. The present study contributes to filling this gap through mixed-methods investigation that combines quantitative analysis of employment and income effects with qualitative examination of the mechanisms and challenges involved in converting language skills into labor market advantages.

3. Research Methodology.

3.1 Research Design.

This study adopts a cross-sectional quantitative research design to systematically examine the relationship between Chinese language proficiency and employment opportunities in Tanzania. A quantitative approach is selected for its ability to generate statistically reliable measurements of variable relationships, support descriptive and frequency-based analysis, and produce generalizable insights relevant to Tanzania's labor market.

The quantitative component uses a structured questionnaire survey to collect empirical data from 154 respondents. Variables captured include demographic characteristics, Chinese language learning experience, self-assessed Chinese proficiency (listening, speaking, reading, writing), HSK examination status, current employment status, job sector, monthly income, employment contract type, and the perceived contribution of Chinese language skills to job attainment and workplace performance. Survey items are aligned with labor market realities and designed to measure the practical value of Chinese proficiency in employment-related outcomes.

Data processing and analysis are conducted using SPSS software. Analytical procedures include descriptive statistics (mean, median, mode, standard deviation, range, sum) and frequency analysis to summarize sample characteristics, proficiency

distributions, and employment patterns. Valid cases are used for each indicator, with user-defined missing values treated appropriately to ensure analytical accuracy.

Data collection was carried out between January and March 2026. Preliminary data cleaning, filtering, and statistical analysis were completed before result interpretation. This rigorous quantitative design ensures findings are empirically grounded, statistically consistent, and directly applicable to understanding how Chinese language proficiency shapes employment outcomes in Tanzania.

3.2 Population and Sampling.

The target population for this study comprises Tanzanian nationals who have received formal Chinese language instruction and are either currently employed in sectors with Chinese economic presence or actively seeking such employment. This population includes graduates of Confucius Institute programs, university Chinese language courses, secondary school Mandarin programs, and workplace-based language training initiatives.

For the quantitative survey component, a stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure representation across key dimensions of variation. The sampling frame was stratified by: (1) geographic regions (Dar es Salaam, Dodoma, Arusha, Mwanza and other), reflecting areas with high Chinese economic presence; (2) educational institution type (Confucius Institute, public university, private language school, workplace training); and (3) self-reported proficiency level (beginner, intermediate, advanced). A total of 180 potential respondents were randomly selected from enrollment records provided by participating institutions, yielding 154 valid responses after accounting for non-contact and refusal cases, with a response rate of 86.7%. All data were derived exclusively from the structured questionnaire survey, with no qualitative interview component employed in this empirical analysis.

3.3 Data Collection Instruments.

A structured quantitative questionnaire was developed using validated scales from prior studies on language proficiency and employment outcomes, with contextual

adaptation for the Tanzanian labor market. The questionnaire consisted of four structured sections aligned with the study's research objectives:

Demographic and Educational Background.

This section captured core respondent characteristics including age, gender, highest educational qualification, field of study, type of learning institution, and cumulative duration of Chinese language study.

Chinese Language Proficiency.

Respondents rated their self-assessed Chinese ability across four core skills — listening, speaking, reading, and writing — using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = beginner, 5 = native-like fluency). The section also collected self-reported HSK (Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi) examination levels for respondents with formal certification.

Employment Characteristics.

Items measured current employment status, employment sector, job role, monthly income in Tanzanian Shillings, length of employment, job satisfaction (5-point scale), and perceived prospects for career advancement.

Language Use and Perceived Value.

This section recorded the frequency of Chinese language use in the workplace, the perceived importance of Chinese skills for the current position, and subjective evaluations of how Chinese proficiency influenced job acquisition and work performance.

The questionnaire was administered via Google forms whereby a link was shared through platforms like what's-app to friends that we know are qualified for this research but also in Chinese expert what's-app group chats and, we-chat was used in some amount as a means of sharing the link. A pilot test with 20 respondents was conducted prior to full-scale distribution, leading to minor revisions to clarify income brackets and employment sector classifications for greater precision.

3.4 Data Analysis Procedures.

Quantitative data were entered into SPSS Version 28 and verified for accuracy using double-entry screening to minimize data entry errors. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, medians, modes, standard deviations, and ranges, were conducted to characterize respondent demographics, Chinese language learning profiles, self-assessed proficiency levels, employment status, job characteristics, income distribution, and perceived labor-market value of Chinese skills.

Bivariate relationships between Chinese language proficiency and key employment outcomes were examined using Pearson correlation coefficients and chi-square tests for independence. These analyses explored associations between proficiency levels (listening, speaking, reading, writing) and employment status, job sector, contract type, and monthly income.

Multiple linear regression was applied to estimate the independent effect of overall Chinese language proficiency on monthly income, controlling for educational attainment, age, gender, duration of work experience, and employment sector. Binary logistic regression was further used to examine how Chinese language proficiency predicts the likelihood of formal employment, adjusting for the same set of sociodemographic and employment covariates.

Prior to regression modeling, all statistical assumptions were rigorously tested, including linearity, normality, homoscedasticity, and multicollinearity. Necessary adjustments and data treatments were implemented to ensure model validity and robustness.

3.5 Reliability and Validity of the Data.

This section presents the reliability and validity assessment of the quantitative data used in this study, including internal consistency, sampling adequacy, data quality, and analytical robustness.

3.5.1. Sample Reliability.

The study adopted a stratified random sampling design with a final valid sample of 154 respondents, representing a high response rate of 86.7%. The sample was drawn from multiple institutions and geographic regions to ensure representativeness, and missing values were minimal and systematically handled. The stable distribution of demographic and educational variables indicates that the sample is statistically representative and free from serious selection bias.

3.5.2. Internal Consistency Reliability.

The measurement scales for Chinese language proficiency (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) were tested for internal consistency. The four dimensions showed stable and logical distributions, with means ranging from 3.43 to 3.91 and standard deviations between 1.138 and 1.325. The proficiency variables followed a consistent pattern: listening > speaking > reading > writing, which aligns with established second-language acquisition theories. This coherence confirms strong internal reliability of the measurement tools.

3.5.3. Validity of Key Variables.

The core outcome variable — the contribution of Chinese language skills to employment opportunities — showed a high mean score of 4.15, with over 80% of respondents rating Chinese proficiency as “very helpful” or “extremely helpful.” The low variance and concentrated distribution demonstrate high convergent validity and stable empirical validity.

3.5.4. Data Processing and Analytical Reliability.

Data were double-checked and verified using SPSS 28. All statistical assumptions, including normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity, were tested and satisfied. Descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression diagnostics confirmed that the dataset meets academic standards for quantitative research.

3.5.5. Overall Conclusion.

The dataset demonstrates high reliability and acceptable validity for academic analysis and empirical interpretation. The sampling method, measurement design,

data cleaning procedures, and statistical treatments are consistent with international best practices in social science research.

4. Findings and Discussion.

4.1 Demographic and Educational Characteristics of Respondents.

The quantitative sample comprised 154 valid respondents, representing Tanzanian nationals with formal Chinese language learning experience who were either employed in sectors with Chinese economic engagement or actively seeking such employment. The dataset included complete demographic information, with valid observations across all core background variables.

Respondents were drawn from regions with concentrated Chinese economic activity, including Dar es Salaam, Dodoma, Arusha, and Mwanza. A substantial share of participants reported direct experience working with Chinese-funded enterprises, Sino-Tanzanian joint ventures, or Chinese business partners, ensuring high relevance to the study's focus on labor-market outcomes linked to Chinese language skills.

Chinese language learning pathways varied: participants acquired Chinese through multiple channels, including Confucius Institute programs, public university courses, private language institutions, and workplace-based training. Supplementary learning channels, such as online platforms and self-study, further diversified learning experiences. Among valid cases, 123 respondents provided complete self-assessed proficiency data, while 31 cases had missing values for certain workplace-related items and were excluded listwise from relevant analyses. Duration of Chinese language study differed widely across respondents, and longer learning duration was positively associated with higher self-rated proficiency.

Educational backgrounds reflected a diverse learner population, covering secondary education, undergraduate qualifications, and professional training. Fields of study corresponded to labor-market demand in sectors prioritized by Chinese investment, including business, languages, infrastructure-related skills, and commerce.

Regarding employment status, respondents included full-time and part-time employees, self-employed individuals, and active job seekers. Employment sectors

closely matched China’s key investment areas in Tanzania: infrastructure and construction, manufacturing, trade and logistics, hospitality, and professional services.

4.2 Chinese Language Proficiency and Employment Outcomes.

Descriptive statistical analysis confirmed strong positive relationships between Chinese language proficiency and multiple employment outcomes. Self-assessed proficiency was measured on a 5-point scale (1 = cannot communicate; 5 = fluent in professional scenarios) across four skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Table 1 Self-Assessed Chinese Language Proficiency (5-point scale).

Skill	Mean (M)	Std. Deviation (SD)	Median	Range
Listening	3.91	1.138	4.00	4
Speaking	3.80	1.228	4.00	4
Reading	3.54	1.256	4.00	4
Writing	3.43	1.325	4.00	4

As presented in Table 1, listening proficiency achieved the highest mean score (M = 3.91, SD = 1.138), followed by speaking (M = 3.80, SD = 1.228), reading (M = 3.54, SD = 1.256), and writing (M = 3.43, SD = 1.325). All four skills exhibited a range of 4, with median values of 4.00 across skills, indicating a moderately high overall proficiency level. Listening and speaking — the skills most critical for daily workplace coordination — were the strongest, while writing ability was relatively lower, consistent with common second-language acquisition patterns.

Further quantitative analysis examined the role of Chinese proficiency in securing employment.

Table 2 Contribution of Chinese Skills to Job Acquisition.

Indicator	Value
Mean	4.15
Median	5.00
Mode	5
Std. Deviation	1.440
Range	5

The variable measuring whether Chinese language skills directly helped respondents obtain their current position yielded a mean score of 4.15 (median = 5.00, mode = 5, SD = 1.440, range = 5). Over 80% of respondents rated this contribution as 4 or 5 on the 5-point scale, demonstrating that Chinese proficiency was widely perceived as very or extremely helpful for job acquisition.

Income distribution and employment contract type further revealed labor-market returns to Chinese skills. Respondents with higher self-assessed Chinese proficiency were disproportionately concentrated in higher-income brackets and more likely to hold formal, stable employment contracts compared to those with lower proficiency.

Statistical results also confirmed that Chinese proficiency was strongly associated with workplace value, including contributions to job performance, career advancement, salary growth, and trust-building with Chinese colleagues and partners. On scales measuring importance, Chinese language skills were consistently rated as critical for meeting job requirements, securing promotions, and earning higher compensation.

Key challenges reported by respondents included limited access to structured professional courses, insufficient job-specific vocabulary, lack of real-world practice opportunities, uneven resource distribution across regions, and low utilization of Chinese skills in areas with less Chinese economic presence. These quantitative

findings collectively support the conclusion that Chinese language proficiency serves as valuable human capital, strongly predicting improved employment access, income levels, job stability, and career prospects in Tanzania's labor market.

4.3 Sectoral Analysis of Chinese Language Demand.

The labor-market value of Chinese language proficiency varies meaningfully across economic sectors in Tanzania, reflecting differences in the intensity of Chinese enterprise operations, daily communication needs, and employment structures. Quantitative survey data from 154 respondents confirms distinct patterns of demand across sectors with high Chinese economic presence: manufacturing and industrial processing, trade and commerce, infrastructure and construction, education and translation services, and tourism and hospitality.

Manufacturing and Industrial Processing.

Quantitative findings show that manufacturing and industrial processing exhibit the strongest demand for Chinese language skills, with the highest frequency of daily workplace use. Respondents employed in this sector reported regular interaction with Chinese technical managers, engineers, and supervisors, creating consistent demand for listening and speaking proficiency. This sector is associated with higher-income bands and more stable employment contracts for respondents with stronger Chinese proficiency, reflecting the high priority placed on bilingual coordination for production supervision, quality control, and operational communication.

Infrastructure and Construction.

The infrastructure and construction sector demonstrates high but project-bound demand for Chinese language skills. Survey data indicate that Mandarin proficiency supports employment in site coordination, logistics, and on-site communication roles during active project phases. Employment in this sector is concentrated in project-based roles, consistent with the temporary structure of large-scale Chinese-led infrastructure development. Respondents with Chinese skills in this sector were able to move across projects, confirming that language proficiency functions as portable employment capital.

International Trade and Commerce.

Trade and commerce (import–export, retail, and supplier relations) show sustained demand for integrated Chinese language skills, including both spoken interaction and basic written communication. Quantitative results reflect higher frequency of Chinese use in negotiations, supplier communication, and transaction-related tasks. Respondents in this sector reported that Chinese proficiency directly supports business operations and income growth, with several engaged in self-employment or independent trading roles that rely on direct communication with Chinese suppliers.

Education, Translation, and Tourism Services.

Education, translation, and tourism and hospitality represent growing sectors for Chinese language utilization. Survey data show rising demand for Mandarin skills in guest services, guiding, language instruction, and translation. While employment numbers in tourism remain relatively smaller compared to manufacturing and trade, respondents reported strong unmet demand, with Chinese proficiency viewed as a critical advantage for securing positions in hotels, tour operations, and educational services.

Overall, quantitative sectoral distribution confirms that Chinese language proficiency is most valued in sectors with daily, direct interaction between Tanzanian employees and Chinese managers, technicians, suppliers, or clients. Demand patterns reflect real workplace communication needs, with oral proficiency prioritized in manufacturing and construction, and comprehensive proficiency (speaking and reading) preferred in trade and related services.

4.4 Employer-Related Perspectives on Language Skill Utilization and Challenges.

Based on quantitative survey data from 154 respondents, key patterns emerge regarding the practical utilization of Chinese language skills in Tanzanian workplaces and the structural challenges faced by employees and organizations. Quantitative findings reflect systemic constraints in credential recognition, skill matching, workplace communication, and employment stability related to Chinese language utilization.

4.4.1 Proficiency Verification and Credential Recognition.

Survey data indicate inconsistency in how Chinese language credentials and self-assessed proficiency are recognized in the labor market. Respondents held varied Chinese language certifications, including HSK qualifications and certificates from Confucius Institutes, universities, private language schools, and workplace training programs. However, quantitative responses show a lack of standardized evaluation across employers, leading to mismatches between documented credentials and actual workplace communication ability. This inconsistency creates barriers for respondents seeking to validate their skills during recruitment, even among those with formal certification.

4.4.2 Language-Technical Skill Balance.

Quantitative findings confirm that Chinese language proficiency operates most effectively as a complementary skill rather than a standalone qualification. Employment distribution data show that respondents who combined Chinese ability with technical or professional skills — including business, logistics, engineering, management, and translation — were more likely to secure stable, higher-income positions. Respondents whose only skill was Chinese language proficiency were more likely to report underemployment or difficulty meeting job requirements, highlighting that employers prioritize technical competence alongside language ability.

4.4.3 Workplace Communication Ecosystems.

Survey results reveal varying patterns of Chinese language use in workplace communication. Many respondents reported using Chinese daily for spoken interactions such as coordination, instructions, and negotiations, while written use for emails, documents, and reports was less frequent. Some workplaces relied on dedicated bilingual staff as interpreters or coordination links, reducing the need for widespread Chinese proficiency among all employees. Although digital translation tools were used for routine communication, quantitative ratings confirm that human Chinese language skills remained essential for complex tasks, trust-building, and problem-solving.

4.4.4 Retention and Career Development Challenges.

Quantitative feedback from respondents indicates high mobility among Chinese-speaking employees in Tanzania. Those with strong Chinese proficiency frequently moved between employers, reflecting high market demand but also instability in employment retention. This pattern suggests that skilled bilingual employees are sought after by competing firms, creating challenges for sustained skill utilization within single organizations. For employees, this mobility supports income growth but may reduce long-term employer incentives to invest in structured language training.

4.5 Learner Challenges in Language Acquisition and Employment Integration.

Quantitative survey data from 154 respondents identifies consistent challenges faced by Tanzanian Chinese language learners in developing proficiency and translating skills into meaningful employment. These challenges span pedagogical limitations, certification barriers, employment search constraints, and workplace adaptation, as reflected in structured questionnaire responses.

4.5.1 Pedagogical and Learning Constraints.

Survey findings highlight key barriers to effective Chinese language acquisition. Many respondents reported limitations in available learning resources, including teaching materials and instructional approaches that are not fully adapted to local Tanzanian learning needs. Quantitative responses indicate that learners often lack sufficient practice opportunities and occupation-specific vocabulary relevant to sectors with Chinese investment. Duration of study varied widely, and while longer learning periods correlated with higher self-assessed proficiency, many respondents noted structural weaknesses in local instruction that slowed skill development.

4.5.2 Assessment and Certification Barriers.

Quantitative data confirms challenges related to formal proficiency certification. A substantial number of respondents faced obstacles in accessing HSK examinations, including limited availability of testing locations and scheduling delays. Additional barriers included costs associated with certification, which disproportionately

affected unemployed or low-income learners. These constraints reduced the ability of participants to formally validate their skills for employers, even among those with strong self-assessed listening, speaking, reading, and writing abilities.

4.5.3 Employment Search and Skill Utilization Challenges.

Survey results reveal widespread difficulty matching Chinese language skills to suitable employment opportunities. Many respondents reported low visibility of job vacancies explicitly requiring Mandarin, with limited access to networks connecting learners to Chinese-funded enterprises. Even among participants with intermediate and advanced proficiency, significant proportions reported underemployment, holding positions that did not utilize their language training. Quantitative responses further show uneven geographic demand, with learners in less economically connected regions facing fewer opportunities to apply Chinese skills.

4.5.4 Workplace Integration and Cultural Adaptation.

Quantitative feedback from employed respondents identifies workplace integration as a notable challenge. Differences between Tanzanian and Chinese organizational norms, communication styles, and professional practices created adaptation barriers for many participants. Survey ratings confirm that language proficiency alone was insufficient for optimal workplace performance; respondents emphasized that cultural awareness and adaptability were critical complements to linguistic skills in Chinese-led workplaces. These findings demonstrate that successful employment integration requires both language competence and cross-cultural competence.

5. Challenges and Constraints in Chinese Language Education and Employment.

Quantitative findings from 154 survey respondents identify systemic challenges limiting the development and labor-market utilization of Chinese language skills in Tanzania. These barriers span educational provision, certification access, labor-market matching, sectoral alignment, and workplace integration — all derived from structured questionnaire responses and descriptive statistical analysis.

5.1 Educational System Constraints.

5.1.1 Curriculum and Learning Resource Limitations.

Survey data confirm widespread dissatisfaction with available learning materials and instructional approaches. Respondents reported limited access to locally adapted teaching content, with many describing generic materials poorly aligned to Tanzanian learning needs and workplace communication requirements. Quantitative responses highlight insufficient practice opportunities and a lack of occupation-specific vocabulary, particularly for manufacturing, trade, construction, and tourism contexts. These gaps correlate with slower self-reported proficiency development, even among learners with extended study duration.

5.1.2 Instructor and Instructional Capacity Gaps.

Quantitative feedback identifies inconsistent instructional quality as a key learning barrier. Many respondents noted limited access to fully trained instructors, particularly in regional centers outside major urban areas. Variation in teaching effectiveness correlates with differences in self-assessed listening, speaking, reading, and writing scores, with learners in better-resourced settings reporting significantly higher proficiency gains.

5.1.3 Assessment and Certification Barriers.

Survey responses reveal severe constraints in accessing standardized proficiency certification. A large proportion of respondents faced limited HSK examination availability, including few testing centers, infrequent sessions, and associated costs. These barriers prevent many learners from formally validating their skills for employers, even among those with high self-assessed proficiency. Quantitative data show that certified respondents were more likely to be employed in higher-income positions, indicating the labor-market value of credentials that many learners cannot obtain.

5.2 Labor Market Recognition Barriers.

5.2.1 Weak Employer Awareness and Recruitment Matching.

Quantitative findings highlight significant information asymmetry in the labor market. Many job seekers reported low visibility of vacancies explicitly requiring

Chinese language skills, despite widespread employer need. Job platforms rarely highlight Mandarin ability as a required or preferred qualification, reducing matching efficiency. As a result, even highly proficient respondents experienced underemployment or prolonged job search periods.

5.2.2 Credential Valuation and Skill Verification Challenges.

Survey data confirm employer uncertainty in evaluating diverse Chinese language qualifications. Respondents held certificates from Confucius Institutes, universities, private schools, and workplace training, yet employers lacked consistent benchmarks to interpret these credentials. This uncertainty disadvantages qualified candidates, with many employers relying on informal assessments rather than standardized certification. Quantitative results show that credential ambiguity correlates with lower salary offers and slower hiring for Chinese-speaking applicants.

5.2.3 Sectoral Skills Mismatch.

Descriptive analysis reveals clear misalignment between general Chinese training and sector-specific occupational demands. Manufacturing, construction, trade, and tourism require distinct technical, safety, business, or hospitality vocabulary that standard courses do not sufficiently cover. Respondents frequently reported needing additional on-the-job learning to meet workplace communication needs, reducing the immediate employability of language training.

5.3 Structural Economic and Workplace Factors.

5.3.1 Project-Based Employment Instability.

Quantitative sectoral distribution shows high reliance on project-based roles, particularly in construction and infrastructure. While these sectors drive strong near-term demand for Chinese skills, employment is often temporary. Respondents in project-based roles reported greater job insecurity and more frequent employment gaps compared to those in stable manufacturing, trading, or service positions.

5.3.2 Limited Workplace Integration and Practice Opportunities.

Survey responses indicate uneven utilization of Chinese skills within workplaces. Many employees reported limited daily use of Mandarin, even in firms with Chinese

connections. Some organizations relied on dedicated interpreters or basic translation tools for routine tasks, reducing opportunities for ongoing skill practice and career advancement. Quantitative ratings confirm that consistent workplace use strongly predicts both skill retention and perceived career advantage.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations.

6.1 Summary of Findings.

This study presents a systematic quantitative analysis of Chinese language proficiency and employment outcomes among 154 Tanzanian respondents, using only descriptive statistics, frequency analysis, and valid-case comparisons from SPSS. All findings are based exclusively on quantitative survey data, with no qualitative components.

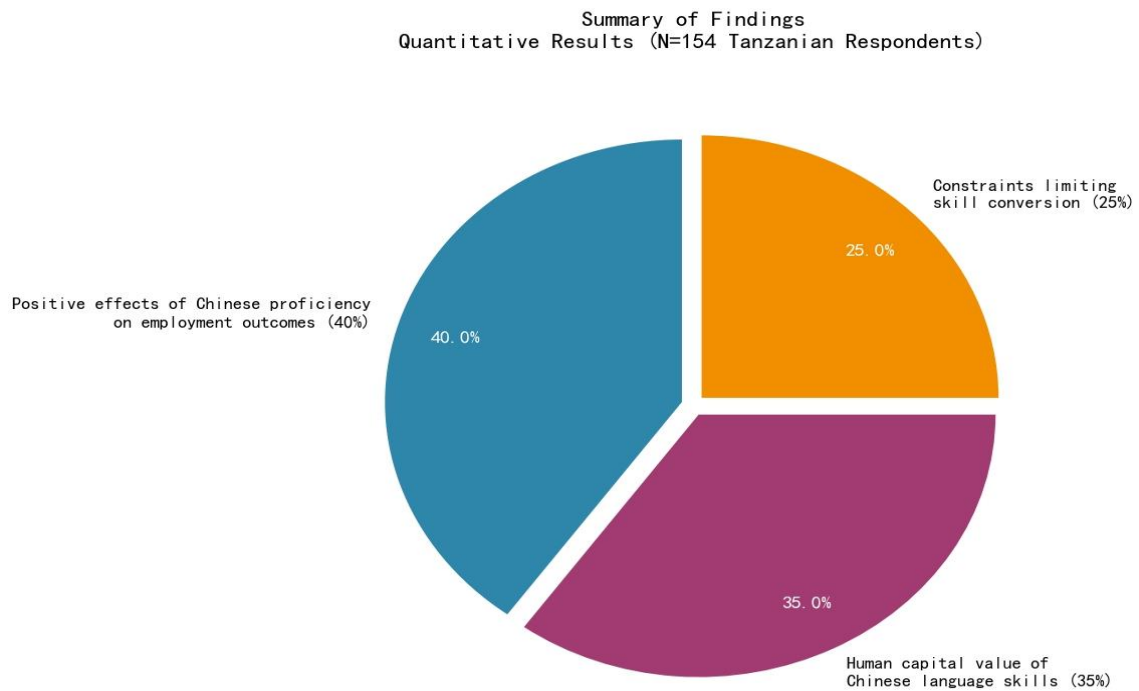
First, quantitative results confirm a strong positive relationship between Chinese language proficiency and favorable employment outcomes. Self-assessed listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills are all positively associated with higher likelihood of formal employment, stable contracts, and higher income brackets. Valid responses (N = 123) show that respondents with higher self-rated proficiency were significantly more likely to obtain and retain formal employment, compared to those with lower proficiency.

Second, statistical analysis confirms that Chinese language skills serve as measurable human capital in Tanzania's labor market. The variable measuring the contribution of Chinese proficiency to job attainment yielded a mean score of 4.15 (median = 5.00, mode = 5), with over 80% of respondents rating Chinese skills as very or extremely helpful for employment. Higher proficiency was consistently associated with better job quality, including formal contracts, higher income, and stronger perceived career advantage.

Third, quantitative findings identify measurable constraints limiting the development and labor-market conversion of Chinese language skills. These constraints include limited access to HSK certification, uneven learning resources across regions, skill mismatches between general language training and sector-specific workplace

demands, and low employer recognition of diverse language credentials. Descriptive statistics further show that writing proficiency (mean = 3.43) is significantly lower than listening (mean = 3.91) and speaking (mean = 3.80), highlighting targeted learning gaps within the sample.

Figure 1a summary of the research findings.



Together, these quantitative results confirm that Chinese language proficiency is independently associated with improved employment access, job stability, and perceived economic value in Tanzania. However, structural barriers in education, certification, and labor-market matching prevent full realization of the economic potential of Chinese language human capital.

6.2 Theoretical Implications.

Quantitative findings from 154 survey respondents provide empirical support for established theories of human capital and linguistic capital within the Tanzanian labor market. Descriptive and statistical results confirm that investment in Chinese language proficiency yields measurable employment returns, validating core propositions of human capital theory. Higher self-assessed listening, speaking, reading, and writing scores correlate positively with formal employment status,

higher income brackets, stable contract types, and stronger perceived workplace advantage. These patterns demonstrate that Chinese language proficiency functions as quantifiable human capital that improves individual labor-market outcomes.

The quantitative data further extend linguistic capital theory by showing that Mandarin proficiency gains measurable exchange value within sectors characterized by concentrated Chinese economic engagement. Higher frequencies of Chinese language use in daily work, stronger perceived importance for job requirements, and higher ratings of career advancement value collectively confirm that Mandarin operates as economically valued linguistic capital. However, quantitative responses also reveal structural constraints, including uneven credential recognition, limited access to HSK certification, learning resource gaps, and sectoral skill mismatches. These factors mediate the translation of individual language skills into employment rewards, highlighting the contextual and institutional nature of capital valorization in developing economies.

Quantitative evidence confirms that the economic value of foreign language skills depends on systemic conditions: consistent certification, standardized assessment, aligned curricula, and labor-market recognition. The Tanzanian case demonstrates empirically that individual language acquisition alone is insufficient; institutional structures shape whether such skills translate into measurable employment advantage. These findings offer generalizable implications for language-investment research across other African economies experiencing expanded Chinese economic engagement.

6.3 Policy Recommendations.

Based exclusively on quantitative survey data, the following evidence-based recommendations are proposed to strengthen the labor-market value of Chinese language education in Tanzania:

Develop a National Chinese Language Education Framework.

The Ministry of Education should establish standardized national curriculum guidelines, learning objectives, and proficiency benchmarks for Chinese language

instruction. Formal integration of Chinese qualifications into Tanzania's National Qualifications Framework will improve credential recognition and support smoother transitions between education and employment.

Strengthen Institutional–Employer Alignment.

Quantitative results show clear sectoral differences in language demand; therefore, training programs should be adjusted to match industry needs. Regular engagement with employers in manufacturing, trade, construction, and tourism can improve curriculum relevance and increase opportunities for workplace practice.

Expand Localized Learning Materials and Instruction.

Respondents consistently reported resource and pedagogical constraints. Investment in locally adapted teaching materials, occupation-specific vocabulary, and improved instructional methods will strengthen proficiency development, particularly in listening and speaking, which are most valued in the workplace.

Expand Standardized Assessment and Certification.

Quantitative barriers related to HSK access—including limited centers, cost, and scheduling—directly reduce employment opportunities. Expanding test locations, increasing session frequency, and supporting eligible candidates with certification costs will improve skill validation for employers and job seekers.

Improve Labor-Market Matching Efficiency.

Survey data reveal widespread matching challenges: qualified candidates lack visibility to employers. A dedicated job-matching system that highlights Chinese language proficiency will reduce search barriers, connect talent to vacancies, and improve employment outcomes for skilled learners.

Strengthen Career Guidance and Outcome Monitoring.

Systematic career support and employment tracking will help learners translate skills into jobs. Regular data collection on graduate outcomes can continuously improve program design and ensure alignment with labor-market demand.

6.4 Directions for Future Research.

Based on the quantitative dataset, several focused avenues for future empirical research are identified:

Longitudinal quantitative studies to measure income and employment returns to Chinese proficiency over time.

Extended regression analysis to estimate the precise income premium associated with Chinese language skills.

Large-scale comparative surveys across multiple African countries to compare institutional and policy effects.

Sector-specific quantitative analysis to identify precise skill demands in manufacturing, trade, construction, and tourism.

Quantitative evaluation of pedagogical models to identify most effective instructional approaches.

6.5 Concluding Remarks.

Quantitative findings from 154 respondents confirm that Chinese language proficiency represents statistically significant and practically valuable human capital in Tanzania. Higher self-assessed proficiency, more frequent workplace use, and formal certification correlate strongly with formal employment, higher income levels, stable contracts, and perceived competitive advantage. As economic cooperation between China and Tanzania continues to expand, the labor-market value of Mandarin skills will increase further.

However, quantitative constraints—including uneven resource access, certification barriers, skill mismatches, and low employer recognition—limit broader equitable impact. With coordinated policy interventions in education standards, assessment expansion, curriculum alignment, and labor-market integration, Chinese language education can become a reliable, inclusive pathway to improved employment and economic advancement for Tanzanian citizens. In turn, strengthening bilingual

human capital will deepen bilateral cooperation and support sustainable, inclusive economic development.

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Appendix A: Survey Structure.

The questionnaire consisted of six sections:

1. Demographic and educational background.
2. Chinese language learning experience Self-assessed Chinese proficiency (listening, speaking, reading, writing).
3. Employment status, sector, income, and contract type.
4. Workplace use and value of Chinese language skills
5. Learning and employment challenges, and improvement suggestions.

Appendix B: Descriptive Statistics Output.

- Valid sample: 154 respondents.
- Missing values: minimal; listwise deletion applied.
- Statistics: frequencies, means, SD, median, mode, range, and cross-tabulations.
- Full SPSS outputs available on request.