



Attitudes, Motivations, and Challenges Regarding Chinese Language Learning among Undergraduates at a Nigerian University

Adeola R. Olaleye

School of Foreign Languages, Shanghai University, China, arolaleye@outlook.com

Fushou Xiao

Prof., School of Foreign Languages, Shanghai University, China, fushaw@163.com

The growing trade partnership between Nigeria and China has led to increased interest in Chinese language learning among Nigerians. Despite the recognized importance of attitude and motivation in second language acquisition, a significant gap exists in the current literature addressing these factors among Nigerian learners of Chinese. This study therefore investigates the attitudes, motivations, and challenges faced by undergraduates learning Chinese language in a Nigerian university. Using a quantitative questionnaire, data were collected from 73 Chinese language undergraduates (Year 1 to Year 4) at the University of Lagos. The instrument was a modified version of Gardner's International Attitude/Motivation Test Battery, supplemented by items adapted from previous literature. The results revealed that Nigerian undergraduates hold positive attitudes toward learning Chinese, driven by a natural affinity for the language, a desire for fluency, the belief that learning Chinese does not negatively affect their local languages and English proficiency, recognition of the global socio-economic significance of the Chinese language, a supportive learning environment, and parental encouragement. Motivations for learning Chinese included academic interests, career prospects, cultural interest, personal development, and potential travel opportunities. However, students reported significant challenges in learning Chinese, particularly with mastering characters, tones and pronunciation, listening, speaking skills, understanding rapid dialogue, communicating effectively with teachers, and responding fluently to comprehension questions. Based on these findings, recommendations are provided to enhance instructional strategies and support systems aimed at improving students' motivation, attitudes toward learning Chinese, and learning skills. These findings can inform educational policies and teaching practices in designing more effective and targeted strategies to address learners' needs thereby improving language acquisition and learning outcomes.

Keywords: attitude, motivation, challenges, Chinese language learning, Nigerian undergraduates, language learning

Citation: Olaleye, A. R., & Xiao, F. (2026). Attitudes, motivations, and challenges regarding Chinese language learning among undergraduates at a Nigerian university. *International Journal of Instruction*, 19(1), 495-518. <https://doi.org/10.29333/iji.2026.19125a>

INTRODUCTION

China's expanding global presence has significantly shaped its relationship with Nigeria, one of its largest trading partners in Africa. Over the past five decades, deepening economic ties have fueled a growing interest among Nigerians in learning Chinese, reflecting broader changes in communication and social interaction. With over a billion speakers, Chinese is the most widely spoken language globally and serves as a crucial medium for global communication, trade, and diplomacy (Usman, 2015; Odinye, 2019). The increasing prominence of the Chinese language in Nigeria can be attributed to the strengthening economic relations and cultural exchanges between the two countries, especially following the establishment of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) in 2000 (Edeh & Hua, 2019; Odinye & Odinye, 2021; Usman, 2015).

Beyond trade, the educational relationship between China and Nigeria has reinforced the significance of Chinese language learning. The increasing presence of Chinese companies in Nigeria has made proficiency in Chinese essential, particularly in universities (Gold, 2022; Edeh & Wang, 2018). Through scholarship programs such as the Confucius Scholarship, Chinese Government Scholarship, and Provincial Scholarship, alongside cultural exchange initiatives, and higher education partnerships, the Chinese government actively promotes Chinese language studies to strengthen bilateral relations (Gold, 2022; Odinye, 2013). Confucius Institutes play a pivotal role in this effort, with two established in Nigeria—at Nnamdi Azikiwe University in 2008 and the University of Lagos in 2009—serving as hubs for language instruction and cultural transmission. These institutes have also facilitated the creation of Confucius classrooms in states like Kano and Cross River (Usman, 2015; Gold, 2022; Edeh & Hua, 2019; Odinye, 2013), equipping Nigerian students with essential language skills necessary for thriving in a globalized economy.

Chinese, one of the six official languages of the United Nations, is spoken by over a billion people worldwide. On Duolingo, a leading language learning app, more than six million English speakers are learning it on the platform, making it the eighth most popular language to learn. In some parts of Africa, such as Uganda and South Africa, Chinese is part of the school curriculum. However, this is not yet the case in Nigeria. The rising interest in learning Chinese is driven by opportunities like summer school programs (CGTN Abuja, 2024). These developments have led to an increase in educational institutions offering Chinese courses, thereby influencing the motivations and attitudes of Nigerian undergraduates toward learning this increasingly relevant language.

Attitudes and motivations play significant roles in second language learning and are essential to learners' success (Dörnyei, 2005; Gardner, 1985, 2006; Ushioda, 2005). Positive attitudes toward a language and intrinsic motivation significantly enhance proficiency, influencing learners' engagement and achievement (Dörnyei, 2005; Gardner, 1985). For Nigerian undergraduates learning Chinese, these factors are essential not only for active participation in classes but also for mastering the language effectively. While previous studies have explored attitudes and motivations in diverse

language-learning contexts (Gardner, 1985; Dörnyei, 2005; Dos Santos, 2024; Dinara, 2023; Mbugua & Iraki, 2022; Bulolo et al., 2022; Wen, 2022; Imsa-ard, 2020; Nguyen & Hajek, 2021), there is limited empirical research focusing specifically on Nigerian undergraduates learning Chinese. Hence, this study aimed to investigate the attitudes, motivations, and challenges regarding Chinese language learning at a Nigerian university. Specifically, the objectives of the study were to:

1. Examine the attitudes Nigerian undergraduates hold toward learning the Chinese language.
2. Investigate the motivations driving Nigerian undergraduates to learn Chinese.
3. Identify the challenges Nigerian undergraduates face in learning Chinese.

This study provides valuable insights that will help Chinese language teachers in developing effective teaching strategies tailored to the specific needs of Nigerian students, ultimately enhancing language acquisition and improving learning outcomes..

LITERATURE REVIEW

China's expanding economic influence globally, exemplified by initiatives such as the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and strengthened diplomatic and economic ties with African countries like Nigeria, has led to a significant resurgence of interest in Chinese language learning among Nigerian undergraduates, sparking research interest in their attitudes, motivations, and learning challenges. The increasing focus is driven not only by enhanced career prospects and business opportunities but also by expanding cultural exchanges and educational partnerships between China and African universities (Wang, 2020). Recent studies emphasize that despite increasing enrollment in Chinese language programs, learners continue to face persistent challenges such as mastering Chinese characters, tones, pronunciation, and grammar, alongside limited speaking practice opportunities and resource availability, necessitating ongoing research for improved pedagogical strategies (Alshammari, 2020; Odinye, 2019). Thus, this review section aims to identify gaps in existing literature on attitudes, motivations, and challenges in learning Chinese language, highlighting the urgent need for up-to-date, context-specific research focused on Nigerian learners.

Attitudes toward Chinese language learning

Attitude in language learning refers to an individual's evaluative reaction to a language based on beliefs or opinions (Gardner, 1985). Crystal (1997) defines language attitude as the feelings individuals have toward their own or another language. Positive attitudes are crucial for successful language acquisition, as they influence learners' motivation and effort. Studies in diverse contexts have consistently revealed positive attitudes toward learning Chinese. Nkrumah and Darko (2020) found that students at two Ghanaian universities displayed positive attitudes toward learning Chinese as a foreign language despite challenges such as peer pressure, social class, anxiety, and lack of motivation. The study emphasized that negative attitudes stemming from lack of interest or teacher-related issues can impede progress but also noted strategies for overcoming these obstacles. Bulolo et al. (2022) investigated the factors influencing students'

attitudes towards learning Chinese at the Confucius Institute, Makerere University, and Luyanzi College in Uganda, finding that students enjoyed learning Chinese primarily for career and business opportunities. However, challenges such as limited practice opportunities, inadequate materials, and age- and gender-related factors negatively impacted attitudes. Their recommendations included improving resources and creating more immersive environments. Similarly, Luo and Limpapath (2016) studied 493 Thai high school students through a survey and found that female learners held more positive attitudes than males with those enrolled in Chinese language programs showing greater enthusiasm compared to peers in other academic tracks such as English and Mathematics. In Nigeria, Odinye (2013) reported positive attitudes among students learning Chinese at the Confucius Institute, driven by extrinsic motivations such as career advancement. A follow-up study (Odinye 2019) confirmed these findings among students at Nnamdi Azikiwe University. Research consistently highlights that positive attitudes toward Chinese learning are often linked to career aspirations and cultural interest. Taken together, studies in African (Nkrumah & Darko, 2020; Bulolo et al., 2022; Odinye, 2013, 2017) and Asian contexts (Luo & Limpapath, 2016) demonstrate that students generally approach Chinese language learning with enthusiasm driven by intrinsic cultural appreciation and extrinsic career opportunities. However, the Nigerian context is undergoing significant transformation. The deepening economic ties under China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), marked by substantial investment in infrastructure, technology, and trade, have rapidly reshaped the career landscape linked to China. This evolving reality means Nigerian undergraduates' career motivations and attitudes toward Chinese differ from those captured in earlier studies (e.g., Odinye, 2013), necessitating recent investigation.

Motivation for Chinese language learning

Research on second language (L2) learning motivation has evolved significantly with Gardner (1985) identifying two primary orientations: integrative motivation, driven by a desire to connect with the target language community, and instrumental motivation, focused on practical benefits such as career advancement. These orientations remain central to understanding Chinese language learning motivations across diverse contexts. In Central Asia and Russia, Dinara (2023) found that career prospects and cultural interest were key motivators for Chinese language learners, though teachers noted challenges with student engagement. Similarly, Wen (2022) identified six motivational factors among U.S. college students, with the ideal L2 self emerging as the strongest predictor of effort. Nguyen and Hajek (2021) revealed that Vietnamese students in Taiwan developed motivations shaped by both their ideal and ought-to selves, integrating linguistic capital for personal and professional advancement. Gardner's Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) has been widely used to assess L2 motivation across cultures. Studies by Sayadian and Lashkarian (2010) in Iran and Genc & Aydin (2017) in Türkiye, with adapted versions of AMTB, demonstrated strong correlations between motivation and academic performance. Gender differences in language learning motivation have also been identified. In Pakistan, Noreen et al. (2015) found that female students showed higher integrative motivation and more positive attitudes toward language learning than males, who experienced greater anxiety. However, Soleimani & Hanafi's (2013) study of 40 Iranian medical students showed contrasting

results, with male learners demonstrating higher positive attitudes than females, highlighting the variability of gender-based motivational patterns across contexts. Zhang (2013) reported high integrative motivation among Arabic students at the University of Khartoum, while Zhang et al. (2020) observed declining motivation patterns among international students from Japan and South Korea. Dos Santos (2024) identified three key themes driving learners' motivation: a desire to move beyond European languages; career development opportunities; and friendship, networks, and education among Chinese learners in a Chinese language school in Belgium. Studies have also explored Chinese language learning motivations in African contexts. Mbugua and Iraki (2022) found that personal interest and cultural appreciation were major drivers of motivation among students at the United States International University-Africa. Similarly, Nwankwere and Korie (2022) identified extrinsic motivation among Nigerian learners at Nnamdi Azikiwe University, primarily linked to career aspirations. At the University of Zimbabwe Confucius Institute, Mkize and Chisoni (2015) emphasized that motivated students required less instructor intervention and performed better academically. Taken together, these studies demonstrate that while career advancement often drives initial interest, sustained engagement is largely driven by cultural appreciation and learners' ideal L2 self-concepts. The evolving China-Nigeria relationship introduces new career pathways that may reshape motivations among Nigerian undergraduates (Nwankwere & Korie, 2022; Odinye, 2013). The expanding scope of Chinese enterprises in Nigeria creates novel career pathways and potentially alters the perceived utility of Chinese language proficiency, impacting both the initial spark and sustained motivation of current undergraduates. The present study seeks to explore these evolving motivations for learning Chinese language among Nigerian undergraduates via Gardner's socio-educational framework.

Challenges facing Chinese language learning

Previous studies consistently identified challenges in Chinese language learning across diverse educational contexts including linguistic barriers, resource limitations, and cultural disconnects. These issues reveal the need for context-specific teaching approaches, enhanced learning resources, and culturally integrated instructional methods. In Saudi Arabia, Alshammari (2020), through a survey, identified five key challenges in integrating Chinese as a foreign language (CFL), including language difficulty, learner motivation, cultural influences, and teaching methods. Similarly, studies in Nigeria have examined specific linguistic challenges. Nkamigbo and Obiamalu (2016) analyzed phonological differences between Chinese and Igbo at the Confucius Institute at Nnamdi Azikiwe University, noting pronunciation difficulties due to tonal differences. They recommended linguistically informed syllabi and employing teachers with linguistics expertise to address these issues effectively. Odinye (2019) further explored common grammatical errors in student examinations, attributing them to first-language interference and limited exposure to Chinese environments. In Sri Lanka, Kandambi (2020) investigated challenges in secondary schools influenced by China's "One Belt One Road Initiative," identifying obstacles such as unqualified teachers, poor teaching strategies, inadequate instructional programs, and poor learning environments. Recommendations included student-centered approaches, improved teacher-training, and better equipped language facilities. Similar challenges were also

documented in Nigeria by Odinye (2018), who surveyed two universities and found inadequacies in learning facilities, qualified teachers, teaching materials, ICT resources, and conducive environments. Okafor (2020) highlighted limited interaction with native speakers as a barrier to developing the students' speaking skills at the Confucius Institute at Nnamdi Azikiwe University. Uchenwoke (2021) observed a misalignment between teaching materials and student needs in Nigerian Confucius Institutes, advocating for textbooks that incorporate Nigerian cultural elements. Taken together, these studies emphasize that despite positive attitudes and strong motivations among learners, linguistic and pedagogical challenges persist. Difficulties with Chinese characters, pronunciation, grammar, and speaking require targeted strategies tailored to local contexts. As Chinese language programs expand beyond pilot institutions like the Nnamdi Azikiwe University to others such as the University of Lagos, addressing these challenges becomes increasingly urgent for effective resource allocation and pedagogical adaptation. The present study seeks to further explore these challenges among Nigerian undergraduates to inform improvements in Chinese language education.

Research Gaps

Despite extensive studies on attitudes and motivations in language learning, significant gaps remain in understanding these factors within the Nigerian context, particularly in relation to the rapidly evolving landscape of Chinese language learning. While Gardner's Attitude/Motivation Test Battery has been widely used to assess attitudes and motivations for learning various languages (Sayadian & Lashkarian, 2010), it has not been recently utilized for Chinese language learners in Nigeria. Existing Nigerian studies have largely focused on Nnamdi Azikiwe University (NAU) (Odinye, 2017; Uchenwoke, 2022; Okafor, 2020, 2022), neglecting institutions like the University of Lagos (UNILAG), which feature distinct academic environments and student demographics crucial for an understanding the current national picture. Furthermore, previous studies often relied on small sample sizes (Wen, 2022; Zhang et al. 2020; Mbugua & Iraki, 2022; Dinara, 2023; Odinye, 2019; Nwankwere & Korie, 2022), limiting the generalizability of findings to Nigeria's growing population of Chinese language learners. While environmental challenges in Chinese language education have been explored (Uchenwoke, 2021; Odinye, 2013, 2019, 2018; Okafor, 2020), specific language difficulties such as character recognition, tone pronunciation, and grammar comprehension have been inadequately addressed in ways that reflect updated teaching methodologies and learner needs within Nigeria's expanding programs (Alshammari, 2020; Nkamigbo & Obiamalu, 2016; Kandambi, 2020; Mbugua & Iraki 2022).

This study addresses these gaps by investigating attitudes, motivations, and challenges faced by undergraduates at the University of Lagos (UNILAG), employing a robust sample size and contextualizing findings within the strategic and economic significance of Chinese proficiency in Nigeria today. Understanding these current challenges is essential for developing timely, tailored teaching methods.

To address these gaps, this study sought to answer the following questions:

RQ1: What are the attitudes of Nigerian undergraduates toward learning the Chinese language?

RQ2: What are the motivations of Nigerian undergraduates for learning the Chinese language?

RQ3: What are the challenges Nigerian undergraduates face in learning the Chinese language?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Gardner's socio-educational model is a foundational framework in second language acquisition (SLA) and a seminal theory of motivation in L2 research. According to Gardner (2006), motivation is a combination of effort, desire to learn the language, and positive attitudes toward language learning, comprising three key components: (1) desire to learn the language, (2) attitudes toward learning, and (3) motivational intensity (effort). Gardner (2005) identifies several factors affecting L2 acquisition, including learner characteristics (ability, attitudes, motivation, anxiety, personality, and learning strategies) and environmental factors (quality of instruction, opportunities for language use, socio-cultural context, and expectations). These factors significantly shape students' learning outcomes (Gardner, 2006). For a learner to be considered motivated, four essential elements must be present: a goal, desire, positive attitudes toward the subject, and consistent effort toward language mastery.

Motivation is assessed using the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB), which focuses on attitudes toward teachers, courses, and classmates. This study applies Gardner's model to analyze Nigerian undergraduates' attitudes and motivations for learning Chinese as a second language. L2 motivation is categorized into integrative and instrumental orientations. Integrative motivation involves a desire to connect with the target culture, while instrumental motivation focuses on practical benefits like career advancement. Gardner emphasizes that integrative motivation fosters deeper cultural engagement and is more enduring, whereas instrumental motivation is often driven by external rewards. Both orientations significantly influence language learning success.

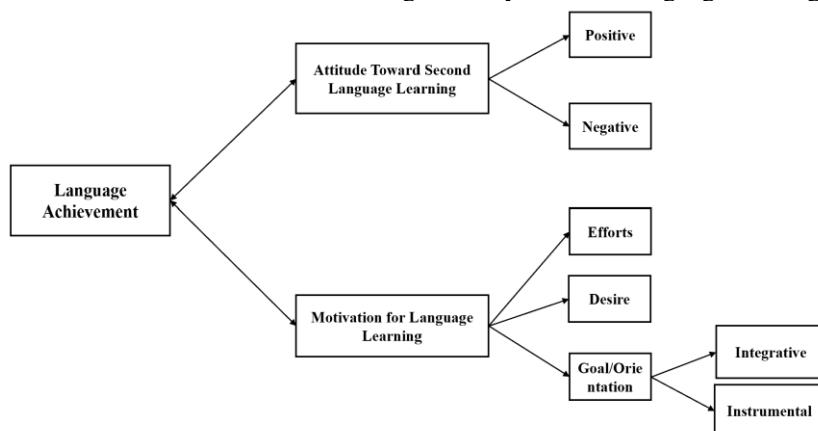


Figure 1

Research Framework of Attitudes and Motivation adapted from Gardner (2006)

METHOD

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, primarily quantitative, to investigate the attitudes, motivations, and challenges that Nigerian undergraduates face in learning the Chinese language. The quantitative component involved systematic collection and statistical analysis of numerical data to measure and describe these factors. Responses to the open-ended qualitative question were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify and interpret patterns within qualitative data that complemented the quantitative findings.

Study Participants

The study participants involved 73 undergraduate students enrolled in BA degree program in Chinese language at the University of Lagos, from Year 1 to Year 4. They were recruited through convenience sampling. As shown in Table 1, the demographic profile revealed a predominantly female sample (75.3%, n = 55), with male students comprising 24.6% (n = 18). Most participants (42.4%) were aged between 21-25 years old, with 12.3% over 31 years old. The academic year distribution showed the highest representation in Year 3 (39.7%), followed by Year 2 (30.1%), Year 1 (21.9%), and Year 4 (8.2%). Chinese language proficiency, assessed by using HSK standardized test, varied levels: HSK 1 (19.1%, n = 14), HSK 2 (15.0%, n = 11), HSK 3 (36.9%, n = 27), HSK 4 (23.2%, n = 17), and HSK 5 (5.4%, n = 4).

Table 1
Demographic information of participants (n = 73)

Participants' Information	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	18	24.6 %
	Female	55	75.3%
	Total	73	100
Age	16–20 years	21	28.7%
	21–25 years	31	42.4%
	26–30 years	12	16.4%
	31 and above	9	12.3%
	Total	73	100
Academic Year	Year 1	16	21.9%
	Year 2	22	30.1%
	Year 3	29	39.7%
	Year 4	6	8.2%
	Total	73	100
Years of Chinese Study	Less than 1 Year	17	23.2%
	1–2 years	17	23.2%
	More than 2 years	39	53.4%
	Total	73	100
Chinese Proficiency	HSK 1	14	19.1%
	HSK 2	11	15.0%
	HSK 3	27	36.9%
	HSK 4	17	23.2%
	HSK 5	4	5.4%
	Total	73	100

Research Instrument

The data collection tool used was a structured questionnaire to investigate the attitudes, motivations, and challenges related to Chinese language learning among Nigerian undergraduates. The questionnaire comprised four sections. The first section had 5 items on participants' demographic information; the second section consisted of 20 items assessing students' attitudes; the third section comprised 20 items measuring motivations; and the fourth section consisted of 19 items plus an open-ended question addressing learning challenges.

Most questionnaire items were adapted from Gardner's (2004) internationally validated Attitude and Motivation Test Battery (AMTB), grounded in the socio-educational model of second language acquisition. Additional questions were drawn from previous studies (Odinye 2013, 2015, 2019; Mbugua & Iraki, 2022) and modified to suit the Nigerian context. Responses were collected using a five-point Likert scale, allowing participants to express their agreement or disagreement with statements ranging from "Strongly disagree" to "Strongly agree."

Content validity was established through an expert in second language acquisition who reviewed the initial draft. The original questionnaire consisted of 35 items but was revised based on expert feedback, increasing to 65 items to improve clarity and coverage. The reliability analysis using Cronbach's alpha yielded a coefficient of 0.9, indicating excellent internal consistency and meeting established reliability criteria. This suggests that the questionnaire reliably measures underlying constructs of motivation, attitude, and challenges of learning Chinese.

Data Collection Procedure

The study was carried out between April and August 2024. First, to facilitate smooth data collection, class representatives were briefed via WhatsApp video calls on the purpose of the questionnaire, the structure of the questionnaire, and detailed administration procedures. Next, a Microsoft Forms questionnaire link was distributed through these representatives, allowing participants to fill out the questionnaire at their convenience. To ensure confidentiality and encourage sincere responses, all data were collected anonymously, with any clarifications handled through class representatives.

Data Analysis

Data analysis employed both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics, including percentages and mean scores, to summarize participants' attitudes, motivations, and challenges in learning Chinese. The results were organized and presented in tables using Microsoft Excel to facilitate clear interpretation. For the qualitative data from the open-ended question on learning challenges, thematic analysis was conducted to identify and categorize prevalent themes. The analysed data were used to answer the research questions.

Table 2

Criteria for interpreting mean score

Range	Interpretation
4.21 - 5.00	Strongly Agree
3.41 - 4.20	Agree
2.61 - 3.40	Neutral
1.81 - 2.60	Disagree
1.00 - 1.80	Strongly Disagree

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents findings on Nigerian undergraduates' attitudes, motivations, and challenges in learning Chinese, followed by an in-depth discussion. The results show positive attitudes driven by career and cultural interests, but significant challenges include difficulties with Chinese characters, tonal pronunciation, dialogue comprehension, and speaking skills. Each research question is addressed with summarized data and detailed analysis.

Attitudes of Nigerian undergraduates toward Chinese language learning

Nigerian undergraduates hold positive attitudes toward learning Chinese, recognizing its importance due to global economic trends and Nigeria's growing ties with China. They highly value proficiency in Chinese as their a second language and not a threat to their indigenous language or English language.

Table 3
Nigerian undergraduates' attitudes toward Chinese language learning

Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Interpretation
Learning Chinese will enable me to know the Chinese people better.	0%	1.3%	13.6%	49.3%	35.6%	4.19	Agree
I plan to learn as much Chinese as possible.	0%	0%	10.9%	42.4%	46.5%	4.36	Strongly Agree
The more I learn about the Chinese people, the more I like them.	0%	2.7%	28.7%	49.3%	19.1%	3.85	Agree
I wish to speak fluent Chinese.	0%	0%	4.1%	26.0%	69.8%	4.66	Strongly Agree
I would like to spend more time studying Chinese.	0%	1.3%	13.6%	56.1%	28.7%	4.12	Agree
I often use Chinese in my life and study.	1.3%	10.9%	23.2%	56.1%	8.2%	3.59	Agree
Overall mean score						4.12	Agree
My parents feel that I should really try to learn Chinese.	2.7%	1.3%	26.0%	52.0%	17.8%	3.81	Agree
My parents really encourage me to study Chinese.	2.7%	5.4%	17.8%	49.3%	24.6%	3.88	Agree
My parents show considerable interest in anything to do with my Chinese courses.	2.7%	2.7%	23.2%	45.2%	26.0%	3.89	Agree
My parents have stressed the importance Chinese will have for me when I leave school.	4.1%	8.2%	23.2%	41.0%	23.2%	3.71	Agree
Overall mean score						3.82	Agree
Chinese language is one of the most spoken languages in the world	1.3%	9.5%	10.9%	43.8%	34.2%	4.00	Agree
Chinese language is unique to speak.	1.3%	0%	6.8%	65.7%	26.0%	4.15	Agree
Overall mean score						4.01	Agree
If I study Chinese, it means I like my local language.	1.3%	2.7%	4.1%	30.1%	61.6%	4.48	Strongly Agree
The study of Chinese will not make me forget English language.	0%	5.4%	6.8%	30.1%	57.5%	4.40	Strongly Agree
Overall mean score						4.44	Strongly Agree
I really enjoy learning Chinese	2.7%	4.1%	16.4%	56.1%	20.5%	3.88	Agree
I love learning Chinese	0%	2.7%	17.8%	56.1%	23.2%	4.00	Agree
I like my Chinese classes	1.3%	4.1%	16.4%	61.6%	16.4%	3.88	Agree
I look forward to my Chinese classes	1.3%	8.2%	24.6%	54.7%	10.9%	3.66	Agree
I have good Chinese teacher(s) to help me with my Chinese study.	1.3%	2.7%	15.0%	50.6%	30.1%	4.05	Agree
Overall mean score						3.89	Agree

Note: SD=Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, N=Neutral, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Disagree

Strong Desire for Fluency and Cultural Appreciation

The findings presented in Table 3 reveal strong positive attitudes among Nigerian undergraduates toward learning Chinese, with an overall mean score of 4.12. Most students (95.5%) express strong desire to become fluent in Chinese, particularly in speaking, reading, and writing, with 69.8% strongly agreeing they wish to speak fluent Chinese ($M = 4.66$). Additionally, 88.9% are committed to learning as much Chinese as possible ($M = 4.36$), and 84.8% are willing to spend extra time studying ($M = 4.12$), demonstrating high motivation and engagement. Cultural appreciation is also significant. A majority (68.4%) agree that learning Chinese enhances their understanding of Chinese culture ($M = 4.19$), and 64.3% report using Chinese daily in

life and study ($M = 3.59$). These results indicate a strong aspiration not only to acquire language skills but also to achieve cultural integration. This aligns with Odinye's (2013) observation that foreign language learners often aspire to emulate native speakers to deepen their connection with the language. Their desire for comprehensive mastery reflects a holistic approach to language acquisition. Moreover, the positive relationship between language proficiency and cultural appreciation supports Gardner's (1985) view that language learning is fundamentally enriched through engagement with the cultural context by improving understanding of cultural nuances such as idioms and cultural references. The students' commitment also reflects a supportive social environment consistent with Nigerian cultural norms that emphasize collaborative learning and mutual encouragement among peers.

Parental Support and Encouragement

Table 3 shows that parental support plays a significant role in motivating Nigerian undergraduates to learn Chinese with an overall mean score of 3.82. 73.9% of students report active parental encouragement ($M = 3.88$) and 71.2% note their parents' interest in their Chinese studies ($M = 3.89$). In addition, 64.2% agree their parents emphasized the importance for future career opportunities ($M = 3.71$), while 70% feel parental expectations to seriously pursue the language ($M = 3.81$). This involvement highlights the key role of family encouragement in sustaining students' positive attitudes and commitment to learning Chinese. This aligns with Gardner et al. (1999), who emphasize that parental support shapes motivation and enhances language proficiency, especially when combined with engaging teaching, fostering students' integrative motivation toward Chinese language and culture.

Global Status of the Chinese Language

The findings in Table 3 reveal that Nigerian undergraduates recognize and appreciate the global status of Chinese, with an overall mean attitude score of 4.01. Specifically, 78% of the students acknowledge that Chinese is one of the most spoken languages in the world ($M = 4.00$), while 91.7% agree that Chinese is unique to speak ($M = 4.15$). This awareness reflects their understanding of China's expanding global economic influence and the international significance of the Chinese language. Nigerian students understand that proficiency in Chinese can open doors to diverse international opportunities and facilitate cultural exchanges. This perspective aligns with Odinye's (2013) observation that China's rise has boosted the increasing popularity of its language worldwide. Beyond viewing Chinese as a purely linguistic skill, Nigerian undergraduates see it as a valuable asset for global engagement, motivated by prospects of career advancement and intercultural connectivity in an increasingly interconnected world. Though some students may not yet fully grasp the language's importance due to limited exposure, this widespread recognition suggests growing interest that can be enhanced through targeted educational programs and cultural initiatives.

No Negative Impact on Mother Tongue and English Proficiency

Table 3 shows strong consensus among Nigerian undergraduates that studying Chinese does not negatively impact their proficiency in either their local languages or English.

The overall mean score of 4.44 reflects this perception of linguistic complementarity. Specifically, 91.7% of respondents strongly agree or agree that learning Chinese does not negatively affect their local languages skills ($M = 4.48$), while 87.9% hold the same view regarding their English proficiency ($M = 4.40$). These findings illustrate that students perceive Chinese learning as an additive linguistic experience rather than a threat to their existing languages repertoire. This aligns with Nigeria's rich linguistic diversity with over 500 indigenous languages coexist and fosters an additive bilingualism approach, where acquiring new languages enriches rather than replaces existing ones (Odinye, 2019). Students typically use their mother tongue at home, English in academic settings, and integrate Chinese as an additional skill. Such a positive attitude is further supported by strong parental and societal encouragement, reinforcing the notion that acquiring Chinese enhances students' career prospects and broadens their global horizons without comprising their foundational languages (Edeh et al., 2019). This positive multilingual perception promotes cognitive flexibility and promotes harmonious coexistence among languages, an asset in today's interconnected world.

Natural Affinity and a Supportive Learning Environment

Table 3 shows that Nigerian students have a strong enthusiasm and positive attitude toward learning Chinese, with an overall mean score of 3.89. Notably, 76.6% of respondents report enjoying the learning Chinese, and 79.3% express that they love the language ($M = 3.88$ and 4.00, respectively), largely due to supportive and quality teaching. A majority also like their Chinese classes (78.0%), and 65.6% look forward to attending them ($M = 3.88$ and 3.66), reflecting generally positive attitudes toward the language learning experience. Furthermore, 80.7% of students agree that they have good Chinese language teachers who support their engagement ($M = 4.05$), highlighting the critical role of quality instruction in fostering motivation and commitment. This aligns with Gardner & MacIntyre's (1993) assertion that a supportive learning environment enhances learners' enjoyment, persistence, and overall engagement with a foreign language. The findings also resonate with Edeh et al. (2019), emphasizing how positive teacher-student relationships and meaningful classroom experiences sustain dedication, as evidenced by 73.9% of students expressing a desire to continue studying Chinese beyond their academic requirements. These results underscore the importance of nurturing a natural affinity for the language through supportive teaching practices and tailored instructional materials. Such an environment not only boosts immediate enjoyment but also fosters long-term commitment, essential for successful language acquisition.

Motivations of Nigerian undergraduates for Learning Chinese

Nigerian undergraduates are motivated to learn Chinese for both practical and cultural reasons. They seek career and academic opportunities tied to China's growing presence in Nigeria, while also driven by genuine interest in Chinese culture and personal growth. This section highlights the key motivations identified in the questionnaire.

Table 4

Nigerian undergraduates' motivations for learning Chinese

Items	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Interpretation
Learning Chinese will enable me to do well in my examination	0%	1.3%	10.9%	52.0%	35.6%	4.22	Strongly Agree
Learning Chinese is important because of China's booming economy.	0%	1.3%	17.8%	54.7%	26.0%	4.05	Agree
Learning Chinese will enable me to work in a Chinese company in Nigeria.	1.3%	1.3%	13.6%	53.4%	30.1%	4.10	Agree
I look forward to studying more Chinese in the future.	1.3%	0%	15.0%	54.7%	28.7%	4.10	Agree
The content of my Chinese language course is suitable for my learning needs.	0%	0%	23.2%	56.1%	20.5%	3.97	Agree
Learning Chinese language will help my future career.	1.3%	1.3%	10.9%	52.0%	34.2%	4.16	Agree
Learning Chinese will enable me to get Chinese scholarship to study in China.	1.3%	5.4%	16.4%	43.8%	32.8%	4.01	Agree
Learning Chinese will enable me to participate more freely in the activities of Chinese groups.	0%	1.3%	6.8%	65.7%	26.0%	4.16	Agree
Learning Chinese will enable me to further my studies in the future.	2.7%	5.4%	20.5%	53.4%	17.8%	3.78	Agree
Overall mean score						4.01	Agree
Learning Chinese will enable me to interact more easily with other speakers of Chinese.	0%	0%	5.4%	47.9%	46.5%	4.41	Strongly Agree
Learning Chinese will enable me to appreciate the Chinese culture.	0%	0%	8.2%	54.7%	36.9%	4.29	Strongly Agree
Learning Chinese will enable me to do business with the Chinese people.	0%	0%	9.5%	54.7%	35.6%	4.26	Strongly Agree
Learning Chinese will enable me to be more at ease with other speakers of Chinese.	0%	0%	9.5%	49.3%	41.0%	4.32	Strongly Agree
Learning Chinese will enable me to behave like native Chinese speakers.	2.7%	21.9%	26.0%	38.3%	10.9%	3.33	Neutral
Overall mean score						4.12	Agree
Learning Chinese will make me a knowledgeable person.	0%	1.3%	19.1%	57.5%	21.9%	3.53	Agree
Learning Chinese will enable me to watch Chinese movies and listen to Chinese music.	1.3%	4.1%	8.2%	53.4%	32.8%	4.12	Agree
Learning Chinese will enable me to make Chinese friends.	0%	0%	15.0%	46.5%	38.3%	4.23	Strongly Agree
I have a strong desire to know all aspects of Chinese.	1.3%	1.3%	21.9%	41.0%	34.2%	4.05	Agree
I am more interested in earning a degree than learning Chinese language itself.	13.6%	47.9%	17.8%	15.0%	5.4%	2.51	Disagree
Overall mean score						3.69	Agree
Learning Chinese will enable me to travel to China.	0%	1.3%	23.2%	53.4%	21.9%	3.96	Agree

Academic Interest and Future Career Opportunities

The findings indicate that Nigerian undergraduates demonstrate strong instrumental motivation for learning Chinese, with an overall mean attitude score of 4.01, reflecting general agreement on the language's academic and career relevance. Notably, 87.6% aim to pass the HSK certification, underscoring strategic planning toward language proficiency (M values between 3.78 and 4.36 across items). A majority (87.6%) strongly believe that learning Chinese will enable them to perform well in examinations (M = 4.22). Most students recognize the importance of Chinese due to China's booming economy (M = 4.05), with 83.5% agreeing it will aid employment prospects in Chinese companies operating in Nigeria (M = 4.10). Many (about 83.4%) aspire to further their studies in China with the support of Chinese government scholarships (M = 4.01). Students generally find the course content suitable for their learning needs (M = 3.97) and look forward to pursuing more Chinese studies (M = 4.10). These motivations align with Nigeria's growing economic and diplomatic relations with China, where Chinese language proficiency is increasingly valued as critical in sectors like trade, infrastructure, and telecommunications. The prominence of career advancement overly purely integrative motives corresponds with prior findings (Nwankwere & Korie, 2022) that Nigerian Chinese learners prioritize socio-economic benefits, viewing language mastery as a strategic tool for upward mobility and professional success. This is supported by Nigeria's expanding Chinese business presence, scholarships programs, and institutional support for Chinese language learning. In summary, Nigerian undergraduates' motivations for learning Chinese are deeply intertwined with pragmatic goals related to education, employment, and scholarship opportunities. This underscores the need for educational programs to emphasize these instrumental benefits alongside cultural and linguistic competence to sustain learner engagement and success.

Understanding Chinese Culture and People

Nigerian undergraduates show strong integrative motivation to learn Chinese, driven by a desire to deeply understand Chinese culture and build meaningful interpersonal connections with Chinese speakers. The data show that approximately 91.6% of students are motivated to gain cultural knowledge through language learning (Mean score (M) = 4.29), and around 90.3% wish to communicate effectively and establish relationships with native Chinese speakers (M = 4.29), and around 90.3% wish to communicate effectively and establish relationships with native Chinese speakers (Mean scores (M) = 4.32-4.41). Similarly, 94.4% aspire to interact more smoothly, and 90.3% seek comfort in Chinese-speaking social settings, underscoring the importance of cultural sensitivity alongside linguistic proficiency. While about 49.2% express an aspiration to adopt native Chinese social behaviors (M = 3.33), this points to a growing awareness that true language mastery encompasses cultural norms and behaviours, not just language skills. Programs such as Confucius Institutes, which offer workshops and cultural events, play a vital role in fostering this intercultural engagement and sustaining motivation (Okafor, 2020, 2021; Edeh et al., 2019; Odinye, 2013). These findings are consistent with Gardner's (2006) socio-educational model and Dinara's (2023)

emphasizing that integrative motivation fosters both linguistic and cultural competence, essential for effective cross-cultural communication in a globalized context.

Personal Development

Table 4 shows that Nigerian undergraduates recognize personal development benefits from learning Chinese, with an overall mean score of 3.69. Specifically, 79.4% agree that learning Chinese enhances their knowledge and cognitive abilities ($M = 3.53$), and 84.8% feel it helps them build friendships with Chinese speakers ($M = 4.23$). Also, 86.2% express strong interest in engaging with Chinese media such as movies and music ($M = 4.12$), indicating intrinsic benefits like cognitive growth and social connection. This aligns with Bialystok's (2011) finding that bilingualism improves problem-solving skills and critical thinking. The link between language learning and cultural engagement aligns with Gao's (2016) view that cultural understanding fosters stronger social connections and meaningful relationships. Importantly, 61.5% prioritize genuine interest in Chinese over degree requirements ($M = 2.51$), reflecting high intrinsic motivation, which Dörnyei (1994) identifies as crucial for effective language acquisition and greater fluency. Overall, Nigerian undergraduates' personal development through Chinese language learning encompasses cognitive growth, social integration, and high intrinsic motivation, highlighting its vital role in their commitment to mastering the language.

Travel to China

For Nigerian undergraduates, Chinese language proficiency is closely linked to their aspirations for immersive travel in China. Table 4 shows that 75.3% see language skills as essential for effective communication and authentic cultural experiences while traveling ($M=3.96$). This motivation reflects a strong desire for cultural immersion supported by growing educational exchange programs and scholarships. Similar motivations have been observed in other regions like Dinara (2023), and among Kenyan students (Mbugua & Iraki, 2022). Travel aspirations act as a key extrinsic motivator, encouraging consistent practice and deeper engagement with the language and culture. Supportive studies by Mbugua & Iraki (2022) and Nwankwere & Korie (2022) also highlight travel opportunities as significant drivers of Chinese language learning among African students.

Challenges Faced by Nigerian Undergraduates in Learning Chinese

Despite positive attitudes and strong motivations, Nigerian undergraduates learning Chinese language face major challenges, especially with tonal pronunciation, Chinese characters, and limited speaking practice. These difficulties highlight the need for increased support to enhance their learning experience.

Table 5
Challenges faced by Nigerian undergraduates in learning Chinese

Items	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Interpretation
I find my Chinese class difficult.	8.2%	23.2%	43.8%	17.8%	6.8%	2.92	Disagree
I find these aspects of Chinese difficult							
Chinese characters	13.6%	17.8%	9.1%	31.5%	17.8%	3.22	Neutral
Vocabulary	12.3%	21.9%	31.5%	30.1%	4.1%	2.92	Neutral
Tones and Pronunciation	13.6%	21.9%	24.6%	24.6%	15.0%	3.05	Neutral
Speaking	8.2%	31.5%	19.1%	28.7%	12.3%	3.05	Neutral
Writing	12.3%	24.6%	26.0%	26.0%	10.9%	2.99	Neutral
Reading	13.6%	27.3%	31.5%	21.9%	5.4%	2.78	Neutral
Listening	12.3%	21.9%	21.9%	31.5%	12.3%	3.10	Neutral
Overall mean score						3.01	Neutral
I find it difficult speaking to my teacher in Chinese.	1.3%	23.2%	41.0%	28.7%	5.4%	3.14	Neutral
I cannot answer the comprehension questions with fluent and complete sentences.	4.1%	24.6%	36.9%	28.7%	5.4%	3.07	Neutral
I find understanding rapid natural dialogue quite hard.	5.4%	19.1%	36.9%	30.1%	8.2%	3.16	Neutral
Overall means score						3.12	Neutral
I find it difficult speaking to my teacher in Chinese.	1.3%	23.2%	41.0%	28.7%	5.4%	3.14	Neutral
I cannot answer the comprehension questions with fluent and complete sentences.	4.1%	24.6%	36.9%	28.7%	5.4%	3.07	Neutral
I find understanding rapid natural dialogue quite hard.	5.4%	19.1%	36.9%	30.1%	8.2%	3.16	Neutral
Overall means score						3.12	Neutral
I am not able to catch up with the speed of teaching in class	9.5%	39.7%	31.5%	13.6%	5.4%	2.66	Neutral
I do not remember how to write the characters and their respective pronunciation.	2.7%	31.5%	34.2%	26.0%	5.4%	3.00	Neutral
I find it difficult to memorize the strokes of Chinese characters.	10.9%	19.1%	23.2%	36.9%	9.5%	3.15	Neutral
I find it difficult to pronounce accurately the different tones of Chinese characters	1.3%	4.1%	16.4%	61.6%	16.4%	2.97	Neutral
Overall mean score						3.12	Neutral
I am always unable to complete my composition on time	4.1%	32.8%	30.1%	27.3%	5.4%	2.97	Neutral
I find it difficult to write a summary after reading an article or essay.	4.1%	30.1%	30.1%	26.0%	9.5%	3.07	Neutral
The Chinese language texts are too difficult for me	6.8%	31.5%	42.4%	15.0%	4.1%	2.78	Neutral
I do not participate actively in activities carried out in my Chinese classes	1.3%	8.2%	24.6%	54.7%	10.9%	2.55	Neutral
Time allocated for the Chinese language is enough	8.2%	26.0%	26.0%	34.2%	5.4 %	2.97	Neutral
My teacher always teaches too much material in class.	8.2%	38.3%	31.5%	17.8%	4.1%	2.71	Neutral
Overall mean score						2.84	Neutral

Chinese Class is not Difficult

The findings on Table 5 show a mixed perception among Nigerian undergraduates regarding the difficulty of learning Chinese. While about 31.4% of students disagreed that their Chinese class is difficult, indicating a positive attitude towards the language, approximately 24.6% agreed that they find it challenging, with the overall mean score at 2.92, leaning towards disagreement with the statement that the class is difficult. This reflects diverse learner experiences similar to findings in Kenya by Mbugua and Iraki (2022), where a majority perceived Chinese as less difficult, but a significant minority reported difficulties.

Challenges Identified in Learning Chinese

The participants identified several key challenges they face in learning Chinese, as summarized in Table 5. These difficulties span seven main areas: Chinese characters, vocabulary, tone, and pronunciation, speaking, writing, reading, and listening (See Table 5 above). The overall mean difficulty score across these areas was neutral ($M = 3.01$), indicating a moderate level of challenge rather than extreme difficulty.

The most significant challenge identified was mastering Chinese characters, with nearly half of the students (49.3%) reporting considerable difficulty ($M = 3.22$). Common struggles included memorizing stroke order, recalling characters and their pronunciation, and completing written compositions on time. These findings align with previous research (Nkrumah & Drako, 2020; Mbugua & Iraki, 2022; Scriberras, 2020), which similarly highlight Chinese characters as a primary obstacle for learners.

Tone and pronunciation posed challenges for 39% of participants ($M = 3.05$). While 38.3% did not find tone pronunciation difficult, a significant number expressed frustration regarding their pronunciation skills and uncertainty on how to improve. Speaking was reported as a difficulty by 41% of students ($M = 3.05$), with communication barriers both with teachers and peers frequently cited. Limited opportunities for controversial practice and interaction with native speakers exacerbated these issues, echoing findings from Mbugua and Iraki (2022) and Scriberras (2020). For example, students shared concerns such as "*I can't use the words I know fluently*," "*I find it hard to have conversations with native speakers*," and "*Sometimes, it's difficult to find friends to practice speaking Chinese with*." One student expressed a common sentiment: "我的发音很差, 想提高自己发音的水平, 但我不知道怎么做," ("My pronunciation is poor; I want to improve it, but I don't know how").

Listening difficulties affected 43.8% of participants ($M = 3.10$), particularly in understanding rapid, natural dialogues proved particularly challenging, with students citing obstacles such as insufficient exposure to native speech and lack of effective technological aids or language learning apps. Despite this, almost half of the respondents disagreed with the notion that they could not keep up with teaching speed in class, suggesting variable experiences with auditory comprehension. These findings emphasize listening as a key skill requiring enhanced instructional focus and technological support.

Writing-related difficulties—such as completing compositions on time and summarizing reading materials—were reported with a mean rating around 3.0, while reading challenges were less frequent, with 27.3% identifying them as problematic ($M = 2.78$). Students generally perceived reading materials as moderately manageable. Classroom participation was positive, with 57.4% engaging actively, though some students reported less involvement ($M = 2.55$). Approximately 46.5% agreed that the amount of material covered by teachers was appropriate, and 39.6% felt the time allocated for Chinese learning was sufficient, indicating room for adjustment in instructional pacing and curriculum design.

These multifaceted challenges highlight the complexity of learning Chinese within Nigeria's unique linguistic environment. Learners face not only inherent language difficulties such as characters and tonal distinctions but also extrinsic issues including limited exposure to native speakers, insufficient immersive practice, and unclear feedback mechanisms.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings about the attitudes, motivations and challenges faced by Nigerian undergraduates in learning Chinese, we provide the following on how to improve the Chinese language education were made:

Teaching approaches and materials should be refined to address the specific difficulties identified, particularly in Chinese character recognition, tonal pronunciation, and listening comprehension. Incorporating multimedia resources—such as audio-visual aids, language learning applications, and authentic Chinese media—can support students' listening and pronunciation skills while increasing engagement and fostering cultural understanding. Additionally, adapting instructional materials to include Nigerian cultural references and contexts may enhance learner reliability and promote cross-cultural connections. From the findings, many students lack sufficient Chinese proficiency to fully comprehend classroom instruction and recognizing that limited instructional hours constrain comprehensive coverage of listening, speaking, reading and writing skills, curricula designers should consider adjusting time allocations to ensure balanced skill development.

Expanding opportunities for immersive and communicative practice is essential. Establishing conversation clubs, language exchange programs, and partnerships with native Chinese speakers—including virtual exchanges—can provide consistent meaningful speaking and listening, speaking experiences. Participation in cultural workshops, festivals, and extracurricular activities should also be encouraged to facilitate practical language use beyond the classroom. To sustain students' positive attitudes and motivation, educational institutions would benefit from adopting learner-centred pedagogies that emphasise communicative competence through integrated practice of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, thereby ensuring regular and diverse exposure to the Chinese language.

Strengthening support systems is imperative. The study identified parental encouragement as a significant motivational factor; hence, maintaining active parental involvement through orientation sessions and informational resources highlighting the academic and career benefits of Chinese language proficiency is recommended. Providing parents with guidance on how to support their children's language learning can further bolster motivation. Concurrently, regular professional development programs for Chinese language instructors should be instituted to enhance pedagogical skills, learner engagement strategies, and methods for addressing common challenges such as language anxiety. Institutional support should ensure teachers have access to adequate resources-including textbooks, digital tools, and technical equipment-to effectively support students, especially in settings where proficiency remains low. Additionally, increasing instructional hours or introducing specialized programs focusing on core language skills may alleviate current teaching constraints.

Finally, educators are encouraged to utilize relevant and engaging teaching materials that align with students' career aspirations. The integration of contemporary and authentic resources, such as current media, literature, and educational technologies, can sustain student interest and clearly illustrate the practical global applications of Chinese language proficiency.

By implementing these recommendations, educators and policymakers can better address the unique needs of Nigerian undergraduates learning Chinese, thereby enhancing learner attitude, motivation, language proficiency, and overall learning outcomes.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the attitudes, motivations, and challenges of Nigerian undergraduates learning Chinese. Through questionnaire, the findings revealed positive attitudes driven by a strong desire for fluency ($M = 4.12$), perceptions that learning Chinese does not negatively impact local or English language ($M = 4.44$), recognition of Chinese global socio-economic importance ($M = 4.01$), a supportive learning environment ($M = 3.89$), and parental encouragement ($M = 3.82$). Nigerian undergraduates demonstrated both instrumental and integrative motivation to learn Chinese. Instrumental motivation factors included career prospects ($M = 4.10$) and academic interests ($M = 4.04$) while integrative motivation was reflected in cultural interest ($M = 4.12$). Other motivational factors were personal development ($M = 3.69$) and travel opportunities ($M = 3.96$). This multifaceted motivation profile contributes significantly to learners' engagement and successful acquisition of Chinese language skills. Despite these positive attitudes and motivations, students face several challenges in learning Chinese. Areas of specific difficulty included mastering Chinese characters ($M = 3.22$), listening ($M = 3.10$), tones and pronunciation ($M = 3.05$), speaking ($M = 3.05$), understanding rapid dialogue ($M = 3.12$), communicating effectively with teachers ($M = 3.14$), and responding fluently to comprehension questions ($M = 3.07$) were significant. These findings highlight the critical areas for targeted pedagogical intervention.

This study offers valuable insights that can inform educators and policymakers to enhance Chinese language education in Nigeria. The study has several limitations. First, the sample's gender imbalance may have influenced findings, as female learners often exhibit higher integrative motivation. Future research should explore gender differences to develop targeted strategies. Second, relying solely on questionnaires limited the depth of findings on classroom dynamics. Incorporating qualitative methods such as interviews and classroom observations in future research would enrich data quality and provide a deeper understanding of learners' experiences. Third, the study did not address coping strategies learners use to overcome their challenges. Therefore, future research should investigate these strategies to further improve language learning experience. Based on the findings, recommendations for teachers are provided to support and enhance students' motivation and attitudes in learning the Chinese language.

REFERENCES

Alshammari, H. (2020). Chinese Language in Saudi Arabia: Challenges and Recommendations. *English Language Teaching*, 13(2), 75-85.

Bulolo, C., Reymick, O. O., Mangudhla, T., Ikechukwu, O., Kawalya, N. V., and Li, F. Q. (2022). Factors Affecting Students' Attitude towards Learning Chinese as a Second Language: A Case Study of the Confucius Institute at Makerere University and Luyanzi College, Uganda. *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 10, 257-271.

Dinara, T. (2023). Motivation as an Axiological Factor in Learning Chinese. *Journal of Psychological Research*, 52(5), 1559-1570. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10936-023-09963-2>.

Dos Santos, L. M. (2024). Motivations for learning Chinese as a foreign language: A case study in Belgium. *International Journal of Instruction*, 17(1), 85-104.

Dörnyei, Z. (2005). *The Psychology of the Language Learner: Individual Differences in Second Language Acquisition*. Lawrence Erlbaum.

Edeh, E.C., & Hua, X.L. (2019). Growing influence of Chinese language in Nigeria can impact the socio-economic development. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Development*, 6(12), 184-191.

Edeh E.C., & Wang H. (2018). China-Nigeria Cooperation in Education and Training: A Comparative Analysis. *North American Academic Research*, 1(7), 144-165.

Gardner, R.C. (2004). *Attitude/Motivation Test Battery: International AMTB Research Project*. The University of Western Ontario.

Gardner, R.C. (2006). The socio-educational model of Second Language Acquisition: A research paradigm. *EUROSLA Yearbook*, 6, 237-260.

Gardner, R.C. (1985). *Social Psychology and Second Language Learning: The Role of Attitude and Motivation*. London: Edward Arnold. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0083787>

Graham, S., Courtney, L., Tonkyn, A., & Marinis, T. (2016). Motivational trajectories for early language learning across the primary-secondary school transition. *British Educational Research Journal*, 42(4), 682-702. <https://doi.org/10.1002/berj.3230>

Genc, Z.S., & Aydin, F. (2017). An Analysis of Learners' Motivation and Attitudes toward Learning English Language at Tertiary Level in Turkish EFL Context. *English Language Teaching*, 10(4), 35-44.

Gold, S.C. (2022). Nigeria and China's Cultural and educational relations since 1960: Impact and Challenges. *Journal of Humanities, Social & Management Sciences*, 2(1), 48-56.

Imsa-ard, P. (2020). Motivation and Attitudes towards English Language Learning in Thailand: A Large-Scale Survey of Secondary School Students. *REFlections*, 27, 140-161.

Kandambi, S.U. (2020). A Study on the Problems of Chinese Language Teaching as a Foreign Language in Secondary Schools in Sri Lanka. *International Journal of Recent Innovations in Academic Research*, 4(4), 22-33.

Luo, H., & Limpapath, P. (2016). Attitudes towards Chinese Language Learning: A Case of Thai Senior High School Students at a Private School in Bangkok. *BU Academic Review*, 15(2), 102-112.

Mbugua W., & Iraki, F.K. (2022). Motivations for Studying the Chinese Language in Kenya: A Case Study of USIU Africa. *Journal of Language, Technology & Entrepreneurship in Africa*, 13, 21-39.

Mkize, F., & Chisoni, G. (2015). The Role of Motivation in Learning Chinese as a Second Language: A Case study of Zimbabwean Students Learning Chinese as a Second Language. *International Journal of Language and Linguistics*, 3(4): 252-257.

Nguyen, T.T.T., & Hajek, J. (2021). Motivation for learning Chinese in a study abroad context: Vietnamese students in Taiwan, *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 45(2), 444-458, DOI: 10.1080/01434632.2021.1899191.

Nkamigbo, L.C., & Obiamalu, G.O. (2016). Phonological differences and the phonological Problems of Igbo Learners of Chinese. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)*, 21(4), 52-61.

Nkrumah, B., & Darko, J.O. (2020). A study of attitudes towards learning Chinese as foreign language in Ghanaian universities: A comparative study of University of Ghana and University of Cape Coast. *Integrity Journal of Education and Training*, 4, 8-15.

Nwankwere, A.U.N., & Korie, I.J. (2022). Examining the Motivations and Needs of Nigerian HSK Chinese Learners at Confucius Institute, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Nigeria. *Awka Journal of Linguistics and Languages*, 1, 258-278.

Noreen, S., Ahmed, M., & Esmail, A. (2015). Role of Students' Motivation, Attitude and Anxiety in Learning English at Intermediate Level in Pakistan: A Gender Based Study. *Educational Research International*. 4(2), 96-108.

Odinye, I.S. (2013). The Study of Chinese Language Teaching and Learning in Nigeria. A PhD thesis submitted to the department of Chinese, Xiamen University, China.

Odinye, I.S. (2019). Introduction of Chinese at University of Lagos: A Study of Students' Attitudes Towards Chinese. *IGWEBUIKE: An African Journal of Arts and Humanities*, 5(1), 41-54.

Odinye, I.S. (2018). Problems facing the teaching and learning of Chinese language in Nigeria. *The Quint: an interdisciplinary Quarterly from the North*, 10(4), 1-18.

Odinye, I.S., & Odinye, I.E. (2021). The Place of Chinese Language in Globalization Order. *Journal of Chinese & African Studies (JOCAS)*, 2(1), 37-44.

Okafor, M.U. (2020). A Study of Chinese Language Teaching and Learning in the Department of Chinese Studies, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Nigeria. *Journal of Chinese and African Studies (JOCAS)*, 1, 55-67.

Sayadian, S. & Lashkarian, A. (2010). Investigating Attitude and Motivation of Iranian University Learners Toward English as a Foreign Language. *Contemporary Issues in Education Research*, 3(1), 137-148.

Soleimani, & Hanafi, (2013). Iranian Medical Students' Attitude towards English Language Learning. *International Journal of Applied Basic Sciences*. 4(12), 3816-3823.

Uchenwoke, O.N. (2021). An Analysis on the Chinese Language Learning Needs and Challenges: A Case Study of Nigerian Chinese Language students. *Interdisciplinary Journal of African & Asian Studies*, 7(1), 18-28.

Ushioda, E. (2005). The role of students' attitudes and motivation in second language learning in online language courses. *CALICO Journal*, 23(1), 49-78.

Wen, X. (2022). Chinese language learning motivation: a study of individual-contextual interactions. *Journal of Multilingual and Multilingual Development*. 45(6), 2183-2199.

Zhang, M. (2013). Attitude, Motivation and Chinese Language Learning Proficiency in an Arabic Context: An Empirical Case Study of Khartoum University Students. *U of K-Annual Conference of Postgraduate Studies and Scientific Research-Humanities and Educational Studies February 2013- Khartoum-Sudan: Conference Proceedings*, 2, 1-19.

Zhang, H., Dai, Y., & Wang, Y. (2020). Motivation and Second Foreign Language Proficiency: The Mediating Role of Foreign Language Enjoyment. *Sustainability*, 12, 1-13.