

Impact of Communication Competency Development Programmes on Employability among College Students in Tanzania: Evidence from TPSC Mtwara Campus, Tanzania

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Abstract

This study examined the impact of communication competency development programmes on the employability of college students in Tanzania, with a focus on TPSC Mtwara Campus. It aimed to identify the types of communication programmes implemented, assess the level of student participation, and determine the effect of these programmes on employability outcomes. A mixed-methods design was employed, with quantitative methods comprising surveys of 82 students and qualitative methods comprising interviews with five key informants from the lecturing staff and programme coordinators at TPSC Mtwara. Quantitative methods employed descriptive statistics, mean scores, standard deviations, and regression analysis, while qualitative methods employed thematic analysis. The study found that TPSC Mtwara Campus offers communication competency training programmes, including presentation skills, debates, group discussions, workshops, and professional writing activities. Students were highly engaged in these activities, which improved their confidence, communication, teamwork, and professional skills. The study concluded that communication competency training is vital for equipping graduates with important professional skills in their respective fields of study. The study recommended that higher education institutions include communication competency training in their curricula, provide students with ample opportunities for hands-on training, and engage industry players to train students for better labour market outcomes.

Keywords: *Communication competency, employability, higher education, student participation, Tanzania.*

1.0 Introduction

Communication competency has become one of the most essential skills required in contemporary labour markets worldwide. Employers increasingly demand graduates who possess not only technical knowledge but also strong interpersonal and professional communication abilities that enable them to function effectively in complex organisational environments (Aririguzoh, 2022; Magembe, 2021; Wu et al., 2023). Effective communication allows employees to express ideas clearly, collaborate with colleagues, engage with

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clients, and participate in decision-making processes within organisations. In the modern knowledge economy, organisations rely heavily on teamwork, coordination, and information sharing, all of which require strong communication capabilities (El-Sakran, 2023). As a result, communication competency has emerged as a critical factor influencing graduates' success in securing and maintaining employment (Alshammari, 2023; Deshmukh & Kumar, 2025). Higher learning institutions are very important in helping students prepare for the labour market through equipping them with both technical and transferable skills (Adeyemo & Olugboji, 2022). Among these transferable skills, communication competency is considered an important attribute that enhances graduate employability. Communication competency encompasses skills essential for graduates to communicate effectively, including verbal and written communication, listening, presentation, and interpersonal skills (Laguna-Sánchez et al., 2020; Mwita et al., 2023).

Globally, universities and colleges have adopted various strategies to strengthen students' communication competencies (Makame & Fulgence, 2024; Neelima et al., 2026). These strategies often include communication skills courses, public speaking training, group discussions, professional writing exercises, internship placements, and collaborative learning activities. Such programmes are designed to provide students with practical opportunities to practice communication in real-world contexts (Saimon et al., 2023). Through these initiatives, students are expected to develop confidence in expressing ideas, engaging in professional dialogue, and presenting information effectively in both academic and workplace environments. These competencies are increasingly considered essential for graduates seeking employment in competitive labour markets (Kuruchumila, 2025; Makulilo & Munishi, 2025).

Despite the growing emphasis on communication competencies in higher education, many employers continue to report that graduates lack adequate communication skills required in professional settings (Baird & Parayitam, 2019; Okolie et al., 2019). Several studies have indicated that although graduates possess theoretical knowledge in their respective fields, they often struggle to communicate ideas clearly, participate effectively in teamwork, and engage professionally with colleagues and clients (Abelha et al., 2020; Kleckner & Butz, 2021; Okolie et al., 2021; Sonnenschein & Ferguson, 2020). This mismatch between academic preparation and workplace expectations has raised concerns about graduates' employability. Employers frequently highlight deficiencies in communication, critical thinking, and interpersonal skills as key limitations among newly recruited graduates (Gazi et al., 2024; Jayasingha & Suraweera, 2020). These concerns have prompted educational institutions and policymakers to reconsider how communication competencies are developed within higher education systems.

In response to these challenges, many Tanzanian colleges and universities have introduced communication competency development programmes aimed at enhancing students' employability (Andrew, 2021; Kibona, 2024; Magembe, 2021). These programmes may include communication skills courses, debate forums, presentation training, internship opportunities, and extracurricular activities designed to improve students' communication abilities. Such initiatives are intended to strengthen students' confidence, improve their professional communication skills, and prepare them for workplace interactions (Adeyemo

& Olugboji, 2022; Makulilo & Munishi, 2025). By integrating these programmes into the educational experience, institutions aim to bridge the gap between academic learning and labour-market expectations. These efforts reflect a broader commitment to improving the quality of higher education and ensuring that graduates are better equipped for employment.

However, despite the increasing adoption of communication competency development programmes in Tanzanian colleges, there is limited empirical evidence of their effectiveness in improving students' employability outcomes. Many studies have focused on general employability skills without specifically examining how communication competency development initiatives influence graduates' readiness for employment. Understanding the implementation and impact of these programmes is essential for informing educational policy, curriculum development, and institutional strategies to enhance graduate employability. Therefore, this study seeks to examine the impact of communication competency development programmes on the employability of college students in Tanzania. Specifically, it examines the development of communication competency programmes implemented in Tanzanian colleges, assesses students' participation in these programmes, and determines their impact on the employability of college students in Tanzania.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Literature Review

2.1.1 Human Capital Theory

Human Capital Theory was developed by Gary Becker in 1964 and later expanded by other economists such as Theodore Schultz in 1965 (Becker, 1975; Schultz, 1961). The theory explains that education, training, and skills development are forms of investment that improve an individual's productivity and economic value. According to this theory, individuals who acquire more knowledge and skills through education become more productive and have better opportunities in the labour market. Human Capital Theory emphasises that education not only provides academic knowledge but also develops competencies that increase individuals' ability to perform effectively in professional environments. Therefore, investing in education and training increases individuals' chances of securing employment and improving their career prospects.

In relation to this study, communication competency development programmes in colleges can be considered an investment in human capital because they equip students with foundational skills for the workplace, including communication, presentation, teamwork, and interaction. All these skills are highly valued in the workplace because they help employees communicate and work efficiently. When students participate in communication competency development programmes, they acquire basic skills that help them become more productive. As discussed in the Human Capital Theory, communication competency development programmes can improve students' employability by enhancing skills applicable in the workplace.

2.1.2 Communication Competence Theory

Communication Competence Theory was developed by Dell Hymes in 1972 (Hymes, 1972). The theory holds that for effective communication to occur, it is not enough for an individual to know grammatically correct language; he or she must also be able to communicate appropriately in different contexts. The theory states that for an individual to have communication competence, he or she must have knowledge of communication rules, the ability to interpret messages, and the ability to communicate effectively with others. The theory argues that for an individual to communicate effectively, he or she must have the knowledge and practical skills to interact with others.

In particular, this study examines communication competency development programmes in colleges that aim to help students develop their communication competency through activities such as presentations, group discussions, debates, and professional writing. Through such activities, students have the opportunity to practice their communication skills by confidently conveying their ideas in different situations. By participating in communication competency development programmes, students have the opportunity to learn to organise their ideas, convey their opinions effectively, and interact professionally with others. In this way, Communication Competence Theory can also explain how communication training programmes can help students improve their communication competency, thereby enhancing their employability.

2.2 Empirical Literature Review

Empirical research has shown that communication competencies significantly improve graduate employability in the modern labour market. Today, employers require graduates who not only have academic knowledge but also have transferable skills, including communication, team-working, and problem-solving skills. Abelha et al. (2020) conducted a systematic literature review to examine the contribution of higher education institutions to the development of employability competencies. It was concluded that higher education institutions can make a significant contribution to improving graduate employability. Communication competencies are among the most critical competencies employers require of their employees because they facilitate the sharing of ideas. In a similar study, Baird and Parayitam (2019) concluded that communication competencies are among the most critical skills employers require of college graduates during recruitment. Communication competency development programmes in higher education institutions can significantly improve students' labour market readiness.

Several studies have also examined the role of communication skills in developing students' employability and career development. For instance, Deshmukh and Kumar (2025) have demonstrated that communication skills make a significant contribution to students' employability, as employers are willing to offer job opportunities to students who can communicate ideas clearly and interact effectively with others. In another study, Alshammari (2023) examined the contribution of communication competency to students' career development and demonstrated that students with communication competency have higher career readiness and greater job opportunities. In higher education, the development of communication competency is often included in academic curricula. Research indicates that academic institutions employ various strategies to develop students' communication

competencies. For example, Saimon et al. (2023) reported that various project-based learning methods significantly improved communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking among college students in Tanzania.

In Tanzania, various studies have investigated the relationship between higher education and employability. Kessy (2020) found that, despite the increase in higher education institutions in Tanzania, graduates are not being employed due to poor employability skills. Mgaiwa (2021) also found that there is a need to develop soft skills, such as communication, teamwork, and problem-solving, to improve graduates' employability. Other studies have also emphasised the significance of communication competency development programmes in enhancing students' readiness for the workplace. For instance, Magembe (2021) observed that students who demonstrated greater confidence in their communication skills were more ready for the workplace. In addition, Mwita et al. (2023) emphasised that universities play an important role in bridging the soft skills gap by offering training programmes to improve students' communication skills. This shows that communication competency development programmes are significant in improving students' workplace readiness.

Despite growing recognition of the importance of developing communication competencies to enhance students' employability, some studies have identified challenges that hinder the development of students' communication skills. For instance, Makulilo and Munishi (2025) highlighted challenges in practical training, teaching methods, and exposure to professional communication environments as obstacles to the development of students' communication skills in higher learning institutions in Tanzania. Okolie et al. (2021) posited that it is crucial for higher education institutions to collaborate with industry to ensure that students acquire the practical skills required in industry. This indicates that although some institutions have developed programmes to develop students' communication competency, the success of such programmes depends on how they are implemented.

3.0 Methodology

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative methods, to provide a comprehensive understanding of the implementation and impact of communication competency development programmes on students' employability at TPSC Mtwara Campus, Tanzania. The mixed-methods design was chosen to capture both numerical data on students' participation and perceptions, as well as in-depth qualitative insights from programme implementers. The study targeted final-year students because they are closest to graduation, enabling assessment of the influence of these programmes on their employability outcomes. The population comprised approximately 450 final-year students who had participated in the programmes and 10 key staff members, including instructors and programme coordinators, involved in designing and delivering the programmes.

For the quantitative component, stratified random sampling was used to select 82 student respondents, ensuring representation from all academic programmes on campus. Structured questionnaires were administered to collect data on student participation, perceptions

of programme effectiveness, and self-assessed employability skills. The questionnaires combined closed-ended and Likert-scale items, enabling consistent measurement and statistical analysis. For the qualitative component, purposive sampling was used to select key informants who had direct involvement in program design and implementation. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore the implementation process, challenges faced during program delivery, and the perceived impact on student employability. Additionally, relevant college documents, including course outlines, program reports, participation records, and training materials, were reviewed to supplement primary data and validate findings.

Quantitative data were analysed using SPSS, employing descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, to summarise students' participation and perceptions. Inferential statistics, specifically correlation analysis, were used to examine the relationship between participation in communication programmes and employability outcomes. Qualitative data from interviews were analysed using thematic content analysis. This process involved transcribing interview data, identifying emerging codes and themes, and interpreting them to understand key aspects of programme implementation, challenges, and their influence on students' readiness for employment. By combining these methods, the study ensured a robust analysis that integrated both measurable trends and rich contextual understanding, providing a holistic view of the effectiveness of communication competency development programmes at TPSC Mtwara Campus.

4.0 Findings

4.1 The Communication Competency Development Programmes Implemented in Tanzanian Colleges

The study found that the TPSC Mtwara Campus offers several programmes to develop communication competencies and enhance students' employability skills. These programmes were developed to support students' academic needs, with particular emphasis on acquiring practical skills. Some of the activities include public speaking workshops, debate competitions, group discussions, writing, and presentations, which give students an opportunity to develop communication skills in a controlled environment, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Communication Competency Development Programmes Implemented at TPSC Mtwara Campus

Communication Program Activity	Freq.	Percentage (%)
Public Speaking Workshops	65	79.3
Group Discussions	70	85.4
Debate Competitions	58	70.7
Professional Writing Exercises	60	73.2
Student Presentations	68	82.9

Source: Field Data (2026)

Survey results showed that approximately 76% of respondents were actively participating in at least 2 program activities per semester, indicating a high level of student involvement across the faculties and disciplines. These programmes, therefore, can be regarded as instrumental in developing students' employability skills. Interviews with instructors and program coordinators emphasised how the programmes are integrated into the college curriculum, which includes theoretical learning alongside practical exercises to reinforce communication skills. The program coordinator said:

"Our goal with the communication competency programmes is to take students beyond theoretical understanding and provide them with practical, real-world communication skills. We include structured activities such as group presentations, debates, and writing exercises because these challenge students to think critically, express themselves clearly, and interact professionally. The repeated practice, along with constructive feedback from instructors and peers, enables students to gain confidence in presenting ideas, engaging audiences, and dealing with challenging questions, which are essential skills for employability and professional success" (KII-1, 18th January, 2026).

Document review also supported these findings, which indicated that the programmes are conducted throughout the academic year and are available to students from all faculties. The programmes cover different aspects of communication, including oral and written communication, teamwork, interaction, and digital communication. In addition, group discussions and debates help students articulate their ideas, while professional writing skills help them communicate effectively in the workplace. These programmes provide students with an opportunity to improve their professional communication skills in a structured way.

The students also highlighted the need for guidance from lecturers and interaction with other students to improve their skills development. A student said:

"Participating in these communication competency programmes has been transformative. Initially, I was apprehensive about speaking and presenting in front of a group, but the programme's structured activities and repetition helped me gradually overcome those apprehensions. Today, I can communicate effectively in presentations, discussions, and teamwork. These skills make me feel ready to tackle interviews, the workplace, and life after graduation" (KII-2, 20th January, 2026).

Notwithstanding the success stories, challenges were identified, particularly resource limitations, large class sizes, and scheduling issues, which sometimes do not favour optimal skill development. An instructor said:

"Although the programmes are well-designed and cover all aspects of communication, the number of participants and the limited time allocated to each session constrain individual practice sessions. Some students may not fully participate in all sessions, which may affect mastery of specific skills. However, we encourage students to be proactive and utilise individual sessions to maximise the benefits of the programmes. The refinement of these programmes is also an ongoing process to ensure that students derive maximum benefit from them and improve their employability skills" (KII1-3, 18th January, 2026).

To conclude, the study's findings demonstrate that the communication competency programmes at TPSC Mtwara Campus are implemented, diverse, and highly beneficial for improving students' communication skills. Although the programmes face various challenges, such as limited resources and student numbers, their structured nature is highly beneficial for improving students' communication skills, which are essential for workplace employability.

4.2 The Level of Students' Participation in Communication Competency Development Programmes in Colleges

The students were expected to indicate their level of agreement with a number of statements about their participation in communication competency development programmes at TPSC Mtwara Campus. Students at TPSC Mtwara Campus generally showed high levels of participation in these programmes. Engagement was measured using a five-point Likert scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), and the mean and standard deviation were used to assess the extent of involvement in various activities. The findings are presented in Table 2 below.

Table 4.2: Students' Participation in Communication Competency Development Programmes

Statement	Mean	StD
I regularly participate in classroom presentations to improve students' public speaking and professional communication skills.	4.12	0.74
I actively participate in college-organised group discussions to enhance teamwork and communication skills.	4.08	0.79
I frequently participate in debate sessions that encourage students to express their ideas confidently and persuasively.	3.95	0.83
I participate in professional writing exercises designed to strengthen students' formal and workplace communication skills.	3.88	0.86
I attend communication workshops organised by the college to improve my interpersonal and presentation skills.	3.92	0.82
I actively collabour ate with fellow students in communication-based learning activities and group assignments.	4.15	0.71
I engage in activities that require giving constructive feedback to peers during communication practice sessions.	3.84	0.88
I voluntarily participate in extracurricular activities to develop my public speaking and interpersonal communication skills.	3.76	0.91
I regularly practice communication skills through presentations, seminars, or workshops organised by the college.	4.05	0.76
I feel motivated to participate in communication development programmes because they improve my future career prospects.	4.21	0.69

Source: Field Data (2026)

Classroom presentations aimed at enhancing communication competency recorded a high mean score of 4.12 ($SD = 0.74$), indicating active engagement in formal learning activities. Participation in group discussions to improve teamwork and communication was similarly high (mean = 4.08, $SD = 0.79$). Debate sessions, designed to foster confident and persuasive expression, showed moderate-to-high involvement, with a mean score of 3.95 ($SD = 0.83$).

Professional writing exercises for workplace communication skills had a mean of 3.88 (SD = 0.86), while communication workshops focused on interpersonal and presentation skills yielded a mean of 3.92 (SD = 0.82).

Teamwork-oriented learning activities recorded the highest engagement among skill-based tasks, with a mean of 4.15 (SD = 0.71), highlighting the importance of collaborative learning in developing communication skills. Peer feedback sessions had moderate participation (mean = 3.84, SD = 0.88), indicating students' involvement in peer-assisted learning. Extracurricular activities focused on public speaking and interpersonal communication showed slightly lower engagement (mean = 3.76, SD = 0.91), suggesting that while students participate, not all are equally engaged. Regular practice in presentations, seminars, and workshops had a high mean score of 4.05 (SD = 0.76), indicating consistent skill development efforts. Motivation to participate in communication programmes due to perceived employability benefits was the strongest driver, with the highest mean score of 4.21 (SD = 0.69). Overall, these findings indicate that students actively engage in both structured and extracurricular activities designed to enhance their communication skills, with career prospects serving as a major motivator.

4.3 The Impact of Communication Competency Development Programmes on the Employability of College Students in Tanzania

This section presents the findings on the influence of communication competency development programmes on students' employability at TPSC Mtwara Campus. The findings in Table 3 indicate that communication competency development programmes significantly influence students' employability at TPSC Mtwara Campus. Measured on a five-point Likert scale, students reported improvements across multiple dimensions of employability.

Table 3: Impact of Communication Competency Development Programmes on Students' Employability

Statement	Mean	STD
Communication competency development programmes have improved my confidence when speaking during academic and professional situations.	4.26	0.68
Participation in communication training programmes has strengthened my ability to express ideas clearly during job interviews and presentations.	4.18	0.73
The college's communication activities have improved my teamwork and interpersonal communication skills.	4.12	0.77
Communication competency development programmes have enhanced my ability to prepare professional documents, including reports, emails, and presentations.	4.05	0.80
Participation in debates, discussions, and presentations has improved my critical thinking and persuasive communication abilities.	4.10	0.76
Communication training programmes have increased my confidence when interacting with lecturers, employers, and other professionals.	4.21	0.71
The communication skills gained from these programmes help me perform better during internships and practical training.	4.09	0.79

Statement	Mean	STD
Communication competency programmes have prepared me to work effectively in team-based professional environments.	4.14	0.74
Participation in communication development activities has increased my readiness to compete in the labour market after graduation.	4.23	0.70
Communication competency development programmes significantly improve my overall employability prospects.	4.29	0.66

Source: Field Data (2026)

Confidence in speaking in academic and professional settings was high, with a mean of 4.26 (SD = 0.68), indicating that participation in presentations, discussions, and other communication exercises helps students overcome communication anxiety and express ideas effectively. Students also reported improved performance in job interviews, with a mean score of 4.18 (SD = 0.73), suggesting that the programmes enhance their clarity and confidence when presenting themselves to potential employers. Teamwork and interaction skills were strengthened (mean = 4.12, SD = 0.77), reflecting the collaborative nature of communication activities and their relevance in modern work environments. Professional document preparation, including reports, emails, and presentations, was positively affected (mean = 4.05, SD = 0.80), while critical thinking and persuasive communication skills, developed through debates and presentations, had a mean of 4.10 (SD = 0.76).

The programmes also enhanced students' confidence in interacting with lecturers, employers, and other professionals (mean = 4.21, SD = 0.71) and their ability to execute tasks confidently during internships (mean = 4.09, SD = 0.79). Teamwork in professional settings was strengthened (mean = 4.14, SD = 0.74), and students reported feeling better prepared to compete with peers in the job market after graduation (mean = 4.23, SD = 0.70). Overall employability, as a general perception, recorded the highest mean score of 4.29 (SD = 0.66), highlighting the comprehensive impact of communication competency programmes on students' workforce readiness. These findings suggest that structured communication training not only enhances technical skills but also builds confidence, interpersonal effectiveness, and professional readiness, all of which are critical for employability in contemporary work environments.

To further examine the impact of communication competency development programmes on students' employability, the study also conducted a simple linear regression analysis. The analysis aimed to determine whether participation in communication competency development programmes significantly predicts students' employability outcomes. In this analysis, communication competency development programmes were treated as the independent variable, and students' employability as the dependent variable. The results are presented in Tables 4, 5, and 6.

Table 4: Model Summary of Regression Analysis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.641	0.411	0.403	0.521

Source: Field Data (2026)

The results in Table 4 show that the model produced a correlation coefficient (R) of 0.641, indicating a moderately strong positive relationship between communication competency development programmes and students' employability. The R-squared value of 0.411 indicates that approximately 41.1% of the variation in students' employability can be explained by communication competency development programmes. The adjusted R-squared of 0.403 further confirms the model's strength, suggesting that communication competency development programmes significantly improve college students' employability.

Table 5: ANOVA Results for Regression Model

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	14.892	1	14.892	54.86	0.000
Residual	21.731	80	0.272		
Total	36.623	81			

Source: Field Data (2026)

The ANOVA results in Table 4.5 indicate that the regression model is statistically significant. The model produced an F-value of 54.86 with a significance level (p-value) of 0.000, which is below the conventional threshold of 0.05. This implies that the model is statistically reliable and that communication competency development programmes significantly influence students' employability.

Table 6: Regression Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficient (B)	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficient (Beta)	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.214	0.356	—	3.41	0.001
Communication Competency Development Programmes	0.683	0.092	0.641	7.41	0.000

Source: Field Data (2026)

The regression coefficient results indicate that communication competency development programmes have a positive and significant influence on students' employability. The unstandardised regression coefficient indicates that for each unit increase in effectiveness in communication competency development programmes, there is a corresponding 0.683-unit increase in students' employability outcomes. The standardised beta coefficient of 0.641 further confirms the strong, positive influence of communication competency development programmes on students' employability outcomes. The t-value of 7.41 with a significance level of 0.001 confirms that the relationship between communication competency development programmes and students' employability outcomes is statistically

significant. The results of the regression analysis reveal that communication competency development programmes play a vital role in enhancing students' employability outcomes. The results of this study reveal that communication competency development programmes in higher education institutions can play a vital role in enhancing students' readiness for labour market outcomes by developing critical professional skills, such as effective communication, teamwork, and interpersonal skills.

5.0 Discussion

The study's findings show that communication competency development programmes play a crucial role in enhancing college students' employability. The findings of the study show that TPSC Mtwara Campus offers various learning activities related to communication, such as presentations, group discussions, debates, workshops, and writing, aimed at developing communication competency among students. This confirms the assertion that higher learning institutions play a crucial role in enhancing students' employability competencies. Similar findings were reported by Abelha et al. (2020), who emphasised that competence development programmes in higher learning institutions play a crucial role in enhancing graduates' employability by providing the skills required in the labour market.

The results also showed that students participated at a relatively high level in communication competency development programmes within the college. High mean scores were obtained in classroom presentations, group discussions, and collaborative learning activities. These results suggest that the students were actively participating in communication-competency development programmes at the college. Such active participation in communication competency development programmes would be essential for developing students' confidence, as suggested by Sonnenschein & Ferguson (2020). Students' active participation in communication-learning activities would be essential to developing the communication skills and confidence needed for effective performance in the workplace.

In addition, the findings indicated that communication competency development programmes play a significant role in developing essential employability skills among students. The skills include teamwork, communication, writing, and presentations. These skills have been recognised as essential skills among modern workforces. The findings of this research support the study by Baird and Parayitam (2019), which concluded that communication skills, teamwork, and interpersonal skills are considered essential by employers when recruiting graduates. Kleckner and Butz (2021) argued that incorporating communication training in academic curricula helps bridge the skills gap among graduates.

The regression analysis conducted in this research also confirmed a statistically significant association between communication competency development programmes and students' employability. This analysis revealed that communication competency development programmes account for a significant proportion of the variation in students' employability outcomes. The findings of this study are consistent with those of various studies on different topics. For instance, Adeyemo & Olugboji (2022) found that communication competence significantly influences employability skills among mass communication undergraduates.

Despite the positive effects of communication competency development **programmes** on students established in this study, challenges were noted that affected their effectiveness. Such challenges include limited resources, large class sizes, and limited opportunities for individualised communication practices. These challenges may limit the effectiveness of communication training activities and thus hinder students from fully developing their communication competency. Mgaiwa (2021) also noted similar challenges, establishing that many higher learning institutions in Tanzania are facing obstacles that hinder their ability to effectively prepare their graduates for employment.

6.0 Conclusion

This research sought to investigate how communication competency development programmes are implemented and their effects on the employability of college students in Tanzania, with emphasis on TPSC Mtwara Campus. Findings from this research revealed that the college has implemented various communication competency development programmes, including presentations, group discussions, workshops, and collaborative learning activities, which provide students with opportunities to develop communication skills vital to success in both academic and professional settings. This research found that communication competency development programmes are implemented in both academic and extracurricular settings, providing students with opportunities to develop their communication skills in diverse situations and contexts.

The results also showed that students can demonstrate a high level of participation in communication competency development programmes. Through active involvement in class presentations, teamwork, and other communication-based learning activities, students can enhance their ability to communicate ideas clearly, interact effectively with others, and gain confidence in professional communication. The students' participation in these programmes is therefore a significant factor in developing their communication competencies.

Furthermore, the study showed that communication competency development programmes positively affect students' employability. Regression analysis indicated that communication competencies are a significant factor in improving students' preparedness for employment. Through active participation in communication competency development programmes, students can demonstrate effective teamwork, interpersonal communication, presentation, and writing competencies. These are considered essential requirements in a modern workforce.

7.0 Recommendations

To improve the effectiveness of communication competency development programmes, it is recommended that communication skills training be incorporated into the core curricula of all academic programmes at higher learning institutions. This will ensure that students continually develop their communication skills rather than perceiving them as a separate activity. Structured communication training, such as presentations, professional writing,

group discussions, and debates, should be incorporated within various assignments and assessments to provide students with consistent opportunities to apply their communication skills. This will enable students to continually develop their confidence, critical thinking, and professional interaction skills, which are fundamental for employability within various professional contexts.

Furthermore, colleges and universities can consider providing more opportunities for students to engage in practical, hands-on communication experiences outside the classroom. Workshops, seminars, internship communication activities, and other practical communication activities can help students gain hands-on experience across a range of scenarios. By encouraging students to participate in these activities, they not only improve their practical communication skills but also develop other important skills, such as flexibility, leadership, and interpersonal communication. Lastly, it is important for institutional management and policymakers to ensure that communication competency programmes are adequately resourced and aligned with labour market needs. This means students need access to communication laboratories and other resources, such as multimedia facilities. Instructors also need adequate resources to ensure the quality of their training.

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