International Journal of Small Business and Entrepreneurship Research, 13 (2), 59-76, 2025

Print ISSN: 2053-5821(Print)

Online ISSN: 2053-583X (Online)

Website: https://www.eajournals.org/

Publication of the European Centre for Research Training and Development-UK

Impact of Strategic Skill Acquisition on Employment Generation in Kaduna North Local Government Area, Kaduna State Nigeria

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doi: https://doi.org/10.37745/ijsber.2013/vol13n25976 Published September 16, 2025

Citation: Gajo S.U., Gambo N., Bamanga F.M., Puyate E.M. (2025) Impact of Strategic Skill Acquisition on Employment Generation in Kaduna North Local Government Area, Kaduna State Nigeria, *International Journal of Small Business and Entrepreneurship Research*, 13 (2), 59-76

Abstract: *This study examines the impact of strategic skill acquisition on employment generation in Kaduna North Local Government Area, Kaduna State, Nigeria. A sample of 305 respondents was selected through a multi-stage sampling technique, and data was analyzed using an ordinal regression model. The results show that technical, entrepreneurial, and digital skills significantly positively impact employment generation, with odds ratios indicating a 52.4%, 68.2%, and 44.6% increase in employment generation, respectively. However, vocational skills do not significantly impact employment generation, with a 16.4% insignificant increase in employment generation. Based on the results, the study recommends that government policymakers and educators prioritize technical skills development programs by establishing vocational training centers that focus on technical skills development, collaborating with industries to provide on-the-job training and internships, and providing access to modern technology and equipment for practical training.*

Keywords: digital skills, entrepreneurial skills, entrepreneurial skills, employment generation

INTRODUCTION

Employment generation is considered a vital economic development engine, as it provides individuals with the means to support themselves and their families, fostering stability and security. The significance of employment generation extends beyond economic benefits, as it also plays a critical role in reducing poverty, inequality, and social unrest. When individuals have access to decent work and a steady income, they are better equipped to break the cycle of poverty, invest in their education and health, and improve their overall well-being.

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However, employment generation has become a global concern, with many countries struggling to create sufficient job opportunities for their growing populations. According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the global unemployment rate stood at 4.8%, with approximately 200 million people unemployed worldwide (OECD, 2025), while Africa faces a higher rate of 7.5% in 2022, according to the African Development Bank (2023). In Nigeria, the unemployment situation is a significant concern. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), Nigeria's unemployment rate was 33.3% in the fourth quarter of 2024 (NBS, 2024), while Kaduna State has an unemployment rate of 32.7%, with 100,231 people out of work (NBS, 2024). Strategic skill acquisition can be a vital tool in promoting employment generation, and this can be achieved through various forms of skills acquisition, such as technical skills, vocational skills, entrepreneurial skills, and digital skills. For instance, technical skills, such as those in engineering, IT, or biotechnology, can enable individuals to secure employment in specific industries, driving innovation and productivity (Lewis, 2020). More so, vocational skills, such as those in trades like electrical work, plumbing, or carpentry, provide individuals with practical skills to perform specific tasks, making them valuable assets to employers (Handler, 2024). Similarly, entrepreneurial skills, including business planning, financial management, and marketing, empower individuals to start businesses, creating employment opportunities for themselves and others (Jardim, 2021). Likewise, digital skills, encompassing software development, data analysis, digital marketing, and more, enable individuals to access job opportunities in the rapidly growing digital economy (Intaratat, 2021).

Furthermore, the Kaduna State government has demonstrated its commitment to promoting skills acquisition and employment generation through various initiatives. Notably, the state has launched the Kaduna Digital Skills Program, which aims to equip individuals with 21st-century skills. It plans to establish Panteka Market as a skills acquisition hub, fostering self-employment and entrepreneurship (Punch, 2025, January 26). Additionally, the state collaborates with the federal government on skill acquisition and reintegration programs for freed minors, providing them opportunities to acquire skills and reintegrate into society. Despite these efforts, employment generation remains a significant challenge in the state, as many young people continue to struggle to access job opportunities, and the state's unemployment rate remains a concern.

Therefore, this study focuses on Kaduna North Local Government Area, Kaduna State, Nigeria, to investigate the impact of strategic skill acquisition, such as technical skills, vocational skills, entrepreneurial skills, and digital skills, on employment generation. The main objective of this study is to examine the impact of strategic skill acquisition on employment generation in Kaduna North Local Government Area. The significance of this objective lies in its potential to contribute to evidence-based policy and program development, improved employment outcomes, and enhanced economic development in Kaduna North Local Government Area and beyond. Hence, by examining the relationship between strategic skill acquisition schemes, including technical, vocational, entrepreneurial, and digital skills, and employment generation, this study aims to provide better insights for policymakers, practitioners, and researchers seeking to understand the

complexities of employment generation and the role of skill acquisition schemes in addressing this challenge, ultimately contributing to improving the lives of individuals and communities in the area.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Clarification

Skills acquisition refers to learning and developing new skills or competencies that enable individuals to effectively perform specific tasks or jobs (Nwazue, 2023). De Grip (2024) viewed skills acquisition as gaining specific skills, knowledge, and competencies through training, education, or experience. There are different forms of skills acquisition, such as technical, vocational, entrepreneurial, and digital skills. Technical skills refer to the specific knowledge and abilities required to perform a particular job or task, often involving specialized tools, software, or equipment (Khang *et al.,* 2023). According to Patel *et al.* (2023), technical skills are the abilities and knowledge needed to perform specific tasks, such as programming, data analysis, or engineering, essential for success in a particular field or occupation. Vocational skills, as defined by Schulz *et al.* (2023), are the skills and knowledge required to perform a specific occupation or trade, often acquired through formal training or apprenticeships. Makhmudovich (2025) defined vocational skills as the practical skills and competencies needed to perform a particular job or occupation, often in a specific industry or sector.

Entrepreneurial skills are the abilities and competencies required to start, grow, and manage a business, including innovation, risk-taking, and leadership skills (Harrison, 2023). Ogbari (2023) defined entrepreneurial skills as the skills and knowledge needed to identify and pursue business opportunities, manage resources, and take calculated risks to achieve business success.
Digital skills are the skills and competencies required to effectively use digital technologies, such as computers, smartphones, and software, to access, evaluate, and create information (Carabregu-Vokshi *et al.*, 2024). According to Reddy *et al.* (2023), digital skills refer to the range of skills and competencies needed to navigate, evaluate, and create digital content, including skills such as coding, data analysis, and digital literacy Employment generation, according to Ausat *et al.* (2023), refers to the process of creating new job opportunities and increasing the number of employed individuals in an economy or industry, whereas Kritikos (2024) viewed employment generation as the creation of new employment opportunities through various means, such as entrepreneurship, innovation, and investment, which contributes to economic growth and development.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework in Figure 1 illustrates the relationship between the Strategic Skill Acquisition Scheme and Employment Generation. The framework posits that the Strategic Skill Acquisition Scheme, comprising Technical, Vocational, Entrepreneurial, and Digital Skills,

directly influences Employment Generation. This suggests that acquiring these skills through strategic schemes can increase employment opportunities.

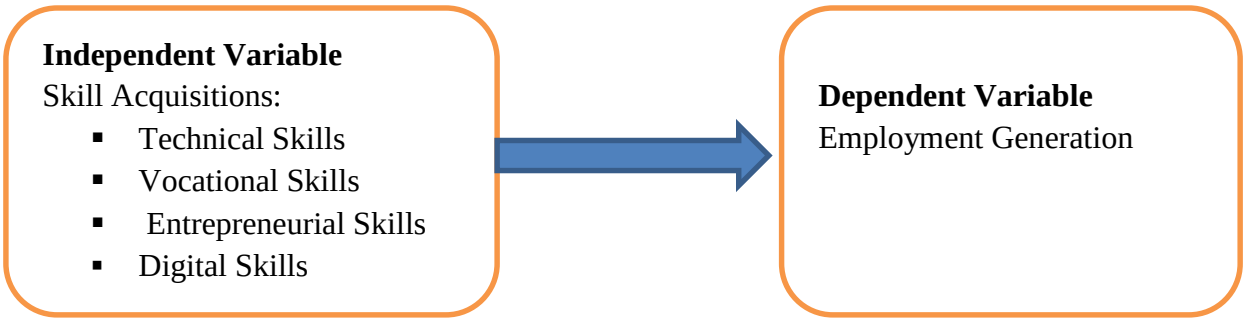

Figure1: Conceptual Framework
Source: Author's Computation (2025)

Theoretical Review

Human Capital Theory: The Human Capital Theory was propounded by Gary Becker in 1964. This theory assumes that individuals and organizations invest in education, training, and skills development to increase productivity and employability (Becker, 1964). According to Becker, human capital refers to the stock of skills, knowledge, and experience an individual or population possesses, viewed in terms of their value or cost to an organization or country. The theory posits that investments in human capital can lead to improved economic outcomes, such as higher earnings and employment opportunities. Human Capital Theory emphasizes the importance of education and training in enhancing an individual's productivity and employability.

Skills Development Theory: The Skills Development Theory emphasizes the importance of acquiring relevant skills and competencies for employability and economic growth (Asher, 1990). This theory assumes skills development is a key driver of economic growth and employability. It posits that individuals and organizations that invest in skills development are more likely to adapt to changing labor market demands, improve productivity, and increase their chances of employment. Skills Development Theory highlights the significance of strategic skill acquisition in enhancing employability and contributing to economic growth. The Human Capital Theory serves as the theoretical framework for this study. This theory is most relevant because it directly links investments in education, training, and skills development to increased productivity and employability. The theory's emphasis on the value of human capital in enhancing economic outcomes, such as higher earnings and employment opportunities, aligns perfectly with the topic's focus on strategic skill acquisition and employment generation.

Empirical Review

Reviewing previous skills acquisition and employment generation studies reveals insightful findings on the relationship between these variables. For instance, Carswell & De Neve (2024) conducted a study in the Tiruppur textile region, India, to explore how skills for garment work are

acquired, focusing on the variables of skill acquisition pathways and employment outcomes. The study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining a quantitative survey with qualitative interviews with garment workers. The results showed that rather than being formally trained for employment, workers gained skills from employment and upskilled themselves through self-directed learning and spatial and job mobility.

Upadhya RoyChowdhury (2024) examined the role of skill training centers in producing a workforce for India's new service economy, focusing on variables such as skill training, migration, and employment outcomes. The study used qualitative methods to gather data, revealing that graduates of training programs often ended up in low-end and low-paid urban service jobs that did not match their expectations or aspirations. The results suggest that skill training centers create a precarious workforce that caters to the needs of organized service industries rather than lifting rural youth out of poverty. Ekankumo and Ebiere (2025) investigated the relationship between entrepreneurship education and graduate employment generation in tertiary institutions in Bayelsa State, Nigeria. The study focused on variables such as opportunity recognition competency, innovative competency, risk management competency, and financial literacy competency. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data from randomly selected students and analyze it using percentages. The results revealed a strong and positive relationship between graduate employment and acquiring entrepreneurial skills.

Alabi (2025) conducted a study in South-south and Southeast Nigeria, examining the relationship between entrepreneurial skills acquisition and business education students' empowerment for employability. The study used a descriptive survey research design, administering a questionnaire to 106 postgraduate students, and employed mean and standard deviation to answer research questions. In contrast, a t-test was used to test hypotheses. The results revealed that problem-solving skills allow one to utilize one's potential, and it was recommended that the university curriculum produce graduates with critical and creative thinking skills. Yetunde and Oyebanjo (2025) determined the impact of entrepreneurship skill acquisition through the Skills Acquisition and Entrepreneurship Development (SAED) program on employment outcomes and business startups in Nigeria. The study focused on SAED graduates and assessed the program's effectiveness in post-project employment status and entrepreneurship skills development. The analysis was carried out using descriptive statistics. The findings indicate that the SAED program positively impacts Nigerian graduates by providing alternative entrepreneurial paths and promoting awareness, enabling them to start small businesses.

Oluwalola (2025) conducted a study in Kwara State, Nigeria, to investigate the entrepreneurial skills essential for business education graduates to foster employment generation. The study employed a descriptive survey design, utilizing a structured and validated questionnaire to collect data from 217 business educators. The data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics (ANOVA and independent sample t-tests). The results showed that entrepreneurial skill

acquisition significantly equips graduates for employment generation. Oluwatoyin *et al.* (2024) analyzed the socioeconomic factors influencing entrepreneurship mindset development among vocational and technical education postgraduate students in Southeast Nigeria. The study focused on variables such as cultural and financial background factors and used a descriptive survey research design, administering a structured questionnaire to a sample of 206 postgraduate students. The data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics, and the results revealed that thirteen cultural background factors and nine financial background factors influence entrepreneurship mindset development.

David *et al.* (2024) conducted a study in Epe Local Government, Lagos State, Nigeria, examining the entrepreneurship skills business education students need for employability. The study focused on variables such as marketing, networking, critical thinking, and financial literacy and used a descriptive research design, administering a validated questionnaire to a sample of 278 students. The results showed that business education students must develop various entrepreneurship skills to prepare them for the competitive business world. Ambali *et al.* (2022) determined the impact of entrepreneurship education on job creation and employability of undergraduate students in Kwara State, Nigeria. The study focused on specialized skills acquisition, self-reliance, and workforce training. It used a descriptive survey research design, administering a self-developed questionnaire to a sample of 361 respondents. The results revealed that entrepreneurship education enables students to acquire specialized skills for self-reliance and workforce training, highlighting the importance of vocational training in job creation.

Literature Gaps

Several gaps exist in the existing literature on skill acquisition and employment generation. Firstly, most studies have focused on specific aspects of skill acquisition, such as entrepreneurship education (Ekankumo & Ebiere, 2025; Alabi, 2025; Ambali *et al.,* 2022) or vocational training (Carswell & De Neve, 2024; Upadhya & RoyChowdhury, 2024), without considering the comprehensive concept of strategic skill acquisition that includes technical, vocational, entrepreneurial, and digital skills.

Moreover, there is a geographical gap, as previous studies have been conducted in regions outside Kaduna State, Nigeria. For instance, studies were conducted in Bayelsa State (Ekankumo & Ebiere, 2025), South-south and Southeast Nigeria (Alabi, 2025), Kwara State (Oluwalola, 2025; Ambali *et al.,* 2022), and Lagos State (David *et al.,* 2024), highlighting the need for research in Kaduna North LGA. The methodologies used in previous studies have varied, including qualitative methods, descriptive survey designs, and mixed-methods approaches. This study will utilize an ordinal regression model to analyze the relationship between strategic skill acquisition and employment generation, providing a unique perspective.

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METHODOLOGY

This study employs a survey research design because it allows for the efficient collection of quantitative data from a large population. The study's area is Kaduna North Local Government Area (LGA), which has a population of over 423,580 people as of 2006 (National Population Commission, 2006). The study's population comprises working-age individuals (18-60 years), encompassing those unemployed or underemployed. More so, the study employs a multi-stage sampling technique, combining stratified and simple random sampling methods. The process involves dividing the population of Kaduna North Local Government Area into strata based on wards. From these strata, a subset of wards is randomly selected to participate in the study. Furthermore, the study applies Taro Yamane's formula for calculating sample size, as shown in equation 3.1.

$$n = \frac{N}{1+ N (e)2} \quad \text{.....3.1}$$

Where: n=sample size, N=Population, e^2= Degree of Error (0.05).

$$n = \frac{423{,}580}{1+423{,}580(0.05)^2}, \; n = \frac{423{,}580}{1059.95}$$, n=399.62=400 approximately

Furthermore, a closed-ended questionnaire with a 5-point Likert scale is used to gather primary data. The questionnaire's validity is established through expert review, and its reliability is confirmed using Cronbach's Alpha test, ensuring the instrument's consistency and accuracy. Ordinal regression modeling is used to estimate the model's parameters. This approach is particularly suitable for the ordinal dependent variable, employment generation, which is measured using a 5-point Likert scale, allowing for a better assessment of the relationship between the variables.

Model Specification

This study adapts the model developed by Yetunde & Oyebanjo (2025) as shown in equation 1 as follows:

$$EG=f(ESA) \quad \text{.....1}$$

Where: EG=Employment Generation, ESA= Entrepreneurship Skill Acquisition

However, this study identifies limitations in the original model proposed by Yetunde & Oyebanjo (2025), specifically its failure to account for various forms of skills acquisition, including technical, vocational, entrepreneurial, and digital skills. This study modifies the model to incorporate these diverse skills, resulting in a revised model that better captures the complex relationships between skills acquisition and employment generation.

$$EG = f(TS, VS, ES, DS) \quad \text{.....2}$$

Where: EG=Employment Generation, TS=Technical Skills, VS=Vocational Skills, ES=Entrepreneurial Skills, DS=Digital Skills.

The revised model can be econometrically specified as follows:

Print ISSN: 2053-5821(Print)

Online ISSN: 2053-583X (Online)

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$EG_i = \theta_0 + \theta_1 TS_i + {}_2VS_i + \theta_3 ES_i + \theta_4 DS_i + +\varepsilon_i$……..……..…..3

Where: ε=represents the error term, $\theta_0 - \theta_4$ =Parameters to be estimated, others as stated in equation 2

Variable and Measurement

Table 3.1: Description and Measurement of Variables in the Model

Variables	Measurement	Measurement Scale	Expected Sign
Dependent			
Employment Generation	This is used to measure respondents' perception regarding employment generation in Kaduna North LGA.	5 Likert Scale	-
Independents			
Technical Skills	This is used to measure respondents' perception regarding the level of technical skills in Kaduna North LGA.	5 Likert Scale	Positive
Vocational Skills	This is used to measure the perception of respondents in terms of the level of vocational skills in Kaduna North LGA	5 Likert Scale	Positive
Entrepreneurial Skills	This is used to measure the perception of respondents in terms of the level of entrepreneurial skills in Kaduna North	5 Likert Scale	Positive
Digital Skills.	This is used to measure the perception of respondents in terms of the level of digital skills in Kaduna North LGA	5 Likert Scale	Positive

Source: *Researcher's computation 2025*

Test of Significance

The ordinal regression model results will be used to test the null hypotheses, with a 5% significance level as the benchmark. A p-value less than 0.05 will lead to rejecting the null hypothesis in favor of the alternative hypothesis, implying a statistically significant relationship between the variables. Conversely, a p-value greater than 0.05 will fail to reject the null hypothesis, indicating no statistically significant relationship.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Descriptive Statistics

Respondents' Perceptions Regarding Technical Skills

The study analyzed the respondents' perceptions regarding technical skills, as presented in Table 4.1

Table 4.1: Respondents' Perceptions Regarding Technical Skills

S/N	Item	SA 5	A 4	U 3	D 2	SD 1	Mean Score
1	Acquiring technical skills has improved my chances of getting employed.	122(40.0%)	128(42.0%)	35(11.5%)	13(4.3%)	7(2.3%)	4.03
2	Technical skills training has enhanced my productivity in my current job or business.	138(45.2%)	116(38.0%)	32(10.5%)	13(4.3%)	6(2.0%)	4.51

***Source**: Author's computation (2025), using SPSS version 20*

For the first survey item in Table 4.1, "Acquiring technical skills has improved my chances of getting employed," 122 respondents (40.0%) strongly agreed. In comparison, 128 respondents (42.0%) agreed, totaling 82% of respondents who believe technical skills enhance job prospects. Meanwhile, 35 respondents (11.5%) were undecided, 13 respondents (4.3%) disagreed, and 7 respondents (2.3%) strongly disagreed. The mean score of 4.03 further reinforces this finding, suggesting that respondents strongly believe in the value of technical skills for employment. Similarly, regarding the second survey item, "Technical skills training has enhanced my productivity in my current job or business," 138 respondents (45.2%) strongly agreed. In comparison, 116 respondents (38.0%) agreed, totaling 83.2% of respondents who believe technical skills training improves productivity. Furthermore, 32 respondents (10.5%) were undecided, 13 respondents (4.3%) disagreed, and six respondents (2.0%) strongly disagreed. The mean score of 4.51 indicates an even stronger positive perception, highlighting the significant impact of technical skills training on respondents' ability to perform their jobs efficiently.

Respondents' Perceptions Regarding Technical Skills

The study presents respondents' perceptions regarding technical skills in Table 4.2

Table 4.2: Respondents' Perceptions Regarding Technical Skills

S/N	Item	SA 5	A 4	U 3	D 2	SD 1	Mean Score
1	Vocational skills training has improved my ability to start and manage my business.	89(29.2%)	119(39.0%)	57(18.7%)	28(9.2%)	12(3.9%)	4.07
2	Vocational skills training has increased my employability.	123(40.3%)	145(47.5%)	29(9.5%)	5(1.6%)	3(1.0%)	4.10

***Source**: Author's computation (2025), using SPSS version 20*

Regarding the first survey item in Table 4.2, "Vocational skills training has improved my ability to start and manage my own business," 89 respondents (29.2%) strongly agreed, and 119

respondents (39.0%) agreed, totaling 68.2% of respondents who believe vocational skills training enhances entrepreneurship abilities. Additionally, 57 respondents (18.7%) were undecided, 28 respondents (9.2%) disagreed, and 12 respondents (3.9%) strongly disagreed. The mean score of 4.07 supports this finding, indicating that respondents value vocational skills training for entrepreneurship.

In terms of the second survey item, "Vocational skills training has increased my employability," a significant majority of respondents agreed, with 123 respondents (40.3%) strongly agreeing and 145 respondents (47.5%) agreeing, totaling 87.8% of respondents who believe vocational skills training boosts employability. Furthermore, 29 respondents (9.5%) were undecided, 5 respondents (1.6%) disagreed, and 3 respondents (1.0%) strongly disagreed. The mean score of 4.10 reinforces this finding, suggesting that respondents strongly believe vocational skills training enhance their job prospects.

Respondents' Perceptions Regarding Entrepreneurial Skills

Table 4.3 presents the respondents' perceptions regarding entrepreneurial skills.

Table 4.3: Respondents' Perceptions Regarding Entrepreneurial Skills

S/N	Item	SA 5	A 4	U 3	D 2	SD 1	Mean Score
1	Entrepreneurial skills training has equipped me with the knowledge to start and manage a successful business.	95(31.1%)	150(49.2%)	38(12.5%)	14(4.6%)	8(2.6%)	4.06
2	Entrepreneurial skills training has enhanced my confidence in running a business.	80(26.2%)	172(56.4%)	32(10.5%)	14(4.6%)	7(2.3%)	4.04

***Source**: Author's computation (2025), using SPSS version 20*

For the first survey item in Table 4.3, "Entrepreneurial skills training has equipped me with the knowledge to start and manage a successful business," 95 respondents (31.1%) strongly agreed, and 150 respondents (49.2%) agreed, totaling 80.3% of respondents who believe entrepreneurial skills training provides valuable knowledge for business success. Additionally, 38 respondents (12.5%) were undecided, 14 respondents (4.6%) disagreed, and eight respondents (2.6%) strongly disagreed. The mean score of 4.06 supports this finding, indicating that respondents value entrepreneurial skills training for acquiring business knowledge.

More so, in terms of the second survey item, "Entrepreneurial skills training has enhanced my confidence in running a business," 80 respondents (26.2%) strongly agreed, and 172 respondents (56.4%) agreed, totaling 82.6% of respondents who believe entrepreneurial skills training boosts

their confidence. Furthermore, 32 respondents (10.5%) were undecided, 14 respondents (4.6%) disagreed, and 7 respondents (2.3%) strongly disagreed. The mean score of 4.04 reinforces this finding, suggesting that respondents strongly believe entrepreneurial skills training enhances their business confidence.

Respondents' Perceptions Regarding Digital Skills

Table 4.4 displays the respondents' perceptions regarding digital skills

Table 4.4: Respondents' Perceptions Regarding Digital Skills

S/N	Item	SA 5	A 4	U 3	D 2	SD 1	Mean Score
1	Digital skills training has improved my ability to access and utilize digital tools and technologies.	117(38.4%)	126(41.3%)	45(14.8%)	11(3.6%)	6(2.0%)	4.06
2	Digital skills training has enhanced my productivity and efficiency in my current job or business.	147(48.2%)	122(40.0%)	22(7.2%)	10(3.3%)	4(1.3%)	4.04

***Source**: Author's computation (2025), using SPSS version 20*

Concerning the first survey item in Table 4.4, "Digital skills training has improved my ability to access and utilize digital tools and technologies," 117 respondents (38.4%) strongly agreed, and 126 respondents (41.3%) agreed, totaling 79.7% of respondents who believe digital skills training enhances their ability to use digital tools. Additionally, 45 respondents (14.8%) were undecided, 11 respondents (3.6%) disagreed, and 6 respondents (2.0%) strongly disagreed. The mean score of 4.06 supports this finding, indicating that respondents value digital skills training for improving their digital literacy.

Regarding the second survey item, "Digital skills training has enhanced my productivity and efficiency in my current job or business," 147 respondents (48.2%) strongly agreed, and 122 respondents (40.0%) agreed, totaling 88.2% of respondents who believe digital skills training boosts productivity. Furthermore, 22 respondents (7.2%) were undecided, 10 respondents (3.3%) disagreed, and 4 respondents (1.3%) strongly disagreed. The mean score of 4.04 reinforces this finding, suggesting that respondents strongly believe digital skills training enhances their productivity and efficiency.

Respondents' Perceptions Regarding Employment Generation

The perceptions of respondents regarding employment generation are presented in Table 4.5

Table 4.5: Respondents' Perceptions Regarding Employment Generation

S/N	Item	SA 5	A 4	U 3	D 2	SD 1	Mean Score
1	I am satisfied with my current job situation.	5(1.6%)	13(4.3%)	58(19.0%)	111(36.4%)	118(38.7%)	1.26
2	Skill acquisition programs have increased my ability to secure a job or start a business.	121(39.7%)	118(38.7%)	44(14.4%)	14(4.6%)	8(2.6%)	4.54

***Source**: Author's computation (2025), using SPSS version 20*

For the first item, "I am satisfied with my current job situation," the results show a high level of dissatisfaction, with 118 respondents (38.7%) strongly disagreeing and 111 respondents (36.4%) disagreeing, totaling 75.1% of respondents who are not satisfied with their current job situation. Additionally, 58 respondents (19.0%) were undecided, 13 respondents (4.3%) agreed, and 5 respondents (1.6%) strongly agreed. The mean score of 1.26 indicates a strong negative perception, suggesting that many respondents are unhappy with their current job situation.

Regarding the second item, "Skill acquisition programs have increased my ability to secure a job or start my own business," the results show a positive perception, with 121 respondents (39.7%) strongly agreeing and 118 respondents (38.7%) agreeing, totaling 78.4% of respondents who believe skill acquisition programs enhance employability. Furthermore, 44 respondents (14.4%) were undecided, 14 respondents (4.6%) disagreed, and 8 respondents (2.6%) strongly disagreed. The score of 4.54 reinforces this finding, indicating that respondents strongly believe skill acquisition programs improve their ability to secure a job or start a business.

Correlation Matrix Estimate on the Impact of Strategic Skill Acquisition on Employment Generation in Kaduna North Local Government Area

The study tests the degree and nature of the relationship between the variables using a correlation matrix and displays the results in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Correlation Matrix

	EG	TS	VS	ES	DS
EG	1				
TS	.546	1			
VS	.405	.010	1		
ES	.520	.250	-.073	1	
DS	.526	.349	-.037	.488	1

***Source:** Author's computation (2025), using SPSS version 20*. EG=Employment Generation, TS=Technical Skills, VS=Vocational Skills, ES=Entrepreneurial Skills, DS=Digital Skills.

From the results in Table 4.6, the correlation coefficient between employment generation and technical skills is 0.546, indicating a moderate positive relationship. This suggests that acquiring technical skills enhances employability and contributes to employment generation. Similarly, the correlation coefficient between employment generation and vocational skills is 0.405, indicating a moderate positive relationship. The analysis also shows positive correlations between employment generation and entrepreneurial skills, with a coefficient of 0.520, and between employment generation and digital skills, with a coefficient of 0.226.

Ordinal Regression Model Estimate on the impact of Strategic Skill Acquisition on Employment Generation in Kaduna North Local Government Area

The study estimates the coefficients of the variables using the ordinal regression model and presented the result is in Table 4.7

Table 4.7: Estimated Ordinal Regression Model

DV=EG								
Variables	Estimate	Std. Error	Wald	df	Sig.	Odd Ratio	95% Confidence Interval	
							Lower Bound	Upper Bound
TS	.421	.185	5.178	1	.030**	1.524	.459	1.182
VS	.152	.146	1.084	1	.298	1.164	-.135	.439
ES	.520	.176	8.757	1	.003*	1.682	.176	.864
DS	.369	.184	4.041	1	.044**	1.446	.009	.729

Source: *Author's computation (2025), using SPSS version 20*. EG=Employment Generation, TS=Technical Skills, VS=Vocational Skills, ES=Entrepreneurial Skills, DS=Digital Skills, * &**= significance at 1% & 5% respectively

The results show that technical skills significantly positively impact employment generation with a coefficient of 0.821, odd ratio of 1.524, significant at the 5% level (p-value = 0.030). The odds ratio of 1.524 indicates that a one-unit increase in technical skills is associated with a 52.4% significant increase in the odds of employment generation. Similarly, entrepreneurial skills significantly positively impact employment generation with a coefficient of 0.520 and odd ratio of 1.682, significant at the 1% level (p-value = 0.003). The odds ratio of 1.682 indicates that a one-unit increase in Entrepreneurial Skills is associated with a 68.2% significant increase in the odds of employment generation, holding other variables constant.

Similarly, digital skills significantly positively impact employment generation with a coefficient of 0.369 and odd ratio of 1.446, significant at the 5% level (p-value = 0.044). The odds ratio of 1.446 indicates that a one-unit increase in Digital Skills is associated with a 44.6% significant increase in the odds of employment generation, holding other variables constant. However, vocational skills do not significantly impact employment generation, with a coefficient of 0.152,

an odd ratio of 1.164, and a p-value of 0.298. The odds ratio of 1.164 indicates that a one-unit increase in Vocational Skills is associated with a 16.4% insignificant increase in the odds of employment generation

Diagnostic Test

The diagnostic tests for the estimated ordinal regression model are presented in Table 4.8

Table 4.8: Diagnostic Test

Pseudo R-Square			
Cox and Snell			.589
Nagelkerke			.526
McFadden			.504
Goodness-of-Fit			
	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Pearson	948.006	668	.061
Deviance	573.964	668	.996

***Source**: Author's computation (2025), using SPSS version 20*

The Cox and Snell R-Square value of 0.589 and the Nagelkerke R-Square value of 0.526 suggest that the model explains a substantial amount of variance in employment generation, approximately 52.6% to 58.9%. The McFadden R-Square value of 0.504 also indicates a good fit for the model. More so, the Goodness-of-Fit test results provide further evidence of the model's adequacy. The Pearson Chi-Square statistic of 948.006 with a p-value of 0.061 suggests that the model fits the data adequately, as the p-value is slightly above the significance level of 0.05. The Deviance Chi-Square statistic of 573.964 with a p-value of 0.996 indicates that the model fits the data very well, as the p-value is far above the significance level of 0.05.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

It is anticipated that technical skills will be crucial in enhancing employment prospects. The results of this study support this notion, indicating that technical skills have a significant positive impact on employment generation, with a coefficient of 0.821 and an odds ratio of 1.524. This finding can be justified because technical skills provide individuals with specialized knowledge and competencies highly valued in the labor market, increasing their chances of securing employment. This finding aligns with studies such as Carswell and De Neve (2024), which highlighted the importance of skill acquisition in enhancing employability.

More so, entrepreneurial skills would be a key driver of employment generation. The results of this study confirm this expectation, indicating that entrepreneurial skills have a significant positive impact on employment generation, with a coefficient of 0.520 and an odds ratio of 1.682. This finding can be justified because entrepreneurial skills provide individuals with the knowledge and competencies to identify business opportunities, develop business plans, and manage businesses, thereby increasing their chances of securing employment or starting their businesses. This finding is consistent with studies such as Ekankumo & Ebiere (2025), Alabi (2025), and Oluwalola (2025), which emphasized the importance of entrepreneurial skill acquisition in enhancing employability and promoting employment generation.

Similarly, it is reasonable to assume that digital skills would be essential for employment in today's digital economy. The results of this study support this assumption, indicating that digital skills have a significant positive impact on employment generation, with a coefficient of 0.369 and an odds ratio of 1.446. This finding can be justified because digital skills provide individuals with the knowledge and competencies required to work in the digital economy, increasing their chances of securing employment.

It is plausible that vocational skills would significantly impact employment generation. However, the results of this study contradict this expectation, indicating that vocational skills have an insignificant impact on employment generation, with a coefficient of 0.152 and an odds ratio of 1.164. This finding can be justified because vocational skills may not align with the labor market's needs, or vocational training programs may not provide individuals with the skills required to secure employment. This finding contrasts with studies such as Ambali et al. (2022), which highlighted the importance of vocational training in job creation. However, it is worth noting that Upadhya RoyChowdhury (2024) found that skill training centers may contribute to creating a precarious workforce that caters to the needs of organized service industries rather than lifting rural youth out of poverty, which may suggest that the impact of vocational skills on employment generation may depend on the specific context and implementation of vocational training programs.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study highlight the critical importance of strategic skill acquisition in driving employment generation in Kaduna North Local Government Area, Kaduna State, Nigeria. The significant positive impact of technical, entrepreneurial, and digital skills on employment generation highlights the need for targeted interventions to develop these skills. Conversely, the insignificant impact of vocational skills suggests a need for reevaluation and adaptation to emerging trends. Based on the results, the study recommends the following:

i. Government policymakers and educators should prioritize technical skills development programs by establishing vocational training centers that focus on technical skills development, collaborating with industries to provide on-the-job training and internships, and providing access to modern technology and equipment for practical training.
ii. Government, Policymakers, and educators should emphasize entrepreneurial skills training by integrating entrepreneurship education into school curricula, providing training and mentorship programs for aspiring entrepreneurs, and offering access to funding and resources for startups and small businesses.
iii. Government, Policymakers, and educators should introduce digital literacy programs in schools and training centers, provide access to digital tools and platforms for practical training, and collaborate with tech companies to offer training and certification programs.
iv. Given the insignificant impact of vocational skills on employment generation, policymakers and educators should reassess vocational skills programs by thoroughly reviewing existing programs, identifying areas for improvement, and updating curricula to align with industry needs.

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