



Entrepreneurial Skill Acquisition and Student's Entrepreneurial Intention in Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin

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Abstract

High levels of graduate unemployment and the shrinking availability of government employment opportunities have raised serious concerns about the low entrepreneurial intention among students in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Although, entrepreneurship is widely recognized as a key driver for reducing unemployment and fostering economic development. It is against this backdrop, this study examines the effect of entrepreneurial skill acquisition on students' entrepreneurial intention at Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin. A cross-sectional survey research design was adopted, and a sample of 351 students was selected from a total population of 4,198 using the Krejcie and Morgan sample size determination table. The respondents were drawn from six departments within the Institute of Financial and Management Studies. Data were collected through structured questionnaires and multiple linear regression was used in order to determine the effect of entrepreneurial skill acquisition on entrepreneurial intention. The findings reveal a positive and significant effect between managerial skills and entrepreneurial intention (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.382$, $p < 0.05$). Similarly, technological skills were found to have a positive and significant effect on entrepreneurial intention (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.366$, $p < 0.05$), while personal skills also significantly influenced entrepreneurial intention (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.121$, $p < 0.05$). The study concludes that the development of personal, technological, and managerial skills is essential in enhancing students' entrepreneurial intention. Consequently, it recommends that polytechnics should strengthen entrepreneurship education by incorporating training programs, seminars, and practical sessions aimed at improving students' entrepreneurial competencies.

Keyword: Entrepreneurship skill acquisition, Entrepreneurial intention, Managerial skill, Technical skill and Personal skill

1.0 Introduction

The rise in global demand as a result of technological advancement and economic instability has brought about increase in unemployment among students in Nigerian tertiary institutions. As such, entrepreneurial intention served as factors that stimulate students' willingness to engage in entrepreneurial activities (Adebisi, 2018). Entrepreneurial intention refers to an individual's conscious state of mind that directs attention, experience, and action toward starting a new business (Hassan *et al.*, 2025). Entrepreneurial intention is widely regarded as the most reliable predictor of actual entrepreneurial behavior, as individuals are unlikely to engage in entrepreneurial activities without first forming a strong intention to do so (Akinkuolie *et al.*, 2024).

Students' entrepreneurial intention plays a crucial role in economic development, particularly in countries such as Nigeria where the labor market is unable to absorb the growing number of

graduates (Hassan *et al.*, 2025). When students develop strong entrepreneurial intentions, they are more likely to establish small and medium-scale enterprises that generate employment, stimulate innovation, enhance productivity, and contribute to sustainable economic growth (Akinkuolie *et al.*, 2024). As tertiary institutions produce graduates who are job creators rather than job seekers, entrepreneurial intention among students becomes a vital tool for addressing unemployment, poverty, and economic dependence (Adeyemi and Olabosinde, 2022).

Despite its importance, students' entrepreneurial intention in many Nigerian tertiary institutions remains relatively low (Salau *et al.*, 2024). Several challenges hinder the development of entrepreneurial intention among students, including inadequate practical exposure to entrepreneurship, limited access to startup capital, fear of business failure, poor entrepreneurial mindset, insufficient institutional support, and overreliance on paid employment after graduation (Okafor *et al.*, 2018; Sayeed and Samuel, 2024; Akinkuolie *et al.*, 2024). Additionally, entrepreneurship education in many institutions is often theoretical, with limited emphasis on skill-based and experiential learning, which reduces students' confidence and readiness to pursue entrepreneurial careers (Hassan *et al.*, 2025).

In response to these challenges, entrepreneurial skill acquisition has been identified as a critical mechanism for strengthening students' entrepreneurial intention (Usman and Markus, 2024). Entrepreneurial skill acquisition involves the development of practical competencies, knowledge, and abilities required to identify opportunities, mobilize resources, and successfully manage business ventures (Adeyemi and Olabosinde, 2022). Specifically, managerial skills equip students with the ability to plan, organize, lead, and control business operations, thereby increasing their confidence to manage enterprises (Ahmad and Ahmad, 2021). Technical skill enhances students' capacity to leverage modern technologies for innovation, production, and digital business operations, making entrepreneurship more attractive and feasible (Santoso, 2024). Personal skills, such as creativity, risk-taking, self-confidence, and problem-solving, help students develop a positive entrepreneurial mindset and resilience necessary for entrepreneurial pursuits (Blaique *et al.*, 2023).

Although several studies have examined entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention (Do Nguyen and Nguyen, 2023; Kolade *et al.*, 2023), empirical evidence on the specific role of entrepreneurial skill acquisition particularly its managerial, technological, and personal dimensions remain limited within the context of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, despite its strategic role in technical and vocational education. This gap in the literature necessitates need to investigate the effect of entrepreneurial skill acquisition and student's entrepreneurial intention in Kwara state Polytechnic, Ilorin with the following specific objectives:

- i. To evaluate the effect of managerial skill on student's entrepreneurial intention in Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin.
- ii. To examine the impact of technical skill on student's entrepreneurial intention in Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin.
- iii. To investigate the effect of personal skill on student's entrepreneurial intention in Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin.

The following null hypotheses were formulated in line with the specific objectives above:

- i. Managerial skill does not have any significant effect on student's entrepreneurial intention in Kwara State Polytechnic.
- ii. There is no significant impact of technical skill on student's entrepreneurial intention in Kwara State Polytechnic.

- iii. Personal skill does not have any significant effect on student's entrepreneurial intention in Kwara State Polytechnic.

2.0 Literature Review

Entrepreneurial skill acquisition

According to Hassan *et al.*, (2025) entrepreneurial skill acquisition is a process of learning or acquiring a particular skill, knowledge or the needed behaviour to succeed in business. These entrepreneurial skill acquisition helps to identify and exploit an entrepreneurial opportunity for the purpose of job creation. Entrepreneurial skills are those skills that will enable an entrepreneur to manage an enterprise successfully with sound and updated knowledge (Jimoh *et al.*, 2017). Entrepreneurial skill acquisition is the process of acquiring business skill which enables potential entrepreneurs to function well in dynamic business environment. Entrepreneurial skills are equally important because it entails sets of skills that are required by an entrepreneur to successfully run a business and add value to work, these skills must be available and used in the right format (Salau *et al.*, 2024). Furthermore, entrepreneurial skills can be acquired through entrepreneurship training session, seminars, workshops, conferences and presentations (Sayeed and Samuel, 2022). This implies that when any of these methods are employed by undergraduates, it will help them acquire the necessary skill needed to develop entrepreneurial intention (Shaw, 2022). Exploiting a particular opportunity depends largely on human capital. The skills could be in form of managerial skills, personal skills and technical skills.

Managerial skills

Managerial skills involved the ability of individual to plan, communicate, coordinate, set goals and make decisions (Akinkuolie *et al.*, 2024). These skills are basic management function exhibited by business owner in order to realize the set objectives (Sayeed and Samuel, 2022). Managerial skills are essential in day-to-day running of the business. Additionally, managerial skills are expected to contribute to how effective an individual will be in managing an enterprise successfully. The managerial skills will enhance managerial effectiveness and also promote entrepreneurial intention (Usman and Markus, 2024).

Technical skills

Technical skills are set of skills necessary to develop knowledge and attitudes needed for development of innovative goods and service (Hassan *et al.*, 2025). This skill is paramount because it teaches individuals how to make use of technical tools necessary for activities in every business line, as every business activity relies on using different programs, tools or a unique way of doing things. Technical skills enable entrepreneurs to have competitive advantage because it develops expertise in choosing business area (Lazear, 2019). Furthermore, technical skills are concerned with expertise and technical know-how in specific field of knowledge or tasks related in a particular sector or industry (Salau *et al.*, 2024). Technical skills are acquired through technical training, practical session, and formal education that are essential for entrepreneurs to effectively carry out their tasks and responsibilities (Singh, 2021).

Personal skills

Personal skills refer to the set of skills that individual possess that will be of assistance in making such a person a successful entrepreneur. These skills are risk taking, locus of control, pro-activeness and innovativeness (Hassan *et al.*, 2025). Personal skills involve knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours that enable an entrepreneur to spot business possibilities, foster innovation, and turn concepts into practical and profitable activities for a long-term existence

(Akinkuolie *et al.*, 2024). The skills include; analytical aptitude, good communication, sound reasoning, creativity, good judgment, foresight, intuition and originality.

Entrepreneurial intention

Entrepreneurial intention is defined as readiness of individuals to practice entrepreneurship by involving in entrepreneurial action to gain independence and launch a new business (Adebisi, 2018). Patricia and Silangen (2016) expressed entrepreneurial intention as the drive to begin or own a venture. It can also be seen as individual's desire to start an entrepreneurial business in the future (Patricia and Silangen, 2016). Entrepreneurial intention according to Bux and Honglin (2015) is the state of mind which determines and directs the actions of the individual towards the development and implementation of a new business venture. Certain factors influencing the entrepreneurial intention, these factors are individual factors and the contextual factors (Akinkuolie *et al.*, 2024). Individual factors includes; psychological traits, demographic factors, individual skills and prior knowledge, individual network and social ties while contextual factors includes; environmental support, environmental influences and organizational factors.

Entrepreneurial intention is expected to influence the decision to start a new business by mostly young individuals who have acquired certain entrepreneurial skill. This orientation and readiness to engage in entrepreneurial behaviour help in pursuing suitable career path and also assist in achieving personal goals and financial rewards (Hassan *et al.*, 2025).

Theoretical Review

This section provides a review of need for achievement theory as the theory underpinned relationship between the independent variables and dependent variable of the study.

Need for achievement (David McClelland, 1961)

The need for achievement theory was developed McClelland (1961). The theory is based on the assumption that need for achievement is one of the strongest psychological factors influencing entrepreneurial behaviour of individuals. Individuals with high need for achievement/success have a strong desire to be successful and they are more likely to develop entrepreneurial mindset (McClelland, 1961). Adebisi (2018) also suggested that individuals who possess a strong need for achievement are more likely to solve problems by themselves, set challenge goal, and strive to achieve it by their own efforts. Individuals with high need for achievement will contribute more in entrepreneurial activities because they discover innovative ways to enhance their performance. Need for achievement is very crucial in enhancing entrepreneurial intention as it determines how far an individual will go and the level of investment in entrepreneurship business (Usman & Markus, 2024). This theory is relevant this study because it is observed that high need for achievement will contribute effectively to the decision of acquiring entrepreneurial skills (managerial skills, personal skills and technical skills) will enable them to have varieties of skill necessary for success in their choosing entrepreneurial path (Salau *et al.*, 2024). It is also believed that people with high need for achievement will strive in acquiring similar skills as successful entrepreneurs does and this will automatically promote superior predisposition to promote high entrepreneurial intention than people who do not possess such skills.

Empirical Review

Hassan *et al.*, (2025) determined the impact of entrepreneurship education on the entrepreneurial intention and skills acquisition of tertiary institutions students in North-Eastern, Nigeria. A mixed-methods research design was employed and 269 Students were sampled using structured questionnaires and interviews. The study revealed that entrepreneurship

education significantly influenced students' technical competencies and shaped entrepreneurial intentions, including students' desire to start businesses and develop leadership and opportunity-recognition skills. The study concludes that entrepreneurship education is one of the catalysts for job creation, self-reliance, and national development.

Akinkuolie *et al*, (2024) examined the influence of entrepreneurial skills on entrepreneurial intention of business education undergraduates in South-West, Nigeria. Proportional sampling techniques was used and 642 Business education undergraduates Students were selected for the study. Therefore, the findings indicated that Students possess both financial management skills and marketing skills and these skills significantly influenced entrepreneurial intention of the selected undergraduate Students. The study furthered recommended that stakeholders should develop and grow entrepreneurial skills and attitudes with the aim of sustaining entrepreneurial intention among undergraduates.

Salau *et al* (2024) studied the relationship between entrepreneurial skills acquisition and employment generation intention in Kwara state. The study employed qualitative method to explore the research objectives in IVTEC Ajase-Ipo. Face-to-face interviews were conducted for 12 alumni of the selected institution across different regions of Kwara State. The findings revealed entrepreneurial skills were acquired through hands-on training, real-world projects, industry internships, interactive learning, mentorship, and extracurricular activities which also enhance job creation intention. The recommends that institution should prioritize practical entrepreneurial skills acquisition program in educational curriculum, establishing entrepreneurship centers, facilitating industry internships, raising awareness about skill acquisition and entrepreneurship, and providing ongoing support for entrepreneurs.

Consequently, after the review of related empirical, it is observed that reviewed studies focused on majorly on the general knowledge of entrepreneurship rather than looking at specific areas of knowledge in entrepreneurship. It is also obvious that previous studies focused on Students in Universities and Colleges of education who offers entrepreneurship courses not students in technical institutions like polytechnic. However, this study used personal skill which is observed to be individual skill as one the proxies and also this study filled a particular gap by limiting the population to the students in technical institutions (Polytechnic) to have conclusions on how entrepreneurial skills acquired by the students affect their entrepreneurial intentions.

3.0 Methodology

The study employed cross-sectional survey design to study the population at a specific time and to understand the difference between individual groups within the population studied. The study population comprised of the entire students of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin. However, for the purpose of clarity and ease access of data, the study was limited to HND 1 students in the institute of financial and management studies only. The total population of the entire HND 1 student for 2024/2025 academic session is 4198 across the six (6) different departments of the institute of financial and management studies, Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin according to Examination office. These departments include; the department of Business Administration and Management, Public administration, Marketing, Accountancy, Banking and Finance and Procurement and supply chain management. The sample size of 351 was determined using Krejcie and Morgan sample size determination table and self-administered questionnaire was used to elicit data from the sampled students. Therefore, simple random and stratified sampling techniques were used to select respondents while multiple linear regression analysis was used to analyse the data collected.

4.0 Result and Discussions

Table 1: The effect of managerial skill on entrepreneurial intention

Managerial skill	Standard coefficient	Significance (p)
Adjusted R ² =0.382	.520	0.000
F=222.187		

Source: Researcher's field survey (2025)

Table 1 indicates that, managerial skill regression coefficient of 0.382 shows a positive relationship between managerial skill and Student's entrepreneurial intention. This implies that a unit increase in managerial skill will yield to 38% units increase in Student's entrepreneurial intention. The result is therefore, statistically significant with a p-value of 0.000*** at P < 0.05 significant level. Based on this result, the study rejects the null hypothesis, and therefore accept the alternate hypothesis which states that, managerial skill has significant effect on Student's entrepreneurial intention in Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin.

Table 2: The Impact of Technical Skills on Entrepreneurial Intention

Technology skill	Standard coefficient	Significance (p)
Adjusted R ² .=0.366	.517	0.000
F=217.776		

Source: Researcher's field survey (2025)

Table 2 indicates that, technical skill regression coefficient of 0.366 shows a positive relationship between technical skill and Student's entrepreneurial intention. This implies that a unit increase in technical skill will yield to 36.6% units increase in Student's entrepreneurial intention. The result is therefore, statistically significant with a p-value of 0.000*** at P < 0.05 significant level. Based on this result, the study rejects the null hypothesis, and therefore accept the alternate hypothesis which states that, technical skill has significant effect on Student's entrepreneurial intention in Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin.

Table 3: The effect of Personal Skills on Entrepreneurial Intention

Personal skill	Standardized Coefficients	Significance (p)
	Beta (β)	
Adjusted R ² =0.121	0.361	0.000
F=54.666		

Source: Researcher's field survey (2025)

Table 3 indicates that, personal skill regression coefficient of 0.121 shows a positive relationship between personal skill and Student's entrepreneurial intention. This implies that a

unit increase in personal skill will yield to 12% units increase in Student's entrepreneurial intention. The result is therefore, statistically significant with a p-value of 0.000*** at $P < 0.05$ significant level. Based on this result, the study rejects the null hypothesis, and therefore accept the alternate hypothesis which states that, personal skill has significant effect on Student's entrepreneurial intention in Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin.

Tables 4: The effect of entrepreneurial skills acquisition on Entrepreneurial Intention

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	B		
(Constant)	1.569	.116			11.380	.000
Managerial skill	.122	.020	.220		5.043	.000
Technical skill	.162	.026	.275		5.011	.000
Personal skill	.289	.030	.408		8.970	.000

Source: Researcher's field survey (2025)

The table above shows that managerial skills significantly predicts 40.8% variation in entrepreneurial intention ($\beta=0.408$ $p=0.000$), followed technical skills which predicts 27.5% ($\beta=0.275$, $p=0.000$), lastly personal skills which predicts 22.0% variation in entrepreneurial intention ($\beta=0.220$, $p=0.000$).

Discussion of Findings

The result of finding above revealed that managerial skill has an effect on entrepreneurial intention such that a unit increase in perceived managerial skill caused about .220 unit decreases in perceived entrepreneurial intention scores which were statistically significant at 5% going by the p value (.000). Based on the result, the null hypothesis is rejected while the alternative hypothesis is accepted, thus, managerial skill has a significant effect on entrepreneurial intention.

Also, that technical skill has a significant impact on entrepreneurial intention such that a unit decrease in technical skill induced about .275 unit rise in entrepreneurial intention scores which was statistically significant at 5% going by the p value (.000). Based on the result, the null hypothesis is rejected and this implies technical skill has a significant impact on entrepreneurial intention.

Lastly, the study revealed that personal skill has an effect on entrepreneurial intention such that a unit increase in perceived personal skill caused about .030 unit decreases in perceived entrepreneurial intention scores which were statistically significant at 5% going by the p value (.000). Based on the result, the null hypothesis is rejected while the alternative hypothesis is accepted, thus, personal skill has a significant effect on entrepreneurial intention.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

The study concludes that the ability to promote entrepreneurial intention depends on the possession of entrepreneurial skills such as managerial, technical and personal. Therefore, it is important to build an atmosphere that will promote entrepreneurial mindset which is essential in preparing and motivating young graduates to have entrepreneurial intentions and also enable students to become job creators rather job seekers and to develop human intellectual capacity to become better and best in building viable economy for the nation.

However, managerial skills are seen as the most important skills because it determines the level at individual is equipped with needed management style to manage and run business successfully. In addition, entrepreneurial skills can also be acquired through online and physical training courses, seminar and conference. These teaching means contribute to better understanding and shape entrepreneurial intention among undergraduate students in Nigeria especially in Polytechnics.

The following recommendations were made in line with the study objectives:

- i. Higher Institutions should adopt instructional methods that will equip students with business management skills, technical and personal as these instructional methods will ensure that students become disciplined and creative individuals who are change oriented and resilient.
- ii. Furthermore, there is need for the schools to enhance the entrepreneurial intention of students via different mediums such as training courses, seminars and practical sessions
- iii. The duration and intensity of the entrepreneurship education and skill acquisition should be increased beyond a semester course for a better impact on undergraduate students.

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