



**EFFECT OF DIGITAL SKILLS ACQUISITION IN REDUCING RECIDIVISM IN  
ILARO MEDIUM SECURITY CORRECTIONAL FACILITY, OGUN STATE.**

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**Abstract**

The purpose of incarceration is to rehabilitate the offenders, to be productive and live a law-abiding life after incarceration. This study explores the effects of digital skills acquisition on reducing recidivism within Ilaro medium security correctional center. The study aims at examining how digital literacy and technological training programmes can empower incarceration individuals, enhances their prospects for re-integration into society and reduce the likelihood of reoffending. The study involves assessing the effect of basic computer literacy, coding and data analysis, digital marketing and Artificial Intelligence (AI) on reducing recidivism. Both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection through questionnaire administration and interview were adopted for the study. Data collected were analysed using descriptive, inferential and thematic analysis. It was discovered from the result of regression analysis that basic computer literacy has negative possibility of reducing recidivism while coding and data analysis, digital marketing and AI has positive possibility of reducing recidivism in Ilaro medium correctional center. The study concluded that basic computer literacy might not reduce recidivism but data analysis, AI knowledge and digital marketing has possibility of reducing recidivism in Ilaro medium security correctional center, Ogun State. The study recommends that government need to invest more in infrastructure that will enhance digital skills acquisition in correctional centers across Nigeria to reduce recidivism.

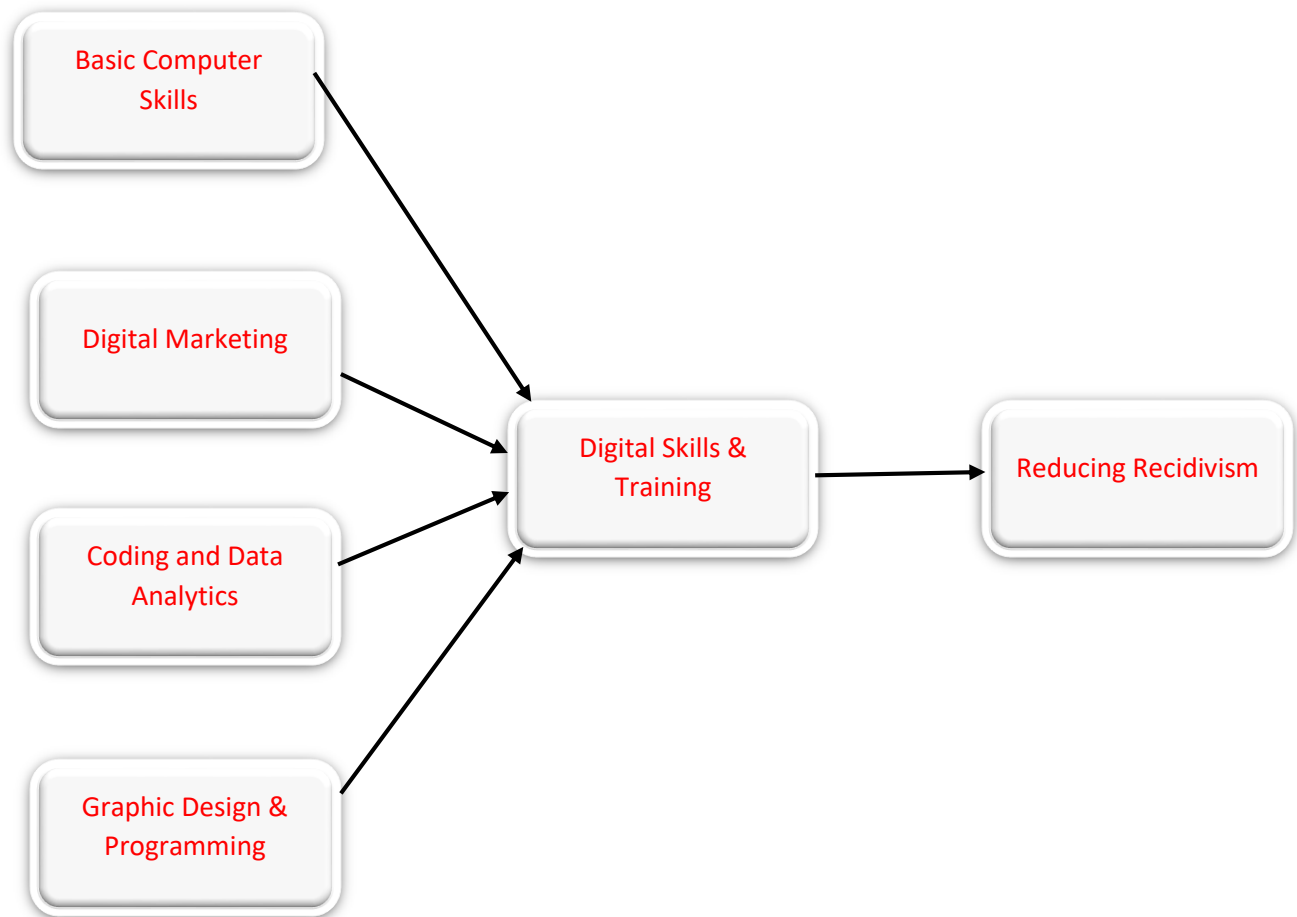
**Keywords:** Recidivism, Digital Skill, Medium Security, Correctional Center, Incarceration.

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## INTRODUCTION

Recidivism and its related challenges has become an issue of concerns globally among public administrators, sociologists, and political scientist and policymaker, counsellors, among others, with many correctional facilities struggling to rehabilitate and equip inmates with the necessary skills and expertise that will ensure a significant and effective reintegration into the society after incarceration (Ross et al, 2023; Anas et al, 2024). Nigerian Correctional Service in 2020 reported that about 40 percent of inmates in correctional facilities across the country are recidivist. This created an argument to what can be done to achieve an effective rehabilitation in the Nigerian correctional centers. The reformation and rehabilitation of interned should begin from the first minute and day in prison to the last minutes and day in the prison (Withers et al 2015, Aliyu, 2018; Alamu & Makinde, 2019), aiming at assisting offenders to develop skills and knowledge that will reintegrate them back to the society after incarceration.

Moral training, vocational training, art/craft learning, religious instruction, and educational programs are some of the programs or strategies that can be used to turn lawbreakers into law-abiding citizens by making crime unappealing to them (Makinde & Olabode, 2020; Alamu & Makinde, 2023). Digital skill acquisition can be particularly beneficial to the inmate, especially in the today's technology driven economy and society. Correctional facilities and their administrator, by providing inmates with digital skill increases their chance of gaining employment after the period of their incarceration. Many studies (ILO, 2020; Akinsanya et al, 2020; Abrifor et al, 2023; Badejo & Chakraborty, 2025) have shown that vocational training and education can help in reducing recidivism through provision of literacy, technical skills and numeracy course that will enhance employment of inmate after imprisonment. Some potential digital skills such as basic computer skills, graphic design, programming and coding, data analysis, digital marketing, among others, can help in reducing recidivism by providing opportunity for employment after incarceration (McDougall et al, 2017). However, further research is needed to explore how effective those digital skill acquisition programmes can help in reducing recidivism in the Nigerian correctional facilities. This study focuses on examining the effect of digital skills acquisition on reducing recidivism in Ilaro medium security correctional facilities, Ogun State. The choice of the facility is due to proximity to the research, and since prison service falls under exclusive legislative list with expected uniformity in rehabilitation programmes across the country. The study will help in providing research evidence for an informed policy and practices on rehabilitation programmes for inmates in the Nigerian correctional system. The framework for the study is;



*Source: Authors' Computation from literature*

## **MATERIAL AND METHODS**

The study adopted mixed method of survey research design based on positivism philosophy of studying natural and social phenomenon using scientific method of data collection and analysis. Quantative data were collected through administration of questionnaire to sampled inmates in Ilaro medium security correction facility, Ogun State and qualitative data were collected through a semi-structured interview with identified recidivist in the studied correctional facility. The population of the study comprised a total of 1,315 inmates (both awaiting trial and convicted inmate) in Ilaro medium security correctional facility as at 31st January, 2025. The study applied Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sampling technique to deduce 297 sample size for questionnaire administration. Interview were conducted to purposively selected 10 inmates who are identified as recidivist, to elicit information on the potential effect of digital skills acquisition on reducing recidivism in the Nigerian correctional system. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section provided analysis of data collected on the four variables of the study. This was done using descriptive statistics to show the level of agreement to questions raise on each variable of the study.

**Table 1: Digital marketing training can improve inmate chance of finding employment after release**

|       |                    | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|--------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Strongly Disagreed | 27        | 9.8     | 9.8           | 9.8                |
|       | Disagreed          | 26        | 9.4     | 9.4           | 19.2               |
|       | Agreed             | 39        | 14.1    | 14.1          | 33.3               |
|       | Strongly Agreed    | 184       | 66.7    | 66.7          | 100.0              |
|       | Total              | 276       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

**Source: Field work, 2025**

The answer to the question of whether digital marketing training can increase an inmate's chances of landing a job after being released is displayed in Table 1. The findings showed that training in digital marketing can increase an inmate's chances of obtaining work after release, with 9.8% strongly disagreeing, 9.4% disagreeing, 14.1% agreeing, and 66.7 highly agreeing.

**Table 2: Digital marketing training can help inmate to develop skills that can be applied in a real-world setting**

|       |                 | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|-----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Not at all      | 12        | 4.3     | 4.3           | 4.3                |
|       | A little extent | 23        | 8.3     | 8.3           | 12.7               |
|       | Some extent     | 168       | 60.9    | 60.9          | 73.6               |
|       | Great extent    | 73        | 26.4    | 26.4          | 100.0              |
|       | Total           | 276       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

**Source: Field work, 2025**

Table 2 shows the response to whether digital marketing training can help inmate to develop skills that can be applied in a real-world setting. It revealed that 4.3 percent of the total respondents stated no extent, 8.3 percent stated a little extent, 60.9 percent stated some extent and 26.4 percent stated great extent to which digital marketing training can help inmate to develop skills that can be applied in a real world setting.

**Table 3: How would you rate the influence of digital marketing**

|       |           | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|-----------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Very Poor | 15        | 5.4     | 5.4           | 5.4                |
|       | Poor      | 74        | 26.8    | 26.8          | 32.2               |
|       | Good      | 102       | 37.0    | 37.0          | 69.2               |
|       | Very Good | 85        | 30.8    | 30.8          | 100.0              |
|       | Total     | 276       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

Source: Field Work, 2025

According to Table 3, 5.4 percent of all respondents said that digital marketing has a very poor influence on recidivism reduction, 26.8 percent said that it has a poor influence, 37.0 percent said that it has a good influence, and 30.8 percent said that it has a very good influence.

**Table 4: The basic computer skills training has improved my ability to use**

|       |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Strongly Disagree | 23        | 8.3     | 8.3           | 8.3                |
|       | Disagree          | 35        | 12.7    | 12.7          | 21.0               |
|       | Agree             | 82        | 29.7    | 29.7          | 50.7               |
|       | Strongly Agree    | 136       | 49.3    | 49.3          | 100.0              |
|       | Total             | 276       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

Source: Field work, 2025

According to Table 4, 8.3 percent of the sampled respondents strongly disagreed that basic computer skill training has improved the ability of inmates to use computers for employment opportunities after being released from prison, 12.7 percent disagreed, 29.7 percent agreed, and 49.3 percent strongly agreed that it will improve inmates' ability to use computers for employment after being released from prison.

**Table 5: The training on basic computer skills has helped me to understand how**

|       |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Strongly Disagree | 12        | 4.3     | 4.3           | 4.3                |
|       | Disagree          | 37        | 13.4    | 13.4          | 17.8               |
|       | Agree             | 120       | 43.5    | 43.5          | 61.2               |
|       | Strongly Agree    | 107       | 38.8    | 38.8          | 100.0              |
|       | Total             | 276       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

Source: Field work, 2025

For example, Table 5 showed that 4.3 percent of respondents strongly disagreed, 13.4 percent disagreed, 43.5 percent agreed, and 38.8 percent strongly agreed that basic computer skills training has helped inmates understand how to generate income after incarceration.

**Table 6: How comfortable do you feel using computer for possible employment after release**

|       |                    | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|--------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Comfortable        | 12        | 4.3     | 4.3           | 4.3                |
|       | Fairly Comfortable | 159       | 57.6    | 57.6          | 62.0               |
|       | Very Comfortable   | 105       | 38.0    | 38.0          | 100.0              |
|       | Total              | 276       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

Source: Field work, 2025

Table 6 revealed that 4.3 percent stated that they are comfortable using computer for possible

employment after release from imprisonment, 57.6 percent of the respondents stated that they are fairly comfortable and 38.0 percent of the total respondents stated that they are very comfortable with using computer for possible employment after release from imprisonment.

**Table 7: The coding and data analysis skill and training has improved my understanding**

|       |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Strongly Disagree | 30        | 10.9    | 10.9          | 10.9               |
|       | Disagree          | 61        | 22.1    | 22.1          | 33.0               |
|       | Agree             | 93        | 33.7    | 33.7          | 66.7               |
|       | Strongly Agree    | 92        | 33.3    | 33.3          | 100.0              |
|       | Total             | 276       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

Source: Field work, 2025

Table 7 revealed that 10.9 percent of the total respondents strongly disagreed that coding and data analysis skill and training has improved inmate understanding for possible employment after release, 22.1 percent disagreed, 33.7 percent agreed and 33.3 percent strongly agreed that coding and data analysis skill and training has improved inmate understanding for possible employment after release.

**Table 8: How likely are you to use coding and data analysis skills for job after imprisonment**

|       |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Not at all Likely | 11        | 4.0     | 4.0           | 4.0                |
|       | Not Likely        | 14        | 5.1     | 5.1           | 9.1                |
|       | Likely            | 136       | 49.3    | 49.3          | 58.3               |
|       | Very Likely       | 115       | 41.7    | 41.7          | 100.0              |
|       | Total             | 276       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

Source: Field work, 2025

Table 8 revealed that 4.0 percent stated that is it not at all likely that coding and data analysis skills for job after imprisonment, 5.1 percent stated that it is not likely, 49.3 percent stated that it is likely and 41.7 percent stated that it is very likely that coding and data analysis skills will help on job after imprisonment.

**Table 9: How relevant do you think coding and data analysis skills for employment**

|       |                     | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|---------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Not at all Relevant | 46        | 16.7    | 16.7          | 16.7               |
|       | Not Relevant        | 42        | 15.2    | 15.2          | 31.9               |
|       | Relevant            | 109       | 39.5    | 39.5          | 71.4               |
|       | Very Relevant       | 79        | 28.6    | 28.6          | 100.0              |
|       | Total               | 276       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

Source: Field work, 2025

Table 9 revealed that 16.7 percent stated that coding and data analysis skills is not at all relevant for employment after release, 15.2 percent stated that is not relevant, 39.5 percent stated that it is relevant and 28.6 percent of the respondents stated that it is very relevant for employment.

**Table 10: How confident do you feel in your ability to create visual content using graphic design**

|       |                      | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|----------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Not Confident at all | 13        | 4.7     | 4.7           | 4.7                |
|       | Confident            | 24        | 8.7     | 8.7           | 13.4               |
|       | Fairly Confident     | 187       | 67.8    | 67.8          | 81.2               |
|       | Very Confident       | 52        | 18.8    | 18.8          | 100.0              |
|       | Total                | 276       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

Source: Field work, 2025

Table 10 revealed that 4.7 percent of respondents stated that inmate does not feel confidence at all in their ability to create visual content using graphic design, 8.7 percent of the respondents stated that they have confidence, 67.8 percent stated that they have fair confidence and 18.8 percent of the respondents stated that they are very confidence that their ability to create visual content using graphic design for employment after incarceration.

**Table 11: The programming training has helped you to develop logical thinking and analytical skills**

|       |                | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Disagree       | 42        | 15.2    | 15.2          | 15.2               |
|       | Agree          | 153       | 55.4    | 55.4          | 70.7               |
|       | Strongly Agree | 81        | 29.3    | 29.3          | 100.0              |
|       | Total          | 276       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

Source: Field work, 2025

Table 11 revealed that 15.2 percent of the total respondents disagreed that programming training has helped you to develop logical thinking and analytical skills, 55.4 percent agreed and 29.3 percent strong agreed that programming training has helped you to develop logical thinking and analytical skills.

**Table 12: How relevant do you think graphic design and programming skills are to finding employment after release**

|       |                     | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|---------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Not at all Relevant | 49        | 17.8    | 17.8          | 17.8               |
|       | Not Relevant        | 10        | 3.6     | 3.6           | 21.4               |
|       | Relevant            | 113       | 40.9    | 40.9          | 62.3               |
|       | Very Relevant       | 104       | 37.7    | 37.7          | 100.0              |
|       | Total               | 276       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

Source: Field work, 2025

Table 12 revealed that 17.8 percent of the respondents state that graphic design and programming skills are not at all relevant to finding employment after release, 3.6 percent stated that it is not relevant, 40.9 percent stated that it is relevant, and 37.7 percent stated that it is very relevant for finding employment after release.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study revealed that the study affirm that the effect of digital skills acquisition has a significant influence in reducing recidivism in Ilaro medium security correctional facility. The study established that digital training and skills has ability to enhance a successful rehabilitation and reintegration of inmate back into the society to become law abiding citizen with employment and economic opportunities. The study argued that lack of education and skills, social marginalization and unemployment are causes of re-offending or recidivism, which can be reduced engaging inmate in digital skills acquisition. Therefore, the study recommends for;

- i. The Nigerian Correctional Authority should institutionalize digital skill training and educations for inmate rehabilitation.
- ii. There should be rehabilitation programme document for inmate rehabilitation which should include digital skill acquisition.
- iii. Correctional Authority should collaborate with Tech Industry and Non-Governmental Organisation for inmate rehabilitation through digital training.

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