2025 Resilience & Resourcefulness Study:

Prepared By: Growthly

A Report on Tech Training to Employment of Graduates in Tech Ecosystems (Kaduna & Kano)

LETTER FROM THE CEO

"DESPITE MANY CHALLENGES AROUND EMPLOYMENT AND EMPLOYABILITY, THE RESILIENCE OF THE NIGERIAN YOUTH REMAINS UNBROKEN."

Y.A. Leinge

At Growthly, we help individuals and organisations make informed decisions using relevant data. Nigeria's youthful demographics positions it as a major influencer of the world's future. However, this potential remains largely untapped.

To unlock this potential, collective effort is essential. Governments must invest in human capital development, while companies and businesses must solve real problems while enhancing productivity.

The Growthly team compiled this report to shed light on the strength of the Nigerian spirit. Despite many challenges around employment and employability, the resilience of the Nigerian youth remains unbroken. From the outset, we had several questions, the most pressing being: Does tech training from hubs and co-working spaces improve young people's chances of gaining employment? The 2025 Resilience and Resourcefulness report takes a giant leap toward answering this question.

We hope that governments, policymakers, tech training providers, educators, and, indeed, Nigerian youths, will find this report valuable in crafting effective pathways to employment and job creation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Photo Credit: **Ihifix**

What are the employment realities of tech-trained graduates in Nigeria? Participants were recruited from three tech hubs: Colab and Ihifix in Kaduna (n=100) and Start-up Kano in Kano (n=50). Graduates who completed at least one 3-month+ tech training program in the past 2 years were eligible. Hub administrators shared the survey link with recent graduates. This study uncovered findings that fundamentally challenge conventional understanding about tech education and career success.

Employment Outcomes (n=150):

- Full-time tech employment: 25% (38 graduates)
- Part-time/freelance/contract tech work: 34% (51 graduates)
- Employed outside the tech sector: 10% (15 graduates)
- Unemployed: 31% (46 graduates)
- Key Finding: 59% work in tech roles total, but only 25% secured full-time positions.
- Soft skills tip technical skills for getting hired
- 100% of surveyed law graduates say they are employed in tech
- Working for international companies offers higher incomes, but only 16% of graduates access these opportunities
- Women earn more than their male counterparts, despite facing 14% lower employment rates
- Specialisation significantly impacts outcomes—DevOps graduates achieve 86% employment vs 60% for Digital Marketing (26-point gap)

This study surveyed 150 graduates from three tech hubs in Kaduna and Kano between January-May 2025 (25% response rate). Results may not generalize nationally. See full methodology on page 21.

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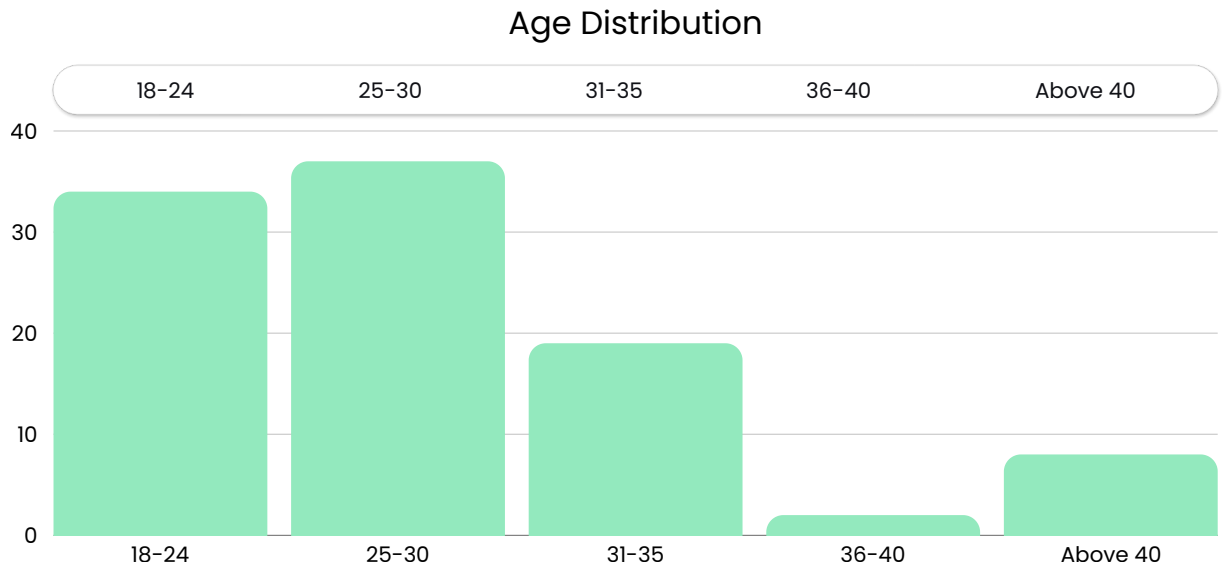
Study Benchmarks

	KADUNA STATE	KANO STATE
Nat. Graduate Unemployment Rate	LEAP AFRICA 40.5% 2023 Estimate	NBS 53% 2022 Estimate
Gross Domestic Product	BUDGIT 4.31 trillion naira 2022 Estimate	BUDGIT 4.26 trillion naira 2022 Estimate
Tech Ecosystem Global Ranking	1207th 2025 StartupBlink report	1120th 2025 StartupBlink report
Flagship Hub	Colab	Start-up Kano

Sources:
Nigeria Bureau of Statistics (NBS)
StartupBlink
LEAP Africa
BudgIT

SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

The survey results show that most of the participants are young, with the largest group falling between the ages of 25 and 30, making up about 37 percent of the total. Close behind are those aged 18 to 24, who account for 34 percent. Participants in the 31 to 35 range make up 19 percent, while only a small fraction—2 percent—fall between 36 and 40. Those above 40 years represent about 8 percent of the group.

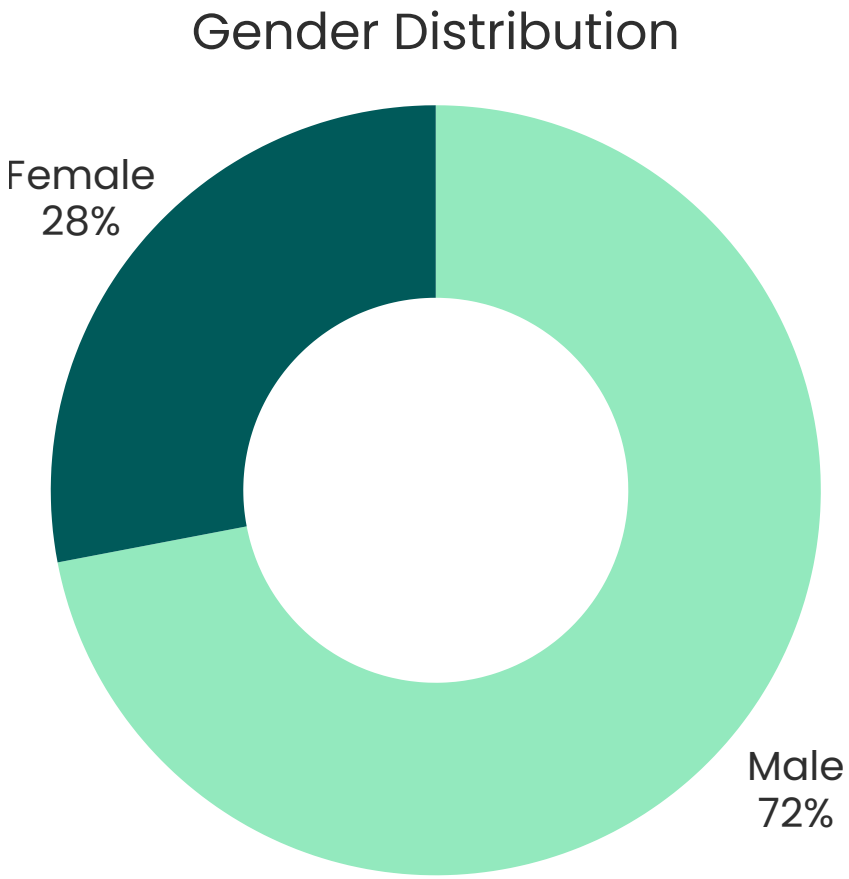


When we compared our survey results with established reports on tech training demographics, the pattern is strikingly similar. For instance, Free Code Camp's surveys of new coders in 2016 and 2018 showed that most learners were in their late 20s, with the median age being around 27 in 2016 and rising slightly to 30 in 2018. This mirrors our finding where the majority of participants fell between 25 and 30 years old, followed closely by those aged 18 to 24.

Likewise, Course Report's bootcamp studies in 2017 and 2018 reported an average age of about 30, with a median of 29. Again, this reflects the same age clustering you observed in our data. More recent reports, such as those from Career Karma and General Assembly, also show that the bulk of coding bootcamp participants are between 25 and 34 years old, often accounting for more than half of all learners.

Even anecdotal accounts from learners online confirm this trend that many bootcamp cohorts are filled with people in their mid-to-late 20s and early 30s, while older learners, though present, remain a smaller group.

In terms of gender, the results show a clear imbalance, with men making up 72 percent of participants and women representing 28 percent. While this highlights a male-dominated space, it is consistent with broader trends in tech training programs worldwide. Reports such as those by Course Report has found female participation in coding bootcamps to be around 30–36 percent.



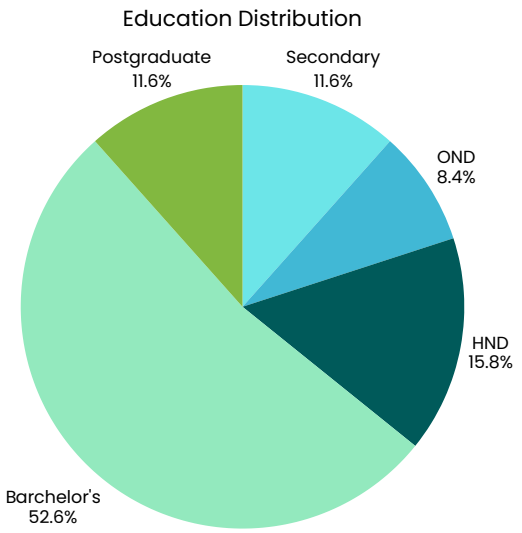
Nucamp Bootcamp's diversity statistics show that 31% of their students are women, a share that, while below parity, is still higher than the female representation typically seen in traditional computer science degree programs.

Taken together, these findings demonstrate a consistent trajectory: while men continue to form the majority in many bootcamps, women's representation is growing significantly, in some contexts approaching an equal split. This broader trend reflects both a cultural shift in the tech industry and the impact of more inclusive training models.

We found that most tech graduates of hubs are university graduates. This points to working-class people in the metropolis had some level of education.

We categorised our sample into 5 educational levels and found a decent spread among 4 categories. A large majority of our respondents (52.6%) had a bachelor's degree. This suggests that employability within the tech ecosystem is significantly shaped by formal higher education. Although tech hubs are often framed as alternative pathways into employment, the evidence here suggests they function more as complementary upskilling platforms for those who already possess tertiary qualifications.

Second, the tech sector may value formal academic credentials alongside technical skills. Employability in the tech labour market is not driven by skills alone, but by a hybrid model in which credentials signal baseline competencies such as cognitive ability, discipline, and learning capacity, while hubs provide job-relevant, practical skills that universities often fail to deliver.



Third, the decent spread across four Postgraduate (11.6%), Secondary (11.6%), OND (8.4%), and HND (15.8%) indicates that tech hubs are not entirely exclusionary, but attract individuals from diverse educational backgrounds, which points to some level of permeability in the system.

However, the comparatively lower representation of non-degree holders suggests structural or market barriers, such as entry requirements, self-selection effects, confidence gaps, or employer bias, that limit the employability returns of hub training for those without university degrees.

Specialization Matters

What you study in tech training significantly impacts your employment prospects and earning potential. Our analysis reveals striking differences across six major specialisations, with DevOps graduates achieving 86% employment compared to just 60% for Digital Marketing graduates—a 26 percentage point gap.

	% OF SAMPLE (N)	OVERALL EMPLOYMENT RATE	WORKING IN TECH	WORKING OUTSIDE TECH	UNEMPLOYED	MEDIAN MONTHLY INCOME (₦)
Software Development	30%	78%	71%	7%	22%	140k
UI/UX Design	20%	67%	63%	3%	33%	110k
Data Science	18%	64%	57%	7%	36%	150k
Digital Marketing	17%	60%	44%	16%	40.5%	85k
Cyber Security	10%	67%	53%	13%	33%	135k
DevOps	5%	86%	71%	14%	14%	180k
TOTAL	100%	69%	59%	10%	31%	125k

KEY INSIGHTS:

1. Our survey captured 7 people specialised in DevOps, yet this field shows the strongest outcomes across every metric.
2. Software development attracts 30% of all tech training graduates and delivers strong results.
3. Digital marketing accounts for 17% of graduates but shows the weakest tech sector outcomes.

5 FINDINGS THAT WILL CHANGE HOW YOU THINK ABOUT TECH CAREERS

THE LAW GRADUATE PHENOMENON

100% EMPLOYMENT RATE AMONG LAW GRADUATES SUGGESTS TRANSFERABLE SKILLS ADVANTAGE

FINDING

All 16 law graduates in our sample reported employment in tech, the highest employment rate among degree fields

WHY THIS MATTERS

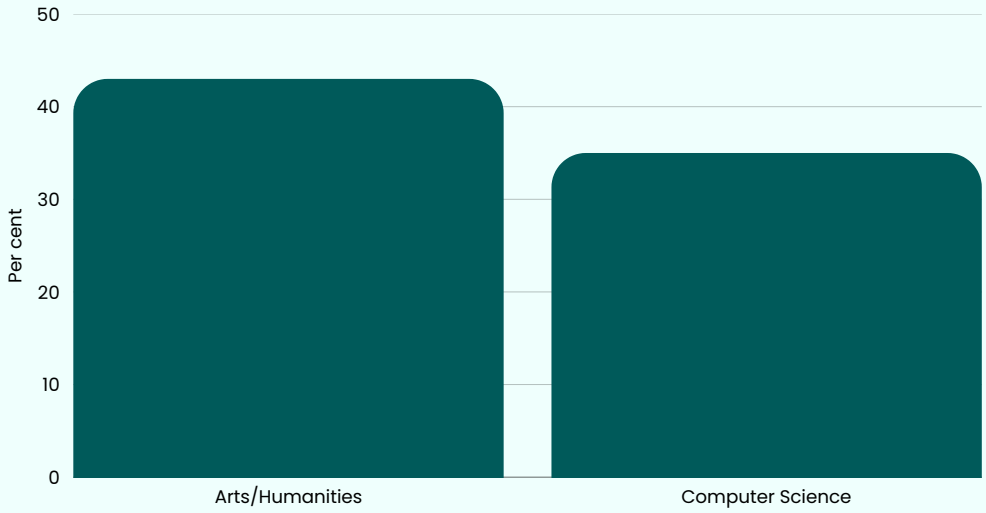
Their analytical thinking, communication skills, and strategic mindset seem to enhance tech roles.

HUBS CAN

Immerse law school methodologies - case studies, critical thinking, and argumentation skills - into their programs.

Picture Source: **ChatGPT**

THE HUMANITIES ADVANTAGE



Creative problem-solving, communication, and human-centered thinking appear to be more valuable more valuable than technical expertise alone.

Graduates from a non-technical background actually have an advantage to leverage their soft skills while building basic technical competency (43% vs 35%).

Soft Skills

SUPREMACY

A higher number of successful graduates cited soft skills as most important than technical skills.

Communication, teamwork, and problem-solving skills are your actual competitive advantage.

74%

of participants say soft skills are crucial for securing jobs

66%

of participants say technical skills are crucial for securing jobs

16%

say they work internationally

Those working internationally earn more by:

103%

The International

INCOME PREMIUM

Working internationally provides much higher income, but only a tiny percentage of graduates access these opportunities.

Though based on a relatively small subset (n=24), this 103% income premium suggests significant untapped potential through international job placements. Many tech graduates prove it's possible. This represents one of Nigeria's biggest economic opportunity in tech.

NOTE: Participants could select multiple skills they considered important.

THE GENDER PARADOX

	EMPLOYMENT RATES	MEDIAN INCOME
Male	73%	₦115k
Female	59%	₦141k

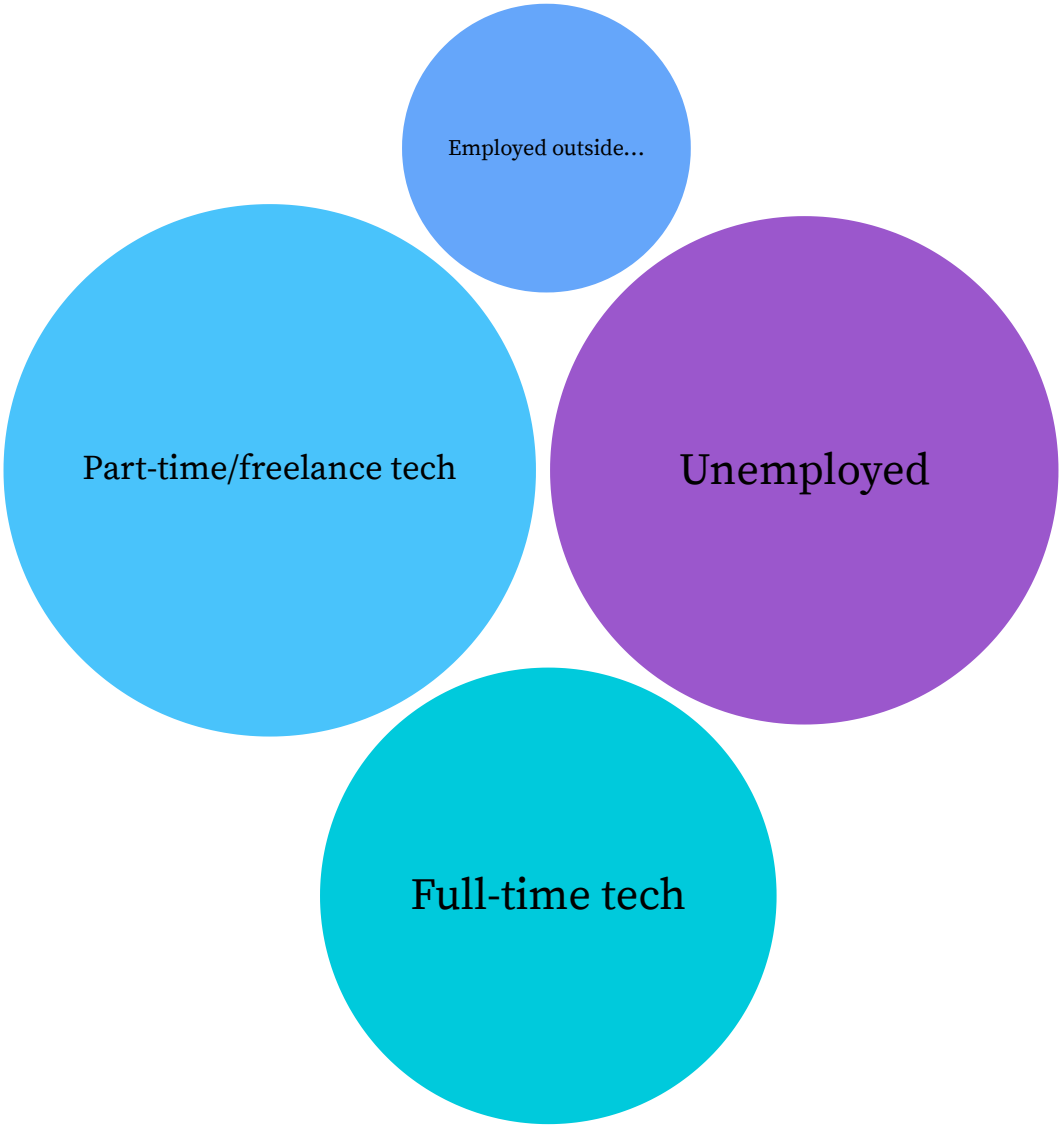
Picture Source: **ChatGPT**

14% LOWER EMPLOYMENT; 23% HIGHER POST-EMPLOYMENT EARNING

Women face employment barriers (14% lower employment rates) but earn 23% more when employed. This reverses the national trend, where women typically earn 35-40% less than men in formal sector jobs (ILO, 2023).

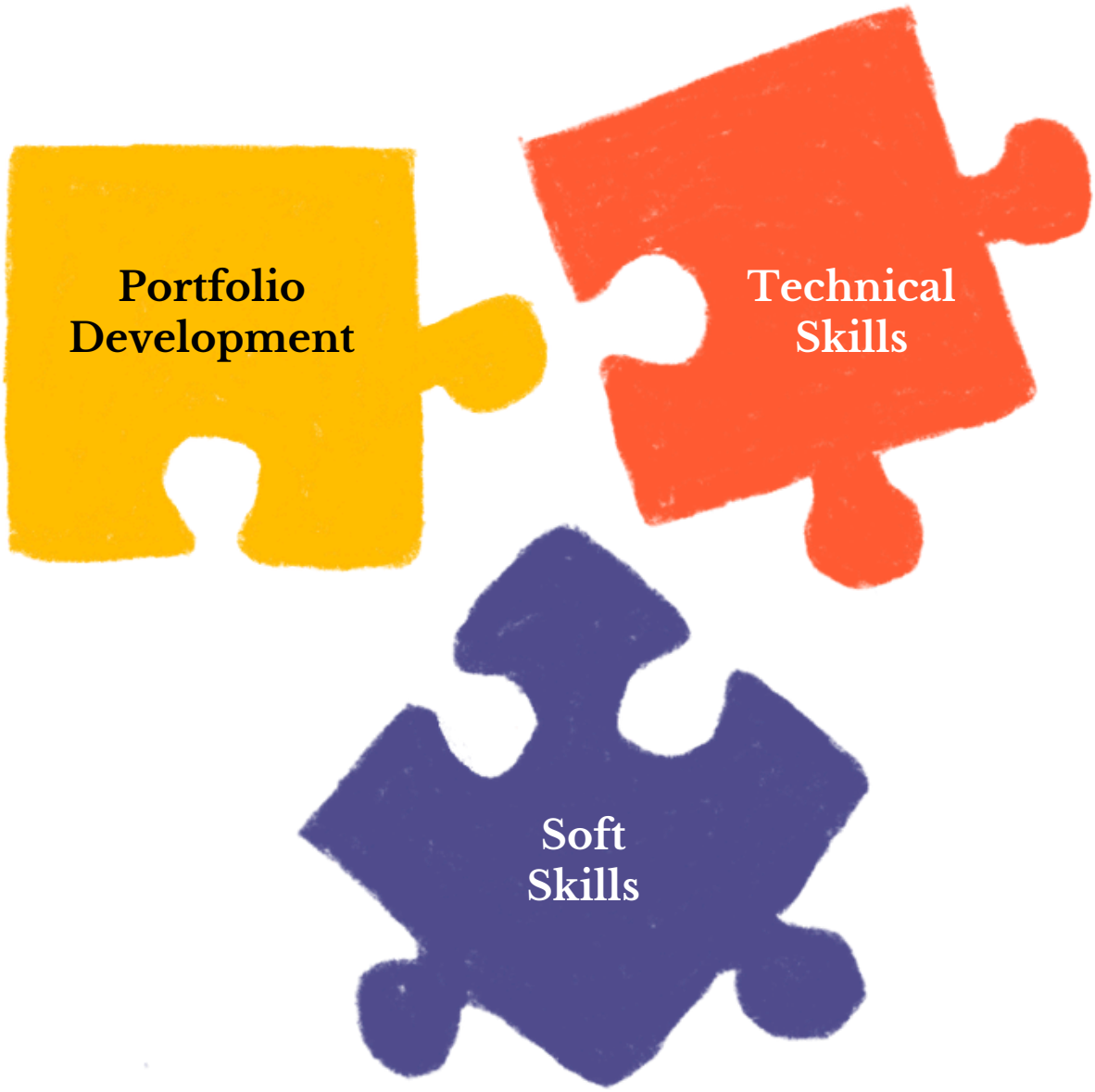
This suggests quality-over-quantity employment patterns in tech companies.

EMPLOYMENT REALITY CHECK



59% work in tech roles total, but only 25% secured full-time positions—highlighting the precarious nature of tech employment for most graduates.

3 PARTS OF THE JIGSAW



Participants could select multiple skills they considered important. While 66 per cent said technical skills, 63 per cent chose portfolio development, and 74 per cent said soft skills (participants could select more than one option).

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR TECH GRADS

Tech grads with non-tech backgrounds have an advantage.

This means that a tech graduate's degree alone isn't enough.

Non-tech Background

- Leverage your existing soft skills.
- Build technical literacy.
- Target roles that blend technical and business skills.
- Highlight your problem-solving methodology from your background.

Tech Background

- Invest heavily in soft skills development.
- Learn from law and arts methodologies .
- Practice explaining technical concepts to non-technical audiences.
- Develop business acumen alongside technical skills.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR TECH TRAINERS

Since soft skills backgrounds consistently outperform technical backgrounds:

- Integrate law school methodologies - case studies, critical thinking, argumentation.
- Add arts/humanities approaches like creative problem-solving, communication, and design thinking.
- Reduce pure technical focus in favor of balanced technical-soft skills integration.
- Develop international employer partnerships and global readiness curricula
- Develop stronger employer partnerships Create job placement support systems

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR EMPLOYERS

Possible assumptions about ideal candidates may be wrong.

- Prioritise law and arts/humanities graduates for their proven superior outcomes
- Weight soft skills assessment equally or higher than technical evaluation
- Test communication, creativity, and strategic thinking capabilities
- Create international internship and placement programs, and build long-term talent pipelines rather than transactional hiring.

ACTION POINTS FOR POLICY MAKERS

Curriculum Reform

Shift 20% of trainees from low-outcome to high-outcome fields by incentivising tech training with subsidies and scholarships, mandating digital marketing programs, and publishing annual "Tech Training Scorecards" showing employment rates by hub/specialisation.

Leverage Non-Traditional Talent

Increase Arts/Humanities recruitment by 40% by launching "Humanities-to-Tech" pathways targeting law and arts graduates, mandating 30% of training hours for soft skills, such as communication, problem-solving, and integrating case studies and critical thinking into curricula.

Address Gender Barriers

Increase female participation from 28% to 40% by funding women-specific cohorts with childcare support, marketing using data like "Female tech graduates earn 23% more than male peers", and requiring diversity hiring targets for companies receiving state tech contracts.

Fix the Income Floor

Increase median income from ₦125k to ₦180k by state governments committing to hiring 50 tech graduates annually at ₦150k minimum, offering tax incentives to companies hiring graduates full-time at ₦120k+, and publishing salary transparency data to empower graduate negotiations.

STUDY LIMITATIONS

While this study provides valuable insights into tech training outcomes in Northern Nigeria, several limitations should be considered when interpreting findings:

1. This study used convenience sampling through tech hub networks rather than probability sampling. Employment rates may be overestimated if unemployed graduates are less likely to remain connected to hub networks. The true employment rate could be lower than the 69% reported.
2. Data were collected exclusively from Kaduna and Kano states. Employment outcomes may differ significantly across Lagos and other states with different economic conditions and rural areas with limited tech-sector presence. Results should not be extrapolated nationally without caution.
3. The approximate 25% response rate introduces potential non-response bias. We cannot determine how non-respondents differ from respondents with respect to employment status, income, or other key variables.
4. All data, including income figures and employment status, were self-reported and not verified. This may introduce social desirability bias, recall errors for specific dates or amounts, and varying interpretations of "employment". Thus, these findings should be interpreted as indicative rather than definitive. Larger studies are needed to confirm these patterns.
5. This study captured a single point in time (January-May 2025) rather than tracking graduates longitudinally. We cannot assess how employment rates change over time after training, whether freelance workers transition to full-time roles, or career progression patterns.
6. Without longitudinal data, we cannot assess the stability or quality of employment beyond income levels.
7. "Employment" encompasses diverse situations, including full-time, permanent positions; part-time or contract work; freelance gigs with irregular income; and unpaid internships (if any respondents categorised these as employment).

Despite these limitations, this study provides the first systematic examination of tech training outcomes in Northern Nigeria and establishes important baseline data for future research and policy development.

ABOUT THIS RESEARCH

Study Design

This study employed a cross-sectional survey design to examine the employment outcomes **of tech training graduates in Kaduna and Kano states, Nigeria.**

Sampling

Participants were recruited through convenience sampling from three tech hubs: Colab and Ihifix in Kaduna (n=100) and Start-up Kano in Kano (n=50). Hub administrators distributed the survey link to their databases of recent graduates who completed at least one 3-month or longer tech training program between January 2023 and December 2024.

Data Collection

Of approximately 600 potential participants contacted, 150 completed responses were received, yielding a response rate of approximately 25%. The final sample included graduates from six specialisations: software development (30%), UI/UX design (20%), data science (18%), digital marketing (17%), cybersecurity (10%), and DevOps (5%).

Data Analysis

Data collection occurred between January and May 2025 using an online self-administered questionnaire. The survey instrument consisted of closed-ended questions.

Sample Characteristics

Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, including frequency distributions, percentages, cross-tabulations, and median calculations. Employment rates were calculated overall and disaggregated by specialisation, gender, educational background, and other demographic variables.

The sample was predominantly male (72%) and young, with 71% under age 30. Most participants (53%) held bachelor's degrees, though educational backgrounds ranged from secondary school (12%) to postgraduate degrees (12%). The sample was geographically concentrated in Kaduna (67%) and Kano (33%) metropolises.

Ethical Considerations

Participation was voluntary and anonymous. No personally identifiable information was collected. Hub administrators were not given access to individual responses; only aggregate data summaries were available.

Growthly Research Team

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Vision

To be the leading catalyst for people and organisational growth in Nigeria and West Africa

Mission

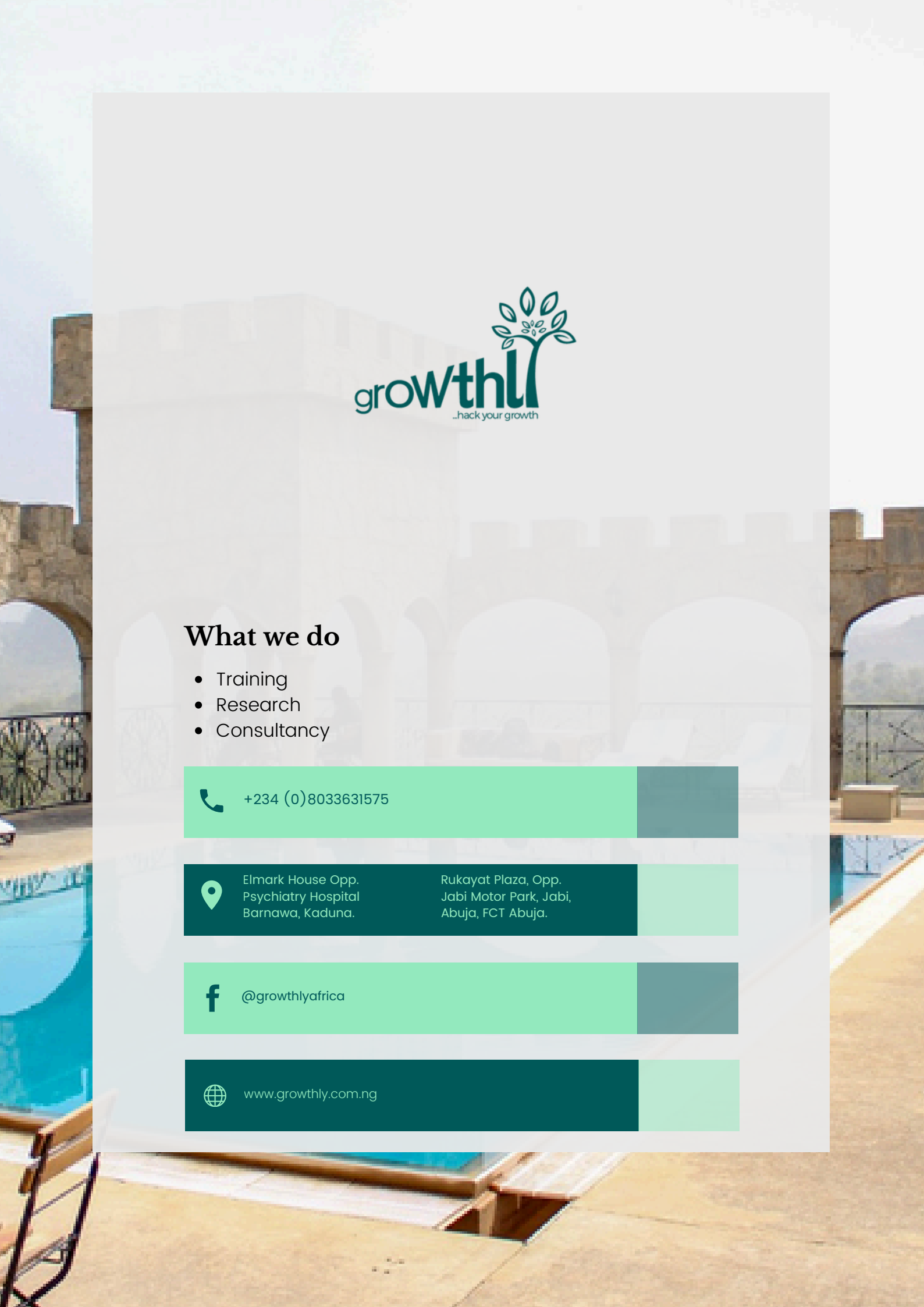
Transforming organisations through leadership development, people empowerment, and research-driven solutions.

Values

1. Knowledge-driven Impact
2. Integration
3. Collaboration
4. Integrity

Focus

- Data Collection
- Data Analysis
- Staff Training
- Consulting



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