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**Federal University of Technology Owerri, Nigeria: A Case Study of the
Perceived Relevance of Individual/Career Development**

Planning

A Special Problem submitted to the Department of Technology and Workforce Learning
in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the Degree of

Master of Science

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July 26, 2011

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Federal University of Technology Owerri, Nigeria: A Case Study of the Perceived

Relevance of Individual/Career Development Planning

CHAPTER 1

RESEARCH OVERVIEW

Individual/Career Development Plans and resulting Individual/Career Development Programs are essential in outlining career goals to be accomplished and steps or resources needed to achieve those goals. Lack of planning and engagement in development activities is seen as one of the factors affecting job fit which further affects performance and productivity resulting in a skills gap. Bailey (2005), suggests that *career planning* and ongoing *skills development* is essential so young professionals should be generalists, as well as specialize in at least one area. The good news is that, in all professions, all of these efforts on career development is often rewarded. In planning careers, individuals assess themselves to understand who they are, what they are interested in and steps/resources needed to reach their interest. In developing your career or yourself, an individual builds on the plans he has mapped out for his career by acquiring knowledge, learning skills and undergoing trainings that will improve him as a person or as an employee. That way, you know what you are good in or have interest in and you develop yourself on your strengths thereby creating less room for uncertainties, deficiencies and career shuffling or loss of interest half way into your career. With much knowledge and experience, you become an expert or a professional creating opportunity for further growth and career satisfaction.

Ituma & Simpson (2007), propose that “Congruence between what an individual would like to do (anchor) and what he is actually doing(work environment) is thought to lead to positive career

outcome such as job effectiveness, job satisfaction and high retention while incongruence is likely to lead to job dissatisfaction and high turnover”. p.1

People who have plans are unlikely to move from job to job. Frequent changes in careers or jobs usually means less years of experience on each job, less time or efforts invested in developing oneself in each field, less skills acquired on each job and ultimately, less expertise on each job. Harrington & Hall (2007) found out that the difference between a job and a career lie in the amount of time, money, commitment, knowledge and trainings invested. In a career, you invest so much but in a job you don't. Realistically, no one will invest so much in a place where he doesn't expect to spend so much time and no one will know a place where he is likely to spend so much time if he doesn't know who he is, what his interests are and what it takes to achieve his aim. Consequently, if you don't have a plan, you'll likely end up having multiple jobs and no career or specified field of expertise (career development). To this need, individuals are advised to take responsibility for their own career development in a more uncertain environment, where career paths go beyond the boundaries of a single organization (Hall, 1996) and where there is an emphasis on portable skills and on meaningful work.

Globally, employers seek experts not just employees. According to United States authors Harrington & Hall (2007), “The changing nature of technology has also affected the form and function of career development. Today, organizations put a premium on people who can adapt and learn quickly” (p120). The continued by saying “The employment contract between individuals and their employers has changed, and job security is a thing of the past”. As the world gets advanced technologically and otherwise, a deficit in skills gap is a major cause of lack of expertise which may be caused by minimal knowledge or skills in several jobs and no professional knowledge/skills in a particular field. This has negative consequences on job performance and outcome because

everywhere, people are improving their skills every day so employees have to meet up to stay employable. Developing countries, including Nigeria, face insufficiencies in expertise; employees have refused to grow on a particular career, they move to any field in which they are qualified for as long as they are paid better. Excluding the poor economic situation of the country and other similar reasons, another cause for these moves may be because they have no knowledge of how career planning and development can help in shaping their future (which is usually a role of the academic institutions, as the first step of knowledge and acceptance, to instill in students before they become graduates) or they simply do not perceive it as appropriate for them. In order to fully engage in planning and development programs, employees must first perceive it as relevant. For this research, employed graduates of Federal University of Technology Owerri, Nigeria, have been chosen, to understand their perception of these plans/programs as relevant to the development of their professional careers and the reason for these perceptions.

Statement of the Problem

According to Harrington & Hall (2007):

“Anyone who works needs no expert to state the obvious: The world of work is in a state of unprecedented change. In today’s organizations, change is a fact of life. Even organizations that for many years were static, today, change at a speed never before experienced. In very short periods of time, organizations are created, experience dramatic growth, merge or are acquired, downsize dramatically, reinvent themselves, or simply cease to exist.” (p.5).

Harrington & Hall continued by saying that the changes occur because of the impact of

globalization, new technologies, societal expectations changing employees/customers and stakeholders.

Also, Harrington & Hall (2007) quoted “People change jobs, employers and even careers much more often than was the case for most of the 20th century. In fact, according to a recent study, new graduates probably will change jobs five to eight times during their first decade of employment. This short cycle time requires that regardless of our field of work, all of us have one career skill in common: job hunting” (p.61). The foundation for changes mentioned in the first paragraph and above lie in economic changes, technology and global competition. This is based on the fact that the economy in developed countries has witnessed a negative change (crisis), consequently, businesses are experiencing shortage in sales being that customers are no longer financially capable to patronize them randomly and this affects their profitability. Those customers who patronize these businesses are usually employees of other companies who may be experiencing similar changes in pay and employment and therefore are most likely to patronize the best to save some money in these hard times. Additionally, global competition has risen in the trade market, countries and companies are coming up with advanced products and services and as a result, every company has to establish new ways of providing service or producing goods so as to remain at the peak of the market. This has led employers to create new businesses or reinvent themselves in areas that seem flourishing, merge with other companies or downsize to sustain their capital base, acquire other companies to grow or simply, cease to exist. In all these, employees suffer the most. Employers now seek for the employees with competitive talents or knowledge and skills so that productivity will be maximized therefore, employees viewed as not competent are laid off in order to reduce waste.

This situation is world-wide so no country is left out thus no working individual is exempted, although it is worse in some developing countries. Ituma & Simpson (2006) stated that according to the Economic Intelligence Unit Report on Nigeria in 2004, Nigeria is currently the world's seventh-largest oil exporter and Africa's most populous nation, representing about 20 per cent of the entire Sub-Saharan African population. Nigeria is currently the tenth largest producer of crude oil in the world at 2.1 million barrels per day. However, despite this wealth in human capital and natural resources (oil), Nigeria is among the world's 20 poorest countries based on GNP per capita. More than one third of Nigeria's export income is used annually to service this debt (Financial Times, 2005). However, reports by United Nations Development Program (1997) suggest that the general unemployment figure may be as high as 50 per cent. Because of the high unemployment rate, individuals have to compete intensely for the few available jobs in the country. Despite the rate of unemployment, there are differential pay and wide variations in employment conditions (especially in the private sector) and this has some consequences for the quality of work, life and careers produced by these employers. Ituma & Simpson (2006) gave an example with IT workers in the lower paying companies who aspire and make conscientious efforts to work for the reputable high paying companies. This often results in frequent job-hopping to earn higher pay.

As the world becomes more technologically advanced and competitive, Governments and employers need, and as a result search for, experts and professionals (beyond academic qualifications). The problem is most graduates of Nigeria move from job to job and from career to career reducing their opportunities of becoming experienced and of developing skills/expertise in a particular field. Obviously, this would not be the situation if they plan their careers, believe in developing their careers or simply have a vision of how they intend to get to the peak of their

professional lives not just working and earning a living. In today's world, people who work just to earn a living are usually scrapped during crisis. Ezekiel 2008 mentioned that lack of requisite skills to meet the job requirements of employers have been identified as one of the major reasons responsible for the high rate of graduate unemployment in Nigeria, there are lots of employers that want to expand their businesses and need people with the right skills but most graduates are yet to recognize this.

Developing countries such as Nigeria lack sufficient and sustainable expertise required to eliminate the skills gap and consequently, increase the rate of economic/technological advancement in the country. Therefore, a plan to acquire, develop and sustain skills is relevant.

Kennedy 2005, shares the same view by saying:

“Even though your boss is blissfully happy with your performance, there is something that could obstruct improvement. Identify whatever it is and develop a plan to improve that skill. Most people do not take advantage of skill-building opportunities. This is either because they have not identified them or because they believe they do not need them. There are some other examples of emerging workplace trends that need to be considered. Changing jobs to get more money instead of settling for the annual increase may be a fad. However, thinking realistically about your options is the most important part of *career planning* right now”. (Kennedy, 2005)

Since a career life decision starts from the school, there may be need for academic institutions to instill the knowledge and importance of career planning and development, skill acquisition and sustainable development in their students to help them identify, organize and plan their careers in order to take charge of their future and that of their society. With the intention of creating a

sustainable knowledge, the learners must first perceive the program as relevant then acceptance and application will be maximized. One such career planning tool and strategy is an Individual/Career Development Planning Program, but it is currently unknown what the perception of Nigerian graduates is on the relevance of IDP/CPD in the development of their professional careers and the reasons behind the perceptions.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the perceived relevance of Individual/Career Development Planning Program to graduates of Federal University of Technology Owerri, Nigeria to their professional careers/advancement. A guide to accomplishing periodical goals is expected to be of importance in acquiring, developing, and sustaining a career to become experts for these graduates. The significance of the problem lies in the real possibility that if a nation lacks enough proficient workers, it will experience a skill gap leading to poor utilization of resources, increased unemployment rate, reduced production of goods/services, diminishing GDP/GNP, import-based economy (imbalance of trade) and slow technological advancement.

This study will help academic institutions in Nigeria be aware of the way their graduates perceive Individual and Career Development Planning Programs and how it affects their professional lives as working graduates as well as the economic growth of the country. As a result, academic institutions which do not offer these programs will consider establishing Individual and Career Development Planning Courses/Classes which will help future graduates understand what IDP and CDP are, perceive them as relevant and consequently create plans for their professional development. If the perceived relevance individual/career development planning programs has in developing careers in graduates of Federal University of Technology,

Owerri, Nigeria is high, academic institutions will be encouraged to, and will most likely; implement it in their curriculum to give their graduating students a focus and so will employers provide professional development programs for their employees. Additionally, future graduates will plan to and focus on acquiring skills and knowledge (development) needed to reach, sustain and improve each step of the plan and expectedly will reduce moving from one career to another instead they'll grow on their plan or in a job. Most people with a plan don't move from job to job and career to career often. Growing on a plan means developing expertise which leads to better utilization of resources, more opportunities/employment for Nigerian graduates and less migration to other countries. This will reduce the burden developing countries place on developed countries that are supporting them, as well as establish independence for these countries as support may cease anytime and finally, create global uniformity in development.

The researcher chose the institution, Federal University of Technology Owerri, Nigeria as a representative for Nigerian universities for the reason that the institution is a Federal University operated by the federal government of the country and as such is expected to be offering the programs such as development programs, producing graduates who have experienced perceptions of development programs and having most of its graduates in good jobs.

If such a university expected to be offering development programs, producing graduates who have experienced perceptions of development programs and having most of its graduates in good jobs still have their graduates shuffling careers then very less will be expected from other universities in the country. It is better, in most cases, to rate a general issue starting from the best part of it so that if the best gives poor results, we can assume less from the worst which is better than starting from the worst and if the worst gives us good result, we may assume more from the best which is a bigger risk.

Additionally, the results of this study may also have implications for the work of career counselors, consultants in education and employers. There is a need for career counselors working with employees (Nigerian graduates) and college/university students to assess their views on IDP/CDP as a result of their academic upbringing and treat them accordingly during counseling. For instance, if they have wrong perceptions of IDP/CDP because they were not taught about its relevance in college, the career counselors could mount workshops and seminars for them in learning and practicing career goals, plans and resources needed to achieve such goals as well as networking, self-exploration and involvement in development programs or activities. By gaining such cognitive and emotional information, the employees/students could be encouraged or motivated and challenge themselves to perform necessary career planning and development activities which will probably affect performance positively.

The findings from this study have implications for future research. Future researchers could consider examining the impact of IDP/CDP on career success and accomplishment. Though there may be several reasons for the deficit in skills gap, this study emphasizes on what deficit is existing as a result of the amount of knowledge or perceptions of development programs.

Research Question

To further understand the problem of graduates of Federal University of Technology Owerri (FUTO), Nigeria who move from job to job and the possible relationship to the perceived relevance of developing individual and career plans the primary research question of this study is:

Do graduates of Federal University of Technology Owerri, Nigeria think that Individual/Career Development Planning Program is relevant to the development of their professional careers?

To first establish the extent to which graduates of FUTO are exposed to and aware of the career relevance of, an IDP/CDP program the study asked the following two sub-questions:

Sub-Question 1: Are Individual/Career Development Planning Programs or courses being offered in Federal University of Technology Owerri, Nigeria or by Nigerian Employers?

Sub-Question 2: If given the opportunity, will the graduates of Federal University of Technology Owerri, Nigeria participate in Individual/Career Development Planning Programs?

To establish the perceived relevance of the IDP/CDP program by the graduates to their professional careers, the study asked the following sub-questions:

Sub-Question 3: Do the graduates of FUTO who participated in an IDP/CDP program believe it was a contributing factor in their career advancement and/or achievements?

Sub-Question 4: Do the graduates of FUTO who did not participate in an IDP/CDP program believe it would have been relevant in their career advancement?

To establish in part the impact of IDP/ICP programs on the careers of the Nigerian university graduates the study asked the following sub-question:

Sub-Question 5: Have the graduates of Federal University of Technology Owerri, Nigeria who have participated in an IDP/ICP program acquired more job-related knowledge and skills and thus feel more competent at work than graduates who did not participate?

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

In today's society, individuals are trying to “do it all”—to find life satisfaction through combination of multiple roles and jobs (e.g., career), however, if they are not spending their time in ways that are congruent with their values and interests, they are unlikely to find the happiness they seek (Perrone, Webb & Blalock, 2005). This may be the case of most graduates of Federal University of Technology Owerri (FUTO), Nigeria who move from job to job and from career to career in pursuit of “satisfaction”, and there lies the problem. The “satisfaction” (self-accomplishment) these individuals seek is most likely to be achieved in the event that resources, interests and values are channeled in the development of skills/expertise in a particular field which will not only accord them promotions, recognitions and rewards but will also be an asset to them and to their society. In order to create a sustainable knowledge, the learners must first perceive the program as relevant then acceptance and application will be maximized. One such planning tool and strategy that guides individuals in channeling resources and interests appropriately to develop skills and expertise is an Individual/Career Development Planning Program, but it is currently unknown what the perception of graduates of Federal University of Technology Owerri is on the relevance of IDP/CPD in the development of their professional careers. For this dilemma this study answers the following research question: *Do graduates of Federal University of Technology Owerri, Nigeria think Individual/Career Development Planning Program is relevant to the development of their professional careers?*

Individual/Career Development Plan

Ituma & Simpson (2006) quoted Hall (1976) as referring to four notable but distinct perspectives of career, which have dominated the discourse on careers. These include: career as advancement, which associates the idea of a career with the notion of "vertical mobility", moving upward in an organization's hierarchy; career as profession, which views only certain occupations with "some clear pattern of systematic advancement", such as the legal and medical professions as representing careers; career as a lifelong sequence of jobs, which regards any person's job history as a career; and career as a lifelong sequence of role related experiences, which is the way each person experiences the sequence of jobs and activities that constitute his work history", that is the subjective career. For this research, we will look at career as a lifelong sequence of role related experiences. This perspective dominates because today's employers are looking for expertise which is usually in a specific field and comes as a result of experience or knowledge in related roles

According to the U.S Department of Commerce (2001), Individual Development Plan is an action plan that identifies your short and long term career goals and what steps you can take to meet those goals. Career planning is beneficial to the individual and employer in that the workplace has been affected by a number of significant changes and trends, which have definite ramifications for your career planning. Amongst these changes is technical knowledge and skills obsolescence – rapid advancement in technology and state-of-the-art knowledge requires employees to upgrade their skills and “retool” themselves to remain current with their job requirements. Also the Accounting Office Management & Administration Report suggests that

“Career maps can show staff where to focus their attention for the next review period, including roles and responsibilities, ways to grow, and results that can be measured”. Individual/Career Development Plan is recognized as an effective tool in skills acquisition and enhancement.

Career Planning, Acquisition of Expertise and the Nigerian Economy.

Ituma & Simpson (2006) stated that according to the Economic Intelligence Unit Report on Nigeria in 2004, Nigeria is currently the world's seventh largest oil exporter and Africa's most populous nation, representing about 20 per cent of the entire Sub-Saharan African population. Nigeria is currently the tenth largest producer of crude oil in the world at 2.1 million barrels per day. However, despite this wealth in human capital and natural resources (oil), Nigeria is among the world's 20 poorest countries based on GNP per capita. More than one third of Nigeria's export income is used annually to service this debt (Financial Times, 2005).

However, reports by United Nations Development Program (1997) suggest that the general unemployment figure may be as high as 50 per cent. Because of the high unemployment rate, individuals have to compete intensely for the few available jobs in the country. Despite the rate of unemployment, there are differential pay and wide variations in employment conditions (especially in the private sector) and this has some consequences for the quality of work, life and careers produced by these employers. Ituma & Simpson (2006) gave an example with IT workers in the lower paying companies who aspire and make conscientious efforts to work for the reputable high paying companies. This often results in frequent job-hopping within the industry and beyond the IT industry. For the reasons above, graduates look for jobs wherever it is accessible and do little or nothing to create a path in which their careers should go not to talk

about steps to take in developing themselves or their careers. The career decisions of most Nigerian graduates are shaped by financial needs consequently, they hop from one job to the other not spending enough time in a job to acquire enough experience or spending money to gain more skills and without reference to professional development. They become “Jack of all trade, master of none”.

Job Satisfaction and Turnover in Nigerian Business

Career/job commitment is usually as a result of job satisfaction, Job satisfaction has been one of the most germane issues facing business organizations in Nigeria (Okpara, 1996). Given the significant relationship observed between job satisfaction and work behavior, the increased satisfaction of IT managers can be a bonus to Nigerian organizations resulting in reduced absenteeism, decreased turnover, and increase in productivity. Excessive changes in turnover and absenteeism result in a waste of human power and needless loss in production and profit. Okpara (1996) continued by saying that an extensive review of the literature on IT and job satisfaction issues revealed that the vast majority of job satisfaction studies have been undertaken primarily in the western part of Nigeria. Unfortunately, very little research has been done on this issue in general, and none at all on this specific topic in Nigeria. In his study, Okpara stated that income was the best predictor of job satisfaction. This is to say that, as the level of income increases so does the level of job satisfaction. Conversely, those that have low levels of income are less satisfied with their jobs. While there may be conflicting results on the importance of money to the Nigerian worker, a strong case can be made for the significance of income in determining the level of job satisfaction.

Popoola and Oluwale (2007), carried out research to investigate the career commitment of records management personnel in a state civil service in Nigeria. The study found that there was significant negative relationship between job tenure, levels of education and career commitment of the respondents. Going further into the findings of Popoola and Oluwale, employees in Nigeria with low level of education are less committed to their careers and are prone to short job tenures. This means that good education could lead to developing a career and being committed to it and in turn staying longer in a job.

Aremu and Ahmed (1996) reported that staff of old and new generations' banks in Lagos, Nigeria differ significantly in their job satisfaction and commitment. Okorie (1995) submitted that the continued commitment of the employees in Nigerian business and service organizations is positively related to their job performance. Job performance is tied to having adequate job skills/knowledge and since job-change is constant, developing those skills or improving the knowledge to keep up with the changes. Therefore, people who perform better are more likely to be committed and people can only be outstanding in performance if they put in more efforts like planning and development. It must be noted that when a career is rewarding, either in monetary terms or prestige (highly valued by the society), an employee in an organization may be satisfied and thus committed to it. Bozionelos (1996) supported this assertion by submitting that promotion (reward) is the only variable that accounts for a significant amount of variance in career satisfaction. In fact, low salary growth and irregular promotions could be said to be responsible for low career commitment and low productivity among Nigerian workers. The outcomes of low career commitment of an employee in an organization are absenteeism from work, high turnover and low quality performance. Rewards, promotions, good pay and recognition bring satisfaction and all come with high performance. Employees who are educated,

experienced and skilled perform highly and employees who are outstanding in performance make extra sacrifices such as planning and development. Being educated, experienced and skilled doesn't just come out of the air.....they come with a plan. For one to plan and improve, one has to understand or comprehend that planning and development is essential.

Perceptions of Career Development

Societal context (e.g. educational systems, labor market structures, national welfare provisions) shapes the career pattern exhibited by individuals (Ituma & Simpson, 2006). In the Nigeria context, key factors that are likely to shape individual career decisions include its specific economic conditions and socio-cultural factors (Ituma and Simpson, 2006). In terms of the former, career decisions are taken in the context of an uncertain and insecure economic environment. While Nigeria is currently the world's seventh largest oil exporter, producing about 2.2 million barrels a day, its economy has been ranked as the 19th poorest in the world (World Bank, 1997). The present state of Nigeria's economy is characterized by uncertainty, high unemployment levels in many sectors and a lack of an established welfare system. Ituma & Simpson (2007) mentioned that there is no specified minimum wage for skilled workers in Nigeria and unlike in most Western developed economies, credit facilities are hard to obtain and only available at very high interest rates. As a result, most workers spend a large proportion of their salaries meeting basic food and utilities needs and, as Ituma and Simpson (2006) found, often give priority to career moves that will better their economic circumstance. This may be an explanation for the move from jobs to jobs by Nigerian graduates in search of better paying jobs not as a way to climb a career ladder or reach self-accomplishment.

In terms of its socio-cultural context, according to Ituma & Simpsons (2007), one of the main features of Nigeria's distinctive culture is the importance attached to the extended family system. Nigerians exert too much value in taking care of financial obligations of their extended families. These values, to some extent, stand in place of the established social security and welfare systems of more developed countries. These factors are likely to impact on the way individuals in Nigeria view their obligations, and hence the meaning attached to their career decisions (planning and development options). The desire for stability and the burden of obligations may mean employees may give greater preference for financial incentives over non-financial incentives such as professional development and growth.

Aremu & Salami (2007) found out that among young adults in Nigeria, high levels of career indecision and career choices based mainly on the wishes and aspirations of the parents in an attempt to ensure that the children go into occupations that would enable families to solve their economic problems, and not necessarily on their interests, values and abilities are thus likely to interfere with educational and career planning and to disrupt normative career development processes. As a result, young adults may enter into occupations they don't have interest in and will be less likely to develop their careers instead they will remain at the same level from the inception to the completion of their career lives. Aremu and Salami continued by saying that unlike children in the individualistic culture dominant in the USA, where dependence is viewed as immature, children living in a collectivistic culture like Nigeria derive a greater sense of psychological security from their obedience to and dependence on parents. This may not be the case for all Nigerian individuals or families but in general, this has been dominant. Aremu and Salami concluded by saying that adolescents brought up in cultures where interdependence

is more valued than independence are likely to find that a sense of separation and differentiation from parents will generate emotional problems and poor career development.

Mentoring is part of developing an employee's career, research by Salami (2008) on "Psychosocial factors as predictors of mentoring among nurses in southwestern Nigeria" revealed that self-esteem, locus of control, emotional intelligence, age, job status and tenure are linear predictors associated to mentoring but gender is not. Practical implications of the findings from this study were that counseling and industrial psychologists should let the employees know the importance of mentoring in the workplace. In effect the study says that Nigerian employees see mentoring (which is part of employers' way of career development for employees) as a way of bringing down one's self esteem or showing who is older, more intelligent, and higher in status or more in control instead of seeing it as a way to learn from each other and grow.

Role of Career Expectations

Research has shown that greater congruence between one's current role combination and one's ideal role combination is linked to decreased role conflict (Perrewe & Hochwarter, 2001). The relationship to decreased role conflict is important to consider because research has shown that role conflict can negatively impact well-being and life satisfaction (Grant-Vallone & Donaldson, 2001). Thus, role congruence could be linked both directly and indirectly (through role conflict) to life satisfaction. The researcher agrees with Perrone, Webb & Blalock 2005, that individuals should be specific in their activities to get maximum results, also with Ejere (2010), that most Nigerians are not career-directed. Contradictory, Ezekiel's (2008), statement on reasons why most graduates are not employed is acceptable but those who move from job to job

may be sought after for skills now but not in future if they don't gather more experience and expertise on the one they have.

The Nigerian Graduate

Research by Ejere (2010) shows that a survey on work- goal priorities among 330 randomly selected senior public servants in Nigeria revealed that the respondents ranked good pay, interpersonal relations and job security as their three most important work goals. Interesting work, variety and convenient work hours were accorded lowest priorities. It was observed that the three job factors ranked most highly are those that satisfy lower order rather than higher order needs. This reveals that an average Nigerian graduate will take a job or move to a job where there is good pay without taking into consideration the growth and development or the future of his career.

In addition, lack of requisite skills to meet the job requirements of employers have been identified as one of the major reasons responsible for the high rate of graduate unemployment in Nigeria.

Ezekiel (2008) wrote that:

“There are lots of employers that want to expand their businesses and need people with the right skills. There are people who are changing jobs almost every four months whereas others have been looking for job since the last five years. The reason for this contrasting situation is because of the type of skills they have. People go into the labor

market thinking that their B.Sc or BA is sufficient for them to get a job. This is not enough because the B.Sc or BA only certifies you academically. Employers are in the look-out for people who are qualified professionally to solve professional and not academic problems, there is a mismatch between what the tertiary institutions produce and what employers need, hence the skill gap”.

In as much as few Nigerian graduate possess the skills so they easily change jobs (Ezekiel 2008), this movement is as result of lack of focus (Ejere 2010) which reduces the time they spend developing themselves in one job and as such reducing their opportunities of sustaining expertise in a particular career.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODS AND PROCEDURES

This study was designed to establish if graduates of Federal University of Technology Owerri (FUTO), Nigeria perceive Individual/Career Development Planning Program as relevant to the development of their professional careers and skills or not. To validate the above statement, the following research question was developed: *Do graduates of Federal University of Technology Owerri, Nigeria think that Individual/Career Development Planning Program is relevant to the development of their professional careers?* To answer the research question, the following sub-questions were developed: Are Individual/Career Development Planning Programs or courses being offered in Federal University of Technology Owerri Nigeria and by Nigerian Employers? If given the opportunity, will the graduates of Federal University of Technology, Owerri, Nigeria participate in Individual/Career Development Planning Programs? Do the graduates of FUTO who participated in an IDP/CDP program believe it was a contributing factor in their career advancement and/or achievements? Do the graduates of FUTO who did not participate in an IDP/CDP program believe it would have been relevant in their career advancement? Have the graduates of Federal University of Technology Owerri, Nigeria who have participated in an IDP/ICP program acquired more job-related knowledge and skills and thus feel more competent at work than graduates who did not participate?

The theoretical foundation illustrates the following: rapid advancement in technology and state-of-the-art knowledge requires employees to upgrade their skills and “retool” themselves to remain current with their job requirements. Employers seek employees who are professional or at least highly skilled in their field. In order to be an expert/competent in your field, employees have to gain outstanding knowledge and experience. To gain sufficient knowledge and

experience in a field, individuals have to invest in their careers. Without a plan and subsequent development programs, resources might be channeled to wrong investments. IDP/CDP are essential to meet career goals through professional development (skills and knowledge training). The Nigerian economy has made it difficult for Nigerian graduates to invest in a career therefore, the career decisions of most Nigerian graduates are shaped by financial needs not the need to develop and get to the peak where they'll remain valuable to their employers as well as their society. The literature review leads the reader to assume that Nigerian graduates believe career success is in how much they earn not how much they know or can do and they suppose that this is satisfaction. Since IDP/CDP is relevant in aligning resources in the right direction to achieve career goals and expertise, it is important to study whether Nigerian graduates (with graduates of Federal University of Technology Owerri as a case study) perceive IDP/CDP as relevant despite the situation they find themselves and the decisions they make or if they do not consider the programs as beneficial to the development of their careers.

As a graduate of a Nigerian university and a former employee of a company in Nigeria, the researcher witnessed the career/job-hopping of Nigerian graduates. The researcher spoke with graduates of some Nigerian universities and employees of some Nigerian companies about their reasons for job-hopping and frequent career changes. After further academic researching on individual and career development planning in Nigeria, the researcher saw the possible linkages between individual/career development and an individual's perception of the importance of planning and developing himself or his career.

Design of the Study

This descriptive study will survey graduates of Federal University of Technology Owerri Nigeria who are presently employed or have ever been employed to determine their

knowledge/perception of IDP/CDP programs, identify the difficulty/ease the face in identifying and achieving career goals or expectations and determine the impact of IDP/CDP on achieving/sustaining those goals (if applicable). Technically, the researcher gathered and analyzed information provided by eligible participants (present or former employees who graduated from Federal University of Technology, Owerri, Nigeria not later than 2007). The limit was placed to get people who have at least witnessed 2-3 years in the workforce. This information was collected via an online survey form consisting of 10 quantitative questions and 5 qualitative questions. The design methodology for this survey was mixed model.

Although the pre-effect and post-effect of individual/career planning program can both be observed and quantified, the researcher has chosen to use subject self-reporting, by means of a written survey, to assess the perceived relevance of an IDP/CDP program. Because of time constraints, the researcher believes that self-reports of participants on perceived or acknowledged impact of IDP/CDP would be an accurate reflection of pre- and post-effect measurements and will ensure true representation and honest opinions.

Subjects of the Study

The theoretical population is graduates of Nigerian universities employed by various companies in Nigeria while the accessible population will be graduates of Federal University of Technology in Owerri, Nigeria who are or have ever been full time employees in various companies. The researcher chose this representative sample for the reason that the higher institution is a Federal University operated by the federal government of the country and as such should be offering the best programs, producing the best graduates and having most of its graduates in the best jobs in the country. From the Registry of Federal University of Technology, Owerri, Nigeria, each year the university produces over 5,000 graduates, in no doubt, in the past

4-10 years the university would have produced 20,000-50,000 graduates and it will not be out of proportion to say that at least 1000 out of these are or have ever been fully employed. The researcher randomly selected 150 names from the population. The selected 150 graduates were invited to participate in the survey and a minimum of 78 datasets from responses were received back. Subjects were identified through the school's alumni and 150 names were selected at random for generalization purposes (that is to make the representation more realistic) and the participants were contacted via email.

The subjects are human and this study has no potential negative impact on them because respondents were informed of the details of study, the role they played and all information provided was not and will not be let out without their approval. The rights of respondents is protected.

Data Collection Methods

Data Collection Plan and Procedure

Data collection commenced in April 8th, 2011 after the research received an approval by the IRB Research Involving Human Subjects committee of Pittsburg State University. The researcher then contacted the Alumni Association of the school which is a strong association among Nigerian universities, and intimated the association with details of the research project and expected participation of members of the association. The researcher also inquired from the institution, if at any point the undergraduate/graduate course curriculum included any form of individual/career development planning class. This was useful in constructing questionnaire with reference to the expected level of knowledge graduates have about IDP/CDP. In the absence of sufficient time to contact and receive feedback from the university or alumni and to have large

number of respondents, the researcher, who is also an alumni of the school and has recent contacts of graduates who are not members of the alumni, directly contacted them in addition to members of the Alumni contacted through the secretary (see Appendices C and D). The researcher created a user account in www.surveymonkey.com (survey software), created the survey/questions and sent the link to the e-mail address of the secretary of the school alumni and the secretary forwarded the link to the group. Participants of the study were provided with details of the study, an assurance that their rights will be protected and the importance of the new knowledge that will be gained after this study.

The Data Collection Instrument

SurveyMonkey.com software was used to create a fifteen-question survey tool consisting of two parts. The first part was an explanation of the terms Individual and Career Development Planning and Programs and the establishment of facts that respondents are aware of and have or have not ever participated in IDP/CDP programs. The second part consisted of questions specific to subject's perceived relevance of individual/career development program as well as subject's job-related skill acquisition and job duration. The researcher selected this online survey technique because the software provides a quick, reliable, and organized method of gathering data from respondents and this technique was approved by the advisor. The privacy agreements of SurveyMonkey.com is authentic and includes non-disclosure of information submitted, thereby violating the rights of the subjects and their privacy. This software also helps in the analysis of data by showing the collective responses to each question in numbered lists and numbered charts. Respondents names were not linked to responses of analyzed data so it is unbiased. To validate the survey, a pilot testing with a small 2 sample group of subjects was conducted. Upon completion, notifications and questionnaires was sent via e-mail to subjects of

the study. The researcher did not disclose the SurveyMonkey.com user account name or password to anyone and the online survey link was only provided to the Alumni of Federal University of Technology Owerri through the alumni secretary. Results from this survey are made known only on this study.

The validity and reliability of this research were based on the data provided by the participants. Find a copy of the online survey located in Appendix E.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This study examined the perceived relevance of Individual and Career Development Planning to graduates of Federal University of Technology Owerri, Nigeria. It gathered information regarding the amount of knowledge these graduates have about IDP/CDP, what impact such development programs has had on their job expertise and job duration (if applicable) and if they generally perceive these programs as relevant or not. The researcher asked, “*Do graduates of Federal University of Technology Owerri, Nigeria think that Individual/Career Development Planning Program is relevant to the development of their professional careers?*”

Method of Analysis

The researcher used Microsoft Excel Package and descriptive statistics for data analysis and interpretation. The data relating to the experiences in development planning programs was first identified by the presence of experience and the level of experience. The researcher then used descriptive statistical tests of frequencies/percentages to analyze the level of experiences in development planning programs with the level of inexperience, the level of opportunities to participate with the level of inopportunity to participate, the level of willingness to participate to the level of unwillingness to participate the level of career changes amongst experienced graduates with the level of career changes amongst inexperienced graduates and the general levels of perceptions of IDP/CDP in development of professional career.

Study Findings

The findings of this study are presented in the order the questions answer the sub questions of this study which are written in italics. **To first establish the extent to which graduates of FUTO are exposed to and aware of the career relevance of an IDP/CDP program the study asked the following two sub-questions:**

Sub-Question 1: Are Individual/Career Development Planning programs or courses offered in Federal University of Technology Owerri, Nigeria and by Nigerian employers?

Sub-Question 2: If given the opportunity, will the graduates of Nigerian universities participate in Individual/Career Development Planning Programs?

Questions 1 and 2 were designed to answer sub-question 1. Question 1 asked: As an undergraduate, did you ever take any class in Individual or Career Development Planning or an course guiding you on how you can plan for the future? There were 78 responses. The chart on Figure 1 shows the responses in percentages with the number for each section in bracket.

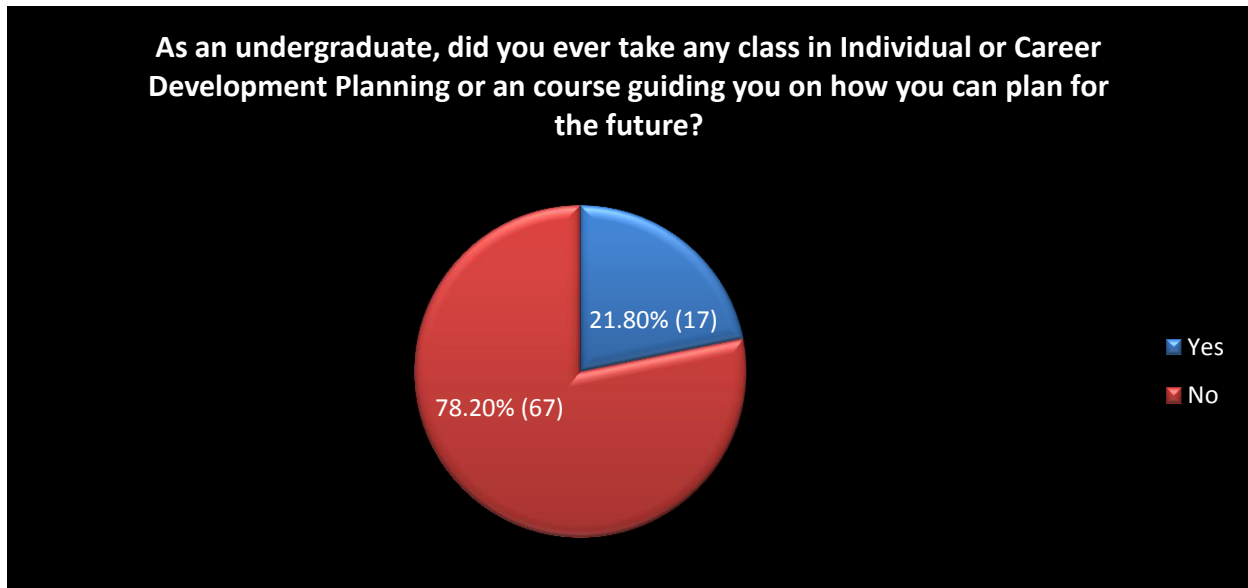


Figure 1 Distribution of respondents who took and did not take Individual or Career Development Planning classes as undergraduates.

The research indicates that most graduates of Federal University of Technology Owerri, Nigeria did not receive any class on individual or career planning; therefore it was not a mandatory course in the school. As a result, more than 50% of the university's graduates would be ignorant about how to plan their future or develop themselves and their careers unless they get this knowledge from somewhere else. *The researcher contacted the Alumni Relations Officer and professor of the university, Dr. Damian Dike, to find out if the school offers or ever offered a class on Career Development or Planning as part of their curriculum, and contrary to the information from the research, his answer was "Federal University of Technology Owerri, Nigeria never and still does not offer any class on IDP or CDP but these topics are discussed as part of the course outline for a Human Resource Management Class in the School of Management Technology".* Therefore, the students did not receive any class IDP/CDP, some respondents may have assumed that the topics on IDP/CDP discussed in a class was a class taken on IDP/CDP.

Question 2 asked: As an employee, have you ever taken any training course on Individual/Career Development Planning or professional development? There were 77 responses and the chart on figure 2 shows the responses.



Figure 2 Distribution of respondents who took and did not take Individual or Career Development Planning training or courses as employees.

The research indicates that more than 50% of respondents have been involved in one or more individual/career development programs as employees. This tells us that more graduates get professional development planning knowledge as employees than as undergraduates.

Question 4 and 5 were designed to answer sub-question 2 (*Sub-Question 2*: If given the opportunity, will the graduates of Nigerian universities participate in Individual/Career Development Planning Programs?)

Question 4 asked: If your answers to both questions 1 and 2 were “no”, why have you never taken an Individual or Career Development Planning program or class? There were 39 responses and the chart on figure 3 shows the distribution of responses.

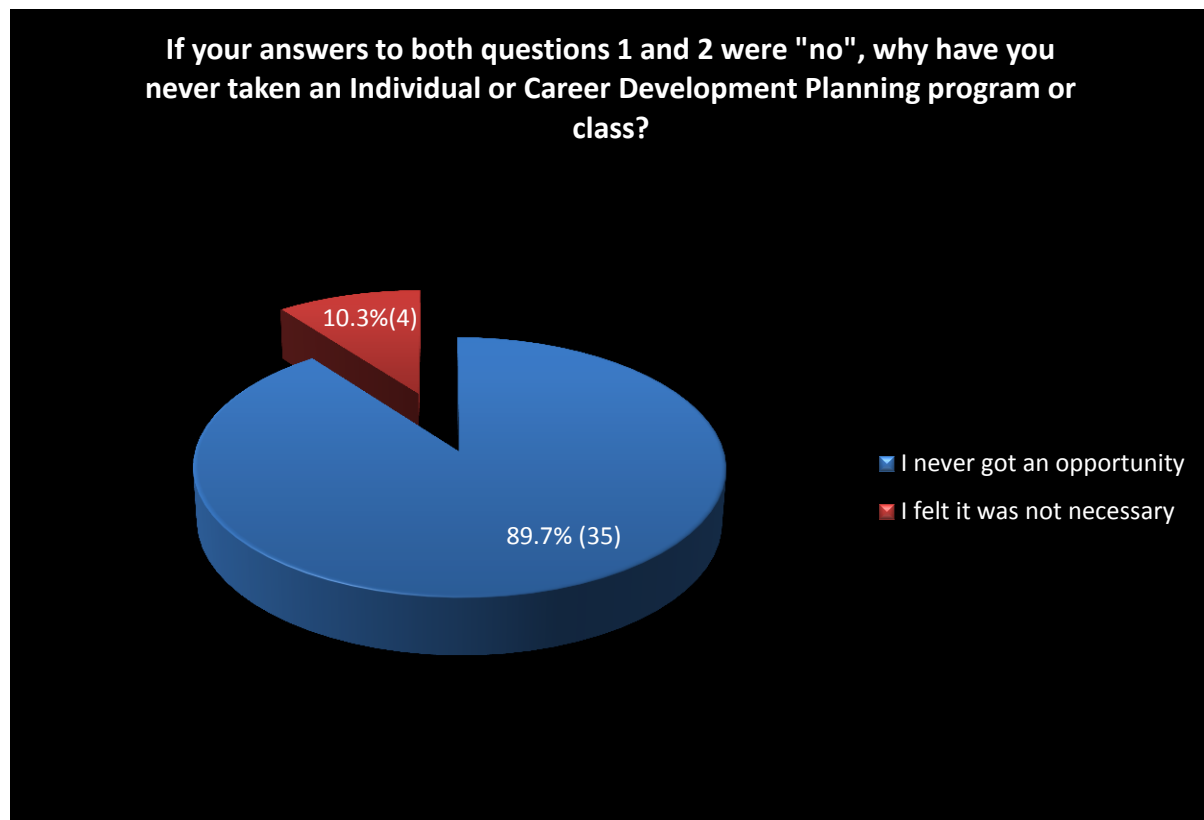


Figure 3 Distribution of respondents who have never taken an Individual or Career Development Planning program or class and the reason.

The research indicates that a very low percentage (10.3%) of graduates who have never engaged in an individual or career planning program or class have done so because they felt it was not necessary. Most graduates felt it was necessary but never got the opportunity.

Question 5 asked: If you answered “I never got an opportunity” to question 4, if given the opportunity, would you have participated in an Individual or Career Development Planning program or training? There were 37 responses to this question and the distribution of responses is shown in figure 4 below.



Figure4 Distribution of respondents who would and would not participate in an Individual or Career Development Planning program or class if given an opportunity.

The research indicates that most graduates are willing to participate in an activity that will enable them plan their future as well as develop their skills and career.

TABLE 1: An Analysis of Sub-Questions 1 and 2

Sub-Question	Questions designed to answer sub-questions	Total Number of Responses	Number of responses for each option	Response in percentage
(1)Are Individual/Career Development Planning programs or courses offered in Federal University of Technology Owerri, Nigeria and by Nigerian employers?	1)As an undergraduate did you take any class in Individual or Career Development Planning or any course guiding you on how you can plan for the future?	78	Yes= 17 No=61	21.8% 78.2%
	(2) As an employee, have you ever taken any training course on Individual or Career Development Planning or for professional development	77	Yes= 42 No= 35	54.5% 45.5%
(2) If given the opportunity, will the graduates of Federal University of Technology, Owerri, Nigeria participate in Individual/Career Development Planning Programs?	(4) If your answers to both question 1 and 2 were “no”, why have you never taken an Individual or Career Development Planning program or class?	39	I never got an opportunity= 35 I felt it was not necessary=4	89.7% 10.3%
	(5) If you answered “I never got an opportunity” to question 4, if given an opportunity, would you have participated in Individual or Career Development Planning program or training.	37	Yes= 34 No= 3	91.9% 8.1%

Table 1: To establish the extent to which graduates of Federal University of Technology, Owerri, Nigeria are exposed to and are aware of the career relevance of IDP/CDP programs.

The result from question 1 (under sub-question 1) shows that out of 78 respondents, only 17 (21.8%) received a class in Individual and Career Development Planning throughout their undergraduate studies but information from the school says that IDP/CDP classes were never offered in the school’s curriculum therefore graduates of FUTO had no knowledge of IDP/CDP as undergraduates. The result of question 2 shows that out of 77 respondents, 42 (54.5%) received a training or class in IDP or CDP or for professional development as employees.

Consequently, more than 50% of the graduates received a training in IDP/CDP as employees and so became aware of how to plan their careers as well as develop themselves and their careers only after they had started a career. This simply means that employers are more interested in developing/shaping the future of their employees than academic institutions and more graduates are exposed to the career relevance of IDP/CDP programs at employee-level than student-level. Students who have not been employed may not have this opportunity.

The result from question 4 (under sub-question 2) shows that out of 39 respondents, 35 (89.7%) people never got the opportunity to take a class or training in IDP/CDP program and 4 (10.3%) people felt it was not necessary. The 35 people may have been part of the 61 respondents in question 1 who did not take an IDP/CDP class as undergraduates and part of the 35 people who never got a training as employees. The 4 who felt it was not necessary may have been part of the 61 respondents in question 1 who did not take an IDP/CDP class as undergraduates because the class was not mandatory, they skipped it or did not enroll in it. The result from question 5 shows that 34 (91.9%) out of 37 respondents, which is a majority, would have participated in an IDP/CDP program if given the opportunity. Though this number (37) should have been the same with the number of people who said they had no opportunity in question 4(35 people), the researcher confirms that these are genuine results from the survey and it may have occurred due to misunderstanding my respondents. The research indicates that majority would have participated in the program.

Responses to questions for sub-question 1 tell us that IDP/CDP classes are not offered by the university but offered to most employees by employers. Therefore, graduates of FUTO are exposed to IDP/CDP programs as employees not as undergraduates. While responses to sub-question 2 illustrates that some graduates were not given an opportunity to participate in an

IDP/CDP class or training program but if given as opportunity, they will be willing to participate.

To establish the perceived relevance of the IDP/CDP program by the graduates to their professional careers, the study asked the following sub-questions:

Sub-Question 3: Do the graduates of FUTO who participated in an IDP/CDP program believe it was a contributing factor in their career advancement and/or achievements?

Sub-Question 4: Do the graduates of FUTO who did not participate in an IDP/CDP program believe it would have been relevant in their career advancement?

Question 3 was designed to answer sub question 3. Question 3 asked: If you answered “Yes” to either questions 1 or 2, of what relevance was the program to you then and now? This question is both qualitative and quantitative because the level of relevance by each respondent cannot be measured and each person’s idea of what is relevant to him or her is different. For instance, a certification is relevant to exhibit expertise but if it doesn’t get me a job, I will assume it is not relevant. Also what was not relevant to me in the past, I will assume will not be relevant to me in the future. The responses are shown in Appendix A and it is observed that almost everyone believes the program was and still is relevant. Technically, the number of respondents who said the program was generally relevant are represented quantitatively in the chart below. There were 45 responses and the distribution is seen in figure 5 below.

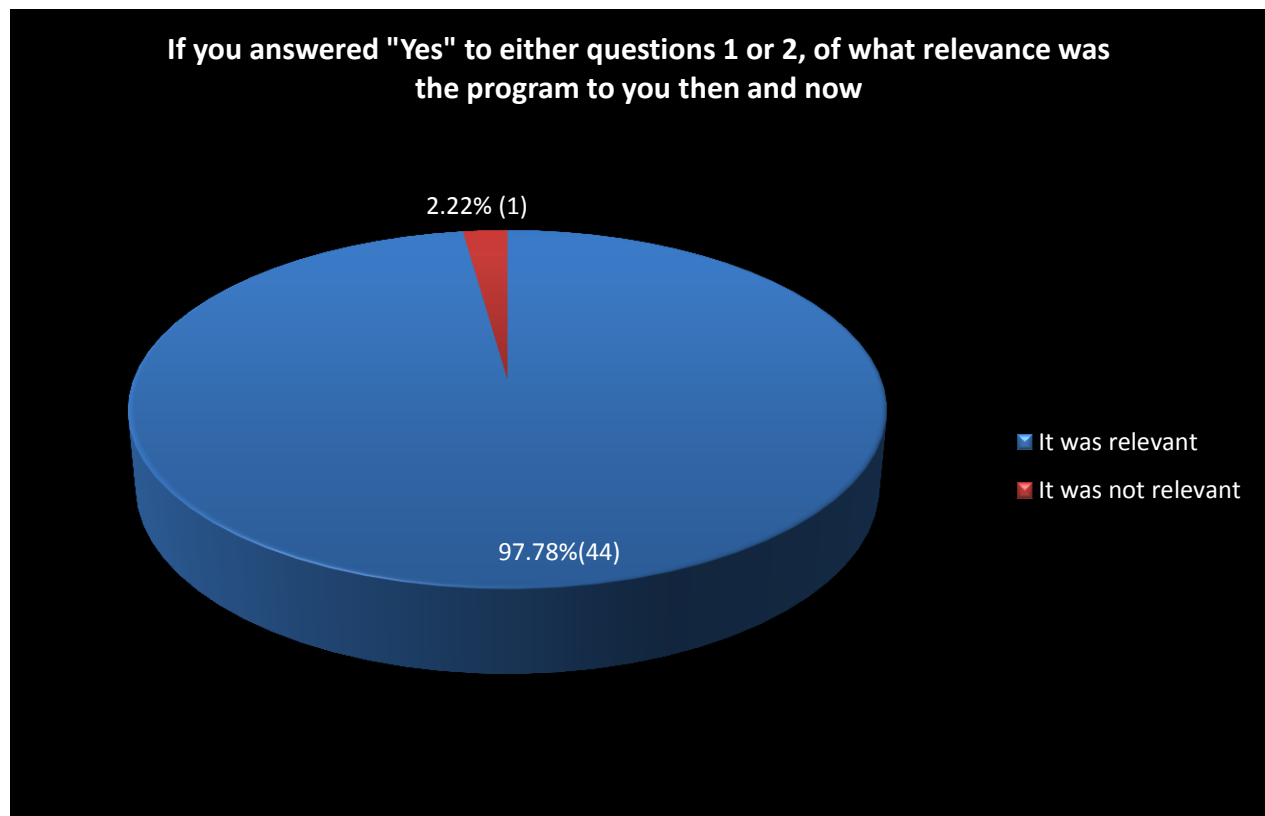


Figure5 Distribution of respondents who took IDP/CDP programs and their perception of its relevance.

The research indicates that most graduates of Federal University of Technology, Owerri, Nigeria believe that the IDP/CDP programs they have taken in the past were and still is relevant to their career.

Question 6 was designed to answer sub-question 4 (***Sub-Question 4: Do the graduates of FUTO who did not participate in an IDP/CDP program believe it would have been relevant in their career advancement?***). Question 6 asked: If you answered “Yes” to question 5, why? (***Question 5: If you answered “I never got an opportunity” to question 4, if given the opportunity, would you have participated in an Individual or Career Development Planning program or training?***). Question 6 is both qualitative and quantitative because the reason for participation may be due to the fact that the program is now seen as relevant or it may be because it was mandatory (for instance programs made mandatory by employers). Since the

aim of the study is to find out if the program is relevant or perceived as relevant, the reasons respondents who previously did not engage in the program give may be because it was relevant or may be biased where mandatory is seen as relevance. The reason for participation for each respondent is different and cannot be measured as due to relevance of the program. The responses are shown in Appendix B and it was observed that everyone believes the program would have helped in different ways concerning career decisions, career plans, individual and career accomplishment. Quantitatively, there is no distribution because there is generally one response to this question. 35 people responded and 35 people believe the program would have been helpful which is 100% but the areas in which the program would have been helpful can be quantified in a chart as shown in figure 6 below:

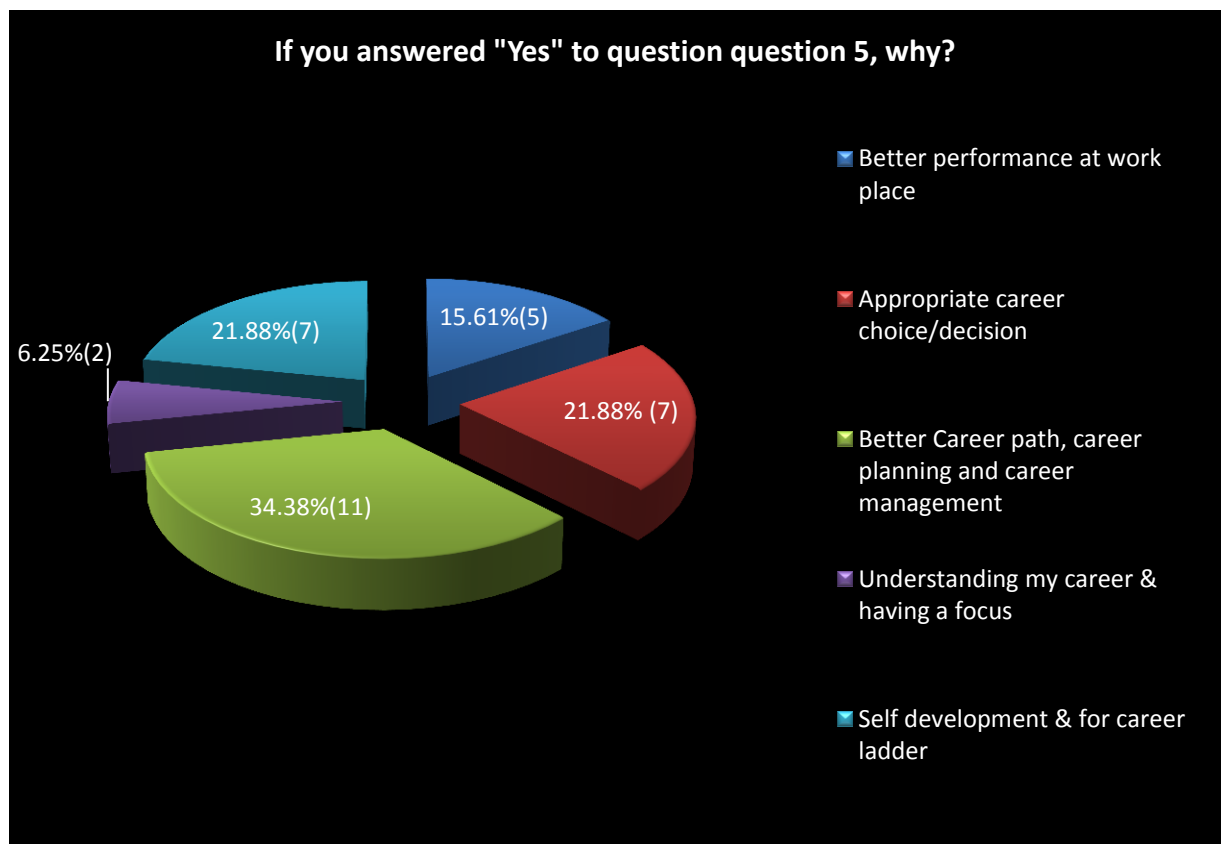


Figure6 Distribution of respondents' answers to why they would have engaged in an IDP/CDP programs if given an opportunity.

Three people did not explain why they would have engaged in an IDP/CDP program if given an opportunity, they simply answered “It is important”. Consequently, the percentages were calculated with a total of 32 instead of 35.

Question 7 was designed to answer sub-question 4. Question 7 asked: If you answered “I felt it wasn’t necessary to question 4 (Question 4 asked: why have you never taken an IDP/CDP program?) , do you feel otherwise now?”. There were 9 responses and the distribution can be seen in figure 7 below.

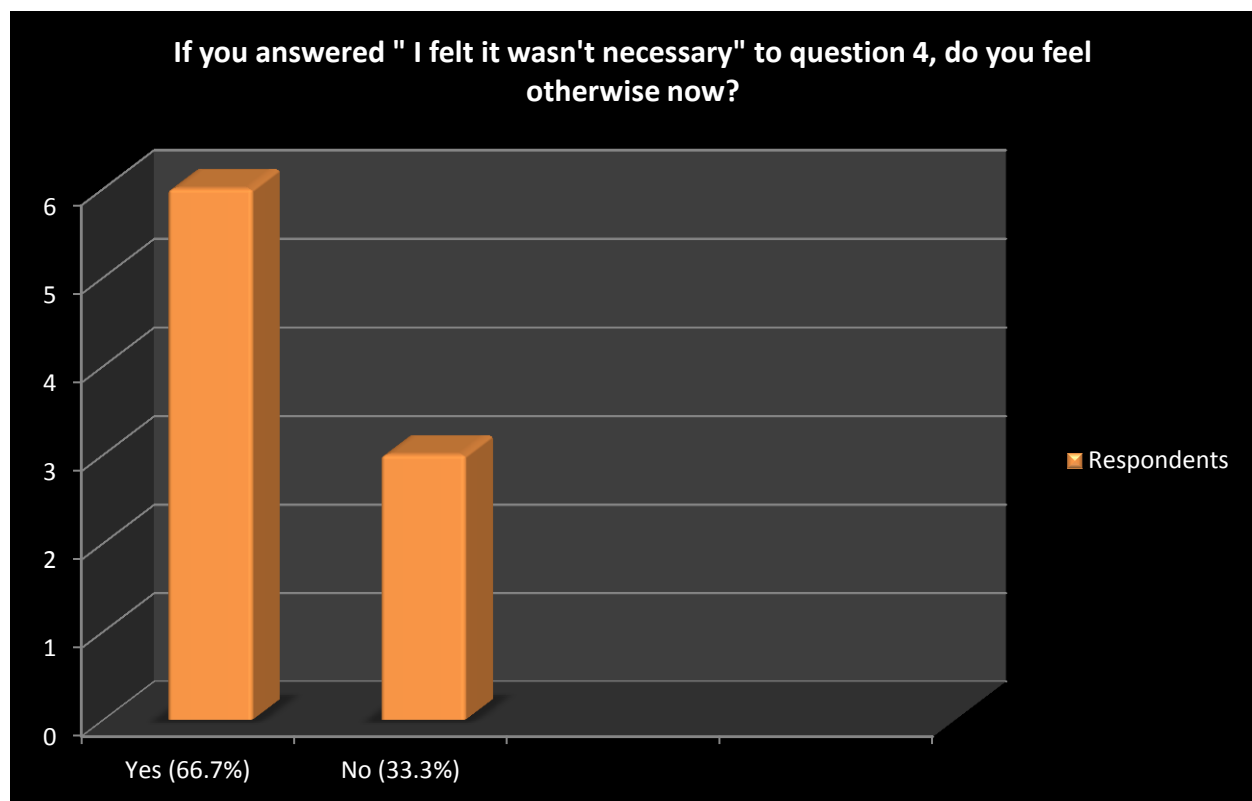


Figure 7 Distribution of respondents who feel they should have taken an IDP/CDP programs earlier.

Though very few people responded to this question, the research indicates that more people feel otherwise now about engaging in an IDP/CDP program than before.

Question 8 was designed to answer sub-question 4. Question 8 asked: Give reasons for your answer in question 7. Only 7 people answered this question and the responses can be seen below.

Question 8: Give reasons for your answer in question 7.

I understood that i need to build on what my strengths are.

5/10/11 1:54PM [View Responses](#)

I have come to that understanding

4/27/11 2:26AM [View Responses](#)

i don't feel it relevance.

4/20/11 12:19AM [View Responses](#)

My reason is based on the fact that i have already chosen a career path and going for the training wont really help cos i dont have plans of changing career.

4/20/11 1:06AM [View Responses](#)

The training equips you better for the future in the career

4/19/11 4:01PM [View Responses](#)

To give me a clear direction of where to go and how to get there, in addition to the tools I need to get there

4/18/11 8:09PM [View Responses](#)

To enhance my skills and to be proficient.

4/18/11 3:52PM [View Responses](#)

The responses were copied directly from surveymonkey.com. The responses show that 5 people out of 7 obviously answered “yes” to the question that they feel otherwise about not engaging in a development class or program which is more than half of the respondents of this questions.

TABLE 2: An Analysis of Sub-Question 3&4

Sub-Question	Questions designed to answer sub-questions	Total Number of Responses	Number of responses for each option	Response in percentage
3) Do the graduates of FUTO who participated in an IDP/CDP program believe it was a contributing factor in their career advancement and/or achievements?	3) If you answered “Yes” to either question 1 or 2, of what relevance was the program to you then and now?	45	Relevant = 44 Not relevant=1	97.78% 2.22%
4) Do the graduates of FUTO who did not participate in an IDP/CDP program believe it would have been relevant in their career advancement?	6) If you answered “If given an opportunity, I would have participated in an IDP/CDP program in question 5, why?”	35	*Quantitatively, everyone felt it would have been helpful in one way or the other =35 *Qualitatively, its relevance was grouped under: *Better performance at work= 5 *Appropriate career choice/decision=7 *Better career path, planning & mgt=11 *Understanding my career & having a focus=2 *Self development & climbing career ladder=7	100% 15.61% 21.88% 34.38% 6.25% 21.88%
	7)If you answered “I felt it was not necessary” to question 4, do you feel otherwise now?	9	Yes= 6 No=3	66.7% 33.3%
	8) Give reasons for your answer in question 7	7	Technically, reasons for a positive answer were 5 Reasons for a negative answer were 2	

Table 2: To establish the perceived relevance of IDP/CDP programs by the graduates to their professional careers.

The results from question 3 (under sub-question 3) show that more than 97% of the respondents who participated in IDP/CDP course or training generally believe it was relevant to them in one aspect of their career or the other (different explanations of its relevance is seen in Appendix A).

The outcomes from question 6 (under sub-question 4) show that participants who did not participate in an IDP/CDP program because they did not have an opportunity would have participated for the reasons stated on table 2 above. This simply means that their perception of the relevance of IDP/CDP programs is high and appropriately placed according to their needs.

The responses from question 7 (under sub-question 4) show that out of the 9 people who felt that it was not necessary to engage in an IDP/CDP program, 6 people feel otherwise now while 3 people don't. This tells us that few graduates did not engage in the program for reasons which would have been beyond their control, fewer graduates felt it was not necessary then and the fewest number of people still feel it is not necessary. The number keeps decreasing. 3 people out of 78 possible respondents is 3.85%.

The results from question 8 (under sub-question 4) show that out of 7 respondents, 5 people gave positive reasons why they feel different about the decisions they made before while 2 people gave reasons why they still feel indifferent about their decisions. A positive response to the relevance of IDP/CDP programs is in the majority.

Responses to questions for sub-question 3 tell us that most graduates who participated in IDP/CDP classes or trainings believe it was a contributing factor in their career advancement and/or achievement. While responses to sub-question 4 illustrates that most graduates who did not participate in an IDP/CDP class or training believe it would have been relevant to their career advancement and all graduates who would have participated in IDP/CDP classes or trainings if

given an opportunity and because they believe the program would have been beneficial in different ways to them as individuals and as professionals in their career lives. Additionally, almost everyone who felt the program was not necessary now feels otherwise and believe that if they had given it a trial, it would have helped in certain career decisions and successes.

Question 9 was not designed to specifically answer an sub-question. Question 9 asked: What is the longest time you have spent in an occupation or a job? 77 people responded to this question and the chart in figure 8 below shows the distribution of responses.

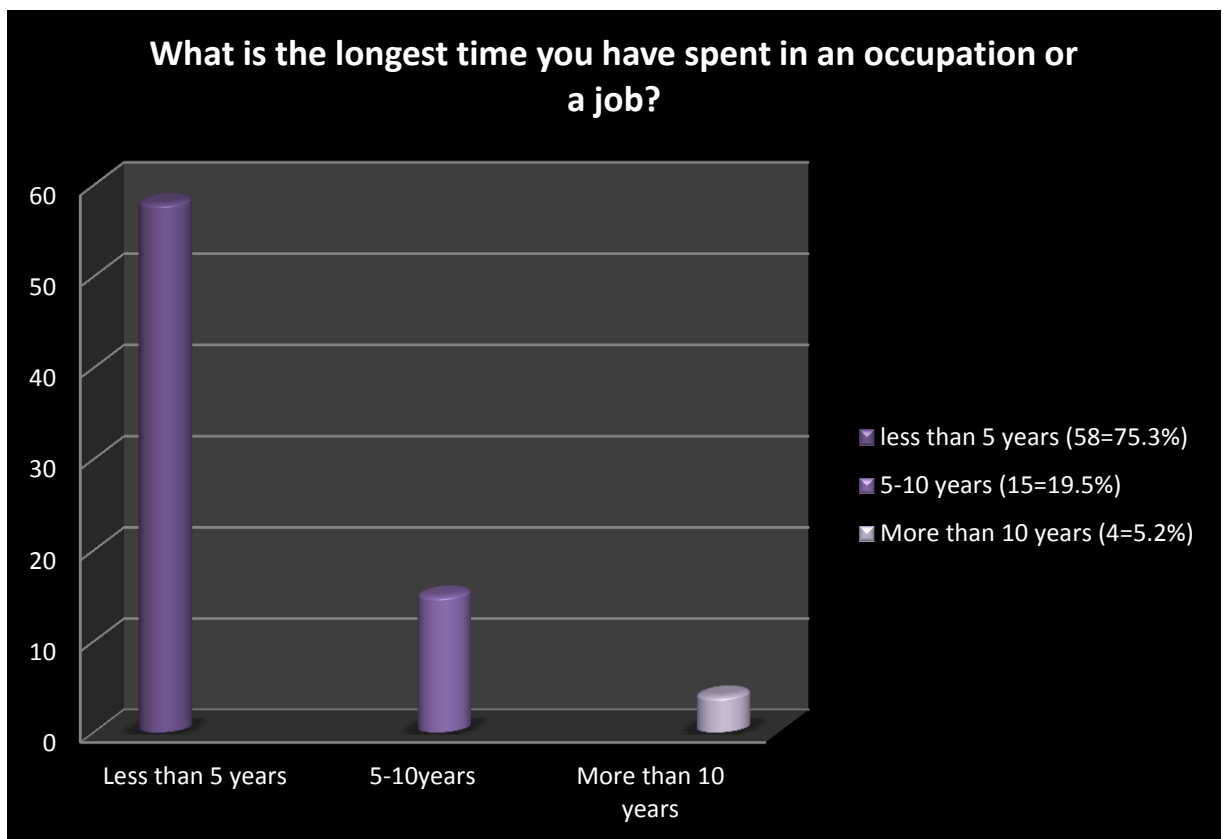


Figure 8 Distribution of how long respondents have spent in a job.

The research indicates that most graduates have spent less than 5 years in a particular job which means that very few graduates have expertise gathered due to years of experience.

To establish in part the impact of IDP/ICP programs on the careers of the graduates of Federal University of Technology Owerri, Nigeria, the study asked the following sub-question:

Sub-Question 5: Have the graduates of Federal University of Technology Owerri, Nigeria who have participated in an IDP/ICP program acquired more job-related knowledge and skills and feel more competent at work than graduates who did not participate?

Question 10 was designed to answer sub-question 5. Question 10 asked: I have acquired much JOB-RELATED knowledge and skills (example: technical, computer, interpersonal, communication, leadership/supervisory etc) in my occupation. PLEASE DO NOT INCLUDE GENERAL OR BASIC SKILLS (example: writing reports is a job-related communication skill unlike sending e-mails for a meeting which is general). There were 78 responses and the distribution of responses is shown in the chart below.

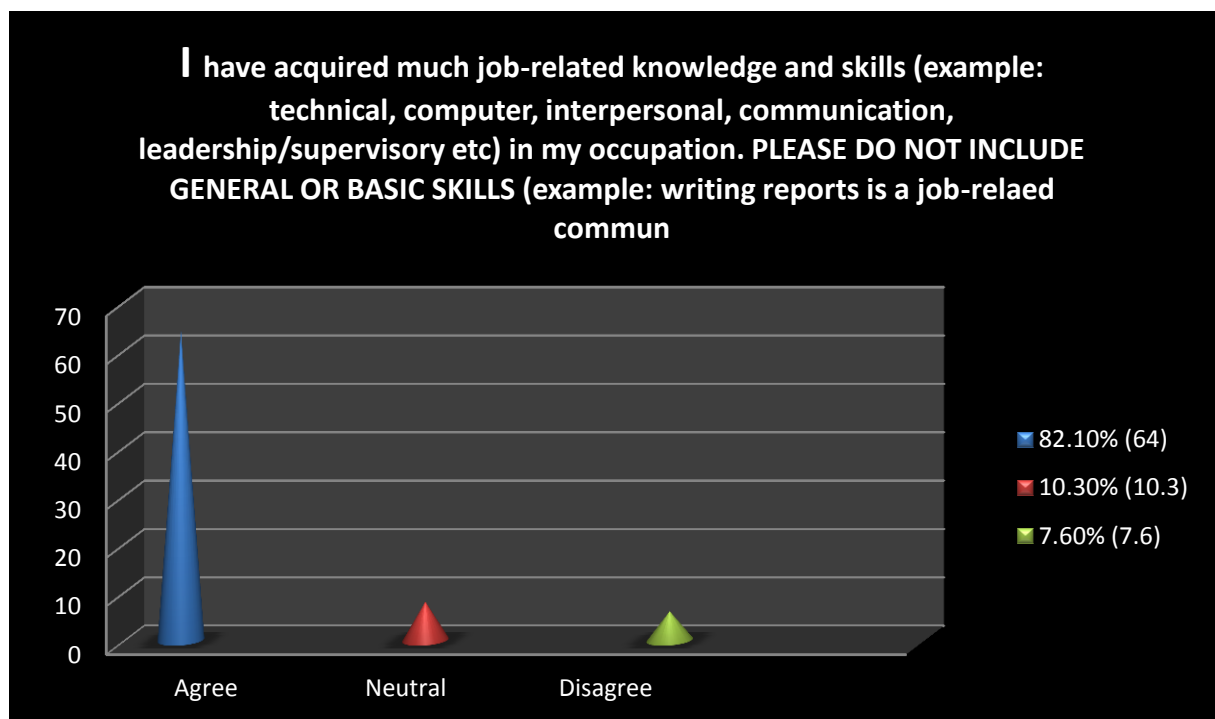


Figure 9 Distribution of respondents' agreement to job-related knowledge and skills acquired.

The research indicates that 82.10% of respondents have acquired job-related knowledge or skills while the rest have not or are neutral.

Question 11 was designed to answer sub-question 5. Question 11 asked: If you have acquired job-related knowledge or skills, was this acquisition as a result of following a plan (example: placing an individual goal and identifying skills, knowledge and resources needed to achieve that goal) or perhaps your organization's employee development plan? There were 55 responses and the distribution is shown in figure 10 below.

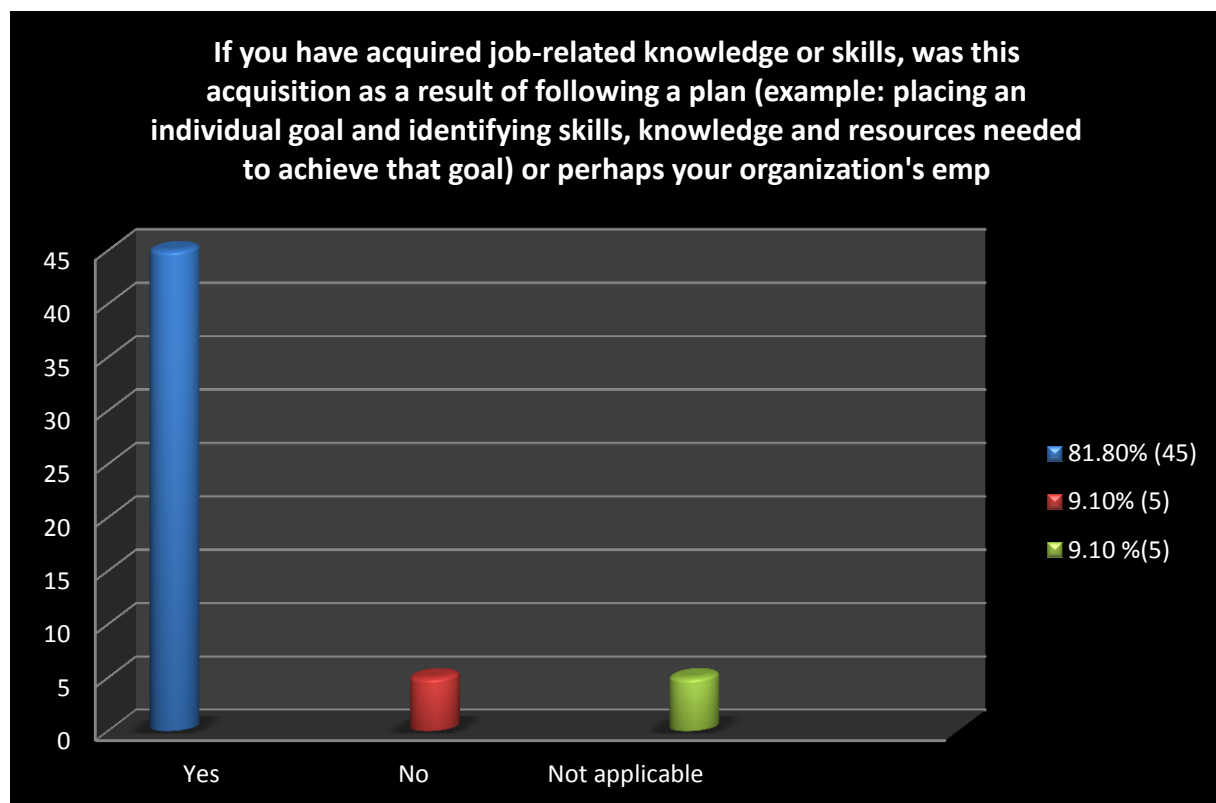


Figure 10 Distribution of respondents' agreement to job-related knowledge and skills acquired

The research indicates that 81.8% of those graduates who have acquired job-related knowledge or skills have done so using an individual or career development plan or an employee professional development program.

Question 12 was also designed to answer sub-question 5. Question 12 asked: I have followed this plan (according to question 11) and it has been useful to me. 55 people answered this question and the distribution is show in figure 11 below.



Figure 11 Distribution of respondents' agreement to following a development plan.

The research indicates that 79.6% of graduates who have ever followed a development plan have do so consistently and it has been useful to them while 3.7% may not have followed the plan or the plan isn't useful and this question isn't applicable to 16.7% of the respondents.

Question 13 was designed to answer sub-question 5. Question 13 asked: Having achieved certain goals I believe I have made significant difference in my workplace and in my society as a whole. There were 54 responses and the distribution is show in figure 12 below.



Figure 12 Distribution of respondents' agreement to the impact of planning and achievement of goals have on their competence at work.

The research indicates that more than 95% of the respondents believe they have made significant differences at their workplace and the society as a whole. This question is both qualitative and quantitative. The quantitative aspect has been illustrated above. The qualitative aspect involves the fact that different people have different ways of viewing success at the workplace and very few people can accept that they have not made significant differences in their work if they actually haven't. Consequently the results of this question are based on beliefs, feelings or perceptions of competence.

Question 14 was designed to answer sub-question 5. Question 14 asked: Employers rate me as competent and treat me as such. This question looks at how employees view their

competence as compared to how they believe their employers view their competence. There were 55 responses and the distribution is shown below in figure 13.

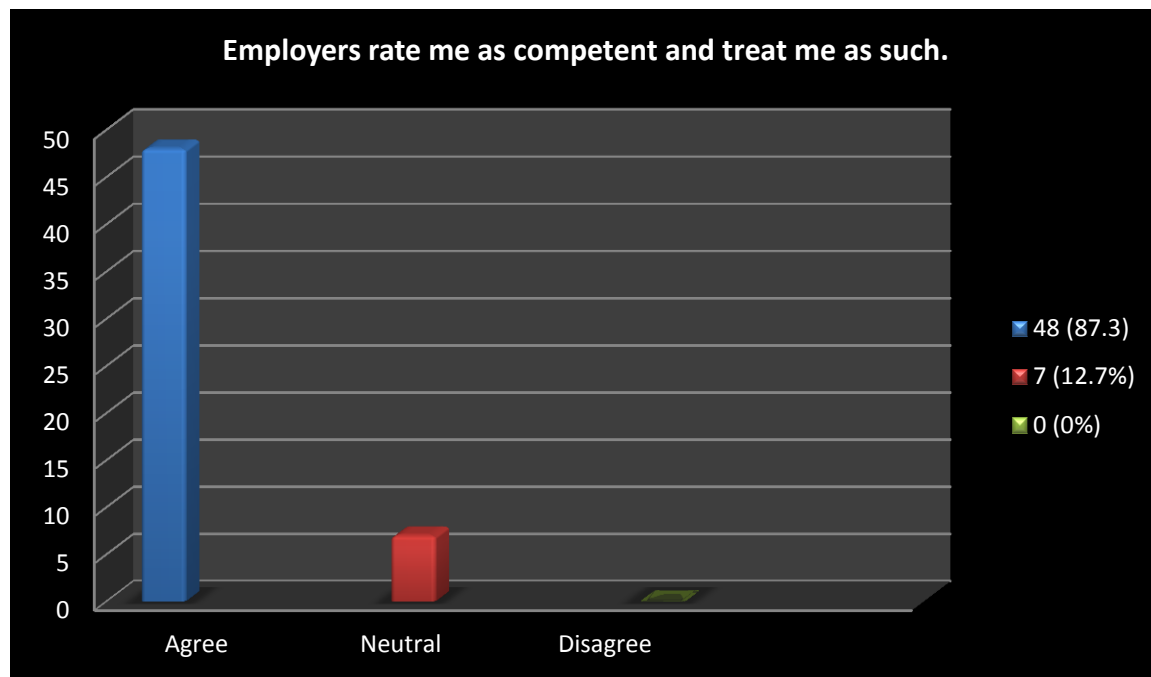


Figure 13 Distribution of respondents' agreement to the fact that employers rate them as competent and treat them as such.

The research indicates that about 87% of respondents' employers rate them as competent and treat them as such. This question is both qualitative and quantitative. Quantitatively, competence can be measured during evaluations or performance appraisals and qualitatively, treating an employee as competent or valuable can be observed in profit sharing, recognition, awards/rewards, promotions, recommendations, more benefits/development and bonuses. Additionally, people have their different opinions about what they view as treating them as valuable or competent. For instance an employee who sees promotion as a way of treating him as valuable will not feel that he is treated as such if he is only recognized or recommended. This may be the reason for those who answered Neutral or this people may not be sure of how their employers rate them.

Question 15 was not designed to answer any specific sub-question. Question 15 asked: If you answered neutral, no, disagree or n/a to any of questions 11-14, how many jobs have you changed in the last 5-10 years. There were 19 responses to this question and the distribution is shown in figure 14 below.

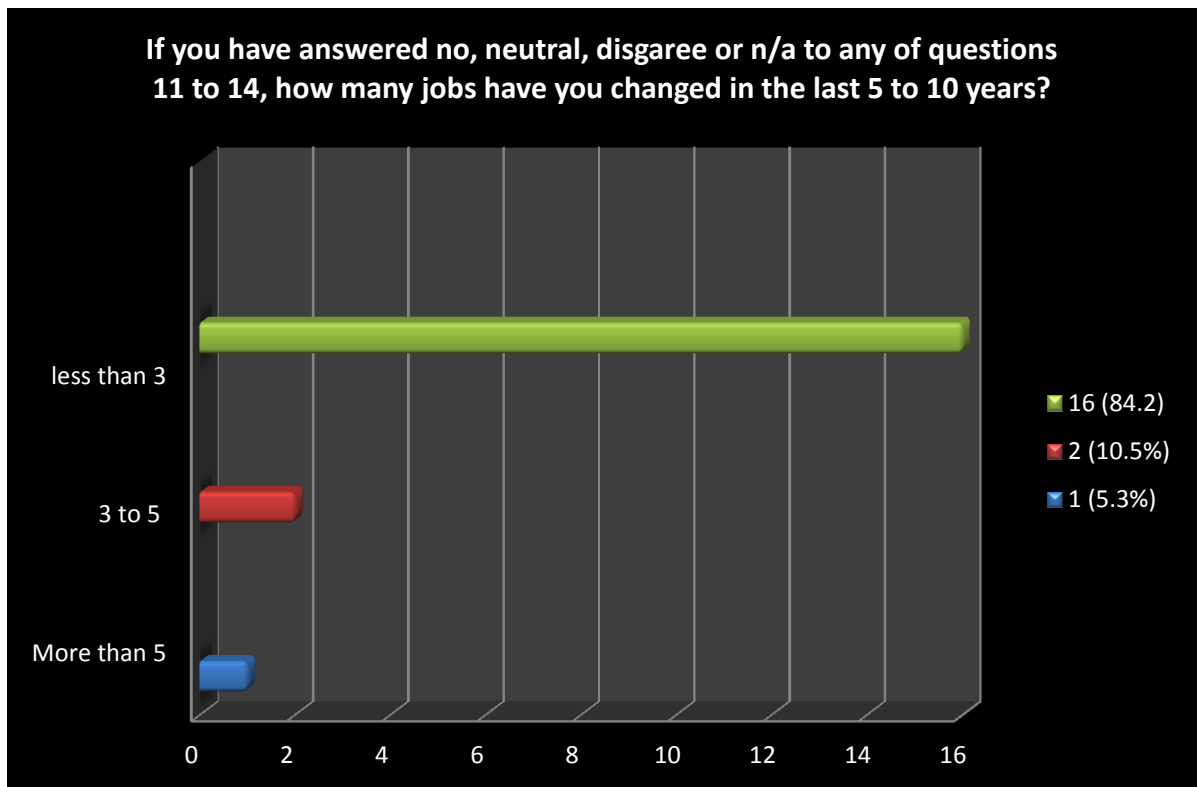


Figure 14 Distribution of how many jobs respondents have changed in the last 5 to 10 years.

The research indicates that 19 people out of 78 possible responses have either not applied planning in achieving a job-related knowledge/skill or believe they have applied it and it wasn't profitable to them or believe/are uncertain they have made no significant difference at their workplace.

TABLE 3: An Analysis of Sub-Question 5

Sub-Questions	Questions designed to answer sub-questions	Total Number of Responses	Number of responses for each option	Response in percentage
5) Have the graduates of Federal University of Technology Owerri, Nigeria who have participated in an IDP/ICP program acquired more job-related knowledge and skills and feel more competent at work than graduates who did not participate?	10)I have acquired much JOB-RELATED knowledge and skills (example: technical, computer, interpersonal, communication, leadership/supervisory etc) in my occupation. PLEASE DO NOT INCLUDE GENERAL OR BASIC SKILLS (example: writing reports is a job-related communication skill unlike sending e-mails for a meeting which is general).	78	Agree=64 Neutral=8 Disagree=6	82.1% 10.3% 7.6%
	11) If you have acquired job-related knowledge or skills, was this acquisition as a result of following a plan (example: placing an individual goal and identifying skills, knowledge and resources needed to achieve that goal) or perhaps your organization's employee development plan?	55	Yes=45 No=5 N/A=5	81.8% 9.1% 9.1%
	12) I have followed this plan and it has been profitable to me.	54	Agree=43 Disagree= 2 N/A=9	79.6% 3.7% 16.7%
	13) Having achieved certain goals, I believe I have made a significant difference in my workplace and society as a whole.	54	Agree=52 Neutral=2 Disagree=0	96.3% 3.7% 0%
	14) Employers rate me as competent and treat me as such.	55	Agree=48 Neutral= 7 Disagree=0	87.3% 12.7% 0%

Table 3: To establish in part, the impact of IDP/CDP programs on the career development of graduates of Federal University of Technology, Owerri, Nigeria.

The results from question 10 (under sub-question 5) demonstrate that 64 people out of 78 possible responses believe they have acquired job-related knowledge and skills. Because the researcher could not verify the exact number of respondents who have not taken the IDP/CDP class or training out of the 64 responses and still believe they have acquired job-related knowledge and skills, question 11 was designed to confirm this.

The results from question 11 illustrates that out of the 55 possible responses, 45 people have acquired job-related knowledge and skills using a plan. Even though the number of people who agreed that they have acquired job-related knowledge and skill in question 10 (64 people) does not equal the number of people who responded to question 11 (55 people), 81.8% of the responses to question 11 have actually used a plan to achieve their goals.

The results from question 12 shows that though 2 people have followed a plan, it was not perceived as profitable to them but majority of the respondents which was 43 people out of 54 responses, who have followed development plans to achieve their goals, perceive the plans as being profitable to them.

The results from question 13 tells us that 52 people perceive themselves as significant in the workplace and the society as a whole out of 54 respondents while 2 people are neutral. In comparison to question 12 where 43 people agree that a plan has been profitable to them and 11 people either disagree or checked not applicable, the analysis shows that 9 other people (added to 43 to make 52 in question 13) who have either checked N/A or disagree to question 12, also believe they have been significant at the work. These people believe that a plan is not necessary to achieve goals that make them significant in their workplaces.

The results from question 14 shows that 48 out of 55 respondents believe their employers rate and treat them as competent while 7 people feel neutral about how they are rated. These numbers are less than the numbers in question 13. In question 13, 52 people feel they are competent while 2 people feel neutral and in question 14, 48 people feel they are treated as competent while 7 people feel neutral. This means that more employees feel significant by self-rating than by ratings from employers.

To answer sub-question 5, the results to the questions 10,11,12,13 and 14 draws a conclusion that 82.1% of 78 respondents have acquired job-related knowledge and skills, 81.8% of 55 respondents have utilized a development plan in acquiring job-related knowledge and skills, 79.6% of 54 respondents agree that the plan was profitable to them, 96.3% of 54 respondents perceive themselves as significant in the workplace and 87.3% of 55 respondents perceive themselves as rated and treated as competent by their employers. Additionally, since 81.8% have utilized a development plan and 79.6% agree that the plan is profitable, that means that only about 2.2% feel otherwise. Even though 96.3% perceive themselves as significant, which is more than the number that has used and agree that the plan is profitable respectively, majority of the people who see themselves as competent and are rated as such by employers can only come from those who have used a plan and believe it is profitable. Generally most graduates of Federal University of Technology, Owerri, Nigeria who participated in IDP/CDP programs have acquired more job-related knowledge and skills using a plan and they perceive this plan as profitable to them. Also most employed graduates perceive themselves as significant and believe their employers rate them as competent.

Questions 9 and 15 were not designed to answer any specific sub-question. Table 4 outlines questions 9 and 15.

TABLE 4

Questions	Total Number of Responses	Number of responses for each option	Response percentage in
9) What is the longest time you have spent in an occupation or a job.	77	Less than 5 years=58 5 to 10 years=15 More than 10 yrs= 4	75.3% 19.5% 5.2%
15) If you answered No, Disagree, Neutral or N/A to any of questions 10-14, how many jobs have you changed in the last five to ten years.	19	Less than 3=16 3 to 5=2 More than 5= 1	84.2% 10.5% 5.3%

Table 4: Outlining results of questions 9 and 15.

Results from question 9 show that 75.3% of 77 respondents have spent a maximum of less than 5 years in a job which means that most graduates do not spent a long time on one job. Results from question 15 show that 19 people have either not had a job-related knowledge/skill or have never utilized a plan in acquiring a job-related knowledge/skill or do not perceive themselves as competent or treated as such. Anyone in this category is either not experienced, or not an expert or not resourceful at work or has not invested in planning for his/her future. 16 out of the 19 respondents have made less than 3 job changes in 5 to 10 years. This may either mean that these people have just entered the labor force or are less resourceful at work or have invested less in planning their future and so have no option but to stick to one job for a period of time. This can also mean that even though people have spent less than 5 years in a job which means they move from job to job, they have acquired expertise and skills and they feel competent at work.

Result of the major research question

Do graduates of Federal University of Technology Owerri, Nigeria think that Individual/Career Development Planning Program is relevant to the development of their professional careers?

The answer to this question is yes. Table 1 shows that 91.9% of respondents who did not take any class or training in IDP/CDP programs will do so if given an opportunity. Table 2 shows that 97.78% of those who engaged in development programs see them as relevant to their career advancement. Table 3 shows that 79.6% believe that using a plan to achieve career goals was profitable to them and 96.3% perceive themselves as competent having achieved certain goals in their professional lives. Despite the fact that these graduates spend few numbers of years in a particular job and the belief that they are competent/experts at their works which is qualitative, on an average, more than 90% of them perceive Individual and Career Development Planning programs are relevant to the development of the professional careers.

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research study was designed to find out statistically, if and to what extent graduates of a university perceive planning to develop themselves and their careers as relevant to the development of their professional careers or their career advancement. The researcher gathered data in May, 2011 from 78 graduates of Federal University of Technology, Owerri, Nigeria. The researcher also designed this study to know to what extent graduates are aware of development planning programs/trainings such as Individual and Career Development Planning programs and if they believe these programs/training have been profitable to them in their career pursuit.

Research in chapter 2 shows that technological advancement has given rise to global competition and the need for employers to desire highly skilled employees. Additionally, expertise and skills require experience and knowledge but most graduates spend few years in one job then move to another thus limiting their years of experience. These actions may show that most graduates believe more in just earning a salary than developing their careers or graduates are simply not aware of the importance of appropriate career decisions, planning and development. Consequently, when there is a downsizing those who have not acquired enough experience will be laid-off and when there is an appointment opportunity, those who have more experience will be chosen. Those who have a plan/goal make fewer changes. It will good to find out if graduates aware of and perceive career development/planning programs in order to know the possible acceptance and maximum application of these programs if they are implemented.

Assumptions and Limitations

Assumptions of the Study

The study assumes that employed graduates of Federal University of Technology Owerri, Nigeria moving from one career to the other and lacking sufficient expertise are representatives of all Nigerian graduates. Secondly, a federal university in Nigeria, operated by the federal government is a good representation of the best university Nigerian academic system can produce and as such should be offering the best programs, producing the best graduates and having most of its graduates in the best jobs in the country. As a result, it should be used to analyze the relationship between career shuffling by graduates and lack of Individual and Career Development plans as it affects experience and expertise so we can draw the reasons why the best out of the lot should engage in career shuffling.

Limitations of Proposed Study

The researcher recognizes that the size of the subject sample and the fact that all data was collected at one location will limit the ability to generalize the finding to all Nigerian graduates employed in Nigeria. The second limitation of this study applies to the fact that only one University is used due to time constraints and limited access to information from other universities in the country however, this will not prove to be a serious problem to the validity and reliability of this study. Finally this study is limited to random selection of the samples considering the small size of the sample and the need for generalization to make the sample realistic representation of the population.

Conclusions

All conclusions are based upon responses in the study. The study provided an answer to the primary research question and sub-questions.

- Though students were intimated on Individual and Career Development Planning in a Human Resource Management class in the School of Management Technology, the Federal University of Technology Owerri, Nigeria did not offer any full class on Individual or Career Development/Planning.
- More graduates received training in IDP/CDP as employees than as students and so became aware of how to plan their careers as well as develop themselves and their careers only after they had started a career.
- Employers are more interested in developing/shaping the future of their employees than academic institutions.
- FUTO graduates who have not been employed may not have this opportunity.
- If given the opportunity, graduates of FUTO would participate in development planning classes/trainings.
- Almost all respondents who participated in IDP/CDP course or training generally believe it was relevant to them in one aspect of their career or the other.
- Technically, all participants who did not participate in an IDP/CDP program because they did not have an opportunity agreed that they would have participated if given an opportunity because it would be relevant in the advancement of their careers
- Generally most graduates of Federal University of Technology, Owerri, Nigeria who participated in IDP/CDP programs have acquired more job-related knowledge and skills using a plan and they perceive this plan as profitable to them. Also most employed

graduates perceive themselves as significant at their workplaces and believe their employers rate them as competent.

- Most graduates do not spend a long time on one job.
- It is assumed that most graduates who have never used a plan in achieving a career goal or see it as non-profitable or do not rate themselves as competent, have either just entered the labor force or are less resourceful at work or have invested less in planning their future and so have no option but to stick to one job for a period of time.
- Even though some graduates have spent less than 5 years in one job which means they move from job to job, they have acquired expertise and skills and they feel competent at work.

Implications

- Since the perceived relevance of IDP/CDP Courses by graduates is high, academic institutions which do not offer these programs should consider including them in their curriculum which will help future graduates understand what IDP and CDP are, perceive them as relevant and consequently make better career decisions and plans for their professional development.
- There is a need for career counselors working with employees (graduates) and college/university students to assess their views on IDP/CDP as a result of their academic upbringing and treat them accordingly during counseling. For instance, if employees do not perform well because they did not make right career decisions, counselors and

consultants will easily identify the problem if those employees are not aware of or perceive career decision, planning and development programs as irrelevant.

- The career counselors could mount workshops and seminars for them in learning and practicing career goals, plans and resources needed to achieve such goals as well as networking, self-exploration and involvement in development programs or activities. By gaining such cognitive and emotional information, the employees/students could be encouraged or motivated and challenge themselves to perform necessary career planning and development activities and subsequently achieve expertise and self-accomplishment.
- Future researchers could consider examining the impact of IDP/CDP on career success and accomplishment. Though there may be several reasons for the deficit in skills gap, this study emphasizes on what deficit is existing as a result of the amount of knowledge or perception of development programs.

Recommendations

- Application to HRD: This study recommends that HRD professionals who specialize in Career Development should place emphasis on the how much new employees know about their career, how well they fit into their jobs and how far they are willing and able to take their careers to become experts as well as competent as work.
- HRD professionals that lecture in colleges and universities that do not teach IDP/CDP classes should seek integration of career and development planning classes to enable graduates have a strong career foundation and focus.
- All educational institutions including Art and Technical Institutes should provide knowledge as well as awareness on how to implement or where to channel such

knowledge, that is, guide graduates into the future appropriately. Other sources of knowledge are optional. For instance, it is up to employers to decide if they should develop the skills and careers of employees and it's up to employees to develop themselves if they choose to. Usually, people get a degree to have a career or a field of specialization/expertise in future. Since research proves that planning programs are necessary for a right path to development, it is important the universities establish such courses as mandatory being one, if not the only place where teaching must be implemented.

- Recommendations for future research: Future researchers could consider examining the actual impact of IDP/CDP on career success and accomplishment. Other researchers could use this information to supplement a secondary research study or to guide the protocol design for a more in-depth approach to this same format.
- This study should be retried with a larger sample of survey respondents. The next researcher can extent the sample size to include students from universities all over Nigeria or in other developing countries and if necessary students from developed countries.

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Appendix A

Responses to Question 3 from Surveymokey.com

If you answered "Yes" to either question 1 or 2, of what relevance was the program to you then and now?

Showing 45 text responses

The courses undertaken were not really recognised by HR, so seemed like a complete waste of my money and time.

5/16/11 5:33AM [View Responses](#)

It developed my ability to identify my core strength. this guided my next stage of career learning or development.

5/14/11 8:05AM [View Responses](#)

Quite relevant

5/6/11 6:27AM [View Responses](#)

The has helped to position myself for advancement opportunities

5/5/11 9:22PM [View Responses](#)

It was a real career booster for me. It aligned me towards achieving my dreams.

5/5/11 1:37PM [View Responses](#)

The program has been very useful,I wish it was part of my undergrad curriculum or at least was talked about. It made me think of what my goal is and how to achieve it.

5/5/11 8:34AM [View Responses](#)

very much relevant

5/5/11 12:55AM [View Responses](#)

the class was necessary in rounding up a programme but today it has helped me a great deal in handling my present carrer effectively

5/3/11 12:22AM [View Responses](#)

It helped me understand what line of career are available for me as an individual, all that is involved to achieve a fulfilling career.

4/29/11 8:34AM [View Responses](#)

it helped me in developing myself.

4/28/11 1:51AM [View Responses](#)

Then, the program / training helped me to know what I want in life and how to make choices on which field I can develop a career and how to plan towards it. Now, as an employee, with the experience and knowledge I have got through the trainings I have finally come up with a plan and made my choice on which fields to develop a career.

4/25/11 3:07PM [View Responses](#)

It was of great relevant to me as it has helped obtain good jobs in the past

4/25/11 2:14PM [View Responses](#)

It serves as a foundation to all our ambitions. It helped me know the purpose of my existence and to be more focused in life. It serves as a foundation to all our ambitions. It helped me know the purpose of my existence and to be more focused in life.

4/24/11 5:09PM [View Responses](#)

it helped me to really know the career i chose is really lucrative.

4/24/11 2:37PM [View Responses](#)

Very relevant

4/24/11 12:47AM [View Responses](#)

Very relevant

4/23/11 3:44AM [View Responses](#)

The courses I personally took on Individual Development Planning are still relevant but the employer sponsored courses on professional development are no longer relevant because I have left that career path.

4/22/11 1:13PM [View Responses](#)

It helped me to get more improved on my chosen career, in addition to learning how to sustain my profession

4/21/11 3:35PM [View Responses](#)

Very relevance.

4/20/11 1:16PM [View Responses](#)

As an undergraduate, the program helped me to know the relevance of career development and planning, and now as an employee, it has helped me to meet certain organizational needs.

4/20/11 1:08PM [View Responses](#)

to build you up for the future and challenges

4/20/11 12:19AM [View Responses](#)

still doing the program but it has given me a wider and broader insight into my chosen career path

4/20/11 10:58AM [View Responses](#)

well it help me in making the right decision

4/20/11 9:47AM [View Responses](#)

it improved my technical skills and confidence. Communication with people and ability to work with a team was developed. Ability to lead and supervise.

4/20/11 8:32AM [View Responses](#)

Having a career development plan helps to improves and creates opportunities for career advancement

4/20/11 5:49AM [View Responses](#)

It has helped in shaping my career

4/20/11 4:45AM [View Responses](#)

The training helped me think of the future in terms of getting more qualifications to be able to develop my career

4/20/11 3:36AM [View Responses](#)

it has improved my knowledge power and enhanced my percerptive ability also improved my proffesionalism

4/20/11 3:33AM [View Responses](#)

Very Relevant. Helped me grow fast in my career

4/20/11 12:37AM [View Responses](#)

very relevant as an employee

4/19/11 6:08PM [View Responses](#)

it put me further on the right track

4/19/11 5:30PM [View Responses](#)

Time consuming then Very relevant to me now

4/19/11 5:23PM [View Responses](#)

Very useful

4/19/11 4:01PM [View Responses](#)

Then it did not look as if it was adding anything to me, but later I discovered the importance of the course and training, also how to apply the knowledge at work place.

4/19/11 3:18PM [View Responses](#)

Puts an individual in a right path

4/19/11 3:01PM [View Responses](#)

The program is relevant to me now because it has helped me gain more knowledge in my field of work, and has placed me in a higher level in my field of work.

4/19/11 2:51PM [View Responses](#)

As an undergraduate, it sharpened my understanding of the labour market demand hence helping me to equip myself with skills that could give me a competitive edge in the labour market.

4/19/11 1:37PM [View Responses](#)

Helped broaden my understanding of career options

4/19/11 2:51AM [View Responses](#)

Then, there was no relevance b/cos i just got employed in the company. But now am beginning to see the relevance of that training program in that am charged to lead and manage resources for another company which was partly what was taught us in the career development planning courses.

4/19/11 12:59AM [View Responses](#)

the programmes have helped me a lot to improve in my career and also my personal planning for investment

4/18/11 10:38PM [View Responses](#)

It helped to understand how I should plan my career but this was done outside Nigeria since there was no facility in place for such training in Nigeria

4/18/11 9:39PM [View Responses](#)

It prepared me to become indispensable and ahead of my colleagues in scheme of things. It has been a launch pad for me to build on other issues.

4/18/11 9:13PM [View Responses](#)

very relevant to my overall knowledge of the IT industry

4/18/11 7:59PM [View Responses](#)

The program enabled me to be competent in the efficient running of oilfield equipment. I underwent an oilfield equipment training school.

4/18/11 3:52PM [View Responses](#)

Very Relevant

4/18/11 3:44PM [View Responses](#)

APPENDIX B

Responses to Question 6 from Surveymokey.com

because i believe it help me better in doing my job

5/26/11 10:44AM [View Responses](#)

I believed would have prepared me better i choosing career.

5/16/11 5:33AM [View Responses](#)

It would have prepared me better for my chosen career.

5/16/11 3:05AM [View Responses](#)

I think as a graduate i should have a good career planning for the future of my children.

5/10/11 2:17AM [View Responses](#)

Professional development is very important, some people who are well talented and can deliver career-wise always end up crashing because they lack good planning/organization especially those from the science background because most science disciplines do not deem it necessary to include this as part of its modules.

5/7/11 9:39PM [View Responses](#)

To improve and understand more in my career

5/6/11 2:57AM [View Responses](#)

i will because its all about developing career and making the best out of you,it will also improve my value and worth in my career.

5/5/11 1:38PM [View Responses](#)

I'm in a profession with many career paths. An early career development planning program would have saved me many years of indecision.

5/4/11 9:33PM [View Responses](#)

So as to enable me have a critical look at the course I would want to study.

5/3/11 6:02AM [View Responses](#)

It is vital for one to have guidance from an external party, who will obviously have no bias and provide a candid and professional advice.

4/30/11 6:14AM [View Responses](#)

To help develop my career needs and also sharpen my skills in order to enhance my performance at work.

4/28/11 5:53AM [View Responses](#)

I recognized its importance

4/27/11 2:26AM [View Responses](#)

It will assist me in planning my career and further evaluate myself and know whether i am heading in the right direction.

4/25/11 11:59PM [View Responses](#)

The program will be an aid on how to manage my career, learning new skills, how to get to a senior marketer. It will also help me identify my strengths and weakness, measure my performance at every stage of my career,

4/25/11 4:49AM [View Responses](#)

Such Programs are meant to prepare Employees for future challenges ahead in their respective Organizations especially that of Top Management Cadres.

4/24/11 5:09PM [View Responses](#)

To build up more ideals and knowledge, it will also be a guideline 4 me in my planning.

4/22/11 6:56PM [View Responses](#)

I want to get better in my job

4/22/11 6:10PM [View Responses](#)

Because it will give me a better skill to project myself into my future

4/22/11 1:13PM [View Responses](#)

it will definitely enhance or have a very big impact in my career .

4/22/11 8:54AM [View Responses](#)

That would have help me alot in planning my career path as to suit the needs of today's organizations.

4/22/11 5:46AM [View Responses](#)

That I believe will enable me make informed decisions on how to develop my career.

4/21/11 9:16PM [View Responses](#)

I believe it would have given me better understanding/insight of various careers and enabled me choose the right and best career for me which is my passion

4/21/11 6:27AM [View Responses](#)

it will help me to be more focused

4/20/11 10:30AM [View Responses](#)

Because it would have helped me sharpened my career plan and goal

4/20/11 3:54AM [View Responses](#)

Because it guides an individual on personal development,like Skills, enhance quality of life and Potential.

4/20/11 2:12AM [View Responses](#)

It is an indispensable tool for acquiring necessary and useful knowledge for career development.

4/20/11 1:20AM [View Responses](#)

NA

4/20/11 1:06AM [View Responses](#)

as a giude, in career decision making

4/19/11 6:29PM [View Responses](#)

It is important

4/19/11 4:01PM [View Responses](#)

It would give me an opportunity to consider different options for planning my career that i may not have thought of on my own.

4/19/11 2:15PM [View Responses](#)

If given the opportunity, it will make me more relevant in my current job position and help me choose a better career path that will better reflect my God's given potentials for service to humanity.

4/19/11 1:45PM [View Responses](#)

It would have helped me make good decisions even when i do not have the experience. I would be advised by expert opinion

4/19/11 5:07AM [View Responses](#)

It will better guide me in the best pathway to follow in my career growth

4/19/11 2:00AM [View Responses](#)

To shapen my future and prepare my self for a better toomorrow

4/18/11 4:45PM [View Responses](#)

To provide the means to enhance my career professionally.

4/18/11 3:52PM [View Responses](#)

APPENDIX C: CALL TO PARTICIPATE E-MAIL

Mon, April 18, 2011 3:34:09 PM

Individual and Career Development Planning Survey: An Appeal for FUTOites to Assist

From: Laz-Okey <laz_okey@yahoo.com> _

[View Contact](#)

To: FUTO ALUMNI <futo-alumni@yahoogroups.com>

Great FUTOites,

I wish to congratulate Nigerians on the successful completion of the National Assembly and Presidential elections.

Please, on behalf of one us who is on her graduate program, I wish to forward to the general alumni body the email below which contains a link to an online survey she is conducting towards her research work. She is one of us in diaspora and we appeal that we all kindly assist her by answering a few questions which does not require any personal information. Please, note that the survey can be taken from any location you may be.

Thank you in anticipation of your usual cooperation.

Yours-in-Service,

Laz. Uzoechi

Secretary General - FAAD (FUTO Alumni Association in Diaspora)

Dear Participant/ FUTO Alumnus/Alumnae,

A research project is being conducted as part of the requirements for a Masters degree in Human Resource Development. The research is on "The Perceived Relevance of Individual and Career Development Planning" to graduates who are employed or have been employed at one time or the other. The research consists of two short completely anonymous surveys.

Please take a moment and answer the questions at the links provided. Remember this is completely anonymous and confidential so please be as honest as possible. It will greatly affect the outcome of the research and information from this research is expected to be helpful to academic institutions and employers in future.

Kindly follow the link below and answer the questions:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/6NBV6YY>

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/6TS7ZJX>

Thanks a lot for your participation!

Uchenna Njoku
Graduate Student,
Department of Technology and Workforce Learning
Pittsburg State University
Pittsburg, Kansas State.
USA
anita27784@yahoo.com
+1620-719-7832

APPENDIX D: SECOND E-MAIL REQUEST TO PARTICIPATE IN SURVEY

Wed, May 4, 2011 6:16:00 PM

Fw: Individual and Career Development Planning Survey: An Appeal for FUTOites to Assist

From: Laz-Okey <laz_okey@yahoo.com> _

[View Contact](#)

To: FUTO ALUMNI <futo-alumni@yahoogroups.com>

Cc: Uche Njoku <anita27784@yahoo.com>

Great FUTOites,

You may recall the appeal I made recently on behalf of one of us who is conducting a survey to aid her in her graduate research program. According to her, she has got just a few responses so far and is very grateful for that. More is still needed. Kindly see the details below and use the link to answer the few questions.

Thank you in anticipation of your usual cooperation.

Yours-in-Service,

Laz. Uzoechi

Secretary General - FAAD (FUTO Alumni Association in Diaspora)

Dear Participant/ FUTO Alumnus/Alumnae,

A research project is being conducted as part of the requirements for a Masters degree in Human Resource Development. The research is on "The Perceived Relevance of Individual and Career Development Planning" to graduates who are employed or have been employed at one time or the other. The research consists of two short completely anonymous surveys.

Please take a moment and answer the questions at the links provided. Remember this is completely anonymous and confidential so please be as honest as possible. It will greatly affect the outcome of the research and information from this research is expected to be helpful to academic institutions and employers in future.

Kindly follow the link below and answer the questions:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/6NBV6YY>

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/6TS7ZJX>

Thanks a lot for your participation!

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APPENDIX E

SURVEY ON INDIVIDUAL AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

Knowledge of Career Development

Career development is an approach used to match employee goals with the business needs of the agency in support of workforce development plans. The purpose of career development is to enhance employees' current job performance and enable them to take advantage of future job opportunities. It is the responsibility of an employee to plan and develop his career while the employer links the organization's needs to employee career goals. Any activity (organizational professional development trainings, self-instructions or academic learning) and action plan that you take to develop yourself or to help you achieve your individual career goals is an Individual or Career Development Plan or Planning Program.

1. As an undergraduate, did you ever take any class in Individual or Career Development Planning or any course guiding you on how you can plan for the future?

☐ Yes

☐ No

2. As an employee, have you ever taken any training course on Individual or Career Development Planning or professional development?

☐ Yes

☐ No

3. If you answered "Yes" to either question 1 or 2, of what relevance was the program to you then and now?

4. If your answers to both questions 1 and 2 were no, why have you never taken an Individual or Career Development Planning program or class?

- ☐ I never got an opportunity
- ☐ I felt it was not necessary

5. If you answered " I never got an opportunity" to question 4, if given the opportunity, would you have participated in an Individual or Career Development Planning program or training?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

6. If yes, why?

7. If you answered " I felt it wasn't necessary" to question 4, do you feel otherwise now?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

8. Give reasons for your answer in question 7.

9. What is the longest time you have spent in an occupation or a job?

- ☐ Less than 5 years
- ☐ 5-10 years
- ☐ More than 10 years

10. I have acquired much JOB-RELATED knowledge and skills (examples: technical, interpersonal, communication, leadership, managerial, supervisory etc)in my

occupation. PLEASE DO NOT INCLUDE GENERAL OR BASIC SKILLS (for instance, writing reports is a job-related communication skill unlike sending e-mails for a meeting which is general)

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree

11. If you have acquired JOB-RELATED knowledge and skills as in the last question in the first part of the survey, was this acquisition as a result of following a plan (example: placing an individual goal and identifying skills, knowledge and resources required to achieve that goal) or perhaps your organization's employee development program?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not applicable

12. I have followed this plan and it has been profitable to me.

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Not applicable

13. Having achieved certain goals, I believe I have made a significant difference in my workplace and society as a whole.

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree

14. Employers rate me as competent and treat me as such.

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree

15. If you have answered NO, NEUTRAL, DISAGREE or N/A to any of questions 1-4, how many jobs have you changed in the last five to ten years?

- ☐ Less than 3
- ☐ 3-5
- ☐ More than 5

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS SURVEY.