

# Social and Psychological Mobility of Tertiary Institutions' Employees in Boundaryless Careers in Nigeria: A Study of ISA Mustapha Agwai I Polytechnic, Lafia Nigeria

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**Abstract:** Careers are moving from traditional to boundaryless pattern not only in the developed countries, but also in Nigeria, as indicated in the tertiary institutions. This study attempt to underpin the challenges inherent in boundaryless career as it affects tertiary institutions in Nigeria using Nasarawa state as a case study. Survey research design was used; the sample for the study was 152 lecturers determined by Taro Yamene sampling size calculation. The instruments used for data collection was designed questionnaire and Focus Group Discussion. Data generated was analyzed using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation, while a non-parametric statistic of chi – square was used in testing hypotheses at .05level of significance combined with content analyses of FGD. Results indicated that career progressions, inferiority perception amongst others are reasons for social and psychological mobility of tertiary institutions employees; age factor, signed bonds with their institutions, amongst others are factors inhibiting social and psychological mobility of tertiary institutions employees; The study further suggested that tertiary institutions in Nigeria should embark on continuous human capital development, create a defined career path for their employees and increase their commitment by having sufficient motivation to keep them in the system.

**Keywords:** Academics, boundaryless career, employees, psychological mobility, social mobility

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The concept "boundaryless career" was first used by Arthur (1994) and promoted by Arthur and Rousseau (1996). They describe it as not limited to the career trajectory of a single organization, but as spanning multiple organizations to develop skills and human capital. Occupations without borders can be described as series of job chances beyond the limitations of a single working environment (DeFillipi and Arthur, 1996). Traditionally, careers have been viewed as growing and progressing in one or two companies (Levinson, 1978; Super, 1990). In recent years, two popular new career prospects have emerged; the protean race and the borderless race (Briscoe, Hall & DeMuth, 2006). The protean competition focuses on personal opinions (Sullivan, 1999). Its focus is on achieving professional success through self-directed professional behaviour (Briscoe, Hall, and DeMuth, 2006). Sullivan and Arthur (2006) further conceptualized career without borders as a race with two aspects: physical mobility and psychological mobility. The high degree of mobility between organizational constraints is the difference between traditional and boundaryless career (Arthur, 1994; Briscoe & Hall, 2006;

Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; Garavan & Coolahan, 1996; Lazarova & Taylor, 2009; Miner & Robinson, 1994; Yamashita & Uenoyama, 2006).

According to Banai and Harry (2005), the characteristic of a typical borderless occupation is that the employee's professional identity is independent of the employer. In this career model, workers are unilaterally responsible for their growth. They look for jobs that allow them to achieve excellence and give them room to manage their career development. Employees see to it to receive regular training and develop on the job so that their skills can be transferred and they are not ashamed to work for many organizations that need them to update their skills (Banai and Harry 2005). In addition, employees with unlimited professional mentality judge success by psychological satisfaction (Arthur, Claman, and DePhillippi 1995; Sullivan 1999). Mmeha, Joab Peterside, and Okodudu (2020) studied the incidence of career mobility among university administrators and how it affects university development in southern Nigeria. His research shows that the professional mobility of university administrators leads to a decrease in the skills, knowledge and talents of administrative cadres, while improving the skills, knowledge and talents of academic cadres. The study also found that the unequal distribution of skills, knowledge and talents between the two main professional cadres in universities has adversely affected the general functioning of administrative cadres.

Mboya (2009) observes that professional mobility has always been a serious challenge faced by global organizations. This situation also applies to Nigerian universities because deregulation of pension reforms in the Nigerian university system and organizations has become a catalyst for employee turnover in the organization (Mboya, 2013). The low performance rate of PhD students in Nigerian graduate schools compounds the problem. Most universities look for experienced staff when selecting academic staff, further fostering their mobility (Satope & Akintunde 2013). Researchers only focus on physical mobility between jobs, so most studies have conducted a borderless career on physical mobility without considering the social and psychological mobility of employees (Sullivan and Arthur, 2006). Physical mobility is defined as "the actual movement between work, organization, occupation and country" (Erdogmus and Aytekin, 2012). Therefore, it is necessary to carry out an investigation on the social and psychological flow of employees in the colleges and universities with occupations without borders in Nigeria to know the reasons for promoting this movement in the academic environment and the factors that inhibit it. The study also aims to supplement the existing literature on the factors that influence the unlimited careers of Nigerian employees.

#### 1.1 Research Questions

1. What are the reasons for social and psychological mobility of tertiary institutions employees in boundaryless careers?
2. What are the factors inhibiting social and psychological mobility of tertiary institutions employees in boundaryless careers?

#### 1.2 Objective of the Study

The broad objective of the study is to underpin the social and psychological mobility of tertiary institutions employees in boundaryless careers. Specific objectives include:

1. To find out the reasons for social and psychological mobility of tertiary institutions employees in boundaryless careers;
2. To identify the factors inhibiting social and psychological mobility of tertiary institutions employees in boundaryless careers.

#### 1.3 Hypothesis

1. There is no significant influence on the reasons for social and psychological mobility of tertiary institutions employees in boundaryless careers
2. There is no significant influence on the factors inhibiting reasons for social and psychological mobility of tertiary institutions employees in boundaryless careers.

## 2. CONCEPT AND NATURE OF CAREER MOBILITY

One of the characteristics of living things is movement. This does not exclude the employee's job / career. Occupational mobility is job / career mobility, and it is an important part of any organization. It requires the flow of employees through levels, promoted positions, and employee career development to promote career development. Occupational mobility means that labour migration between jobs or geographic locations becomes easier. Therefore, occupational mobility can be described as the ability of employees to switch jobs between different companies, different careers, different locations or different countries (Black, 2002). Occupational mobility can be regional or professional. Geographical mobility refers to the mobility of people between regions, while occupational mobility refers to the mobility between jobs (Jorgen & Sauto, 2003). Career mobility tends to focus on career changes, because most occupations consist of a series of job-related roles. Although changes or flows initiated by organizations or individuals may occur, the biggest changes in the nature of the work performed within roles may occur during the transition period between roles, that is, when individuals resign his or her current job and may be transferred to another job in a new organization, occupation, industry, location or country/region. Social and organizational forces, such as the changing labour market or organizational restructuring, may determine this transition, or professional participants may seek them out as part of their self-designed career development (Inkson, & Thorn, 2010). Either way, as part of the subjective profession, they will be promoted on a personal level in the psychological adjustment process. Careers are often compared to different types of travel (Inkson, 2007). According to Nicholson (1984), employees usually go through a four-stage process when transitioning in any career mobility. He believes that these stages are: preparation, meeting, adjustment and stabilization.

### 2.1 Theoretical Perspective of Boundaryless Career in Work Setting

The Human Capital Theory is employed to give this study a theoretical framework. Boundaryless careers have remained an undiagnosed contemporary workplace issues facing employees and employers especially in Nigeria work settings. Most researchers consider the prevalence and cost of boundaryless careers as a serious dilemma facing organizations today, since it has become a regular recurrence at work (Ituma and Simpson, 2009). Work is an integral part of man and for any organization to function holistically, its workforce must be held at a very high esteem because it is the propelling force of the workforce that differentiates how successful and competitive an organization can be. Human Capital Theory gives credence to this assertion. For instance, Becker (1964) outlined how workers are highly imperative to organizational effectiveness. He defined human capital as the process related to training, education, and other professional programs, with the purpose of increasing workers' knowledge, skills, abilities, and values, thereby increasing workers' satisfaction and performance, thereby increasing the organization's output. Human capital is a key factor in increasing the value of companies and employees to increase productivity and maintain competitive advantage (Schultz, 1993). Traditionally, the main production factors in the past included physical capital such as land, equipment, factories, and management. The theory is based on the assumption that investment in human capital will lead to an increase in economic output. The basic assumptions are summarized below:

- i. Investing in education and training leads to more learning.
- ii. There is a relationship between learning and increased productivity. In other words, increasing learning outcomes to increase productivity.
- iii. There is a relationship between increase in productivity and increase in wages/salaries.

The hypothetical summary is: investment in education / training leads to higher productivity, which leads to an increase in employee wages / salaries and a corresponding increase in corporate income. The hypothesis of this theory implies that the educational level will cause income differences among employees (Becker, 1994). That's why employees continue to develop through advanced study or on-the-job training. Green (1993) pointed out that lack of employee training is related to low competitiveness. Therefore, when organizations do not provide employees with opportunities to improve their skills, knowledge, and competitiveness in the organization, employees often turn to other organizations that provide such opportunities. In addition, human capital formation is any activity that improves the quality of work.

It refers to the knowledge and training that any employee needs and receives to improve their ability in the organization. Therefore, every employee is entitled to training or any form of human capital investment from time to time. Bates (1990) stated that training is linked to the longevity of organizations. Thus, any organization that does not train the employees makes lower profit and will be unable to pay their employees higher salaries. This can lead to such employees moving to other firms that will pay higher salaries.

Based on this theory, educational attainment has positive correlation with higher earnings. It is also believed that schooling and or training enhances an employees' productivity and any employee that fails to achieve that moves to firms where he/she will achieve such which invariably brings about the concept of boundaryless career (Ituma and Simpson, 2009).

## 2.2 Causes of Boundaryless Career

The concept of borderless occupations has been proposed to support an increasingly common employment relationship model (Arthur and Rousseau, 1996) that is independent, rather than dependent, on the traditional organizational career system. Some of the reasons identified for careers without borders include:

*Low employer commitment:* Changes in employment patterns that occurred in many companies around the world in the late 1980s led to layoffs and increased job insecurity. These organizational changes are accompanied by changes in the demographic structure of the workforce and the labour values of employees (Valcour and Tolbert, 2003). Therefore, many employees do not value single-employer attachment as a career strategy (Arnold, 1997; Cappelli, 1999; Tolbert, 1996).

*Higher earnings:* People who are already employed have considerable bargaining power when considering switching to another employer; it can be said that job changes between organizations will lead to higher incomes (Valcour and Tolbert, 2003). One study found that the longer you stay with the organization, the lower the salary growth rate between the two time periods, supporting this argument.

*Education and training:* two people can work in the same type of job and in the same company, but due to their different professional capacities, their levels of social and psychological mobility are very different. Professional competence can be described as three different "recognition methods" which can be related and adapted to changing career chances (DeFillipi & Arthur, 1996). These three forms of knowledge involve motivation and personal identity (knowing why), skills and experience (knowing how), and relationship and reputation (knowing who). Knowing why implies the energy and general identity that an employee can bring to the tasks, projects and work culture they face. Knowing how involves skills and knowledge, including the tacit knowledge required for tasks or job performance. Knowing who is involved in employee relationships with colleagues, professional associations, and friends provides visibility, access to new opportunities, and sources of information (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006).

Eby, Butts, and Lockwood (2003) studied the impact of occupational skills accumulation in borderless occupations. They found that those with a higher level of knowledge (positive personality, openness to experience and perception of the career), knowledge (skills related to occupation / work, professional identity) and knowledge capacities (mentor, internal network and external network) they report a higher level of perception of professional success and internal and external marketing capabilities. On the other hand, education can also be used to determine the inherent costs and advantages of changing employers. For example, some people believe that education create more chances for movement of employees between organizations because their skills and knowledge are attractive to many employers (Blau, Ferber, & Winkler, 2002; Brett & Stroh, 1997). This is why employers currently require employees to sign a bond agreement before they are sent for further training, which will stay for at least a specified period of time before leaving the organization.

*Dual-learning couples:* In the case of dual-learning couples, men's careers usually take precedence when making decisions that may affect the careers of both spouses (Pixley, 2000). It is believed that in most cases, if a husband is provided with employment opportunities that may affect his wife's career (such as moving work to another geographic location), a decision will be made that favors the male's career, resulting in disruption of women's continuous employment with her present employer (Valcour and Tolbert, 2003). Felmler (1982) found in her research that women's inter-organizational work shifts are four times more than that of intra-organizational work shifts, and this change is positively correlated with marriage. This may reflect the tendency of wives to make sacrifices in their own occupations due to the husband's occupation (Valcour and Tolbert,

2003). The professional experience of wives often depends on the career path of their husbands. Most husbands' occupations are characterized by regular full-time work and career progression, while their wives more often postpone their career start, intermittent or part-time work.

### 2.3 Overview of Boundaryless Career in Nigerian Work Setting

Boundaryless career exist in different sectors of the Nigerian economy such as agricultural sector, oil and gas sector, banking sector, education sector, information, communication and technology (ICT) sectors. According to Ituma and Simpson (2009), the oil and gas, banking and ICT sectors are the most lucrative and rewarding work settings in Nigeria. Also, of recent, the education sector particularly tertiary institutions are gaining prominence in remuneration though with several challenges. Thus, the overview of boundaryless careers in Nigeria work setting will be analyzed based on two dimensions namely; social mobility and psychological mobility of career without borders.

Sullivan and Arthur (2006) defined psychological mobility as the employees' perception of their transformation capabilities. Research results on Nigerian employees in the workplace indicate that most employees have a negative view of their ability to move from one organization to another (Ituma and Simpson, 2009; Udegbe, 2003). These findings affirm that uncertainty and insecurity are the main factors that restrict employees from participating in inter-organizational movements. In addition, structural barriers, ethnic loyalty, personal networks, gender discrimination, perceptions of educational qualifications, and the nature of job biographies can all hinder the inter-organizational movement (Eze and Ike, 2017). National loyalty is the preferential treatment and other privileges given to candidates to recruit or promote employees based on national relations. Ituma and Simpson (2009) pointed out that a federal system designed for public sector recruitment has increased awareness of ethnic identity and expanded to narrow the ethnic gap. The situation of the personal network is also very important. This is related to the connection between the individual and the influential members of the society. It is usually called "man-know-man" in Nigeria.

Gender discrimination according to various studies on career development in Nigeria, (Udegbe, 2003; Chovwen, 2006) showed that women suffer more discrimination in their job choices and career attainment as a result of the societal gender role stereotype. Sullivan and Arthur (2006) pointed out that two people can be involved in the same type of work and the same industry, but due to their different professional skills, their perception of social and psychological mobility can be quite different. Some employees in the tertiary institutions believe good educational qualification can enhance employee's chance of making an inter-organizational movement. More so, Ituma and Simpson (2009) revealed that employers place high level of emphasis on a prospective employee's quality of education.

Work biography is conceptualized as the number of years spent in an industry, number of employers worked for (locally and internationally), the kind of projects worked on, changes in work roles, hierarchical levels attained, key achievement and years of full-time work experience (Ituma and Simpson, 2009). They observed that work biography enhances the chances of an employee to make inter-organization movement.

## 3. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the survey research design. The population of the study include 245 lecturers from Isa Mustapha Polytechnic, Lafia including those that has PhDs and yet to move and those that have moved from the Polytechnic to Universities. A sample size of 152 lecturers was obtained using Taro Yamene formulae. The proportionate stratified random sampling was used to select the sample from a total of one hundred and fifty two (152) lecturers from Isa Mustapha Polytechnic, Lafia including those that has PhDs and yet to move and those that have moved from the Polytechnic to Universities; to ensure that, appropriate and proportionate population of the lecturers were included in the sample.

The instrument for data collection is a self-structured questionnaire. It comprises of a 15 – item questionnaire divided into two clusters and each cluster contains relevant question items that addressed each of the two research questions. The completed copies of questionnaires were analyzed for reliability using Cronbach Alpha coefficient. Eventually, the reliability statistic of 0.790 was established for the whole set of scores. Research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation while a non-parametric statistic of chi – square (goodness of fit test) was used to test the two hypotheses at .05level of significance. On the other hand, the

study also purposively sampled 20 (10 each from Isa Mustapha Polytechnic, Lafia that has PhDs and yet to move and those that have moved from the Polytechnic to Universities were selected for Focus Group Discussion (FGD). Moreso, this method is employed because of its effectiveness and the data will be qualitative using content analysis.

#### 4. RESULTS

Research Question 1: What are the reasons for social and psychological mobility of tertiary institutions employees in boundaryless careers?

Table 1: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation on reasons for social and psychological mobility of tertiary institutions employees in boundaryless careers.

S/No	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	STD	Decision
1	Career progression	141	8	1	2	3.89	0.43	Positive
2	Inferiority perception	132	16	4	0	3.84	0.43	Positive
3	Better prospects and opportunities	62	85	4	1	3.37	0.57	Positive
4	Personalities factor	25	127	0	0	3.16	0.37	Positive
5	Deepening of research skills	13	129	8	2	3.01	0.44	Positive
<b>Cluster Mean</b>						<b>3.46</b>	<b>0.45</b>	<b>Positive</b>

Source: Survey 2021

Bar chart showing reasons for social and psychological mobility of tertiary institutions employees in boundaryless careers.

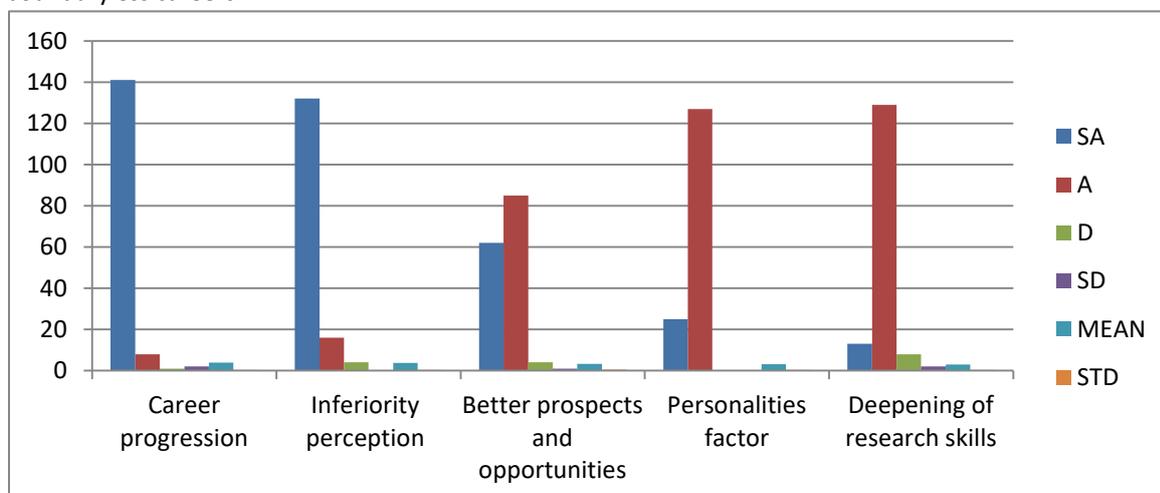


Table 1 shows the reasons for social and psychological mobility of tertiary institutions employees in boundaryless careers. As shown in the table and bar chart above, respondents' ranked career progression as the top most. The cluster mean and standard deviation are 3.46 and 0.45 respectively.

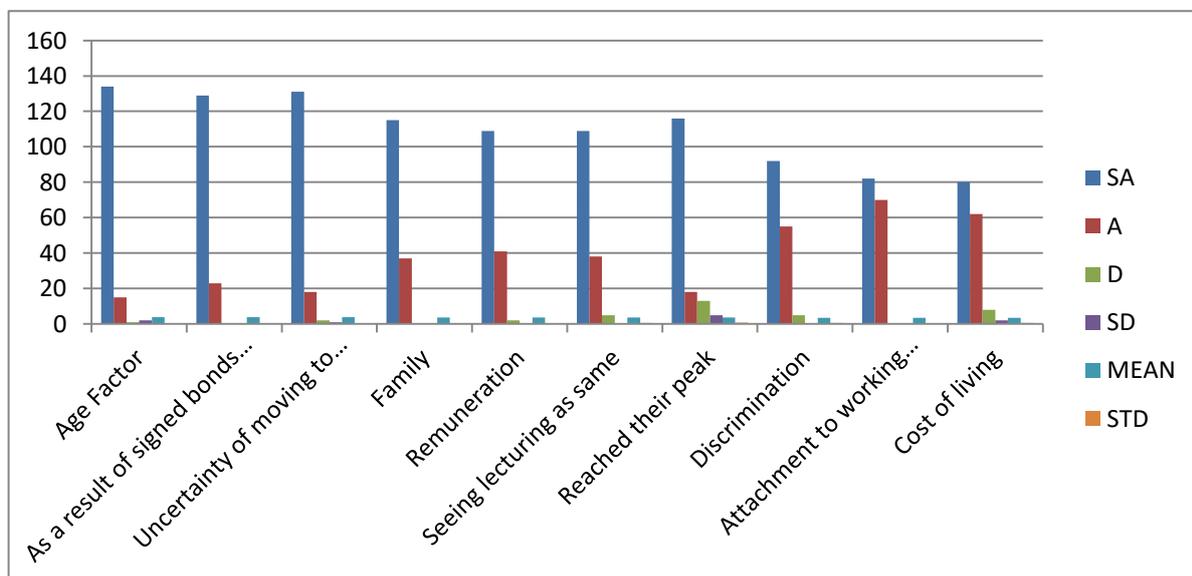
From the Focus Group Discussion, it was observed that career progression is paramount. "In the polytechnic, you cannot be conferred with professorship". So, for some they move to be able to reach that peak in academia. For some, they were motivated to move because of the inferiority perception they get from their environment working in other tertiary institutions aside the university. Others felt they should move because of better prospects and opportunities the universities have that other tertiary institutions do not have (visiting, sabbaticals, wider national and international engagements/ consultations with others globally). Some also move because of their kind of personalities; they do want change of environment and new challenges in life. So with the opportunity, they move to more challenging environment and opportunities. Another reason according to them is to deepen their research skills because as PhD holders, they automatically become research fellows in the universities. Unfortunately, the Polytechnic does not recognize that, so for those with PhD instead of allowing them to undertake researches, they are normally given administrative work which hinders most of them from researching, again not all can be in administrative position at the same time, therefore "no proper recognition for them, so they move".

For career progression, lack of motivation to grow, the polytechnic placed a bar on career development opportunities to reach full potentials are limited because they are not given to research like university system. You can become Chief Lecturer, which is the peak of your career in the polytechnic without having PhD, and again without being visible in the academic. Your contribution to knowledge is more acknowledged in the university system compared to that of the polytechnic.

Research Question 2: What are the factors inhibiting social and psychological mobility of tertiary institutions employees in boundaryless careers?

Table 2: Mean ratings and standard deviation on factors inhibiting social and psychological mobility of tertiary institutions employees in boundaryless careers.

S/No	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	STD	Decision
1	Age Factor	134	15	1	2	3.85	0.47	Positive
2	As a result of signed bonds with their institutions	129	23	0	0	3.85	0.36	Positive
3	Uncertainties of moving to another institution	131	18	2	1	3.84	0.45	Positive
4	Family constraints	115	37	0	0	3.76	0.43	Positive
5	Remuneration	109	41	2	0	3.70	0.48	Positive
6	Seeing lecturing as same	109	38	5	0	3.68	0.53	Positive
7	Reached their peak	116	18	13	5	3.61	0.78	Positive
8	Discrimination from those in university system	92	55	5	0	3.57	0.56	Positive
9	Attachment to working environment	82	70	0	0	3.54	0.50	Positive
10.	Cost of leaving	80	62	8	2	3.45	0.66	Positive
	<b>Cluster Mean</b>					<b>3.68</b>	<b>0.52</b>	<b>Positive</b>



FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION with PhD Holders in the Polytechnic on social and psychological reasons for not moving to the University

Their responses to what are the social and psychological factors encouraging movement or hindering same are stated below from the discussion:

Age Factor - one of the participants categorically stated "it isn't easy to just move from an institution after spending almost half of your working life. Age has set in so you take time to really weigh the pro and con because you aren't young any longer to delve into uncertainties". Also, the uncertainty of moving to another institution or work environment is another factor. With particular reference to the university, he said some have moved and have some regrets because universities have an inferiority perception for those coming from other tertiary institutions other than the universities. Moreover, some staff after the higher degrees they are

reluctant to move because they have carved a niche for themselves. So, “moving to where they will be treated as learning the ropes isn't an option for them”.

Some employees like the lecturers in IMA Polytechnic signed bonds with their institution; so sudden movement without serving the terms of agreement might not be feasible.

Another barrier that constitutes hindrance to movement according to participants is family constraints. For some, family comfort is a great priority to them. So, even with the highest degree, if they discover it is going to ruffle their families, they will prefer to stay back. Besides, some of them already have their personal accommodation and wouldn't jump out to the unknown to start renting houses, or change their wards schools etc. Also some say staying with the people and environment they are used to is safer for them than any major midlife change into the unknown (personality issue here not all persons are cut out for risking into the unknown).

Some of the participants were of the opinion that “as long as most of these tertiary institutions do not really pay higher salaries compare to where they are coming from, there isn't any need for them to move”. For them, salary is a big factor knowing that some have moved and been paid lower salaries compared to their former institutions. “No one want to go less”.

Again, some participants said they have reached their peak in the Polytechnic (Chief Lecturer), so, they would prefer to retire properly and enjoy their benefits. they can later take contract appointments though.

Others see lecturing at whatever tertiary institution whether Universities or Polytechnics as same since it's about imparting knowledge.

Some say they don't want to move because of the glaring discrimination they get from these universities; not just of their publications but placement not at par with where they are leaving. Most times they are placed lower than where they have attained.

Attachment to the current environment, people, social connections even places of worship plus family considerations reduces the propensity to move. Some do not want to start these social connections again.

Some even try to consider cost of living if they move, University academia is more challenging and demanding which poses a threat to potential mover.

#### 4.2 Test of Hypothesis

Research Hypothesis 1: There is no significant influence on the reasons for social and psychological mobility of tertiary institutions employees in boundaryless careers.

Table 3: Chi square test on the reasons for social and psychological mobility of tertiary Employees in boundaryless careers.

Opinions	Observed Frequency	Expected Frequency	Df	Level of Sig	X <sup>2</sup> Cal	X <sup>2</sup> Tab	Decision
No influence	22 (2.89)	380	12	0.05	392.03	21.03	Sig
Influence	738 (97.1)	380					

From Table 5, the calculated  $X^2 = 392.03$ , crit = 21.03, df = 12 at 0.05 alpha level. The calculated value is greater than the critical value therefore the hypothesis which states that there is no significant influence on the reasons for social and psychological mobility of tertiary institutions employees in boundaryless careers is rejected.

Research Hypothesis 2: There is no significant influence on the factors inhibiting social and psychological mobility of tertiary institutions employees in boundaryless careers.

Table 4: Chi square test on factors inhibiting social and psychological mobility of tertiary institutions employees in boundaryless career.

Opinions	Observed Frequency	Expected Frequency	Df	Level of Sig	X <sup>2</sup> Cal	X <sup>2</sup> Tab	Decision
No influence	46(3.03)	760	27	0.05	1437.3	28.3	Sig
Influence	1474 (96.97)	760					

From Table 5, the calculated  $X^2 = 1437.3$ , crit = 28.3, df = 27 at 0.05 alpha level. The calculated value is greater than the critical value therefore the hypothesis which states that is no significant influence on the factors inhibiting social and psychological mobility of tertiary institutions employees in boundaryless careers is rejected.

#### 4.3 Discussion of findings

After the first analysis, result indicated that career progression, better prospects and opportunities, personality factor and deepening of research skills are reasons for social and psychological mobility of tertiary institutions employees in boundaryless careers. Some people believe that education create more chances for movement of employees between organizations because of increase in knowledge and skills development. This is also in line with the findings of Blau, Ferber, & Winkler, (2002); Brett & Stroh, (1997). This is why employers currently require employees to sign a bond agreement before they are sent for further training. However, boundaryless career exists among employees in the Nigerian tertiary institutions but what is more glaring is the psychological mobility aspect. This is as a result of their career structures and their belief that they are so much constrained by the barriers to transcend their boundaries. You are only recognized as lecturers only when you teach in University system and not in Polytechnics or Colleges of Education as applicable in Nigeria. It can also be inferred that the two forms of psychological mobility according to Erdogmund and Aytakin (2012) the organizational mobility preference and boundaryless mindset were observed among employees of IMA polytechnic, Lafia.

The second analysis reveals that age factor, as a result of signed bonds with their institutions, uncertainty of moving to another institution, family, remuneration, seeing lecturing as same, reached the peak, attachment to working environment and cost of living as factors inhibiting social and psychological mobility of tertiary institutions employees in boundaryless careers. These agreed with the findings of Ituma and Simpson, 2009; Udegbe, 2003, that most Nigerian employees in their workplace have a negative view of their ability to move from one organization to another. These findings affirm that uncertainty and insecurity are the main factors that restrict employees from participating in inter-organizational movements. In addition, it also confirmed the findings of Eze and Ike, (2017) which revealed that structural barriers, ethnic loyalty, personal networks, gender discrimination, and the nature of job biographies are factors that can all hinder the inter-organizational movement. One is forced to assert that even though the traditional career pattern (i.e. hierarchical progressive movement within a single organization) is still dominant in Nigeria and supported by organizational structures, there is a new trend of developing boundaryless mindset among young academics in tertiary institutions.

### 5. CONCLUSION

Boundaryless career which is the sequence of job opportunities that goes beyond the boundaries of a single employment setting is in its ebb in Nigeria tertiary institutions. The results of the study established that career progressions, inferiority perception amongst others are reasons for social and psychological mobility of tertiary institutions employees in boundaryless careers; age factor, as a result of signed bonds with their institutions, amongst others as factors inhibiting social and psychological mobility of tertiary institutions employees in boundaryless careers. However, boundaryless career exists among employees in the Nigerian educational sector particularly in the tertiary institutions but what is more glaring is the psychological mobility aspect of

the boundaryless career. This is as a result of their negative perception of the career structures and their belief that they are so much constrained by the barriers to transcend their career boundaries.

### **Suggestion**

As stated earlier, there are very limited researches on the claim of the shift from traditional career pattern to a boundaryless career pattern in Nigeria. Ituma and Simpson (2009) noted where such exist; it is limited to physical mobility and less work on the area of social and psychological mobility. Based on the foregoing, there is need for more empirical studies on boundaryless career in Nigerian public sectors and to study gender influence on career development.

## **6. RECOMMENDATION**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- i. There is need for improvement of welfare of employees to reduce mobility of employees among tertiary institutions.
- ii. The trend of employees developing a boundaryless mindset, by not following traditional career pattern of growing in a particular organization or with one particular employer, affects organization in various ways.
- iii. Employees developing boundaryless career makes the organization to incur cost in replacing the employee(s) that left, lowers output and productivity, causes talent flight or loss of intellectual capital to the organization and leads to dissatisfaction among students in case of tertiary institutions. It can equally be prevented when tertiary institutions embark on continuous human capital development, creating a defined career path for their employees.
- iv. Increase their commitment by having sufficient motivation to keep them in the system.
- v. Employees in the tertiary institutions other than universities should crave for more knowledge by furthering and undertaking appropriate trainings for greater visibility, and productivity.
- vi. Employees should never be apprehensive in moving out of their 'so-called' comfort zones because growth only comes by mobility which goes with challenges for greater productivity. Besides, such movements have numerous gains in widening their horizons.

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