

## Interpersonal Relationship Experiences of Technical University Fashion Learners

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**ABSTRACT:** *The article sought to document concerns of fashion learners regarding interpersonal relationship experiences of Technical University fashion learners during the Semester-Out Industrial Attachment (S-O IA) programme. It therefore adopted a cross-sectional descriptive survey design and used a semi-structured questionnaire to collect data from 199 third year HND Fashion learners from five (5) public Technical Universities. The study established that the interpersonal relationship experiences the respondents acquired during the S-O IA programme were significantly favourable albeit with some challenges. It was thus recommended that the Technical University Industrial Liaison Offices (TUILOs) establish a yearly pre and post S-O IA stakeholders' seminar to discuss students' concerns before and after the S-O IA programme.*

**KEYWORDS:** Fashion Learner, Interpersonal Relationship Experiences, Semester-Out Industrial Attachment programme, The Technical University Fashion programme.

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### INTRODUCTION

The present article which is part of a larger study focused on seeking feedback on the interpersonal relationship experiences of Technical University fashion learners in Ghana. The Fashion Design programme is one of the career and practical oriented programmes studied under creative or applied arts in Ghanaian Technical Universities at the Higher National Diploma (HND) level. Courses studied in many of the Technical Universities under Fashion Design as expressed in Damalie et al. (2023) include Creative Design and Working Drawing, Clothing and Textile Manufacture (design, development, production and styling), Management and Technology, Beauty Culture, Merchandising, Entrepreneurship, Communication Skills, Information Communication Technology (ICT), and African Studies among others (NABPTEX Fashion Design Syllabus [FDS], 2001; Competency Based Learning/Training [CBL/T] Curriculum, 2008-2009).

At the time of conducting this research, eight of the ten Technical Universities in Ghana were training learners in HND Fashion Design. They include Accra, Bolgatanga, Cape Coast, Ho, Kumasi and Sunyani Technical Universities. The remaining were Takoradi and Tamale Technical Universities. The programme was taught using the traditional syllabus and the new Competency-based syllabus. While some Technical Universities had shifted to using the new CBL/T in Fashion Design (Biney-Aidoo et al., 2014), others still used the traditional syllabus whereas yet others used a hybrid of the two for teaching the Fashion Design programme. The emphasis was on competency-based learning and teaching (CBL/T) approach to learners' industrial attachment (IA).

The Technical Universities have incorporated in their training schemes the element of Industrial Attachment programmes, also referred to as vacation industrial attachment (VIA), internship or the semester-out industrial attachment (S-O IA) to fulfil the career-oriented practical training needs. The semester long hands-on work experience i. e. S-O IA is to conform with the contemporary thinking that Technical University education should be career-oriented with more emphasis on the practical content of the various courses and for the HND programmes to be made relevant and industry-friendly (Nyarko, 2011) as cited in Takoradi Polytechnic (2014a). Human capital development is at the heart of the S-O IA programme as it is meant for learners to gain practical, managerial and or hands-on experience that pertain to the area or course of study for which they are undertaking the exercise (Damalie, 2016). Like general IAs, the S-OIA are platforms for learners to translate theory into practice, and acquire effective work habits which can be a tremendous aid in personal life, as well as in employment (Rice & Tucker, 1986); and this is the whole essence of learning, to apply the learned theories.

Related empirical studies reviewed indicated highly significant research interest in the subject of IAs. Attention has been mainly on assessment of the effectiveness of learners' IA implementation programmes in Sri Lanka, Nigeria and Ghana (Damalie et al., 2023). Some of the course areas of interest include Fashion Design and Textiles; Civil Engineering; Teacher Education; Psychology; and Fashion Design and Textiles at the tertiary level of education and educational institution-industry nexus in human capital development (Biney-Aidoo et al., 2014; Damalie et al., 2023; 2019; 2023; Donkor et al., 2009; Oladiran et al., 2012; Osman et al., 2008; Owusu-Acheampong et al., 2014). Although the various studies cited had focused on IA pursued by learners from higher institutions of learning, none specifically focused on the issues pertaining to criticism from tertiary level (Polytechnic/ Technical University) Fashion learners in Ghana on the novel S-O IA programme except in the case of Biney-Aidoo et al. (2014), and Damalie et al. (2019; 2023). However, the methodology employed in all three studies vary. For example, Biney-Aidoo et al. (2014) studied only one of the five institutions under the current study, hence it was not all-inclusive. Damalie et al (2023; 2019) on the other hand used similar methodology as the current paper and was all-inclusive, but was concerned on the adequacy of their preparations the learners' make prior to the S-O IA programme, and the work experiences they acquired during the programme instead. These differences identified notwithstanding, the existing literature gave useful "hints" and paved the way for the current paper. For instance, the readings from the afore-mentioned studies suggest among others that though learners' field of study has link with their attachment activities or experience, and they have signaled that the programme should be continued, they are faced with many challenges (Donkor et al., 2009) including that on interpersonal experiences. There was thus the need to find out if the situation was the same with the Fashion Design S-O IA.

Gap: The literature gap on specific documented information on the challenges and benefits accruing to Technical University Fashion learners in Ghana with regard to interpersonal relations challenges justified the need to seek feedback from the Fashion learners who had gone through the programme, hence the study. The findings were to serve as basis for adjustment of the programme (if need be) to maximise the benefits of the programme to the learners. It might support the Technical University in Ghana to objectively administer the S-O IA programme more effectively to improve the work-learning programme in general. These important issues prompted the researchers to seek information from learners' perspective on the S-O IA programme which is aimed at increasing the number of opportunities Fashion Design learners have to acquire relevant hands-on competencies, knowledge, skills, and attitudes in relation to interpersonal experiences so as to justify the investment made by all stakeholders into their development.

The aim of the larger study which is equally upheld in the current paper is to persistently seek response from Technical University HND Fashion learners in identifying challenging issues with the S-O IA programme. The focus of this article is specifically meant to help confirm, document and communicate the concerns of fashion learners about the S-O IA programme (if any) for redress. Specifically, the paper identified and discussed the challenges of learners regarding interpersonal relationship experiences during the programme.

### **Literature Review on Learners' Interpersonal Relationship Experiences**

#### *Interpersonal Relationship Experiences of students during the S-O IA*

The effectiveness of the internship programme is assessed based on the degree to which the trainee is exposed to gain academic skills, personal skills and enterprise skills. Unlike the other two, i.e. academic and enterprise skills, personal skills include implicit skills of a person such as creativity, relational skills, problem solving skills and analytical skills, self-confidence and to hold independent judgment (Karunaratne & Perera, 2015). To this end, the TUFS is to be instilled with interpersonal skills fostering close relationship that are essential for the work environment (Takoradi Polytechnic, 2014a). Indeed industry recognises also and commits to equipping Technical University Fashion students (TUFSs) with such skills (Kumasi Polytechnic, 2013).

The rationale is also to build up the trainees' persona and understanding of individuals and groups in work circumstances (Owusu-Acheampong *et al.*, 2014). In this regard the Technical Universities expect the TUFSs to be guided by the laid down schedules between the institution and industry among which are reporting date of the attachment exercise, and establishment of routine working hours for the learners (Takoradi Polytechnic, 2014b; Ho Polytechnic, 2016) so as to meet their set targets. Indeed reports show that learner interns follow the normal eight working hours of the host organisation on five-days in a week basis (Donkor *et al.*, 2009; Takoradi Polytechnic, 2014b). Interns are assessed on these variables as well as others mentioned in the student log book in which daily entries related to their learning objectives are expected to be recorded.

#### *Expectations of the Technical University from Industry*

The policy document of the Takoradi Technical University for instance on industrial attachment (Takoradi Polytechnic, 2014a) expects that apart from making placement available for students to get attached for the S-O IA programme, industry should report to the Industrial Liaison Officers or school-

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Publication of the European Centre for Research Training and Development-UK based supervisors, any form of indiscipline on the part of the learners. But how can industry determine where learners have displayed indiscipline if the ground rules are not laid out earlier and for them to feel welcomed.

Having given the learner or student interns' placement in the first place, industry is obliged to allow them to exhibit their capabilities and to assess them as prospective employees, but before that the interns must be formally oriented by the host organisation within which they have been placed to operate, and be enlightened on the set of code of conduct to guide their operations (Takoradi Polytechnic, 2014b). Adjei *et al.* (2014) stated that for student interns to be able to adequately meet the expectations of industry, they have to be taken through orientation before going through other essentials such as practical education / training, practical assignments, mentoring, monitoring, coaching, assessment and an exit interview. For instance, at such fora issues on organisational structure could be discussed and introduction of staff, particularly those who are most likely to have to oversee the student interns' activities during the internship period.

The industry has its own work culture and it is the expectation of the TUILOs that student interns are informed on the industry's chain of command, internal communication channels, operations, rules and regulations for which interns must comply, and safety issues among others. Interns are expected to adhere to the rules of engagement, operate effectively within the industry and also to be able to fill their log books appropriately. The information similarly aids them in writing their reports effectively for assessment in school (Donkor *et al.*, 2009; Ho Polytechnic, 2012; Takoradi Polytechnic, 2014a). The Technical Universities expect that industry informs prospective learner interns about industry's expectations of the student interns, and for industry to take note of, and be able to meet expectations of the interns during the internship programme. The orientation though formal, also helps foster healthy relationships between the management, industry-supervisors and workers and the student interns. These engagements could also help build useful network (Ho Polytechnic, 2012) for all stakeholders including TUFSSs in the industry.

#### *Nature of host companies*

Small and medium scale industries in Ghana form the crux of the private sector whilst the multi-nationals make up for a few large-scale organisations operating in the private sectors (Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA), 2002) as cited in Biney-Aidoo *et al.* (2014).

#### *Supervision during Industrial Attachment: Relationship between Students, Supervisors and Other Workers*

All learners who embark on any of the IA programmes are expected to be supervised and assessed (Takoradi Polytechnic, 2014a; CBL/T, 2008-2009) so that learner interns earn academic credit for industrial work experience (Donkor *et al.*, 2009). The assessment of learners is in either two or three components depending on the institution.

#### *Attitude of Technical University Fashion Student Interns (TUFSSIs)*

The Technical Universities strongly advise students on their attitude during the IA programme. For instance, the interns are not supposed to pose as employees. Consequently they are not to demand the payment of allowances from the supervisors. They are advised to humble themselves and show total commitment to the practical training exercise. Similarly, they are encouraged to learn to project the

Publication of the European Centre for Research Training and Development-UK image of the University at all times, creating positive first impression, be filled with can do attitude, be very respectful and law-abiding (Ho Polytechnic, 2012).

Though it is held that positive reception of host organisation and staff (management, supervisors and workers) during the internship programme are crucial to the success of the exercise, the attitude of students to the programme, positive response to reporting time and students' welfare issues are likewise very critical to the success of the internship programme. IA companies expect learners to be of good behaviour, proactive, confident, and punctual, and to contribute significantly to the company's productivity (Biney-Aidoo *et al.*, 2014).

## METHODS

A cross-sectional descriptive survey research design was adopted to provide answers to the study's research questions. The method was deemed appropriate because the study sought to evaluate an on-going programme (Donkor *et al.*, 2009).

The third year HND Fashion Design learners in all Technical Universities which had been running the Fashion Design programme for five years or more using either Traditional or Competency Based Learning/Training (CBL/T) curriculum were purposively targeted for the study. The total population of HND Fashion learners in the five Universities was 357. Table 1 shows the population of the study.

Name of Institution	Population of Third Years
A	109
B	105
C	63
D	44
E	36
<b>Total</b>	<b>357</b>

**Table 1: Population of the Technical Universities Studied**

**Source: Field Data, 2016**

Simple random sampling was used to sample ninety-four (94) representatives from one of the institutions (A) because their learner population was high at the time of data collection. On the other hand, all third year HND Fashion students in the rest of the institutions (B, C, D, E) were included in the study because student turn out on the day of data collection was generally low in those four institutions. The total sample for the study was 221. Data was collected with a questionnaire designed to have both close-ended and open-ended items, to allow for in-depth qualitative and quantitative analysis. The data were analysed with the aid of Statistical Program for Service Solutions to generate frequency and percentage tables and figures for discussion.

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Table two presents the sampling frame for the study.

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Sample</b>
A	105	94
B	109	44
C	63	37
D	44	22
E	36	24
<b>Total</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>221</b>

**Table 2: Sampling Frame**

**Source: Field Data, 2016**

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The general characteristics of the respondents are described on institution, gender, age ranges, and their places of attachment. Table 3 shows the distributions of the respondents by institutions and gender.

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Gender</b>				<b>Total</b>	
	<b>Male</b>		<b>Female</b>			
	<i>Freq.</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Freq.</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Freq.</i>	<i>%</i>
A	14	7	77	38.7	91	45.7
C	2	1	19	9.5	21	10.6
E	2	1	20	10.1	22	11.1
B	6	3	22	11.1	28	14.1
D	6	3	31	15.6	37	18.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>15.1</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>84.9</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by Institutions and Gender**

**Source: Field Data, 2016**

As illustrated in Table 3, about 46 % of the respondents were from A; 10.6 % from C; 11% from E; 14 % from B and 18.6 % from D. Many learners were from A. This is not surprising because there were more respondents from that institution. Majority of respondents (84.9 %) were females and the males were in the minority (15.1 %). Biney-Aidoo et al. (2014) also found more females than males studying Fashion. If these findings are anything to go by, it could be described as an indication of the interest of females in the Fashion profession.

Institution	Age in Years							
	15-19		20-24		25 and Above		Total	
	<i>Freq.</i>	%	<i>Freq.</i>	%	<i>Freq.</i>	%	<i>Freq.</i>	%
B	1	0.5	69	34.7	21	10.6	91	45.7
E	0	0.0	11	5.5	10	5.0	21	10.6
D	0	0.0	8	4.0	14	7.0	22	11.1
A	0	0.0	19	9.5	9	4.5	28	14.1
C	0	0.0	37	18.6	0	0.0	37	18.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>72.4</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>27.1</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 4: Age Ranges of Respondents****Source: Field Data, 2016**

Table 4 shows that the majority of the respondents (72.4%) were within the age range of 20 – 24 years; followed by those within age 25 years and above (27 %), and only one was within the age range of 15-19 years (.5%). The characteristics of the respondents play a significant role in the practical learning process. The result shows a significantly youthful (99.4% [20-24; 25 & above years]) group of young graduating class of professionals from all the participating Technical Universities about to make an entry into the fashion industry. Every country's most significant resource is said to be its human capital. The numbers of youthful students studying fashion therefore tell the patronage level of the youth in the fashion industry and what the future probably holds for the fashion profession in Ghana and Africa as a whole. It is no wonder therefore that Africa fashion continues to gain the attention of the West (Richards, 2015).

Institution	Place of Attachment					
	Private Organisation		Public Organisation		Total	
	<i>Freq.</i>	%	<i>Freq.</i>	%	<i>Freq.</i>	%
A	87	43.7	4	2.0	91	45.7
C	21	10.6	0	0.0	21	10.6
E	22	11.1	0	0.0	22	11.1
B	27	13.6	1	0.5	28	14.1
D	26	13.1	11	5.5	37	18.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>92.0</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 5: Distribution of Respondents by Place of Attachment****Source: Field Data, 2016**

Table 5 illustrates that the majority (92%) of the respondents had their attachment with private host organisations. In that category, students from A formed 43.7 %; their counterparts from C 10.6%; those from E formed 11%; B and D Technical University students formed 13.6% and 13 % respectively. The Table indicates that very few (8 %) had their attachment with public organisations. Respondents from

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D formed the highest (5.5 %) percentage of students who got placement in public organisations, followed by their counterparts from A with 2 %. The result seems to confirm the assertion of Biney-Aidoo et al. (2014) that most IA companies are privately owned.

Significantly, the private organisations have been very supportive of the IA particularly the S-O IA programme. In a rather sharp contrast, it shows from the results that not many public organisations in the fashion industry are available as IA companies. The available few seem to be sited at the locations of D and A Technical Universities. Biney-Aidoo et al. (2014) also found that all fifty (50) companies who had received students for IA over the past five years in collaboration with the Accra Technical University were privately owned. Some of the companies were owned by past students of the Accra Technical University Fashion department who had established their own companies and as Alumni, were willing to receive students from their alma-mater for IA.

### Research Question 1: What Interpersonal Relationship Experiences did the Technical University Fashion learners acquire during the Semester- Out Industrial Attachment Programme?

Time Reported	Frequency	%
First week of attachment period	146	75.6
Second week of attachment period	37	19.2
Third week of attachment period	7	3.6
After the fourth week of attachment period	3	1.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 6: Time Respondents Reported to Industry**

Source: Field Data, 2016

The results relating to when students reported for attachment in Table 6 indicate that majority (75.6 %) of respondents reported in the first week of the attachment period while 19.2%, 3.6%, and 1.6 % reported in the second, third and after the fourth week of the attachment period respectively. The student intern is expected to submit his/her Assumption of Duty Form, as this helps the Industrial Liaison Office compile a comprehensive database for the supervisors for easy determination of the location of each and every student on the IA programme (Takoradi Polytechnic, 2014b). Indeed, some of the application letters sighted from one of the Technical University during this study had the dates of start and end of the S-O IA period indicated on them.

Name of Institution	Months of S-O IA	Duration of S-O IA
B	February to July, 2016	6 months
D	February to April, 2016	3 months
A	March to June, 2016	4 months
C	March to June, 2016	4 months
E	October to December	3 months

**Table 7: Official Months of Starting and Ending S-O IA and Duration for the Institutions**

Source: Field Data, 2016



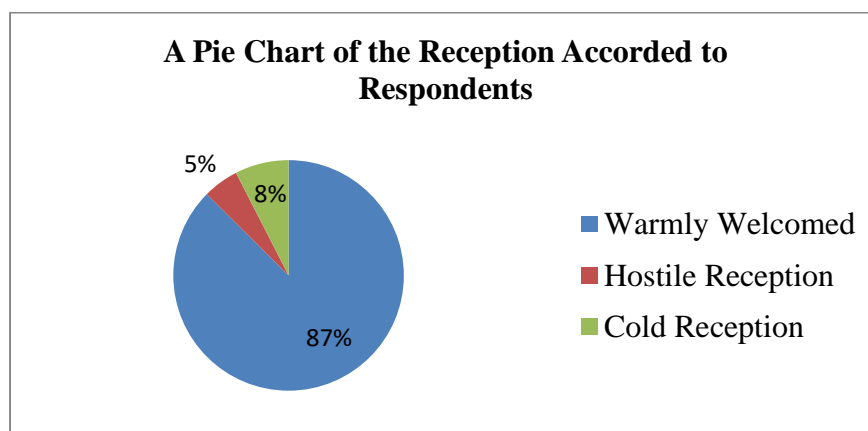
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Table 7 presents the official months of start and end of the S-O IA. It shows respondents from B started the attachment in the month of February and ended in July, 2016. Respondents from D Technical University also started the attachment in the month of February but ended in April, 2016. Respondents from A and C Technical University started the attachment in the month of March and ended in June, 2016. Respondents from E Technical University however started the attachment in the month of October and ended in December, 2016.

The study result is thus inconsistent with Biney-Aidoo et al. (2014) which suggested that some Technical Universities offering the Fashion Design send their learners for IA around the same period (February to July). It is evident from the results that there are some slight differences in the timing as per the individual Universities' academic calendar. This scenario is to be expected mainly because of the differences observed in the Technical Universities' schedules. The fourth semester for all the Universities in the study, for instance do not start on the same months.

Thus contrary to the finding in Biney-Aidoo et al. (2014), it does appear that there are actually differences in the schedules of the Universities as illustrated in Table 7. Only E Technical University started at same time as B Technical University. Two Technical Universities (A & C) actually started the S-O IA a month later whereas E Technical University started in October. The maximum duration was approximately six months (26 weeks) while the minimum was three months (12 weeks).

Again, contrary to the notion that the IA period is only between the months of March to August each year (Biney-Aidoo et al., 2014), the result suggests that Technical University Fashion Learners (TUFLs) were spread in industry engaged in the acquisition of industrial experience between February and December. In the study of Gumbe et al. (2012), after two years of continuous study, learners undertook a one year Student Industrial Attachment (SIA) Programme as an integral component of their undergraduate studies in the Faculty of Commerce. To make the S-O IA experience worthwhile to all TUFLs, this study supports the CBT/L approach hinted in Biney-Aidoo et al. (2014) that the various Technical Universities consider extending the duration to allow the students adapt to the industrial environment properly and to adequately grasp the required experiences.



**Figure 1: Reception accorded to respondents by industry**

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As indicated in Figure 1, majority (87 %) of respondents said they were warmly welcomed while a few (7.5 % and 5 %) said they experienced a cold and hostile reception respectively. The nature of the reception accorded to learner interns may indicate industry's readiness to partner the Technical University in training the learners or not. The pie chart shows that majority of respondents were warmly welcomed. This constitutes a good feedback for the TUILOs knowing that the respondents were comfortable. Contrary to that, the other 13% (8% and 5%) felt unwelcomed because they experienced cold and/or hostile reception from industry.

The attachment component in the Technical University Fashion Design programme like any tertiary programme is not only meant to fully prepare learners for the job market. It is also meant to expose them to real life situations including acquiring competencies in people skills (Effah et al., 2014).

***Respondents' Participation in Orientation Activities of Industry***

The findings showed that 59.4% had orientation while 40.6% did not have it when they went on the industrial attachment programme. One wonders how those who did not go through the orientation were able to they are able to settle properly in their new working environment. In truth, the initial beneficiaries of such a programme would have been the learner interns, but the ultimate beneficiaries of such a programme would have been the industry. Industry always demands that labour operates under their set of conditions of service, and learners on internship act as casual workers who must also follow industrial norms.

<b>Orientation Activities</b>	<b>Frequency*</b>	<b>%</b>
Rules and Regulations	183	92.0
Introduction of staff	128	64.3
General Roles and Responsibilities	82	41.2
Organisational Structure	77	38.7
Introduction of students to staff	73	36.7
Expectations of industry	69	34.7
Familiarisation of Facilities	17	8.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>629</b>	

**\*Multiple Responses**

**Table 8: Orientation Activities of Industry**

**Source: Field Data, 2016**

Table 8 shows that majority (92%) of learners who participated in the orientation programme acknowledged that they were informed on the rules and relations under which to operate in the industry. Sixty-four percent (64%) admitted that staffs were introduced to the respondents while 41 % acknowledged that they were taken through their general roles and responsibilities as learner interns. Thirty-eight percent (38%) acknowledged that they were informed about the organisational structure as part of the orientation activities; 36.7 % admitted that they were introduced to staffs, while 34.7 %

Publication of the European Centre for Research Training and Development-UK said they were informed of the expectations of industry, and 8.5 % admitted they were given a familiarisation tour of facilities in industry as part of the orientation activities in the industry.

These pieces of information given to the learners by industry were indeed invaluable. They impact positively on their industrial experience as the learners had to be enlightened on the set of code of conduct to guide their operations (Takoradi Polytechnic, 2014b). Adjei et al. (2014) similarly asserted that for learner interns to be able to adequately meet the expectation of industry, they have to be taken through orientation, as it further minimises the expectation gap among all the parties involved and strengthens the industrial relationship and learners' confidence (Karunaratne & Perera, 2015).

### ***Learners' Willingness to Go Back to Industry***

The results show that while 59.4 % learners said they were willing to go back to the industry they were attached, 40.6 % said they were not going to go back to the firm they were attached during the internship. The result is almost a split decision constituting both positive and negative feedback and could have a dire consequence on the successful experiential learning activities of the students in industry, and to a large extent the S-O IA programme. It is thus consistent with Van Dorp's (2008) position that the provision of experiential learning activities such as industrial attachment do not necessarily provide a meaningful learning experience due to various challenges that significantly affect the overall quality of the programme.

<b>Reasons for Willingness</b>	<b>Frequency*</b>	<b>%</b>
Good coaching	81	71.1
Good Relations	39	34.2
Conducive Atmosphere	17	14.5
Enough time for interns during training	11	9.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>148</b>	

### **\*Multiple Responses**

#### **Table 9: Respondents' Reasons for their Willingness to Go Back to Industry Source: Field Data, 2016**

Further probe showed as illustrated in Table 9 respondents' willingness to go back to the industry they were attached because they received good coaching from industry (71.1 %); had good relations with industry (34.2 %); and worked in a pleasant atmosphere (14.5 %). Few of the learners also said industry made enough time for them in the training (9.6 %). Thus most of the learners were willing to go back to the industry they were attached only because they received good coaching from industry (71.1 %). The reasons others gave for their unwillingness to go back to same industry included lack of motivation, unpleasant nature of the industry, and the need to gain new skills elsewhere. Meanwhile some learners also indicated that their work was not appreciated by industry, and yet others cited the distance of industry from their residence as reasons for not willing to go back to the industry they were attached. Others further cited lack of industrial resources as their reasons for not wishing to go back to the industry they were attached.

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These responses constitute negative feedback from learners and give an indication that the various structures cited in the available literature such as due diligence by the TUILOs may not have been followed to the letter. First, given the enthusiasm learners showed in reporting during the first week of the attachment period (75.6%) and the general impression that they are interested and generally have good perception about the industrial attachment activity (Owusu-Acheampong et al., 2014), the lack of motivation expressed could very well imply the lack of extrinsic motivation from industry. It is common knowledge among Technical University learners that the S-O IA is not a paid internship. They should therefore under normal circumstances not expect to be paid any money at the end of the period (Ho Polytechnic, 2012; Takoradi Polytechnic, 2014b), but some IA companies reportedly go out of their way to promise the offer of some allowances but fail their promises later (Biney-Aidoo et al., 2014). Such failed promises made in the past could be a contributory factor for learner interns to be highly expectant of extrinsic motivation. The result is a pointer that IA placement support continues to emerge as the greatest area of dissatisfaction among learner interns as they continue to trek long distances to the industries of attachment. This is further supported by Donkor et al. (2009) who stress that placement support is the greatest area of dissatisfaction among stakeholders.

Interpersonal relationship experiences	Agree		Not Sure		Disagree	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
1. I related very well with my supervisors in the industry.	189	95.0	1	0.5	5	2.5
2. I related very well with the workers in the industry.	187	94.0	5	2.5	3	1.5
3. I related very well with management.	185	93.0	3	1.5	8	4.0
4. I could easily approach my superiors in the industry for help.	168	84.4	13	6.5	16	8.0
5. The industry staff appreciated my work.	168	84.4	15	7.5	12	6.0
6. The programme afforded me the opportunity to share my problems with industry staff.	127	63.8	22	11.1	45	22.6
7. The programme provided the industry staff opportunity to share their problems with me.	106	53.3	30	15.1	57	28.6

**Table 10: Respondents' General Interpersonal Relationship Experiences in the Industry**

**Source: Field Data, 2016**

Table 10 indicates that majority (95%) of the respondents agreed with the statement that they related very well with their supervisors in the industry, .5 % were not sure, 2.5 % disagreed with the statement. Ninety-four percent (94%) of the respondents also agreed with the statement that they related very well

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Publication of the European Centre for Research Training and Development-UK with the workers in the industry, 2.5% were not sure while 1.5 % disagreed with the statement. Similarly majority (93%) of respondents agreed with the statement that they related very well with management, 1.5% were not sure and 4% disagreed with the statement.

Eighty-four percent (84%) agreed with the statement that they could easily approach their superiors in the industry for help, 6.5 % were not sure while 8 % disagreed with the statement. Again, 84% agreed that the industry staff appreciated their work while 7.5 % were not sure and 6% disagreed with the statement.

Regarding the statement that the programme afforded the interns opportunity to share their problems with industry staff, 63.8% agreed while 53% agreed that the programme provided the industry staff opportunity to share their problems with them. The significant ratings from the result constitute positive feedbacks. Indeed the disagreements further go to show that learners had individual experiences regardless of their group backgrounds (institutions). The disagreements are also very much in tune with one of the reasons some respondents were unwilling to go back to the industry they were attached. Learner interns like any industry worker need to see fairness in the way they are treated by their managers. When they feel that their work is appreciated, it contributes to extrinsically motivate them to perform. It constitutes ethical manufacturing, a current demand from industry by many fashion buyers. This study agrees with Biney-Aidoo et al. (2014) that it behooves their interns' superiors in the industry, particularly their direct supervisors to find time to engage them periodically to discuss with them various issues and difficulties related to the S-O IA programme. In a recent study, some learner respondents (35 %) also upheld that uncooperative attitude of some industry based supervisors made the learners find it difficult to participate fully in the attachment process (Owusu-Acheampong et al., 2014).

While it could be noticed from the two sets of results that the respondents may have been more open with the industry staff regarding the sharing of problems, these feedback are still positive and a timely pointer to the happenings in industry during the S-O I A programme. It is possible this information might inform the TUILOs to encourage more interactions as also suggested by Biney-Aidoo et al. (2014) between all stakeholders especially between learners and the industry staff.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The study established that the interpersonal relationship experiences the respondents acquired during the semester-out industrial attachment programme were significantly favourable albeit with some challenges. Considering the fairly youthful age of the learners (20-24 years), the number of respondents who acknowledged that the management team was willing to listen to the problems of interns and accepted their contributions were not encouraging. Again the number of learners' unwilling to return to the place they were attached is alarming and need to be addressed.

## **Recommendations**

It was recommended that the TUILOs establish a yearly pre and post S-O IA stakeholders' seminar to discuss learners' concerns before and after the S-O IA programme. Such meetings should involve the prospective learner interns and supervisors from both the school and industry in order to create an avenue for discourse among all the stakeholders in the S-O IA programme. That may go a long way to

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Publication of the European Centre for Research Training and Development-UK ensure that the implementation of the programme foster healthy relationships between the TUFLs and the various industry players (management, supervisors and workers).

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