THINK BEFORE YOU SWITCH TO A TECH CAREER PATH IN NIGERIA

It has become a common trend in Nigeria for people to switch to an Information Technology (IT) career path. It is not common or even possible to switch from Social sciences or Engineering sciences to Medical fields as a professional. For instance, switching to Pharmacy or Medical Rehabilitation will likely require going back to the university, or even retaking the WAEC (West African Examination Council) examination if one had not earlier taken Biology and other relevant subjects in WAEC.

It is a different thing with the IT career path. Anyone can actually switch to an IT career path, despite any background by taking some professional courses, or by mastering the skills of a particular IT career path through self-taught. This evidently tells that the IT career path has widely spread arms to welcome anyone (those without a university degree inclusive), who is ready to put in required hard work to switch to an Information Technology career path.

Many platforms in Nigeria and around the world, have made it easy to switch into the IT career path. Paid courses on Pluralsight, Coursera, Udemy, Code Academy and many others can be taken and get one ready on an IT career path in a matter of months. Detailed unpaid courses are offered by generous platforms such as w3schools, tutorialpoints and many others. Scholarship programs like that of Hamoye internship program, Andela scholarship program, IITA scholarship

program, NITDA scholarship program and many others which are offered from time to time, can easily prepare people of various backgrounds for an IT career. Despite the many available opportunities to move to IT career path, it is my honest advice that you *think before you switch to a tech career path in Nigeria*. And that is the subject of this piece of technical writing.

In order to gain useful insights that can guide one to make an informed decision about switching to an IT career path, I decided to scrap a dataset of the latest 114 various IT job positions advertised on one of Nigeria's famous job websites (Jobberman) as at July 1, 2023. All the jobs gathered in the dataset were advertised in 2023.
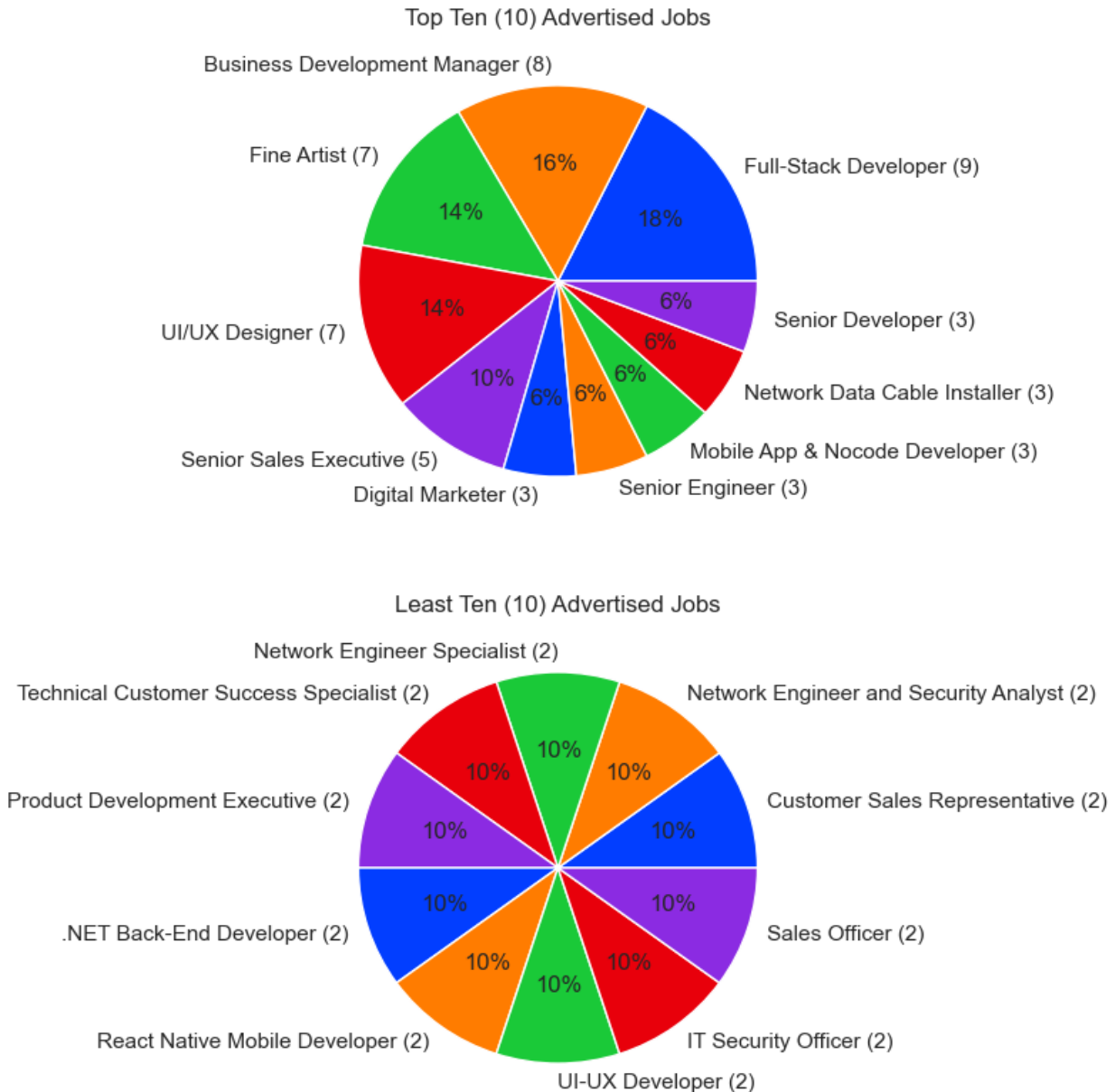
As much as there are many easy ways to leap into the IT career path, it is pertinent for one to investigate the kind of IT career paths that are in demand. In order words, which IT jobs are often advertised? IT professional aspirants need to know cities in Nigeria that are likely to advertise IT job positions, IT jobs that pay a high salary (if a high salary is part of the motivation for switching) and factors that could affect the expected average salary of an IT professional.

These points mentioned in the paragraph above are the insights that will be gained from this technical report. A closer look at the dataset through in-depth analysis will reveal the mentioned insights desired.

IT Skills in more Demand in Nigeria

Some people think that once they gain an IT skill today, they will get a job immediately. That is not exactly so. The truth is that there are IT jobs that are often advertised more than the others. That is to say that some IT jobs are more in demand than the others. It is vital that one should have a good knowledge of IT career paths that are in demand, and a smart way to know this is by checking the frequently advertised jobs. Otherwise, one may have to deal with disappointment after spending months learning a particular IT skill, only to find it difficult to secure a job placement because the acquired skill is not always on the job advert boards.

Top Ten and Least Ten Advertised IT Jobs on Jobberman

Top Ten (10) Advertised Jobs

Business Development Manager (8)

Fine Artist (7)

Full-Stack Developer (9)

16%

18%

14%

Senior Developer (3)

6%

UI/UX Designer (7)

14%

6%

Network Data Cable Installer (3)

10%

6%

6%

6%

Mobile App & Nocode Developer (3)

Senior Sales Executive (5)

Senior Engineer (3)

Digital Marketer (3)

Least Ten (10) Advertised Jobs

Network Engineer Specialist (2)

Technical Customer Success Specialist (2)

Network Engineer and Security Analyst (2)

10%

Product Development Executive (2)

10%

10%

10%

Customer Sales Representative (2)

10%

.NET Back-End Developer (2)

10%

10%

Sales Officer (2)

10%

10%

React Native Mobile Developer (2)

10%

IT Security Officer (2)

UI-UX Developer (2)

There are two Pie Charts shown above. The first shows the top 10 IT jobs advertised on jobberman website, while the second shows the least 10 advertised jobs. It is easy to see and conclude at a glance that the Full-Stack Developer role is most in demand with 9 advertised jobs, followed by the Business Development Manager role with 8 job adverts. While Fine Artist (Graphic designers) and UI/UX Designers roles came next with 7 occurrences for each. But it may not be exactly so, UI/UX Designer is the same skill path as UI-UX Developers, so putting those

two as one type of skill means that UI/UX Designer role was advertised 9 times just like Full Stack Engineer role. This is no surprise because the UI/UX Desigmers design what the Full Stack Developers use to produce the front and back end of an application.

At this point, UI/UX Designer and Full Stack Developer skills appear to be the highest in demand. Before that is concluded, let's learn something about Business Development Manager, Senior Sales Executive, Sales Officer, and Customer Sales Representative roles. One may wonder why these roles are classed as IT roles. It is simply because data analytics skills are often required to successfully execute them.
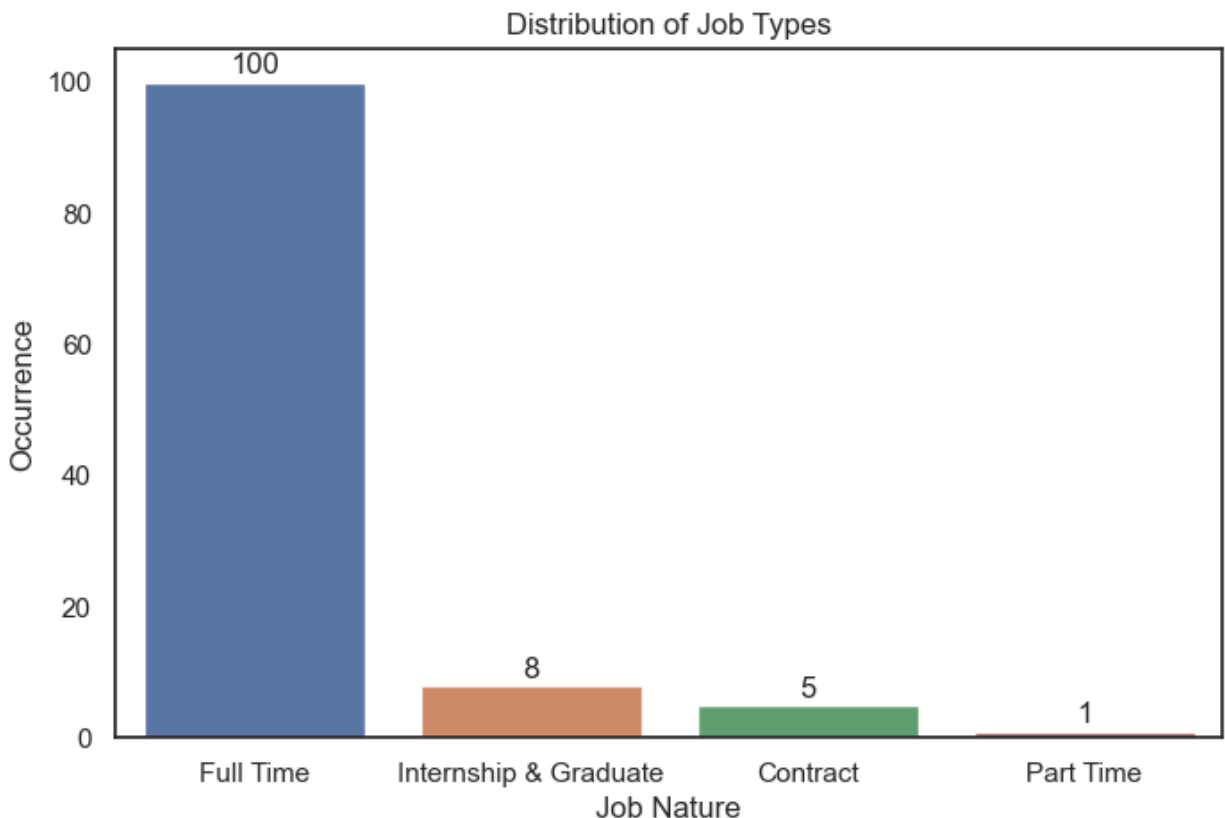
When a data analyst fills a sales or business development role, their skills can be handy in quickly analyzing available data to determine how effective their efforts in market research and making sales have been overtime, and see if there is a need to re-strategize and change methods and approach or not. If a company chooses not to employ a person skilled in data analysis for these roles, then the company may have to separately employ a data analyst who will help the organization gain insight from available data. Most companies do not want to incur this extra cost and that is why these roles are sometimes classified as IT jobs.

Ok, now a closer look at the pie charts will show more insights. Business Development Manager occurred 8 times, Senior Sales Executive occurred 5 times,

Sales Officer occurred 2 times, and Customer Sales Representative occurred 2 times. If all (grouped as a role for Data Analytics skilled persons) occurrences are put together, it means a person with data analytics skill can fit in for 17 of the 114 IT jobs advertised which is 14.9% of the entire advertised jobs. Full-Stack Developer and UI/UX Designers which occurred 9 times each is only 7.89% of the entire advertised jobs. So it can be easily concluded that Data analytics is the most in demand IT skill, followed by Full-Stack Developer and UI/UX Designers.
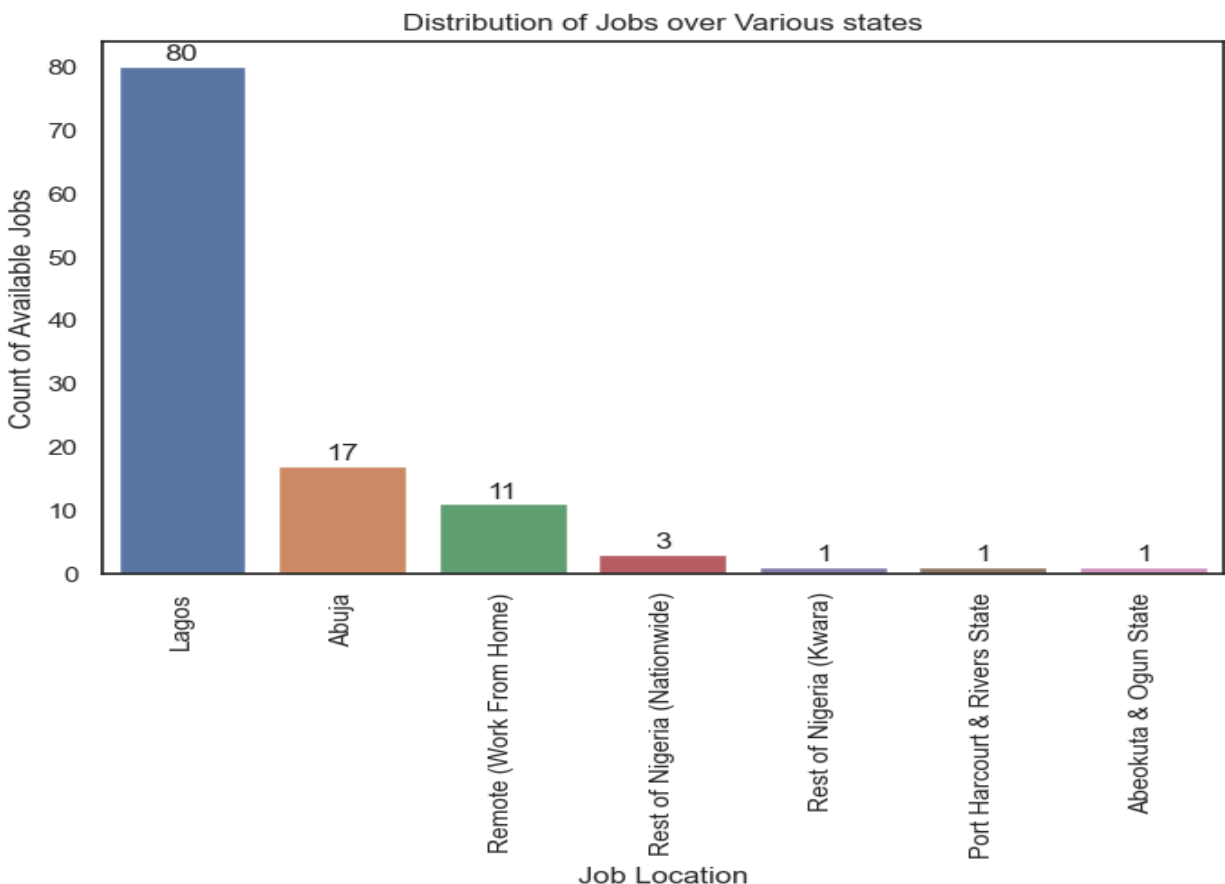

The bar chart above shows that many of the available jobs are full time jobs. Full time jobs are more available than internship & Graduate, Contract or Part Time jobs. For starters, Internship and Graduate jobs are what they will likely get first, but they are not many from the bar chart above (just 8 in 114 job openings). IT professional aspirants need to understand that they must to be proficient enough in their skills to apply for a Full Time job. Else, breaking into the IT career will not be easy even after gaining high in-demand skills like Data Analytics, Full Stack Developer or UI/UX Designer skills, as most adverts are for Full Time roles and not internship or graduate roles.

Nigeria Cities with more Opportunities for IT Job

There is this idea that IT jobs are everywhere one resides. Yes, all companies and establishments need to digitize their processes and use IT to manage their process, but not all companies have done so yet in Nigeria. One fact that IT career aspirants must have in mind is that in Nigeria, many organizations have not begun to employ IT experts. So many companies still prefer the work to be done manually. For instance so many companies do not have even a website, how much more hiring experts to help them gain insights from accumulated data. And where such organizations are many in a city, then getting an IT job placement will be difficult in such a city. The figure below shows cities where IT jobs can be most likely secured based on the dataset from Jobberman.

Lagos For IT Job Opportunities

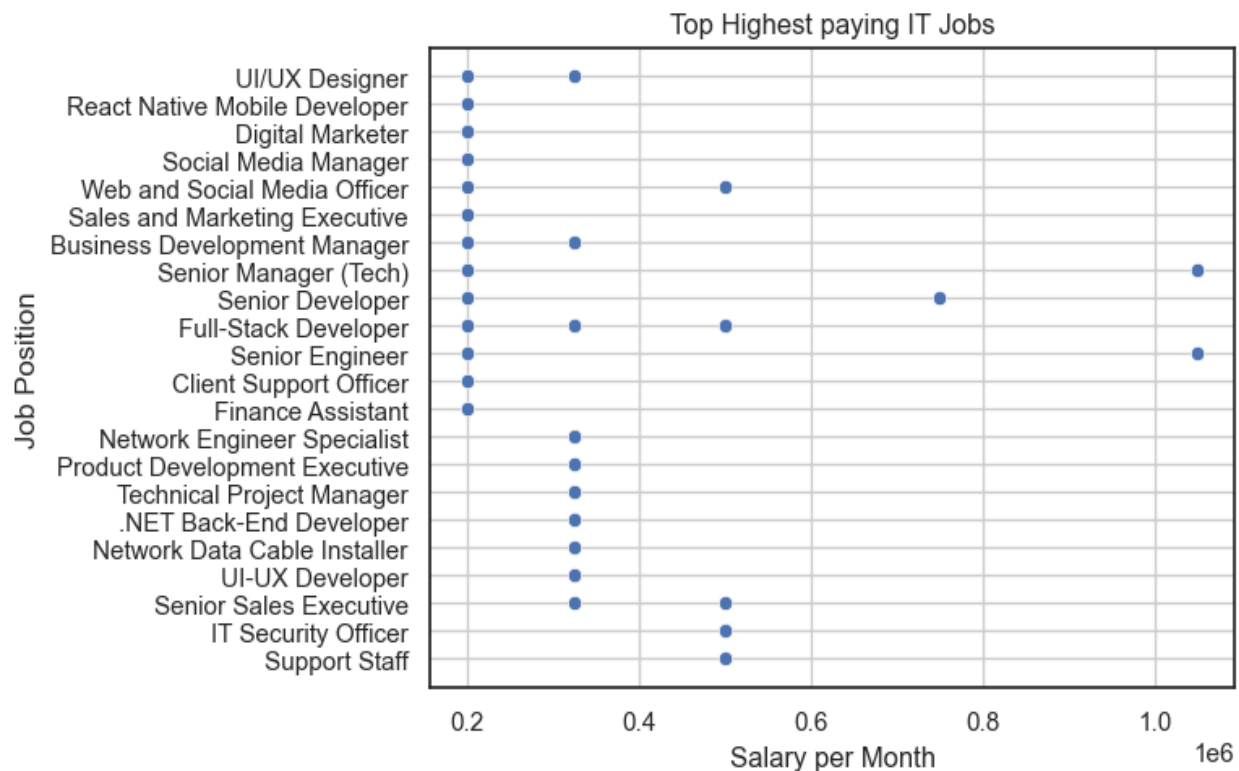

Distribution of Jobs over Various states

The latest advertised 114 IT jobs on Jobberman website all came from five (5) cities in Nigeria. And the cities are Lagos, Abuja, Kwara, Port Harcourt, and Abeokuta. Others are remote jobs and "Rest of Nigeria (Nationwide)" jobs.

A close look reveals clearly that Lagos is the city to reside in, for someone who wants to secure an IT job as soon as possible in Nigeria. 80 of the 114 advertised jobs are in Lagos. 80 jobs make up over 70% of the entire advertised jobs. Lagos is a fertile ground for IT career aspirants. One can confidently relocate to Lagos and hope to get an IT job soon. Abuja comes next to Lagos with about 17 jobs (14.9%) of the entire advertised jobs. Remote IT jobs is next in count, with 9 jobs (9.6%). Based on this dataset, someone who lives in Maiduguri, Benin, or Abakaliki with the goal of switching to an IT career must consider relocation to Lagos or Abuja, except if the person wants to settle for remote job which may not be easy to find based on its availability according to the dataset on hand.

Average IT Salaries and Factors that Affect them

Most people want to switch to an IT career because they wish to have an increased salary. This is not to discourage anyone, but the bad news is that there are IT jobs that pay below NGN75,000 per month. Now, an encouraging news is that there are IT jobs that pay up to NGN 1,200,000 per month in Nigeria. Therefore, it is of essence to find out career paths with good salaries base on the available data.

The scatter plot above shows the top paying IT jobs found at Jobberman website. The Senior Manager (Tech) and Senior Engineer role were the highest paid roles

with an average salary of over NGN1,000,000 per month. This was followed by the Senior Developer role which is about NGN750,000 per month. Next were Web and Social Media Officer, Full-Stack Developer and Senior Sales Executive, IT Security, and Support Staff roles with the highest pay of about NGN500,000 average monthly salaries. Other roles had average salary above NGN300,000 per month, while most of the high paying roles paid NGN200,000. It may not be true that someone will gain IT skills and start earning NGN500,000 or NGN1,200,000 per month immediately. Consider why.

Many factors contribute to the average salary IT professionals may expect. This can be confirmed from the variation of salaries attached to a particular type of role. Majority of the advertised jobs have different salaries for the same type of job roles, as examples, the tables below show variation in salary for UI/UX Designer, Full Stack Developer, and Senior Engineer roles

UI/UX Designer Salary Variations

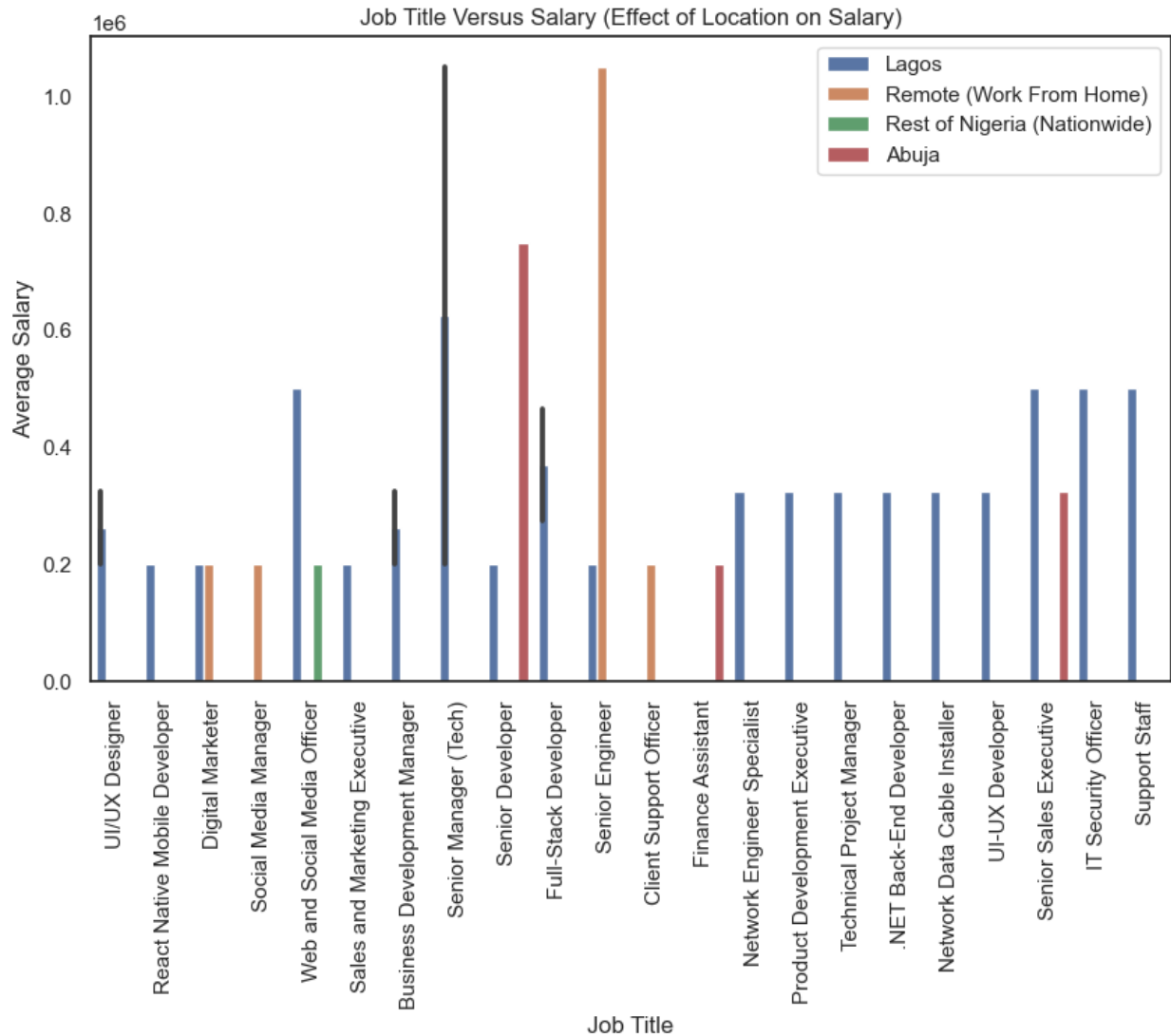| Position	Company	Job Location	Type of Job	Salary Range	Job Description
UI/UX Designer	Emporg Limited	Lagos	Internship & Graduate	NGNLess than 75,000	Engineering & Technology
UI/UX Designer	Bellah Options	Abeokuta & Ogun State	Full Time	NGNLess than 75,000	Creative & Design
UI/UX Designer	Frontlett Virtualting	Abuja	Full Time	NGN75,000 - 150,000	Software & Data
UI/UX Designer	Your Internet Pages	Lagos	Internship & Graduate	NGN75,000 - 150,000	Software & Data
UI/UX Designer	Your Internet Pages	Lagos	Internship & Graduate	NGN75,000 - 150,000	Software & Data
UI/UX Designer	Towaider	Lagos	Contract	NGN150,000 - 250,000	Software & Data
UI/UX Designer	Atareconsultancyservices	Lagos	Full Time	NGN250,000 - 400,000	Engineering & Technology

Full Stack Developer Salary Variation

Position	Company	Job Location	Type of Job	Salary Range	Job Description
Full-Stack Developer	G2EMO TECHNOLOGIES	Lagos	Contract	NGN75,000 - 150,000	Software & Data
Full-Stack Developer	Loctech Nigeria Limited	Port Harcourt & Rivers State	Full Time	NGN75,000 - 150,000	Engineering & Technology
Full-Stack Developer	Sunej Global Ventures LTD	Lagos	Full Time	NGN75,000 - 150,000	Accounting, Auditing & Finance
Full-Stack Developer	Unified Payment Services Limited	Lagos	Full Time	NGN75,000 - 150,000	Software & Data
Full-Stack Developer	Atareconsultancyservices	Lagos	Full Time	NGN150,000 - 250,000	Engineering & Technology
Full-Stack Developer	Towaider	Lagos	Contract	NGN250,000 - 400,000	Software & Data
Full-Stack Developer	Atareconsultancyservices	Lagos	Full Time	NGN250,000 - 400,000	Creative & Design
Full-Stack Developer	Anonymous Employer	Lagos	Full Time	NGN400,000 - 600,000	Software & Data
Full-Stack Developer	Atareconsultancyservices	Lagos	Full Time	NGN400,000 - 600,000	Engineering & Technology

Senior Engineer Salary Variation

Position	Company	Job Location	Type of Job	Salary Range	Job Description
Senior Engineer	SD-6 Consortium	Rest of Nigeria (Nationwide)	Internship & Graduate	NGNCommission Only	Sales
Senior Engineer	Atareconsultancyservices	Lagos	Full Time	NGN150,000 - 250,000	Engineering & Technology
Senior Engineer	234code	Remote (Work From Home)	Full Time	NGN900,000 - 1,200,000	Software & Data

.One strong factor that must be responsible for the variation in salaries for the same job position is experience. A newbie in Full-Stack development may earn around NGN75,000 to 150,000 or Less while a more experienced person may earn up to NGN600,000 or more. But experience is not the only factor that affects average salary of an IT Job. The graph below gives insight into yet another factor.
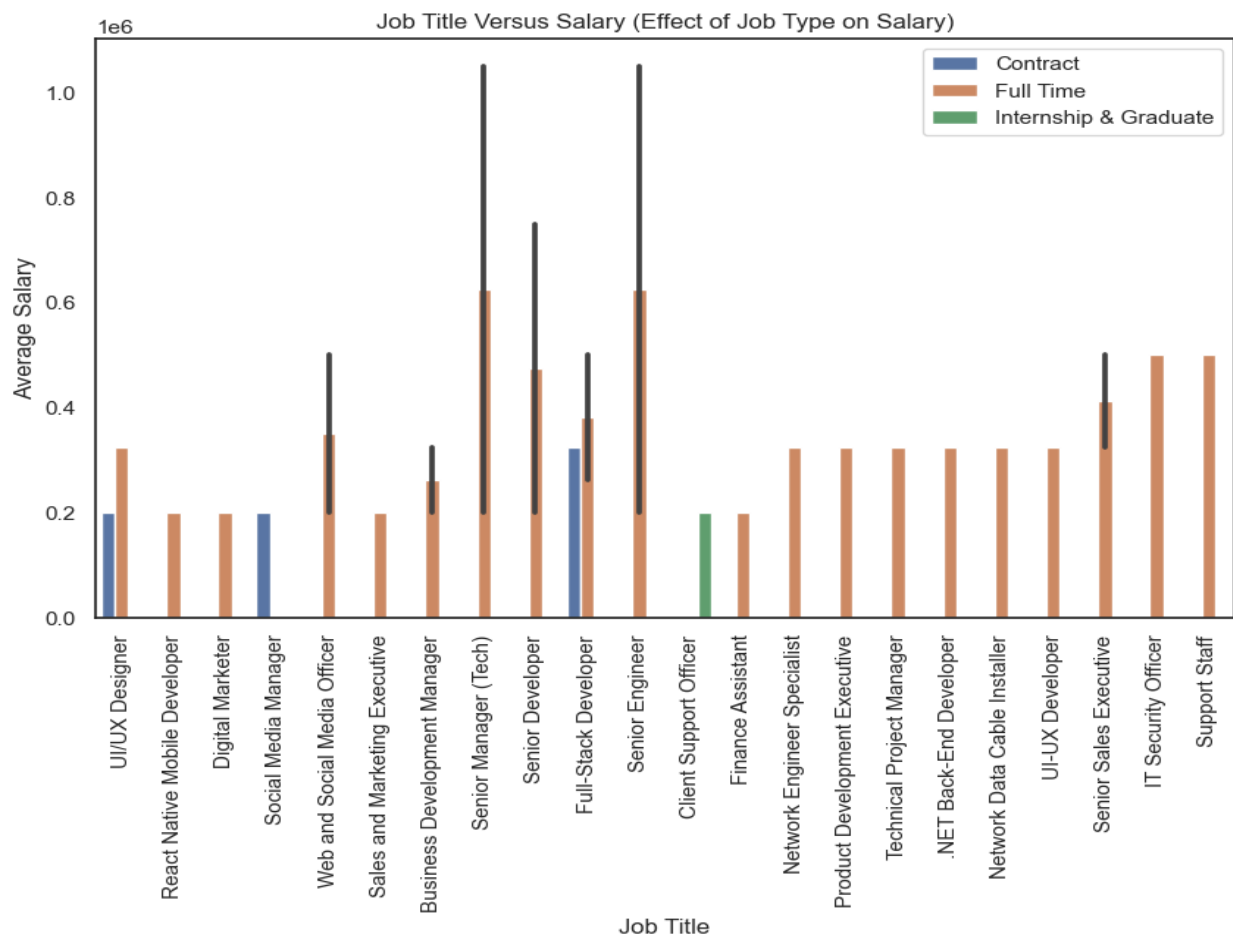
Location Affects Salary Expectation

The legend shows that Jobs in Lagos, Remote (Work from Home), Rest of Nigeria (Nationwide) and Abuja are colored blue, orange, green and red respectively. Web and Social Media Officer role was available in Lagos and Rest of Nigeria (Nationwide). Although the same job role, Lagos paid higher than Rest of Nigeria, but Abuja may be an exception because a Senior Developer in Abuja was paid more than 3 times the Senior Developer in Lagos. But it may not be the case always that Abuja paid higher than Lagos, because Lagos Senior Sales executive was paid higher than Abuja Senior Sales Executive. So who pays better between Lagos and Abuja? One can say it depends on the IT skill you have, although the size of this dataset was quite small to reach a more accurate conclusion. But it can

be seen from the dataset that when Abuja paid higher than Lagos, the margin was too large in comparison to when Lagos job paid higher than Abuja.

Now, the different in salary between a Remote job and jobs in Nigerian cities was very alarming. Looking at the Senior Engineer role, someone in Lagos was paid just NGN200,000 while someone who worked remotely on the same job was paid over NGN1,000,000. You can't convince me that this is about experience, because Senior Engineer role is for an experienced person by default. Clearly location affects the average salary of an IT role, and Remote jobs pay far more than jobs done in Nigeria. This is not surprising because some Remote jobs are foreign jobs. So if money is your primary aim for joining IT career path, today is the earliest time to start looking for a remote job.

What else could affect expected pay of an IT professional? Let's look closely at the next graph.
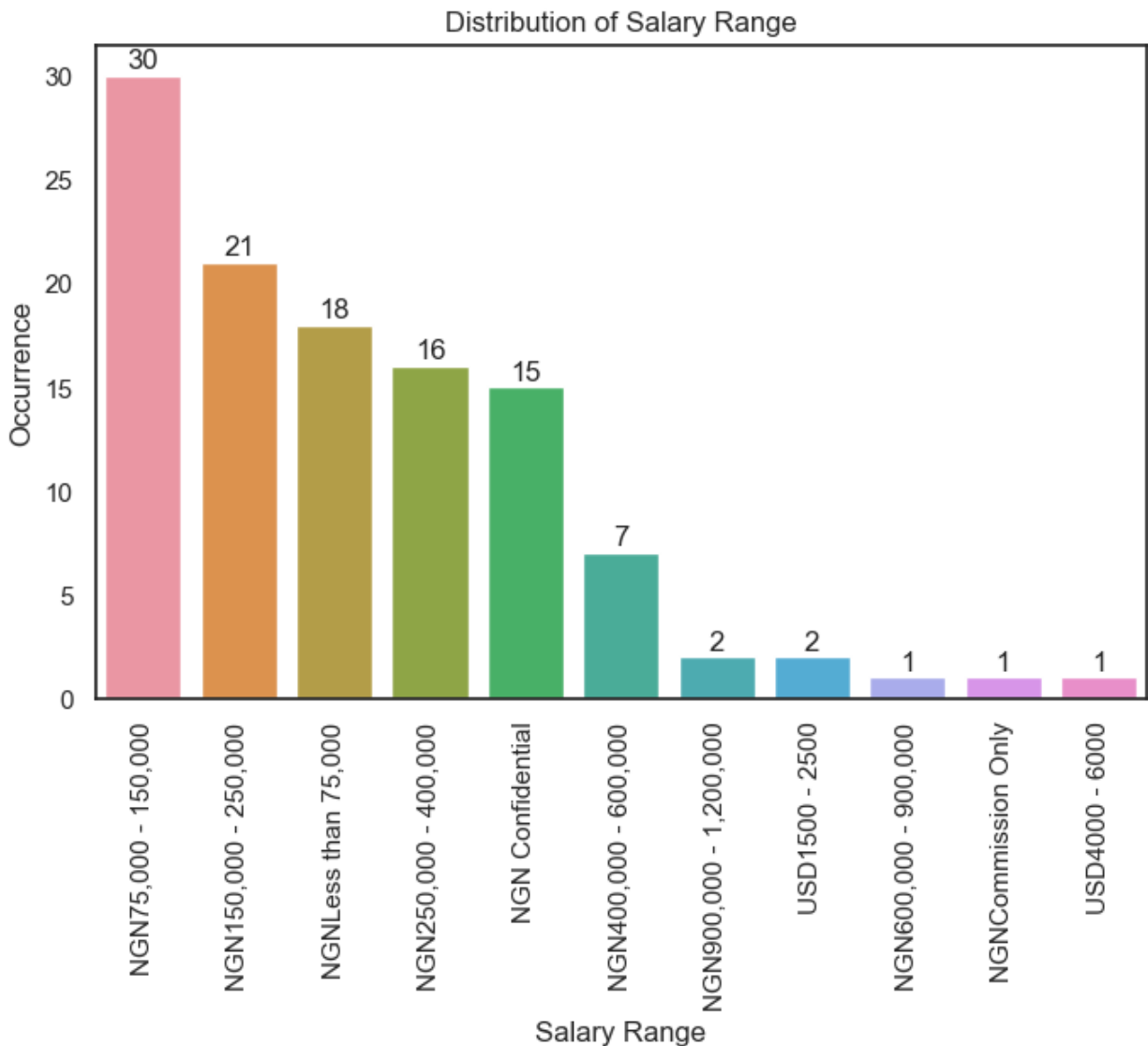
The Nature of Job Affects the Salary

For the graph above, blue, orange, and green represents Contract, Full Time, and Internship & Graduate Jobs respectively as shown in the legend. It is reasonable to conclude that Full Time jobs always pay higher than Contract and Graduate jobs. In fact, internship and graduate jobs (for newbie) pay least highest average salary of about NGN200,000 and that must be very rare, as it can be seen appear once among the top salary jobs. This also shows that the type of IT job (Full time, Contract, Graduate or Part time) has great influence on salary expectation.

Conclusion

Switching to an IT career path may not be a bad idea, but it will be realistic to have the following in mind.

1. Data analytics skill is the most in demand IT skill currently because the skill in invaluable to sales related and business development roles which were mostly advertised (17 openings). Therefore following the data analytics IT career path may get one into the IT job world faster. IT jobs for a newbie are not many based on the dataset from Jobberman website. Only 7% of the available jobs are for internship and graduates roles (which fits persons new to IT career). So if you want to get a placement quick, brace up enough to tackle fulltime technical interviews and go for full time roles.
2. Lagos is the best city to stay in Nigeria in order to secure an IT role soon. 80 of the 114 IT jobs scrapped from jobberman website are in Lagos.
3. A realistic view is that persons who are new in IT profession will not start with a high salary. Based on the handy dataset, most IT jobs will pay NGN75,000 - 150,000 as shown in the chart below, followed by NGN150,000 - 250,000 (only one single graduate job was found in this range). A handful will pay less than NGN 75,000 (Some Full Stack developers role fall in this range).

Count of Salary Range for IT Positions Advertised on Jobberman as at July 1, 2023

Distribution of Salary Range

There are IT jobs that as high as N1,200,000 and even up to USD6000 per month, but they are not common.

A factor such as location affects salary range. IT jobs in Lagos and Abuja will likely pay a high salary, while remote jobs pay most. Nature of Job such as Full Time, Part Time, Contract or Graduate role also affect salary range of an IT job.

Position	Company	Job Location	Type of Job	Salary Range	Job Description	Salary	Lower Salary	Upper Salary	Average Salary
Manual QA Software Tester	Wallethub	Remote (Work From Home)	Full Time	USD1500 - 2500	Software & Data	USD1500 - 2500	1500	2500	2000.0
Automation Software Tester	Wallethub	Remote (Work From Home)	Full Time	USD1500 - 2500	Software & Data	USD1500 - 2500	1500	2500	2000.0
Full-Stack Developer	Wallethub	Remote (Work From Home)	Full Time	USD4000 - 6000	Software & Data	USD4000 - 6000	4000	6000	5000.0

A closer check reveals that all jobs that paid in USD are remote jobs and full time roles, and that goes further to reconfirm that remote jobs and full time jobs pay most in the IT Profession.