

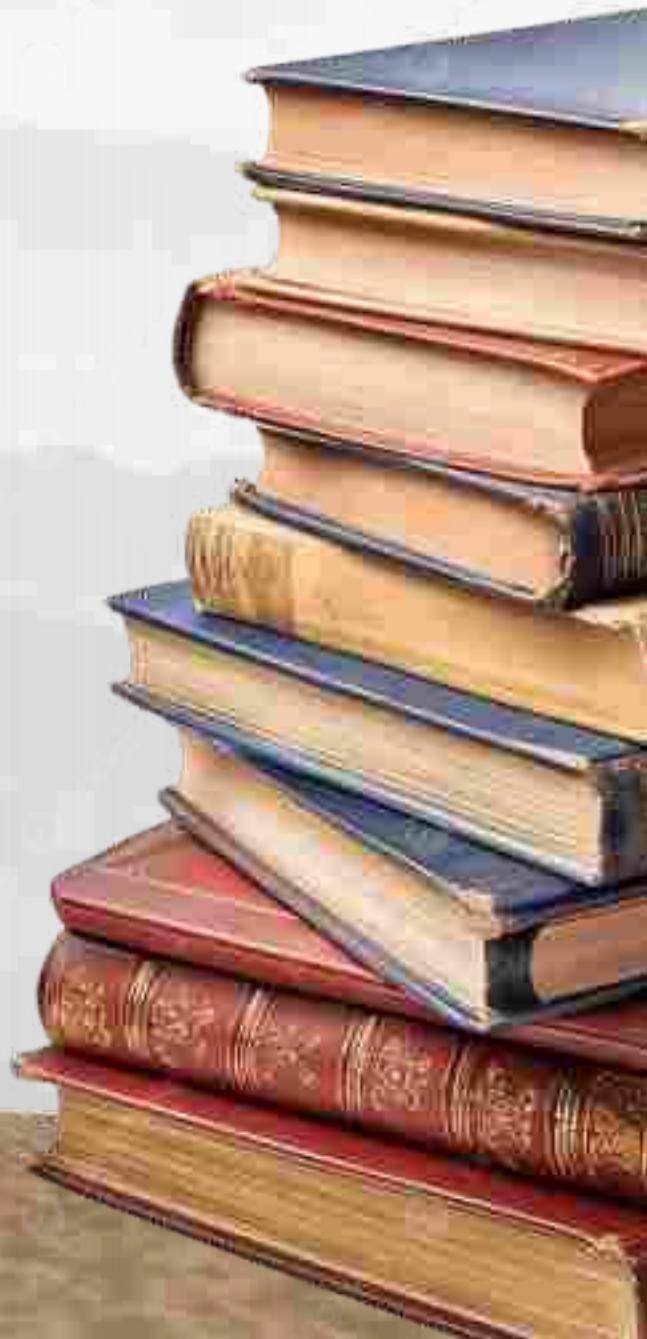


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PERSPECTIVE ON EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

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PERSPECTIVE ON EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

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CHAPTER FOUR

FACTORS THAT WILL ENHANCE DEVELOPMENT OF CAREER SERVICE CENTRES IN NIGERIAN' TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS

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Abstract

This chapter explores the critical factors that can enhance the development of Career Service Centres (CSCs) in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Drawing on recent studies and policy initiatives, it examines how adequate funding, institutional policies, industry collaboration, skilled personnel, technology integration, student engagement, and governance mechanisms contribute to more effective CSCs. The chapter argues that strategic alignment among government agencies, institutions, industry, and students is essential to strengthen CSCs, improve graduate employability, and bridge the gap between academic learning and labour market demands.

Keywords: career service centre, tertiary education, Nigeria, employability, industry partnership, institutional support, technology integration

4.1. Introduction

Career Service Centres have become integral components of higher education globally, bridging academic learning and labour market demands. In Nigerian tertiary institutions, the role of these centres is even more crucial, given the rising rate of graduate unemployment, skills mismatch, and the growing demand for globally competitive professionals. Career Service Centres are expected not only to guide students in making informed career choices but also to equip them with employability skills, entrepreneurial knowledge, and industry exposure.

However, the effectiveness of these centres depends largely on a variety of factors that enhance their development. Adequate funding, strong institutional support, collaboration with industry stakeholders, availability of trained personnel, access to modern technology, and a supportive policy framework are just some of the elements that determine their success. Without these factors, Career Service Centres may remain underutilized or ineffective in fulfilling their mandates (Ogunode, 2025; Ifeagachukwu, Salihu, & Ejike, 2025).

This chapter therefore explores the critical factors that will enhance the development of Career Service Centres in Nigerian tertiary institutions. The chapter is discussed under the following subheads: concept of tertiary education, concept of career service centre and critical factors that will enhance the development of Career Service Centres in Nigerian tertiary institutions.

4.2. Clarification of concepts

i. Concept of Tertiary Education

Tertiary education is an organized educational system that is consciously designed for manpower production, in-service training and national development. Tertiary education is an education that advances teaching, research and community services for national development. Tertiary education is an education industry that is meant for the production of manpower and national development via implementation of teaching, research and provision of community services. The objectives of tertiary education includes; to provide higher education opportunities via effective teaching, researching and provision community services; to develop produce students with specialized knowledge and skills for solving personal problem and national problem; to prepare student for national workforce and to contribute to societal and community development; to provide academic program of various disciplines; to provide quality instruction in field of studies and to conduct researches to generate new knowledge for national development and to solve complex problems (Ogunode, 2025b). Tertiary education as a planned and organized educational system designed for the total development of man/woman and the total transformation of society through the utilization of teaching, research and provision of community service. Tertiary education can also be viewed as post-basic and secondary school education that embraces advanced teaching, research and community service (Oweikpodor, Onafowope & Ogunode, 2024).

Tertiary education, also known as higher education, refers to educational programs offered by universities, colleges, and other institutions beyond secondary education. It encompasses undergraduate and postgraduate studies, providing students with advanced knowledge, skills, and qualifications in their chosen field of study (Proctoredu, 2023). Tertiary education, also called post-secondary education, is any level of education pursued beyond high school, including undergraduate and graduate credentials. These credentials encompass certificates, diplomas or academic degrees. Tertiary education refers to specialized education in a specific field, taken on after finishing high school. Tertiary education is non-compulsory and provided in a specialist institution, usually a college, polytechnic or university. This form of education may be delivered virtually or at a distance (Top-hat, 2023).

ii. Concept of Career Service Centre

A career center is a dedicated department or resource within a university or college campus that provides a wide range of support, guidance, and resources to help students and alumni in their career or skill development and job search efforts. This dedicated department is often part of a school, college or non-profit organization but might also be an independent business or government agency. In career centers, trained career development professionals can help you choose a career path, find and apply for open positions, create a resume and learn skills that employers might prefer in candidates (Fulokoja 2025). Coal city University Career Services Centre (CSC) is a centre that supports students through all stages of their career development in order to enable them to lead meaningful lives and become responsible leaders of tomorrow (Coal City university centre 2025). Career services centre according to Ogunode (2025) are centres or departments cut out and designed to equip the students and the alumni with up-to-date skills, knowledge, and opportunities to thrive in labour market. The centres serves as a backbone of students' career empowerment in the university and is to bridge the gap between the demand for, and the supply of Labour in Nigeria and globally.

4.3. Functions of Career Service Centre

The functions of Career Service Centre according to Indeed Editorial Team (2025) includes;

i. Career exploration

Getting a degree can prepare students for a job in a specific industry or provide students with skills that can be used in a wide range of career fields. Career services can help guide students to discover specific job positions that match their interests and abilities. Often, students may not realize the range of careers available based on their degree program and experience. Career services can provide direction and details about a variety of jobs through aptitude tests and advising.

ii. Job recruiting

Career services departments exist to help students find the best jobs suited to their degree background and personal skill set. They make connections and partner with companies to ensure students have opportunities to pursue a career through job fairs and employment search portals. Career services may even work directly with businesses who request information about potential candidates who keep resumes on file with the department.

iii. Resume reviews

A career services department will help students prepare and review a resume as they begin a job search. Whether you need to set up a resume to find a summer job or are ready to graduate and enter the workforce in your chosen industry, career services can help you build a marketable resume that will resonate with employers. They can also do the same with a cover letter.

iv. Interview practice and tips

Career services often include practical help for students ready to enter the job market. This includes assistance with developing interviewing skills. A career service staff member may offer assistance through a seminar or a one-on-one session. You can set up a time to practice answering interview questions and responding to an interviewer, practicing your verbal tone and nonverbal cues.

v. Internship connections

A career service department is often the best place to seek internship opportunities. Whether you fill a position on a college campus or within a business, career services can help connect you with organizations offering these positions.

vi. Loan and debt counseling

Career services may also include help planning your financial outlook once you graduate. They can offer advice on choosing a career path that may provide you with higher earnings so you can begin paying off student debt (University of Ibadan 2025; FCESOYO 2025).

4.4. Benefits of using career services

The benefit from utilizing career services in universities according to Indeed Editorial Team (2025) includes:

i. Networking opportunities

Career services offer students networking opportunities with industry leaders that can be difficult for students to make on their own. Professional networking allows students to connect with mentors who can offer guidance about a chosen career field. A professional relationship with someone already employed by a business in your industry may help your chances of getting hired within the same institutions.

ii. Current industry knowledge

Students are sure that information coming from a career services department is aligned with current industry trends. Career advisors can provide definitive answers for changing ideas that reflect what hiring managers look for in a job candidate. Career services collects information from industry professionals to learn the most relevant ideas for students.

iii. Assistance for free

Career services departments offer their help for free to current students since any related fees are paid as part of the cost of tuition. After graduation, career services like resume reviews typically involve fees. Using these services to your advantage while you are in school can save you money as you prepare to enter the job market. Some campus career services also offer their assistance to alumni who have graduated but still want help in their career. This can include advice on how to train for a management position, how to ask for a raise or even how to go back to school to pursue a higher degree.

iv. Guidance for first-generation college students

Students who are the first in their direct family to go to college often face different challenges than those who have a history of college-educated family members. These students may not have the same advice and coaching from family who have already pursued a post-secondary education. Career services can offer support and guidance for these students in a safe and knowledgeable environment.

4.5. Factors That Will Enhance Development of Career Service Centres in Nigerian' Tertiary Institutions

The development of effective Career Service Centres (CSCs) in Nigerian tertiary institutions requires deliberate planning, adequate resourcing, and strategic alignment with the realities of both the education system and the labour market. These centres play a vital role in preparing students for life after graduation, ensuring they can translate academic learning into meaningful careers. Several key factors can enhance the development and sustainability of these centres:

i. Adequate Funding and Resource Allocation

Funding is the backbone of every successful Career Service Centre. Many Nigerian tertiary institutions struggle with insufficient financial resources, which limits the establishment and proper functioning of CSCs. Adequate funding ensures that these centres can procure modern facilities, maintain digital platforms, organize career fairs, and host workshops and seminars. Sustainable financial investment—whether from government subventions, institutional budgets, alumni donations, or partnerships with private organizations—is crucial for long-term growth. Adequate funding is foundational for effective CSCs. Recent policy actions in Nigeria, such as

TETFUND's Career Service Centre intervention programme, show that financial support from government sources is crucial for establishing centres and providing essential resources like infrastructure, software tools, and workshop facilitation (TETFUND, 2024 -- "TETFund Begins Career Services Center Intervention").

ii. Strong Institutional Support and Policy Framework

Institutional leadership must commit to CSCs by incorporating them into strategic plans and providing policy backing. For instance, the establishment of Career Services Units in Nigerian universities (e.g. Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta) under Vice-Chancellor's office illustrates how institutional support enhances CSC effectiveness. When institutions integrate career services into their strategic development plans, it provides a strong framework for accountability and growth. Furthermore, clear policies from the National Universities Commission (NUC) and other regulatory bodies can institutionalize career services as a mandatory component of tertiary education, ensuring consistency and quality across institutions.

iii. Collaboration with Industry and Employers

A major factor that determines the relevance of CSCs is their ability to connect students with industry opportunities. Collaborating with employers, professional associations, and government agencies allows centres to provide internships, mentorships, and job placements. These partnerships help bridge the skills gap between academic training and workplace expectations. Industry collaborations also expose students to current trends, emerging fields, and entrepreneurial opportunities, making them more competitive in the job market.

iv. Availability of Skilled and Professional Staff

The effectiveness of CSCs depends largely on the expertise of the personnel managing them. Staff should be trained in career counseling, labor market analysis, and employability skills development. Professional development programs, both local and international, should be provided to equip staff with up-to-date knowledge and innovative strategies. Employing specialists such as career coaches, industrial psychologists, and digital platform managers will also raise the quality of services offered.

v. Integration of Technology and Digital Platforms

In the era of digital transformation, technology plays a crucial role in enhancing career services. Online platforms can provide students with access to job boards, virtual career counseling, e-learning modules, and networking opportunities. Leveraging social media and mobile applications can also increase student engagement and awareness. The adoption of data analytics further allows CSCs to track employment outcomes and assess the effectiveness of their programs, guiding continuous improvement.

vi. Student Engagement and Awareness Campaigns

A well-resourced Career Service Centre cannot function optimally if students are not aware of or engaged with its services. Awareness campaigns, career clubs, peer mentoring programs, and student ambassadors can help in promoting CSC activities. Early engagement—starting from the first year—ensures that students build their employability skills gradually rather than waiting until their final year. Creating a culture that values career readiness within the student community will enhance the impact of these centres.

vii. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Accountability

For CSCs to remain relevant, there must be mechanisms to measure their effectiveness. Regular evaluation of programs, graduate employment rates, student satisfaction, and employer feedback helps institutions refine their career services. Establishing clear performance indicators and publishing reports enhances accountability, builds credibility, and attracts external partners.

viii. Government and Private Sector Support

Government agencies and private organizations have a role to play in the development of CSCs. Government can provide policy direction, capacity-building programs, and seed funding, while the private sector can support through corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives, internship programs, and mentorship schemes. The synergy between the public and private sectors ensures sustainability and responsiveness to labor market needs.

ix. Entrepreneurial Development and Innovation Focus

In a country with high youth unemployment, CSCs should not only prepare students for paid employment but also equip them with entrepreneurial and innovation skills. Integrating entrepreneurship training, business incubation programs, and start-up support within CSCs will empower graduates to create opportunities rather than depend solely on limited formal jobs.

Conclusion

The development of Career Service Centres in Nigerian tertiary institutions is dependent on a combination of funding, policy, institutional commitment, industry collaboration, skilled staffing, and technology adoption. When supported by strong government frameworks and private sector partnerships, CSCs can evolve into robust platforms that enhance graduate employability, foster entrepreneurship, and contribute significantly to national development.

Revise Questions

- 1) What is tertiary institution?
- 2) Define career service centre.

3) Discuss five factors that will enhances development of career service centres

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CHAPTER FIVE:

TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN NIGERIA AND CRIME MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

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CHAPTER SEVEN:

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