

Career Services Centre in Universities in Nigeria: Benefits and Prospects

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Abstract: The implementation of a Career Service Centre (CSC) in universities in Nigeria has been a topic of interest in recent years. The need for such a center has been driven by the increasing competition and complexity of the global job market. In view of this, this paper is aims to explore the benefits of establishing career services centre in the Nigerian universities. A comprehensive analysis of existing literatures on Career Service Centre (CSC) in universities in Nigeria was done with the aid of systematic review system using secondary data that were collected from print and online publication. The paper concluded that career development, enhanced partnership between universities and private institutions, enhanced employment opportunities and support economic growth and development are the benefits establishing Career Service Centre (CSC) in the Nigerian universities. The paper also showed that Tetfund Support, Community support, Support of international organizations and private institutions are the prospects that will aid the development of the Career Service Centre (CSC) in the Nigerian universities. Based on these findings, the paper recommends that the Tetfund which is an agency of the Federal government should provide adequate funding for the implementation of Career Service Centre (CSC) in the Nigerian universities. International organizations and private institutions should be directly involved in the implementation of the Career Service Centre (CSC) programme. Effective capacity programme should be organize for all the universities administrators to aid effective implementation of the Career Service Centre (CSC) programme their respective institutions. Training should be organize for all the pioneering staff of the Career Service Centre (CSC) units.

Keywords: Career Service Centre, Universities, Management.

1.0 Introduction

The university is an organized and planned educational institution designed for the production of high level manpower through active teaching, research and community services. University is also a higher learning institution that focus on national development, training and manpower production via teaching and researching. NOUN in Ogunode (22) noted that the university is the apex of all tertiary institutions. It is expected to make optimum contribution to national development by: Intensifying and diversifying its programmes for the development of high level manpower within the context of the needs of national requirements; making professional course content to reflect our national requirements; making all students, as part of a general programme of all-round improvement in university education, to offer general study courses such as history of ideas, philosophy of knowledge and nationalism.

For the university education to make significant impact on national development, its research has to be relevant to the national development and its results disseminated to both government and industries. There are three categories of university by ownership in Nigeria. These include

federally-owned universities, state-owned universities and private universities. Universities can also be categorized along the courses offered. We have specialist universities that offer particular programmes (NOUN in Ogunode 2022).

Concern has been raised about the decline in the quality of education in Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Education. This is evident by the quality of graduates produced by these institutions. For instance, graduates from Nigerian universities are faced with problem of unemployment upon graduation. In 2006, the Federal Ministry of Education conducted a large survey involving more than 10,000 online participants to track the products of Nigeria's educational sector. The survey clearly showed a disturbing trend that over 60% of participants were unemployed or under-employed (Babalola in NOUN 2016). This could be attributed to their poor quality as well as mismatch between labour market and higher education curriculum.

Also, it is well established that the issue of graduate employability has been a major challenge in the Nigerian economy, with less than 12% of university graduates securing decent jobs within 18 months of graduation. Employers have also long lamented the caliber of graduates being produced in universities and other tertiary institutions, and in order to prepare new graduates for the workforce, they have been forced to implement pre-employment training programs. Therefore, with this rate of unemployment and the high number of graduates produced yearly in Nigeria, including career services in Nigerian universities may reduce the rate of unemployed graduates (FUNAAB 2024).

In order to address this problem, the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) introduced Career Service Centers in the 2024 disbursement cycle, it was meant to complement other programs in the nation's tertiary education system. Specifically, the Centers were established to provide information for students on trends in the job market, opportunities, and requisite skills as well as linkages with the employment industries including the alumni of the institutions (FUNAAB 2024).

The report and recommendations of the National Employability Benchmarking baseline assessment, which was submitted to the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) by the International Finance Corporation (IFC) led to the directive that all universities in Nigeria should establish Career Services Centre Units in Nigerian universities in 2023. The directive have been implemented in all Nigerian universities. Building on the premise, this paper seeks to explore the benefits and prospects of Career Service Centre in the Nigerian universities system.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 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). From the above, career services centre in this paper 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.

The objectives for the establishment of a career centre in tertiary institution are as follows: career advice, school application support, resume and cover letter help, job search resources, networking event and professional development workshop (Fulokoja 2025). Coal city University

Career Services Centre (CSC) provides the following: facilitating self-assessment and career exploration of our students in order to enable students to develop a clear career objective; empowering our students to make effective career choices from freshmen through alumni; offering high quality trainings, career counselling and coaching in order to meet our students' individual needs; bringing employers to campus for workshops and on-campus recruitment in order to enhance career related experiences; actively build partnerships with employers to create the best career opportunities for our students (Coal City university centre 2025). For FUNAAB (2024), the objectives of CSLU includes:

1. Mentor students in acquiring information, knowledge, and competencies that enhance individual career development, academic success, and employability;
2. Provide students with career coaching through training and workshops;
3. Establish platforms and networks for alumni engagements;
4. Create pathways for career connections with industries and organizations; and
5. Establish connections with companies to investigate the potential for student internships and professional prospects.

General Functions of CSLU

The office of the Career Service and Linkages Unit, Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta gives students the following options;

1. Search for industries and employment opportunities for graduates;
2. Learn about career and job fairs and employer events;
3. Use the units 'portal and e-library to enroll in online certification classes in career;
4. Schedule a one-on-one career coaching session;
5. Prepare students for career e-learning pathways; and
6. Assist students in getting internship placement, work-study jobs, volunteering jobs, and job opportunities.

Organizational Structure of CSLU

The unit is under the office of the Vice-Chancellor and operates three (3) focal areas namely; training/workshops, alumni relations, and industrial linkages. The function and key Performances Indicators (KPIs) of the various focal areas are as follows;

a. Training and Workshop

- To organize virtual and physical training and workshops on career development through the student life cycle;
- To organize periodic workshops and use interactive tools, and courses for developing practical skills to improve student resumes;
- To facilitate students' reading culture on career advice articles and books to make good career decisions;
- To coordinate students taking skill assessments to discover their strengths;
- To encourage students to use the unit library, e-books, career-related software, and interactive coaching room

b. Alumni Relations

- To facilitate a functional and up-to-date database of the alumni of the University;
- To identify the University alumni across the globe in different professional platforms and arrange networking events;

- To synergize and collaborate with the University Alumni Centre;
- To conduct a periodic baseline survey on the post-graduation of FUNAAB graduates

c. Industrial Linkages

- Develop concrete links and collaborations with industries and organizations for job placements, internships, volunteering jobs, and NYSC among others;
- Connects FUNAAB students to professional bodies and associations;
- To arrange the coordination of all collaboration and/or memorandum of understanding with industries and development partners;
- To partner with industries/international development partners to organize job/career fairs, career conferences, and employment conferences;
- To identify fresh collaboration for the University, students, and the unit;
- To collaborate with industries for the establishment of the Programme Advisory Committee for the review of programmes/courses;
- To consistently monitor all collaborations to make sure they beneficial and sustainable (FUNAAB 2024).

From the above, the functions of Career Services Centres in this paper includes;

1. Career Services Centres is designed to of student's careers and their employability;
2. Career Services Centers is designed to help students in making right choice of career path;
3. The centre is programmed to provide counselling, guidance, and support to all students as well as give them tools for self-assessment to further support them to identify their interests, strengths, weaknesses and prospects;
3. Career centers help to organize and facilitate education programs, workshops, seminars, and other similar programs to equip students with relevant employability skills to assist them search for jobs.
4. Career centers provide transition resources by supporting resume building, application processes and interview preparation.

3.0 Method

The benefits and prospects of Career Service Centre in the Nigerian universities system. Thee paper is a position paper that adopted a systematic literature review-based method. The method allows to collect and review the related previous literature from various online sources. With the aid of digital platform, the researcher collected secondary information to generate knowledge on this topic from 2015-2025. The position paper followed qualitative narrative design method. The researcher has visited different online sites to collect the previous literature and analyze the literatures on benefits and prospects of Career Service Centre in the Nigerian universities system. The previous findings are critically analyzed and presented in different themes as on benefits and prospects of Career Service Centre in the Nigerian universities system (Adapted from Ogunode, 2025).

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion

This output of the literatures on benefits and prospects of Career Service Centre in the Nigerian universities system presents an in-depth study and result that can infer conclusion on the topic. The study includes: online publication; conference paper, journals sorted from from reputable international journals such as CEON, Elsevier, Hindawi, JSTOR, IEEE, Learn Techlib, SAGE, Nebraska and Springer (Adapted from Ogunode, 2025v).

Exclusion

Also, the literature review excludes information from edited books, preprints, monographs, information below 2015 and book chapters (Adapted from Ogunode, 2025).

4.0 Result and Discussion on Benefits of Career Service Centre in Universities

Career development

The implementation of career service centers in universities in Nigeria is an important factor in shaping the future of education and employment. These centers provide students with valuable resources and assistance in their career development, such as career counseling, resume building, and job search strategies. By having these services available on campus, universities can better prepare their students for the job market and increase their chances of success after graduation. Implementation of career service centres in universities in Nigeria has been shown to have numerous benefits. It provides students with valuable resources and guidance for their future careers. This includes resume building, interview preparation, and job search techniques. Career service centres also offer networking opportunities, allowing students to connect with professionals in their field of interest. The career service center plays a crucial role in the Nigerian tertiary education system. As a central hub for students, it provides a range of services that are essential for their academic and professional success. The center helps students develop necessary skills and knowledge for the workforce by offering career guidance, counseling, and job placement opportunities.

Enhance partnership between universities and private institutions

Career service centers in universities in Nigeria can support students and also benefit the universities themselves. By having a dedicated center for career development, Musa, (2022) noted that universities can attract more students and enhance their reputation as a institution that prioritizes the success of their graduates. This can also lead to stronger relationships with employers and alumni, increasing opportunities for internships and job placements for students. He also highlighted the significance of internships, mentorship programmes, and continuous learning as vital components of career development. He also stressed the need for universities to collaborate closely with industries to create opportunities for students to gain hands-on experience and build meaningful connections.

Enhanced employment opportunities

The implementation of career service centres in universities can have a positive impact on the economy of Nigeria. By equipping students with the necessary skills and resources to enter the workforce, universities are contributing to the development of a highly educated and skilled workforce. This can lead to economic growth and competitiveness in the global market. Career service centres in universities in Nigeria has often offer internships and job placement services, increasing the likelihood of successful employment after graduation. The implementation of career service centres has also been linked to improved academic performance and retention rates among students. This is due to the support and guidance provided by these centres, helping students to better navigate their academic and career paths. The critical role of career services in bridging the gap between education and employment. He outlined several key strategies for improving employability, including the importance of developing transferable skills, gaining practical experience, and cultivating professional networks. Career services centre provide students and graduates with resources and support to enhance their employability by guiding career planning, resume building, interview preparation, and networking (Olajuyigbe, 2024). He noted that employability goes beyond academic qualifications, rather encompasses a wide range of skills and attributes that make a graduate attractive to employers, adding that career services play a pivotal role in helping students and graduates identify these skills and leverage them effectively in the job market.

Support economic growth and development

It also organizes workshops and events to help students build their resumes, network with professionals, and prepare for interviews. With the increasing demand for qualified individuals in the Nigerian job market, the career service center serves as a vital bridge between students and employers. By equipping students with the necessary skills and resources, the career service center contributes significantly to the overall development of the Nigerian tertiary education system and its students. It not only benefits individual students but also plays a crucial role in promoting economic growth and development in Nigeria. Overall, the existence and importance of a career service center in Nigerian tertiary institutions cannot be understated.

Also, the implementation of a CSC in universities will:

- Provide students with access to various career resources and services. These include resume writing assistance, interview preparation, and job search assistance. With a CSC, students would be better equipped to navigate the job market and increase their chances of securing employment upon graduation.
- Benefit employers. By partnering with the CSC, employers would have access to a pool of talented and well-prepared graduates. This would not only benefit the employers but also contribute to the economic growth of Nigeria.
- Benefits of a CSC is its ability to address the issue of graduate unemployment in Nigeria. With a centralized platform for career resources and services, students would have a better understanding of the job market and be better prepared to enter it. This could lead to a decrease in graduate unemployment and ultimately, contribute to the development of the country.

Prospects of Career Service Centre in Universities in Nigeria

There are many prospects for the development of the Career Service Centre in Universities in Nigeria. Some of these prospects includes; Tetfund Support, Community support, Support of international organizations and private institutions

TETfund Support

The TETFund is an interventional measure of the Federal Government to tackle inadequate facilities in our tertiary institutions (Nairaland, 2013). Tertiary Education Trust Fund (Tetfund) is one major key research funding agency of the Nigerian government. TETFund came into being at a time when the education sector had suffered many years of neglect by successive governments which resulted in large-scale decay of institutional facilities, physical structure, academic teaching and research equipment (Eze, 2014). Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) is a government intervention agency responsible for providing supplementary support to all levels of public higher institutions with the main aim of using funding to restore all the lost objectives of higher institutions in Nigeria (Jumare & Muhammad, 2019; Echono 2022; Ogunode & Akuh, 2024). Wapmuk and Amini (2018) and Echono, (2023) noted that the funds disbursed to public tertiary institutions are to be used for the provision or maintenance of: i. Essential physical infrastructure for teaching and learning; ii. Instructional material and equipment; iii. Research and publication; iv. Academic staff training and development; and v. Any other need which, in the opinion of the Board of Trustees, is critical and essential for the improvement of quality and maintenance of standards in the higher educational institutions. With TETFund support, the Universities career services centre will likely be sustainable and it will also realize her programme. TETFund is ready to provide the full support that will assist the centres to survival and implement it programmes.

Community support

The availability of various communities support from the universities system will also play a critical role in the sustainability of the career service centres in the various institutions. The communities like the faculties, departments, academic planning units and counselling unit will

provide technical and administrative support for the career service centre to growth and develop in the universities. International organizations are organizations with an international membership, scope, or presence. They tend to operate in many countries of the world.

Support of international organizations and private institutions

Another prospects for the development of the universities' career service centre is the availability and collaboration with international organizations here in Nigeria and also the country. According to (Ogunniran, Komolafe & Ogundele 2019) International organizations are organizations with an international membership, scope, or presence. They tend to operate in many countries of the world. International organizations are of two types: non-governmental and governmental international organizations. Among key and important international organizations operating in Nigeria in terms of activity impact are the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), European Union (EU), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and many others coupled with myriad of Non-Governmental Organizations operating from both home and abroad. They noted that international organizations are of two types: non-governmental and governmental international organizations. Among key and important international organizations operating in Nigeria in terms of activity impact are the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), European Union (EU), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and many others coupled with myriad of Non-Governmental Organizations operating from both home and abroad. Ogunode, Ukozor, Cand Agbo, (2024) categorizes international organizations into forms such as non-governmental organizations, international development agencies, and foundations, all aimed at providing specialized human services to enhance societal development. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) operate independently from governments, undertaking roles ranging from advocacy to project implementation. NGOs, whether local or international, aim to provide non-profit services to enhance social, economic, political, and technological development with the host country's consent. Ogunode, Nwisagbo, Ineye-Briggs, (2025); Ogunode, Ayeni, and Ogwuche (2023) noted that they provide technical support, financial aids and promote accountability and monitoring system of resources allocation. The direct or indirect involvement and participation of these institutions in the implementation of the career services programme of the universities will help the programme to succeed and develop.

4.1 Findings

The paper revealed that career development, enhanced partnership between universities and private institutions, enhanced employment opportunities and support economic growth and development are the benefits of implementation of career services centre in the Nigerian universities. The paper also showed that Tetfund Support, Community support, Support of international organizations and private institutions are the prospects that will aid the development of the career services centre in the Nigerian universities.

4.2 Conclusion and Recommendations

In conclusion, the implementation of career service centers in universities in Nigeria is of utmost importance. It benefits students, universities, and the economy as a whole. By providing students with the necessary support and resources for their career development, these centers play a crucial role in shaping the future of education and employment in the country. So, the government and the universities communities and private institutions should invest directly on career services centres and ensure the career services centres in the Nigerian universities are operating in an optimal level to realize its' goals.

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