E-ISSN: 2997-9366
American Journal of Management Practice
https://semantjournals.org/index.php/AJMP

| Research Article

Check for updates

Roles of Guidance and Counselling in the Implementation of Career Services Programme in the Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria

Amorha Ifeagachukwu, Ph.D
Department of Guidance and Counselling, Faculty of Education, National Open University of Nigeria

Aisha Jummai Salihu, PhD, ATTAH, Gabriel Ejike, PhD
Department of Guidance and Counseling, Faculty of Education, University of Abuja Nigeria

Abstract: This paper explores the roles of Guidance and Counselling in the implementation of career services programme in the tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The paper employed the use of secondary data which were collected from both online and print publications. The study revealed that career awareness and information dissemination, career assessment and self-discovery educational guidance and planning, decision-making and goal setting, skill development and employability training, psychosocial support and adjustment counselling; linkages with industry and professional bodies, support for special populations and follow-up and career monitoring are the roles of guidance and counselling in the implementation of career services in the tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Based on the findings, the paper suggests that professional Guidance and Counsellors should be fully involve in the implementation of career services programme in the tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

Key words: Guidance and Counselling, Career Services, Tertiary Institutions.

This is an open-access article under the CC-BY 4.0 license

1.0 Introduction

The transition from education to the world of work is a critical phase in the life of every student, particularly in a rapidly changing and competitive economy like Nigeria's. Tertiary institutions are expected not only to impart academic knowledge but also to prepare students for meaningful and productive careers. In this regard, the roles of guidance and counselling have become increasingly significant in supporting students to make informed career choices, develop relevant skills, and adapt to the demands of the labour market. Guidance and counselling services serve as a bridge between academic training and career development by providing students with professional support in areas such as career planning, decision-making, self-discovery, and personal development.

In Nigerian tertiary institutions, where many students face challenges such as lack of career information, peer pressure, unemployment anxiety, and poor self-awareness, the implementation

of structured career services anchored in effective guidance and counselling practices is essential (David, Ohunene, & Ogunode 2021). This paper explores the various roles played by guidance and counselling in facilitating the implementation of career services within the tertiary education sector in Nigeria, and how these roles contribute to the overall development and employability of graduates.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1Concept Tertiary Education

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). Every tertiary institutions is obliged to work towards enhancing students' academic achievement and staff counselling needs. According to Edinoh & Wali-Essien (2023), tertiary education is a social agent of progress and development in the society and aids technological advancement. It is designed to help in the development of nations by providing the high as well as the middle level manpower needed for the social, economic and political advancement through the programme of teaching, learning, research and community services. This function places tertiary education at the apex in the ranking of educational institutions and it is designed to accommodate knowledge acquisition and production.

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). 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 (Ogunode, 2025).

2.2 Concept of Guidance and Counseling

Guidance is a process whereby an individual is helped to understand himself in all ramifications, so that he can effectively utilize his potentialities or talents. Counselling is a process through which an individual who needs help is assisted a professionally prepared individual so that he can be helped to make necessary adjustment to life, and to his environment. It is a process whereby an individual is helped through a relationship with a professionally prepared person to voluntarily change his behaviour, clarify his attitudes and goals so that his problems could be solved. Counselling is done in two ways; individual counselling and group counselling. In individual counselling, there is a one to one relationship between the client and the counsellee. In group counselling, the counsellor is involved with a group of counsellees. In addition, counselling may be preventive and curative. The Guidance/Counsellor believes in the individuality of people. To him every individual is a unique special person, who is capable of developing his potentials and capabilities to the fullest, if properly guided (Idowu, N.D).

Guidance and counselling is a service that all human beings need at one point of their life. There is no human being that has never got a problem at one point or another. Once a problem arises, one seeks solutions, suggestions or even other people's opinions about the problem. In one way or another, one seeks for guidance and counselling services (Alutu,; Garner in Suleiman, Olanrenwaju, & Suleiman, 2019). Guidance and counselling services are services that have been

in existence as long as human beings have lived, either formally or informally. Guidance and counselling has been engraved in African traditional society since time immemorial. According to Busari and Muraina in Suleiman, et al (2019) and Ohunene, Audu, and Ogunode, (2021), Muhammad (2025) guidance and counselling was entrusted to the immediate and extended family where individuals confined in and depended upon their relatives for advice when faced with problems. As such in the African traditional society, people of all ages could seek for this service from the elderly or respected people in the society such as fortune-tellers, wizards, astrologers, palmists and future-tellers were thought to be getting information from the gods and could therefore guide and counsel others according to what the gods have counselled.

Guidance counselling is a noble profession whose importance in the educational system of Nigeria is becoming increasingly recognized by the country's educational planners and policy makers. Ideally a well-trained school counsellor should be available in each institution in the federation to deal with various aspects of students‟ problems and this presupposes the establishment of school guidance and counselling from the primary up to the tertiary levels (Adeyemo, in Suleiman, et al 2019).

Essential Guidance Services in School

Guidance and counselling in secondary education should focus on suggested counselling procedure by Busari in Suleiman, et al (2019) as enumerated bellow:

Appraisal Service: Involves the use of psychometric instruments to gather data on individuals to enable both the counsellor and the individuals concerned to understand themselves. Using the appropriate appraisal procedure using the test or non-test techniques, the individual can be opened-up to him. He is thus in a better position to understand his strengths and weaknesses, and consequently can make more realistic and effective choices

Placement Service: Refers to assistance given to an individual to make adjustment to the next stage of life development (Olayinka, in Suleiman, et al 2019). In secondary school, student's placement may means secondary adjustment in further education or adjustment in a job after secondary education. Placement therefore refers to the next steps, either in educational pursuit or in pursuit or Improving Guidance and Counseling Services for effective service delivery In Nigerian Secondary Schools: implications for stakeholders in education in vocational pursuit. Individuals need to be placed in educational or vocational field that relate to their interests, abilities and personalities.

Referral Service: This is the act of transferring an individual to another person or agency providing different kind of assistance. Referral is made for the purpose of specialized assistance. Many referrals occur simply because the problem is beyond the scope of the services provided.

Orientation Service: This is provided to help students adjust better in any new environment. Many new students feel lost socially and psychologically because they no longer enjoy the psychological support of parents, friend and former teachers. Orientation service helps students to adjust during his critical transition period. The students are introduced to the physical plants, administrative setup, rules and regulations governing student conduct use of school facilities, teaching staff, and how the school guidance programme can serve their needs.

Evaluation Service: The entire guidance programme in the school is evaluated in order to see how far the stated objectives and goals have been realized and whether the programme meets the developmental needs of the students. Unlike the other guidance services, evaluation is not a direct service to the student but to the entire guidance programme.

Counselling Service: Is a personalize dialogue or interview between the counsellor and counselee or client during which the client seeks expert assistance from the counsellor regarding the resolution of his problem. The Counselling service is personalized in the sense that usually, the

client has a personal problem which requires privacy and confidentiality for discussion with a help expert. Such concerns may include emotional problems, family problems, sexual difficulties, marriage issues and other psychological problems (Hammed and Muraina, 2016). The Counselling service is the heart of guidance service and the most important central service of guidance.

Information Service: This aims at providing students with better knowledge of educational decisions. Such decision might include whether to go for further education or not, what institution to attend, what courses to offer, what elective to take, which social association to belong etc. The sources of information service include the local community, the national sources as well as source from outside the country.

Follow-up Service: This service is designed to assess the extent to which the guidance programme is meeting the needs for which it was Yusuf Suleiman, Muraina Kamilu Olanrewaju, Jamiu Mahmood Suleiman established. This service is concerned essentially with successes, failures, problems and feedbacks from those who have benefited from the programme. The ultimate goal of follow-up and evaluation is to improve the programme or make those adjustments that have been indicated by the beneficiaries of the programme as necessary. Individuals need to understand what is required in the situation they are placed. In order to determine the effectiveness of planning and placement, there is need to find out how the individuals are developing in their own place of work, and school, how they are adjusting into their new environment. Follow-up service helps the staff to better understand and improve their curriculum and methods.

2.3 The Qualities and Roles of a Counsellor

It is pertinent to ask the questions who should be a counsellor in the school system?

What are his characteristics? For anyone to be able to provide any meaningful counselling in the primary school, be should have the following characteristics.

a) Empathy;

b) Genuineness;

c) Patient Understanding;

d) Ability to maintain confidentiality;

e) "Sound moral character; and

f) Ability to maintain good appearance (Idowu, N.D).

The counsellor is a helping professional who is trained in human behaviour. He interprets human behaviour in such a way that he will be able to function effectively in the world around him. The Guidance counsellor seeks to help individuals of all ages and sex in their bid to solve their problems. He is always out to treat individuals with dignity and respect. The counsellor empathises with individuals and confidentiality in his watch-word. He keeps his counsellees" secrets secret. He is a career educator, who sees to it that Individuals are properly guided in their choice of careers. Indeed, the counsellor is an adviser, a helper, a teacher, a parent, a confidant and a friend to the child (Idowu, N.D).

3.0 Method

This study sought to understand and examine phenomena related to the roles of Guidance and Counselling in the Implementation of Career Services in the Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria by focusing on previously published scientific literature. The Elsevier, CEON, and Goggle Scholar databases were used to search for articles that matched the keywords "School plant,"

Maintenance" Tertiary institutions". The articles included in this study were original articles; open access; discussed related research questions; published from 2004 to 2023; and came from Scopus Q1-Q4 reputable journals, Science and Technology Index (SINTA) accredited journals (S1-S6), and the Web of Science with core collection. The various research results obtained were then analyzed with regard to the application of the concept of importance of school plant maintenance in tertiary institutions. All the data were descriptively analyzed and are presented in the form of short narratives. (Adapted from Adnyana, Mahendra, & Raza, 2023; Ogunode, 2025)

4.0 Result and Discussion on Roles of Guidance and Counselling in the Implementation of Career Services in the Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria

Concept of Career Services

Career services centres 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 (Ogunode, 2025). 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).

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).

Roles of Guidance and Counselling in the Implementation of Career Services in the Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria

Guidance and counselling play a critical role in the effective implementation of career services in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. These services are essential for preparing students for the world of work, helping them make informed career choices, and addressing personal, academic, and social challenges that may affect their career development. Below is a comprehensive discussion of the roles of guidance and counselling in this context:

1. Career Awareness and Information Dissemination

Guidance and counselling units provide up-to-date information on career opportunities, labour market trends, academic requirements, and vocational skills. This helps students to: understand various career options available to them; learn about job prospects and demands in Nigeria and globally and identify the qualifications and skills required for specific professions.

2. Career Assessment and Self-Discovery

Counsellors assist students in understanding their interests, abilities, values, and personality traits using psychological tools such as: aptitude tests; interest inventories and Personality assessments. This self-awareness helps students make realistic and informed career decisions that align with their strengths and preferences.

3. Educational Guidance and Planning

Career services in tertiary institutions often include helping students align their academic programs with their long-term career goals. Counsellors guide students on course selection and combinations relevant to chosen careers; academic strategies to improve performance and Further education opportunities (postgraduate programs, professional certifications, etc.)

4. Decision-Making and Goal Setting

Guidance and counselling support students in the decision-making process by: helping them evaluate career alternatives; encouraging critical thinking and self-reflection and assisting in setting short- and long-term career goals. This helps reduce indecision and career anxiety, promoting a clearer focus on future objectives.

5. Skill Development and Employability Training

Many counselling centers collaborate with career services units to organize workshops, seminars, and training programs aimed at developing employability skills such as communication and interpersonal skills; resume writing and job interview preparation; problem-solving and leadership skills and entrepreneurial skills for self-employment

6. Psychosocial Support and Adjustment Counselling

Students in tertiary institutions often face emotional, social, and psychological challenges that can affect their career focus. Guidance counsellors provide: counselling for stress, anxiety, and depression; support for students dealing with family, peer, or academic pressure and mediation in conflict resolution within campus life. This emotional stability is crucial for effective academic and career development.

7. Linkages with Industry and Professional Bodies

Guidance and counselling units may work with career offices to facilitate internships and industrial training placements; connect students with mentors and professionals in their fields of interest and organize career fairs, job expos, and campus recruitment drives. These connections expose students to real-world work environments and build networks for future opportunities.

8. Support for Special Populations

Guidance and counselling services also cater to students with disabilities, international students and economically disadvantaged or marginalized groups. They ensure equitable access to career services and inclusive participation in all career-related programs.

9. Follow-Up and Career Monitoring

After graduation, some institutions maintain follow-up services to monitor alumni career progression; provide ongoing counselling support and adjust programs based on feedback from the labour market.

4.1 Finding

The study revealed that career awareness and information dissemination, career assessment and self-discovery educational guidance and planning, decision-making and goal setting, skill development and employability training, psychosocial support and adjustment counselling; linkages with industry and professional bodies, support for special populations and follow-up and career monitoring are the roles of guidance and counselling in the implementation of career services in the tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

4.2 Conclusion and Recommendations

Guidance and counselling have become more than just support systems in Nigeria's tertiary institutions—they are vital tools that shape students' academic and career journeys. By helping students discover their strengths, explore career options, and make informed decisions, these services play a crucial role in preparing them for life after school. In a country like Nigeria, where many graduates face the harsh realities of unemployment and a constantly evolving job market, the need for well-structured and accessible career services has never been more urgent.

When guidance and counselling are fully integrated into the educational system, they do more than just help students find jobs—they empower them to become self-aware, confident, and ready to contribute meaningfully to society. Ultimately, these services lay the foundation for a generation of graduates who are not only employable but also proactive, self-driven, and equipped to navigate the complexities of the modern world.

Suggestions

To fully realize the benefits of guidance and counselling in tertiary institutions, the following practical steps are suggested:

1. Invest in Functional Counselling Units:

Universities and other higher institutions should prioritize the establishment of well-resourced guidance and counselling centers. These should be run by qualified professionals who can offer both academic and career support.

2. Make Career Education Part of the Curriculum:

Career guidance shouldn't be an afterthought—it should be embedded into the academic experience. Students should start learning about career planning and personal development as early as possible in their academic journey.

3. Support Continuous Learning for Counsellors:

Just like any profession, counsellors need regular training to stay updated. They should be exposed to current labour market trends, digital tools, and modern counselling methods that make their work more effective.

4. Build Strong Links with Industry:

Institutions should actively collaborate with employers, industries, and professional bodies to create opportunities for internships, mentorship, and job placements. This connection helps students gain real-world insights and experience.

5. Secure More Institutional and Government Support:

For guidance and counselling services to thrive, there must be strong backing from both school management and government bodies. This includes funding, policy development, and consistent monitoring.

6. Promote Awareness Among Students:

Many students are unaware of the resources available to them. Institutions should run regular awareness campaigns to encourage students to engage with guidance and counselling services and see them as a valuable part of their education.

References

1. Adeyemo, D. A. (2014). *Counselling People with Special Needs* in T. Ajobiewe & K. Adeniyi (Eds). Access and Quality of Special Education Needs Delivery in Nigeria. Ibadan. Glory Land Publishing Company, 128-146
2. Adnyana, I. M. D. M., Mahendra, K. A., & Raza, S. M. (2023). The importance of green education in primary, secondary and higher education: A review. *Journal of Environment and Sustainability Education*, *1*(2), 42-lastpage. Retrieved from https://joease.id/index.php/joease/article/view/14
3. Akinade, S. J. (2012). *Behaviour modification principles and practices*. Ibadan: Stirting-Holding.
4. Alutu, A. N. G. (2005). The status of guidance services in secondary schools in Edo state. *The Nigerian Journal of Guidance and Counselling, 10, 114-125.*
5. Busari, A. O. (2012). *Essential Guidance and Counselling Practices.* Gbemisola Multiservice Publisher. Mokola, Ibadan. Most Recent Edition
6. Coal City university centre (2925). Coal city University Career Services Centre (CSC) https://ccu.edu.ng/index.php/career-service-center/.
7. Daily trust (2024). TETFUND: Career Service Centre's As Game Changer In Nigerian Tertiary Educationhttps://dailytrust.com/tetfund-career-service-centres-as-game-changer-in-nigerian-tertiary-education/
8. David, O,. K., Ohunene, L,. A. & Ogunode N,. J. (2021). Guidance and Counseling Services in Nigerian Tertiary Institutions: Problems and Solutions. *International Journal on Integrated Education* 4(10),67-74
9. Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN). (2013). *National Policy on Education*. Lagos, Nigeria: NERDC.
10. Fulokoja.(2025).Career-service-center.https://www.fulokoja.edu.ng/administrative-department.php?i=6&n=career-service-center.
11. FUNAAB (2024). Career services and linkages. https://funaab.edu.ng/section/career-services-and-linkages-unit/
12. FUTA (2025). Career Services Can Boost Employability, Professional Development https://www.futa.edu.ng/home/newsd/1037

13. Garner, N. (2000). Perceptions of counselors facilitating multi-issue solution-based groups. Unpublished Dissertation, Duquesne University.

14. Hammed, A and Muraina, K. O. (2016). Influence of Test Phobia on Examination Success: Implications for Counselling. *Academic Journal of Counselling and Educational Psychology (AJCEP), 2, 100-106.*

15. Idowu, S. (N.D). Guidance and Counselling for the primary school child

16. Muraina, K. O. (2018). Exploratory Effects of Vocational Counselling Strategy and Gender on Career Awareness of In-School Adolescents in Gombe State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Teaching, Education and Learning, 2(3), 89 -100.*

17. Olayinka, G. R. (2012). *Counselling efficacy and Extraversion as Correlates of Employees' Work Attitudes*. Ile-Ife, Nigeria: Obafemi Awolowo University Press

18. Ogunode, N,. J. & Owobamigbe K,. D, (2021).Guidance & Counselling in Nigerian primary schools: Challenges and Way forward. *Central Asian Journal Of Innovations On Tourism Management And Finance*, 2(8),29-37.

19. Ogunode, N, J (2025a). Career Services Centre in Universities in Nigeria: Benefits and Prospects. *AMERICAN Journal of Public Diplomacy and International Studies, 3 (7),79-86*

20. Ogunode, N, J (2025). Benefit of Digital Literacy for Academic staff and Students of Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria. *American Journal of Alternative Education,* 2,(2),43-53

21. Ohunene, L,. A, Audu, B, C .& Ogunode, N,. J.(2021). Challenges Facing Counsellors in Nigerian Public Primary Schools and Way Forward. *Middle European Scientific Bulletin* (17), 301-310

22. Owobamigbe K,. D, Ohunene, L,. A, & Ogunode N, J. (2021).Guidance and Counseling Services in Nigerian Tertiary Institutions: Problems and Solutions. *International Journal on Integrated Education.*Volume 4, Issue 10, 67-74

23. Muhammad, A. S. (2025). Persistence and its Impact on Minor Sins among Muslims in Kwara State Nigeria. *Spanish Journal of Innovation and Integrity*, *44*, 136-146.

24. Suleiman, Y., Olanrenwaju, M. K., & Suleiman, J. M. (2019). Improving Guidance and Counseling Services for effective Service Delivery in Nigerian Secondary schools: Implication for Stakeholders in Education. *Journal of multicultural Studies in Guidance and Counseling* 3(1), 75-89.

25. Popoola, B. I. (2015). Correlates of school counsellor competence in South Western Nigeria. *Journal of Social Science, 8(3), 237-243*

26. Top-hat (2023).Meaning of tertiary education. https://tophat.com/glossary/t/tertiary-education/ UNESCO (2023). *Que debe saber sobre la alfabetización*. https://www.unesco.org/es/literacy/need-know