

**REVITALIZING ENTREPRENEURSHIP STUDIES IN
LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE EDUCATION FOR
JOB CREATION AND POVERTY ERADICATION IN
NIGERIA**

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Abstract

This paper examined revitalization of entrepreneurship studies in Library and Information Science (LIS) education for job creation and poverty eradication in Nigeria. Revitalization of entrepreneurship studies in LIS education that would be amenable to the profession is not only a necessity but mandatory if the prospective LIS graduates would be employers of labour rather than job seekers in a competitive 21st century. The introduction of entrepreneurship studies in Nigerian universities since 2004 is a laudable step despite the fact that facilities for skills acquisition are generally lacking in most institutions. In furtherance of this laudable intention, stakeholders in LIS have also seen the need for integrating entrepreneurship studies in LIS education which has recently led to the proposal for a course known as “Infopreneurship” to be included in LIS undergraduate education programme. Training of LIS students in entrepreneurship requires some skills such as information technology skills, information literacy skills, managerial skills and personal entrepreneurship skills. Opportunities for LIS professionals were also highlighted to include: book publishing, information brokerage, consultancy services, bookselling business, record management, indexing and abstracting services, system analyst, operation of business centres, cybercafé business, editorial services, authoring books, email publishing, web publishing, desktop publishing, establishing and maintaining libraries for organisations, compilation of directories, compilation of bibliographies etcetera. It is recommended that to make entrepreneurship studies attractive, government ought to create favourable environment in terms of infrastructure provision, funding and regulating interest rates on bank loans for interested graduates that would wish to be self-employed after graduation.

Keywords: Education; Entrepreneurship Studies; Job Creation; Library and Information Science; Poverty Eradication; Revitalization; Nigeria.

Introduction

Entrepreneurship refers to an individual's capability or talent to spin concepts or ideas into reality and is therefore a key skill for all aiding young people to be more creative and self-reliance in whatever they embark on. Entrepreneurship is an increasingly central phenomenon in contemporary society. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) proposes to foster an entrepreneurial spirit in general (OECD, 2010; OECD, 2015, p. 54–60), with the European Commission suggesting that school curricula should focus on creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship (European Commission, 2010). Fully appreciating the importance of this and despite the challenges involved, the institutions have entered what was once the domain of business schools and implemented entrepreneurship education in the curricula of many universities around the world (Kristiansson and Jochumsen, 2015). In the same vein, Ifidon and Obaseki (2018) opined that entrepreneurship is a concept that is now widely accepted by nonprofit and public service agencies, which is referred to as social entrepreneurship. The authors further opined that there is need for library professionals to embrace the principles of entrepreneurship as the discipline before now is nonprofit inclined thus making it non-viable to intending and some practicing librarians. The main focus of entrepreneurship is to identify opportunities, achieve self-dependency, increase customer base by providing superior services, customer loyalty and increased revenue. Ochogwu (2009) postulated that libraries and information centres that practice both reactive and proactive service orientation will likely be the most successful information providers in the information age. The author further asserted that entrepreneurship in LIS is of huge importance; however, all practitioners need to be involved in the attempt at making it work.

Entrepreneurship Education

Entrepreneurship education is defined as education that seeks to provide students with the knowledge, skills and motivation to encourage entrepreneurial success in a variety of settings. Variations of entrepreneurship education are offered at all levels of schooling from primary or secondary schools through graduate university programmes. In Nigeria, entrepreneurship education was introduced by the National Board for Technical Education in 2007 to help in training of entrepreneurs in library related and non-library related enterprises. Some of the entrepreneurial ventures in librarianship include: bookshop management; indexing and abstracting services; editing books and journals; records management; exhibitions; publishing and reprography; video recording; information brokerage; document screening and control fee-based writing amongst others.

In order to accentuate job creation and poverty eradication, entrepreneurship education was introduced as a compulsory course which is receiving global attention. Musa (2009) stated that indigenous entrepreneurship through provision of enabling environment, technical education and financial assistance as well as skill acquisition opportunities has been a cardinal thrust for employment generation. Aladekomo cited in Babalola et.al. (2018) remarked that Nigeria policy on education emphasized the need for functional education that is relevant, practical and with particular emphasis on the acquisition of appropriate skills and development of competencies and equipment for the individuals to live in and contribute to the development of his/her society. Amoor (2008) stated that entrepreneurship education would provide students with the opportunities to identify and develop a range of skills and attributes that will be of use to creating and shaping their future by experiencing both business and work environment. Nnadozie, Akanwa and Nnadozie (2013) revealed that diminishing job openings and exposure to entrepreneurship studies should make the library and information science graduates explore the opportunities in other sectors where they can put their specialised training to their best advantage. Fakuade (2015) noted that entrepreneurship means ownership and self determination as opposed to simply being dependent on somebody else for one's livelihood and future. Effective entrepreneurial education is not possible without the right lecturers, students, supporting technology, laboratory equipment and allied infrastructures. Career paths for LIS students could be shaped and encouraged by entrepreneurial education provided. The information age no doubt provides the LIS students with contours of entrepreneurial options within and outside the library walls.

Skills Needed for Entrepreneurship by LIS Professionals

Skills are abilities and capacities required of a person to acquire through deliberate, systematic and sustained effort to smoothly and adaptively carryout complex activities of job functions involving ideas cognitive skills, technical skills or people interpersonal skills ([www.online business dictionary.com](http://www.onlinebusinessdictionary.com)). Elonye and Uzuegbu (2013) posited that LIS professionals should strive to improve on their overall skills through the acquisition of various forms of ICT skills and develop entrepreneurial culture and mindset in order to render quality services in the library, achieve self-employment and remain relevant. Elonye and Uzuegbu (2013) highlighted further some professional and managerial skills required for successful entrepreneurship in LIS to include:

- **Information and Communication Technology Skills:** This has to do with networking, library automation and digitization, web based services, reprography, micrographs, facsimile, video text, teletext, database creation, library management

software including CDS ISIS, LIBSYS, content development, desktop publishing, intranet, presentation, hardware/software skills and relational databases including the ability to create data structures which facilitates the indexing and retrieval of information and thesaurus development. Farkas (2006) emphasizes on some specific technical skills like HTML, Network administration, PHP and MYSQL, efficient use of search engines, use of blogs to provide services, web cast and search skills.

- **Information Literacy Skills:** This has to do with the ability to locate information efficiently and effectively, evaluate information critically and competently, and use information accurately and creatively. Also included here is the economics and marketing of information product and services, information resource management, information processing and organising, e-mail, multi-media and video conferencing.
- **Managerial Skills:** This entails marketing, financing, accounting, control, planning and goal getting, decision making, human relations and managing growth. They are essential in launching and growing a new venture. Included here is also the knowledge of records management principles and electronic book keeping.
- **Personal Entrepreneurial Skills:** This has to do with inner control/discipline; risk taking, innovativeness, change orientation and ability to manage change, persistence and visionary leadership. The combination of many of these skills with the right support ensures ideas do not just remain as dreams but become real viable businesses.
- **Indexing Skill:** This entails having the knowledge and ability to index a document efficiently and effectively. By so doing one could be contracted to index document for a particular organisation.
- **Cataloguing Skill:** This entails having the knowledge and ability to catalogue library materials irrespective of the type and form.
- **Research Skill:** This entails having the knowledge and ability to conduct and carried out research efficiently and effectively.
- **Online Book/Journal article Publishing Skill:** This entails having the knowledge and ability to publish book and journal electronically.

Library and Information Science Education

Library and information science education is a study of issues related to library and information services. The need for provision of library and information science education and the acquisition of relevant knowledge techniques and skills for effective library and information work in the 21st century in order to drive the needed development and expectations of the society. The increasing need for information and rapid developmental

changes in Nigeria and across the globe has accorded a primordial role to Library and Information Science profession above any other professions. Thus, library and information science education like in allied disciplines, must be viewed as driver of Nigeria's economic as no society can develop without entrepreneurs. Library and information science schools at all levels are expected to brace up to the challenge by providing the relevant knowledge and skills that are premised on the entrepreneurial needs of their students. Library and information science educators have a pivotal role to play in realising Nigeria's developmental goals. By virtue of their training and experience, they can employ their vast knowledge to advance entrepreneurial training in library and information science by establishing information consultancy and business enterprises that have multiplier effects on Nigeria growth and development (Mohammed cited in Babalola et.al., 2018).

Career Opportunities for LIS Professionals

Library and Information Science (LIS) professionals have a lot of potentials to develop the knowledge and skills required to sustain and survive in the present day knowledge society. Globalisation and liberalisation have opened up multiple career options to the LIS professionals. The traditional roles of LIS have changed with the advances in Information and Communication Technologies. LIS professionals are expected to be academics of higher order with competence to work in a hypertext, networked and digital environments. Hence, the LIS education should impart the learners with the necessary skills to gain employment upon graduation and to develop the vision and understanding to help them cope better with the rapidly changing world (Sinha and Pandey, 2014).

Nowadays, a number of career prospects are available in Library and Information Science. The qualified and trained professionals are employed in various libraries and information centres. LIS professionals can select the type of library as per their own interest. Thus, there is a very bright future prospect for LIS professionals. It is only the trained personnel in LIS that can have employment opportunities in the various sectors (Unegbu and Unuoha, 2013). Some of the available career opportunities in LIS profession includes: book publishing, development of computer software, production and sales of library equipment, information brokerage, consultancy services, bookselling business, record manager, indexing and abstracting services, system analyst, operation of business centres and cybercafé business, editorial services, authoring books, email publishing, web publishing, desktop publishing, establishing and maintaining libraries for organisations, compilation of directories, compilation of bibliographies.

Elements for Revitalizing Entrepreneurial Studies in LIS Education

Today, most Nigerian universities offer entrepreneur course, with course code GST 311 that is taught theoretically without the integration of the practical aspect that could provide students the opportunity of acquiring practical skills. Even among those with entrepreneurship centres, not all are equipped for the acquisition of practical skills. The zonal centres that were proposed have also not taken off. This position is supported by Dantani and Ibrahim (2014) who observed that the paucity of qualified instructors/teachers, instructional equipment/materials and well equipped laboratories are capable of frustrating entrepreneurial education in Nigeria. Borrowing from the general entrepreneurship studies course, and desiring to develop a tailor-fit programme for students of library and information science, Departments of Library and Information Science in Nigerian universities, have also come up with LIS-related entrepreneurial courses. A look at the course descriptions of about 25 approved LIS programmes in Nigerian universities indicates that entrepreneurship courses peculiar to the field are hardly offered presently, apart from the general studies course. Among the few universities with LIS departments offering entrepreneurship courses are those below:

Table 1: List of Nigerian Universities Offering Undergraduate Entrepreneurship Courses in LIS Programme

S/N	UNIVERSITIES	PROGRAMME	COURSE CODE AND TITLE
1.	Federal University of Technology, Minna	Library and Information Technology	LIT 318: Data Communications and Network Systems LIT 319: Analysis and Design of Library Information Systems LIT 324: Publishing and book trade LIT 518: Information products and services LIT 524: Entrepreneurship in LIT LIT 525: Electronic publishing
2.	University of Ilorin, Ilorin	Library Science	LIS 402: Entrepreneurship in Information
3.	Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria	Library and Information Science	LIS 220: Business Information Systems and Services LIS 321: Marketing of Libraries and Information Centres LIS 323: Financial Management in Libraries and Information Centres LIS 414: Publishing and Advertising
4.	University of Nigeria, Nsukka	Library and Information Science	LIS 448: Library Marketing and Public Relations
5.	Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi	Library and Information Science	LIS 513: Library and Information Consultancy Services LIS 523: Marketing of Library and Information
6.	University of Abuja, Abuja	Library and Information Science	LIS 302: Introduction to Publishing LIS 408: Marketing Library and Information Services LIS 409: Library and Information Consultancy LIS 411: Revenue Generation in Libraries and Information Centres

Source: National Universities Commission Handbook (2018)

However, the entrepreneurship courses are aimed at tuning or re-orienting students' minds towards possible job creation and self-employment for economic development. Considering from the list in table 1, it is evident that only 6 out of 25 approved Nigerian universities offering library and information science offered entrepreneurship courses. This indicate that, the awareness is low and there is need for revitalisation of entrepreneurship studies in Library and Information Science education in Nigerian universities and most especially in the universities that are yet to commence the programme. The awareness can be made through organising conferences, workshops, symposia under the Professional Associations such as National Association of Library and Information Science Educators (NALISE), Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN), Nigerian Library Association (NLA). The themes of the conferences, workshops, symposia should focus on entrepreneurship aspects such as "Entrepreneurship Education in Library and Information Science Programmes", "Entrepreneurship in Librarianship", "Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Science and Technology Education for Self-Reliance". Babalola et. al. (2018) posited that in furtherance of the need to entrench entrepreneurial courses in LIS education at the undergraduate level, some experts who were invited by the NUC to review the existing Benchmark and Minimum Academic Standards (BMAS) and come up with a new one that would meet modern realities proposed for the inclusion of a course to be known as Infopreneurship, among several other new courses that were proposed. Babalola et. al. (2018) outlined further the proposed content of Infopreneurship subject to final approval by the NUC to contain such essential aspects such as:

1. Concept of Infopreneurship.
2. Need for Infopreneurship skills.
3. Income/Revenue Generation Activities in Libraries and Information Centres.
4. Techniques for Generating Income/Revenues.
5. Establishing and Managing Revenue Generating Activities.
6. Problems and Prospects of Revenue Generation Activities.

Job Creation

Job creation is a process by which number of jobs in an economy increases. Job creation often refers to government policies intended to reduce unemployment. According to Abd-Khaliq (2017) entrepreneurship is a veritable source of employment and wealth creation for Nigerians who desire to create wealth for themselves by starting a business of their own and nurturing it to maturity. A business empire can be created by starting small and working hard enough to maintain the business and making it grow through various stages. Many big

companies in Nigeria today started small many years ago and their founders were committed in their pursuit and persevered until the businesses grew into world class brands. Similarly, Prato (2013) posited that librarians can also be essential resources to entrepreneurs and start-ups, which have led some libraries to develop small business centers. These librarians understand that knowing how to conduct effective research, including topics like trademark/copyright laws and market research, in addition to the specific domain areas of the product or service being produced is essential to a successful business venture. Today's librarians are supposed to be innovators who would explore new technologies and novel ideas in the relentless pursuit of excellence by embracing the entrepreneurial spirit. Indeed, librarians and entrepreneurs share certain characteristics which include: creativity, persistence, and passion.

Poverty Eradication

Poverty eradication can be seen as a set of measures both economic and humanitarian that are intended to permanently eliminate or lift people out of poverty. Measures like those promoted by Henry George in his economics classic "Progress and Poverty" as those that raise or intended to raise ways of enabling the poor to create wealth for themselves as a means of ending poverty forever. In a related assertion, Babalola et. al. (2018) states that poverty reduction involves the strategic use of tools such as education, economic development, health and income redistribution to improve the livelihoods of the world's poorest people by governments and internationally approved organizations.

Conclusion

Revitalization of entrepreneurship studies in LIS education in Nigerian universities with the ultimate goal of creating job and eradicating poverty in Nigerian requires pragmatic approach and sincere commitment on the part of all the stakeholders: the students, lecturers, technical staff, School management and government if the issue of unemployment must be surmounted. It is barely fifteen years that entrepreneurship education was embraced as a compulsory General Studies course in most Nigerian universities with varying levels of successes. In most of the universities, this course is still taught only theoretically. In the universities where there exist entrepreneurship centres, the centres are not well equipped with the requisite facilities and artisans to implement the impartation and acquisition of skills by students. Education managers must do the needful by providing the needed learning facilities and manpower that will impact positively on entrepreneurship skill acquisition capable of driving job creation and economic development of the society. The current unemployment grief in Nigeria can be confronted frontally through a robust entrepreneurship studies that is devoid of dilapidated or nonexistence of teaching facilities, personnel and laboratories.

Despite the visible and long term benefits of entrepreneurship studies, there are no requisite facilities capable of provoking the desired entrepreneurial spirit among library and information science students. It is appropriate to conclude that entrepreneurship studies is the only component for reviving LIS education and remains the only potent economic for job creation and eradication of poverty in Nigeria.

Recommendations

This paper therefore raises the following concerns:

1. There should be more awareness on the significance of entrepreneurship studies through conferences, workshops, symposia under the platform of Professional Associations such as National Association of Library and Information Science Educators (NALISE), Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN), Nigerian Library Association (NLA). The themes of the conferences, workshops, symposia should focus on entrepreneurship in Librarianship.
2. There should be adequate provision of facilities such as printing machines, photocopiers, binding and laminating machine, Internet, and library digitisation software at the laboratories to drive the needed entrepreneurial skills in library and information related businesses to graduates of LIS.
3. The teaching of entrepreneurship courses should be revitalized and strengthen in institutions that is been offered and institutions that are yet to offer the course should commence with practical teaching methodologies especially towards trend analysis, market surveys, business proposals, memo writing.
4. Government should endeavour to construct entrepreneurship practical based workshop centres fully equipped with modern equipment in various institutions of learning with competent qualified facilitators to handle the centres.
5. Government should provide adequate funds to institutions concerned and create favourable environment in terms of infrastructure provision and regulating interest rates on bank loans for graduates who would wish to be self-employed after graduation.

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