

The Role of Academic Library and Librarians in Enhancing Entrepreneurship in Nigeria

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Abstract

There is a great need to extend library profession base on the fast growing needs of employment in the country as at today. To reduce the unemployed rate that has reached an alarming stage which is due to economic recession and constant decline in industry which would have lead to the drive of the economy of the nation at large. The present economic realities and the challenges in labour market in Nigeria as well as the increase in unemployment of our graduates also justify the need to equip undergraduates with the basic entrepreneurial skills and accurate knowledge that would enable them to be self-employed after graduation. Moreover, users of library no longer see the need to visit the library because library services are not attractive and packaged in ways that will make them visit the library. There is therefore, the need to make library services attractive; this will require that teachers or lecturers need to infuse entrepreneurial courses in their curriculums irrespective of the courses that they teaches at institutions of higher learning. The acquisition of entrepreneurial texts books both hard copies and soft copies should be available for the use of both students and academic staff . Hence library services need to engage in entrepreneurship education in academic school curriculum will greatly enhance entrepreneurial knowledge and skills which will prepare graduate students for the challenge of the labour market and make them to be self employed in the long run.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurship Skills, Academic Library, Librarians.*

Introduction

According to Atterbury and Finnell, 2009, Librarians often lack prior training in entrepreneurship. Edewor And Omosor (2012) also stated that libraries are not profit making institutions whose reasons for existing is service rather than financial gain. Consequently, library personnel need to be trained on business models, commonly employed in entrepreneurial ventures with its associated

elements of personal financial risk and potential financial gain. Due to the economic crises that lead to the increase of unemployment rate as well as the decline and collapse of industry which in turn lead to massive retrenchment, there is now more emphasis on developing and promoting entrepreneurship. However, the arrival of the information age where information provision is an increasingly important commercial activity coupled with new technological development, bringing together hitherto disparate activities in information supply, has led to a change in the role of libraries and librarians (Norris, 2007). Libraries as well as academic librarians have to take the lead in promoting entrepreneurship, this will help undergraduate and postgraduate students to have basic knowledge and skills on entrepreneurship.

According to Yacom (2011), academic libraries are institutions that are established to take care of the information need of students, lecturers, researchers and other community of scholar to move the nation forward. One major way librarians play significant role is by sourcing for information for the development of Entrepreneurship in Nigeria. Hence, Nigeria education system is not yet suitable or ripped enough to meet the manpower and employment needs of the nation which is due to the growing proportion of unemployment rate in the country. This development can be expressed by the high population of unemployed youths graduating from both secondary schools and tertiary institutions that roam the streets without employment. The question is are there window of opportunities available for them to make use of? If yes how will they get access to information that will lead them to such opportunities, that is where the significant role of librarians comes to play.

Entrepreneurial education distinguishes itself from other aspects of business curricula by emphasising the notion of an entrepreneurial perspective that can be learned through theoretical and practical training (Kuratko and Hodgetts, 2004). Librarians has a major role to play in promoting Entrepreneurship which will go a long way in reducing unemployment rate in Nigeria. Entrepreneurship is the backbone of industrial development throughout the world. The academic institutions play a major role in the manpower development of any nation providing high well and middle level manpower for the acceleration of social, economic and political advancement of a nation.

Statement of the problem

The employment situation in Nigeria leaves less to be desired as anecdotal evidence has shown that there is a huge mass of individuals with different levels of certification and skills that are willing to work but are unemployed. The jobs from the government are not forthcoming and there is a dearth of industries to absorb graduates and others. This unfortunate situation has created a lot of societal problems as some youths have taken to criminal activities like armed robbery, kidnapping, internet fraud and the likes. Thus, there is an urgent need to consider alternative avenues of fully engaging those who are unemployed and one of such avenues is the promotion of entrepreneurship. As a result, it is essential that

students who are in universities have the mind-set of focusing on entrepreneurship while they still study hard in their disciplines. A critical establishment that has the capacity to promote entrepreneurship in academic institutions is the academic library and librarians are the personnel to facilitate this. It is based on this backdrop that this article will examine the role of academic library and librarians in enhancing entrepreneurship in Nigeria.

The Impact of Entrepreneurship in Stimulating Industrial Development

Entrepreneurship is the bedrock of industrial development throughout the world which make so many advance country in the world an industrial nation, such country include China, Singapor. United State of America and North Koria just to mention but a few, the employment rate of most industrial nation druped due to Entrepreneurship which goes a long way to increase employment generation. In Nigeria and other developing countries, there are few entrepreneurs due to harsh economic policy and political environment as well as lack of entrepreneurship education. Issa, M' Bashire anad Saka (2012) stated that improved and sustainable global economic development depends on the strong entrepreneurship education, that is why schools in developed countries provide such entrepreneurship education for life-long trade to the students as well as learning a trade that is essential for self-employment and self-reliance. Given the recent challenges in world economy, their schools emphasize training in computers, information technology and other related fields. Students are also encourage to visit a library to source for information which will aid and sharpens the skills and stimulate students interest in entrepreneurship and above all they become self employed and employer of labour in the long run.

Information has a major role to play in stimulating accurate knowledge and shaping students entrepreneurship skills for long life self sustenance, in line with the demand of this information age, academic libraries together with academic staff through Training and Seminars work closely with industries to establish curriculum and programmes to meet their skills' expectation thereby promoting entrepreneurship. In Nigeria, there is need to introduce entrepreneurship education in our education curriculum and academic programmes. Base on this, Arogundade, (2011) Issa, et al (2012) citing in Omolayo (2006) maintained that many Nigerian have difficulties in translating their business ideas into realities and creating new business ventures due to lack of necessary information and skills needed to achieve their target. This implies that the University curriculum was in the past tailored towards making graduates collar-job focused and not skills acquisition oriented for self development. This explains why millions of our youths and lot of university graduates are unemployed and are found roaming about major cities and towns in Nigeria in search of white-collar jobs.

It is therefore, imperative to reposition Nigeria University to stimulate economic growth through deliberate agenda of production of entrepreneurship graduates. The School of Business University of Ibadan has taken a bold step in Promoting entrepreneurship in Nigeria, the University of Ibadan management has

collaborated with the federal government through the Central Bank of Nigeria which made the provision of The School of Business. The School of Business will play a critical role in promoting knowledge and innovative skills for both undergraduate and postgraduate students. The University of Ibadan School of Business (UISB) will also play a major role in promoting entrepreneurship education.

The School of Business university of Ibadan is structured to achieve the following objectives,

- * To produce international competitive development-oriented, first-rate economic policy and corporate managers, as well as entrepreneurs that generate employments and that can propel not only national and regional development in particular, but also productive integration of the African continent into the global economy.
- * Education for the youth, such as Training , Seminars and workshops that will enable them to be self-employed and self reliance, including managers and directors.
- * Provide graduates with adequate training and skills that will enable them to be creative and Innovative in bringing new ideas in identifying more business opportunities;
- * Entrepreneurship Serve as a catalyst for economic growth, Socio-Political stability and development.
- * Offer tertiary institution graduates with adequate training in entrepreneurship education through development of their curriculum.
- * Reduce high level of poverty
- * Enhance employment generation
- * Provide the young graduates and postgraduate students with enough training and support that will enable them to establish a career in small and medium scale businesses. ([Https://pgcollege,ui.edu.ng](https://pgcollege.ui.edu.ng)).

Akimkugbe (2008) maintained that there is urgent need to review our educational system that will encourage entrepreneurship education that is rich in curriculum content and practical that can produce relevant skills and needed to acquire necessary orientation and mindset for business, vocational and professional lives after the university education. University of Ibadan through The School of Business, has taking the lead in this regard, the only thing that is left is for other department and faculty to follow suit.

The goal of academic libraries and school libraries should be designed and tailor to include providing entrepreneurial education for long-term activity for their students from year one to their final year, by the time they graduate they will have acquire enough skills and knowledge in entrepreneurship which in turn will

make them self employed. Academic library together with academic staff both at the faculty level down to the departmental level on the other hand need to work closely with willing and reputable industries and other related entrepreneurial oriented agencies to establish rich entrepreneurial education curriculum and programmes that will meet the acquisition of knowledge and skills expectations of students in Nigeria institutions of higher leaning.

To meet the challenges of this information age, schools should place great emphasis on literacy skills training on computers, information communication technology (ICT) and other related fields that will promote the knowledge of entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurship Education

Entrepreneurship education is an integral part of general education aimed at preparing individuals for self employment, occupational fields, and effective participation in the world of work (Ejiogu & Nwajiuba, 2012). Entrepreneurship education seeks to provide students with the knowledge, skills and motivation to encourage entrepreneurial success in a variety of settings (Ismail, Rak & Omar, 2011). They view it as a new approach in imparting knowledge to students. Entrepreneurship education is made up of different kinds of experiences that gives students the ability and vision of how to access and transform opportunities of different kinds Refaat, (2009). Entrepreneurship education is a lifelong learning process. It is any educational activity or program that promotes an understanding of how to start a business. According to Agu (2006) in Ekankumo & Kemebaradikumo (2011), entrepreneurship education is the type of education designed to change the orientation and attitude of students and the process that will equip them with the skills.

Entrepreneurship education was introduced into the educational system of Nigeria with a view of restructuring the system in order to reshape both the system and the individual so that in the long run, it will reduce unemployment.

Entrepreneurship education therefore is a strategic way of tackling the unemployment scourge affecting Nigeria. In the view of Refaat, (2009) students will benefit from entrepreneurship education because they will become aware of occupational choices that are available in small business management and entrepreneurship.

Skills Required for a Good Entrepreneurship

According to an online dictionary, Skills are the abilities or knowledge required of an individual in a position to plan and execute an action geared towards accomplishing some tasks or achieving some set goals. (www.online.dictionaty.com).

Entrepreneurs must endeavour to possess the applicable skills and knowledge in order to succeed in any business venture of one's choice. According to Uzuegbu (2013) It is important to note that traditional roles are becoming less frequent in the array of entrepreneurial careers now open to information professionals. As a result, different competencies, skills and graduate qualities are

required for entrepreneurship. Omekwu (2009) states that if library and information professionals do not acquire skills, other professionals from computer science and engineering will step into their core areas of work specialization and take their opportunities. This also means that for librarians to play their role in enhancing or promoting entrepreneurship, they must have basic skills and knowledge about entrepreneurship and the role it play in promoting entrepreneurship as a means of reducing unemployment rate in Nigeria. This is because Uzuegbu (2013) is of the opinion that skills have become both generic and multidisciplinary in the digital age. Cross disciplinary qualifications imply that some people without a basic background in librarianship may acquire basic information management skills either by further training or lessons from work experiences and invariably go into information management. In the light of the above, Ugwu and Ezeani (2012) posit that Library 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 to their users, achieve self-employment and remain relevant. Thus, some professional and managerial skills are required for successful entrepreneurship as highlighted in Ugwu and Ezeani (2012) are:

Information technology skills, which has to do with training and educating both library staff, students and academic staff on the job so as to impact entrepreneurship skills and knowledge to students through the use of Information technology. This will facilitates the promotion of entrepreneurship in Nigeria. Information technology skills which is also needed for the sourcing of information on entrepreneurship by both lectures and students, this will go a long way to develop the skills and knowledge needed for entrepreneurship in the mind of the students.

Information literacy skills: The library need to train their staff to develop high literacy skills which will facilitate the effective assistance librarians renders to students in sourcing for information for library users. These have to do with the ability to locate information efficiently and effectively, evaluate information critically and competently, and use information accurately and creatively.

Personal entrepreneurial skills: which 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.

Good Entrepreneurship

There is no such thing as a typical entrepreneur. Some entrepreneurs are quiet and hardworking, while others are more outgoing and flamboyant. The key to being a successful entrepreneur lies in the ability to take an idea and then through

the process of innovation, develop it in such a way that it becomes a marketable product or service.

Kimmons (2013) highlighted characteristics of entrepreneurship to include:

Skill - All the interest and vision cannot make up for a total lack of applicable skill. For instance, if he wants to start a business that creates mobile games, he should have specialised knowledge in mobile technology, the gaming industry, game design, mobile app marketing or programming.

Organisation and Delegation - While many new businesses start as one-man business, successful entrepreneurship is characterised by quick and stable growth. This means hiring other people to do specific jobs. For this reason, entrepreneurship requires extensive organisation and delegation of tasks. It is important for entrepreneurs to pay close attention to everything that goes on in their companies as it grows, but if they want their companies to succeed, they must learn to hire the right people for the right jobs and let them do their jobs with minimal interference from management.

Risk and Rewards - Entrepreneurship requires risk. The measurement of this risk equates to the amount of time and money one invest into a business. However, this risk also tends to relate directly to the rewards involved.

An entrepreneur who invests in a franchise pays for someone else's business plan and receives a respectable income, while an entrepreneur who undertakes ground breaking innovations, risks everything on an assumption that something revolutionary will work in the market. If such a assumption fails, he can lose everything. However, if he is right he can suddenly become extremely wealthy.

Lack of knowledge on how to interact with entities that make businesses succeed: Many LIS professionals do not know how to interact with necessary entities such as banks, suppliers, customers, venture capitalists, distributors and advertising agencies. They are indispensable players in every successful business.

Role of the librarians and libraries in enhancing entrepreneurship in Nigeria

The role of librarians and the libraries in the promotion of entrepreneurship in Nigeria cannot be overemphasized. Librarians and the libraries are intertwined, as the professionally trained personnel (librarians) perform their activities within a defined space (libraries). Thus, the discussion of the role of librarians and the library in enhancing entrepreneurship will be fused in this context. Librarians can enhance entrepreneurship in various ways. One of the ways librarians can enhance entrepreneurship is through the provision of relevant information resources and services. Ideas on how to set up and sustain a business have been documented in intellectual works in different formats like textbooks, audio, visual and audio-

visual resources. Thus, librarians have the role of providing access to these information resources on entrepreneurship so that willing individuals can retrieve and use them. Eke, Igwesi and Orji (2011) also emphasized that the major function of information professionals like librarians in entrepreneurship education is information provision. The authors asserted that librarians perform the role of information suppliers to those who are willing to become an entrepreneur and those who are already entrepreneurs but are willing to widen their horizon in their businesses.

Furthermore, in order to assist the users make effective use of the myriads of information resources on entrepreneurship within the collection of the library, librarians need to provide information literacy skills. To facilitate this, librarians can engage in awareness and sensitization programme of their user community so that they can be aware of opportunity that has opened for them to build their information literacy skills. With a high level of information literacy skills, the users which will be equipped them to make good use of information resources and services on entrepreneurship in the library.

In addition, librarians in Nigeria can also support entrepreneurship through the creation of makerspace in the libraries. A makerspace is a physical location where individuals can come together to share resources and knowledge, work on project, network and build (Educase Learning Initiative, 2013). Thus, if libraries can provide a space where users can learn different skills and also network with individuals of like minds, they are also supporting entrepreneurship. Oyewole and Anenene (2016) argued that the concept of makerspace has to be domesticated within the Nigerian context so that members of the society can have the opportunity to learn and acquire new skills in an environment where tools (like computers, machines used for hairdressing, barbing, shoe making, soap making, catering, bead making and the likes) are available within the library space for use. This can empower individuals amidst the economic challenges being witnessed in the country.

Challenges to growth of entrepreneurship

Lack of specific skills: it should be noted that the clients' population are rapidly changing as the technologies for servicing them is changing too. Many Library Information Science (LIS) professionals lack various forms of ICT skills relevant for entrepreneurship. Emmanuel et al (2013).

Problem of generating compelling business ideas: Many LIS professionals have all it takes to become successful entrepreneurs. However, students, Librarians and unemployed youth aspiring to be entrepreneurs are faced with the problem of how to generate compelling business ideas for new entrepreneurial businesses. Not knowing how to generate ideas that would breed frustration, make the aspiring entrepreneur to start a business similar to the one he has seen around him. Besides, the entrepreneur not having the initial ingredient of success - the entrepreneurial

mindset of bringing about a change, creating an invention or beating competition - soon goes under when faced with endless competition from existing businesses. Emmanuel et al (2013).

Problem of Information: There are so many youth who are interested in acquiring knowledge and developing their skills in entrepreneurship but due to lack of information and frustration such zeal cool off. Librarians need to create awareness through seminars, workshop and Training as well as Exhibitions. Emmanuel et al (2013).

Inadequate of Funding: The issue of funding have been a challenge to Nigerian government for a very long time, Scholars and Professionals across the country have been lending their voice to the issues of funding education, funding all aspect of the economy which will enhance the economic growth and development of the country at large, making fund available directly to higher institutions, though Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND) and Education Trust Developmental Fund (ETDF) to fund entrepreneurship so that both undergraduate and postgraduate students can access for promoting entrepreneurships.

The National Assembly has a role to play in promoting entrepreneurship in Nigeria, If each members of the National Assembly be involve in promoting entrepreneurship at their constituency level together with the House of Representative Members, this can be done by establishing Entrepreneurship Foundations (EF), this alone will reduce unemployment rate in Nigeria.

Government Policy: The Federal Government and the National Assembly should also formulate policy and realistic bills that will give entrepreneurship legal backing and proper funding for the benefit of the grass root youth and students.

Conclusion

No society in our contemporary world can achieve meaningful progress without taking cognizance of the role of entrepreneurship, since the would-be graduate are expected to acquire necessary skills that will enable them to meet the needs of society. Entrepreneurship education plays a significant role in unemployment reduction and economic development. Library and Information science education should see the need of ensuring full implementation of entrepreneurship education in the training of library and Information practitioners not just in theory but in practice. Full implementation of entrepreneurship will make much of what they learnt in theory to be real when the necessary mechanism are put in place.

Entrepreneurship education in library and information science will not deliver its dividends if efforts are not made to ensure that the programme is practical oriented. If the integration of entrepreneurship education to the training of librarians is not adequately implemented, it becomes difficult for graduates of

library and Information science to secure self-employment, let alone creating job for others, in which case is like going back to square one. Efforts therefore should be made to ensure that the necessary equipment (facilities) are put in places, qualified teachers with practical knowledge are absorbed into the system, and only then we can move from the non entrepreneurship era to the entrepreneurship age.

Recommendations

Arising from the findings of this study, the following recommendation were made,

- * The study of librarianship at the undergraduate and masters level in Institutions of Higher learning that have not incorporate entrepreneurship education into their curriculums should do so without delay in order to equip the students with the skills that will make them innovative, self-employed, job creators and contribute to national development this should be applicable to all other departmental courses in each faculties.
- * The entrepreneurship education should not be theory alone, efforts should be made to provide adequate facilities that will enable the students to have practical experience and real life situations must be included in their course/programme so that the students can gather as much skills as necessary to start up on their own.
- * Adequate funding must be provided by government to enhance entrepreneurship education at all level Primary, secondary schools and Institutions of Higher Learning.
- * The Federal Government and the National Assembly should also formulate policy and realistic bills that will give entrepreneurship legal backing and proper funding for the benefit of the grass root youth and students.
- * Higher institutions in Nigeria should offer courses that meet both students' academic requirements and as well learning entrepreneurial skills that are essential for self-employment and self-reliance.
- * There should also be a collaboration between the academic library, lecturers and students literacy skills training gird toward entrepreneurship skills acquisition.

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