

Promoting Entrepreneurship Education For Empowering LIS Students: A Challenge For Undergraduates In Benue State

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Abstract: This study investigated adequacy of entrepreneurship curriculum, its relevance and challenges in adopting LIS entrepreneurship education as a means for promoting and empowering LIS graduates from two universities in Benue State; Benue State University and University of Agriculture Makurdi as reference points. The population comprised 12 lectures in LIS departments of the two institutions. A structured questionnaire was used for data collection. Data generated were analyzed using simple percentage and presented in descriptive form. The findings revealed adequacy in LIS current trends curriculum in Entrepreneurship education is 42% as well as skills in entrepreneurship, training and development of computer software education is 50%. This implies that there is room for improvement on current trends in LIS curriculum. Its relevance is increase in National Gross Domestic Product in terms of employment, boost publishing capabilities and Job creation. It was concluded that government has to provide infrastructures, finances and National University Commission should enforce implementation of policies to adopt entrepreneurship education to meet current trends in LIS and ultimately value added economy in the State.

Keywords: Promoting Entrepreneurship, LIS education, empowering students, Benue State

I. INTRODUCTION

It is over five decades when library and information science education was formally introduced in Nigeria to produce qualified and adequate personnel for the nation's libraries and information services centers. The absence or dearth of library school in Nigeria is a matter of the past. However, the establishment of such schools is not enough, but there is need to ensure that they withstand the modern challenges through adequate provisions in human, materials, financial, resources for teaching and learning. The scenario predominated by information and knowledge perspectives as observed by Levy (2018) suggested digital literacy skills as the 21st century learning skill which has permeated entrepreneurship hence the pressing need to educate and train the library and information manpower towards a sustainable professional competence. The time has come for academics, educators and other critical stakeholders to do things differently, adopt approaches and strategies for the conduct of entrepreneurship. This is enunciated in the (NPE, 2014) which

is educating for maximization of the creative potentials and skills of the Nigerian citizens for self-fulfillment and general development of the society. According to Abubakar and Abbas (2014) the dynamism of the world and the need to meet the information needs of every member of the society has put the profession on its toes. Most reasons why there is need to restructure the LIS curriculum to educate and train information personnel who would be able to fit into the ever changing world to impact positively in the State.

Nigeria today, and Benue State in particular is engulfed in the increasing rate of unemployment, poverty and other social and economic problems facing all spheres of life both in education, private and government agencies. There is therefore an apparent need to intensify and enforce LIS entrepreneurship skills studies to elevate unemployment challenges and rather empower the LIS students to capacity building. This increasing rate of unemployment, high level of illiteracy, corruption and bad governance among others is accentuated to poverty (Garba, 2010). However, we can achieve employment as well as wealth creation for LIS

students where the identified panacea to this problem is training and teaching of entrepreneurship which is the focus of this paper.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Benue State as an agrarian state sustaining livelihood is basically through farming. However, there are ampule of graduates of Library and information science who are presently facing unemployment and there are appreciable number of tertiary institutions whose needs for information in search of intellectual activities is enormous. This has thrown up the challenge of relevance in the education and training of LIS students for competences and skills in LIS entrepreneurship which can be achieved through a constantly reviewed curriculum to be delivered by equally competent staff. This study therefore, investigates the current trends in library and information science in the two universities in Benue State educating library and information science students.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- ✓ Ascertain adequacy of entrepreneurship curriculum in the two universities teaching LIS producing graduates with requisite qualification for professional practice in this current era.
- ✓ Determine the relevance of entrepreneurship education of LIS students in the current trends.
- ✓ Identify the challenges against adopting entrepreneurship training.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

One of the current trends that is raging today is the fast place at which information and communication technology (ICT) is changing and then why libraries are responding to these challenges. Its essence is to improve the provision of services in order to meet the diverse and sophisticated users' demands of information. These trends such as web based library information services, Library information networks, electronic information resources; Library and information science education reflects current trends in the technology. Therefore there should be advance curriculum in Library education in order to provide new initiative to our teaming LIS professionals. With the adoption of modern technology and more importantly in this 21st century, the traditional method of service provision is astronomically becoming obsolete. In this regard, it is not only becoming a challenge but a threat to any institution or establishment whose activities or services are completely carried out manually. Specifically, the curricular of library schools (Departments of Library and Information Science) have a lot of challenges. This could therefore have negative implications on the products of these universities in terms of services, employment and relevance.

Abdullahi (2016) asserts the need for librarians to explore entrepreneurship opportunities based on their academic strength. The study sorts the way forward to include good entrepreneurship competencies, acquisition of ICT skills and

government policies to provide adequate infrastructures. The dynamism of the society has manifested to a lot of developmental changes and cutting across all sectors. The ways of doing things previously can no longer meet the modern taste, thus, change is a necessity. Specifically, the changing demands of the library and information profession dictate that preparation for this field cannot be regarded complete as professional must take the changes in the world into account and update themselves in order to perform creditably on their jobs (Gongchi, 2008). Entrepreneurship education links to venture creation and wealth creation. Similarly McMullan and Gillin (1998) claimed that individuals who took entrepreneurship courses possessed stronger intention to get up and own company at some point in their life than those who did not attend the courses.

There is a significant relationship between the academic libraries and library and information science schools, whatever influence or implication on one affects the other. Consequently, whatever challenges facing Nigerian libraries would also affect the training departments or schools (Ngwuchukwu, Ezeh & Izuchukwu 2019). In marketing of library and information services, it requires approaches that are quite different from those traditionally used in the manufactured goods. These different approaches stem largely from the four distinctive features of services namely; intangibility; inseparability; heterogeneity and perish ability. These characteristics lead to different consumer perceptions and behaviours, making it more difficult for service oriented providers in the place of the Librarians which should ensure the satisfaction of his or her client and to have established a competitive advantage. These distinctive characteristics also present significant quality and in achieving operational efficacy.

It brings to the fore introducing information brokerage as a current trends in Library and information science is not out of place as defined by Onaade (2012) that, it provides an opportunity that enterprising librarians can explore as a business niche. An information broker is thus an information consultant who provides professional advice to solve problems (Frank & Howell, 2003). There is no doubt that librarians are well positioned to exploit this opportunity because, as Emmanuel (2012) points out, professional services provided by librarians are believed by many to be critically accessed, and utilizing information resources to the fullest extent and with particular regards to electronic resources. It therefore proffers a tangible solution to a state faced with unemployment hence information brokerage is a profitable area in entrepreneurship and could offer diverse opportunities to trained Librarians in document delivery, information consultancy and advocacy. Okafor, Njoku, Madumere & Osadebe (2017) noted that information brokerage creates avenues for individuals such as information professionals to engage in meaningful work for sustainable development and alleviate poverty.

Another current trend is the emergence for entrepreneurship training for library and information science students. Kuratko (2003) defined entrepreneurship as a dynamic process of vision, change and creation: an integrated concept that permeates an individual business in an innovative manner. Entrepreneurship is about seeing opportunities and

bringing about change. It is a practice of starting new organizations or revitalizing organizations, particularly new business generally in response to identified opportunities. Several researchers examining the relationship between entrepreneurial education and entrepreneurial characteristics stated that personal characteristics associated with entrepreneurs can be developed through entrepreneurial education. Rasheed (2003) suggested that students who take entrepreneurship training and engage in business activities have a higher value of entrepreneurial characteristics. Also Ochogwu (2009) posited 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”. From the foregoing assertions by authors are, in the view that entrepreneurship education is of huge relevance to graduates of LIS.

Value creation is normally described in the entrepreneurship literature as new venture initiation, but a more inclusive description includes many value creation initiatives that do not result in new venture creation. Community activism, intra-preneurship, educational reform, government reform, and similar efforts all demand entrepreneurial thinking and action. I adopt Gedeon’s (2014) definition of entrepreneurship education that places a premium on value-added student transformation:

“Entrepreneurship education encompasses holistic personal growth and transformation that provides students with knowledge, skills and attitudinal learning outcomes. This empowers students with a philosophy of entrepreneurial thinking, passion, and action orientation that they can apply in their lives, their jobs, their communities, and/or their own new ventures”.

The current plans for educational development in Nigeria are earmarked in Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) number 4. The 2030 Agenda for sustainable development and adoption of SDGs seeks to incorporate and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development which are economic, social and environmental. The SDG look to address the root cause of poverty and how different drivers of change influence and relate to one another to achieve transformation for sustainable development. It is in view of the foregoing that the researchers dwell in engaging LIS educators to intensify teaching and promoting entrepreneurship training for economic sustainability of our teaming LIS graduates.

Mngutyo, Aboh and Nongo (2017) study on Library and information science entrepreneurship and wealth creation in Nigeria reveals the role LIS educators can play in inculcating entrepreneurship skills, opportunities of entrepreneurship available to LIS graduates and concluded that identifying and emphasizing LIS entrepreneurship areas through conscious efforts during training and practical session should be encouraged. In the same view, Nyam (2017) asserted the need to inculcate entrepreneurship education in LIS. His argument is based on equipping Library Science student with the necessary skills to be self-reliant for wealth creation.

According to Bygrave (2003) this age is an entrepreneurial age and entrepreneurs are driving a revolution that is transforming and renewing economies world-wide. In his views it is regarded that entrepreneurship is a key driver of our dear economy. It therefore requires LIS graduates to be

creative and willing to be innovative by identifying ventures like indexing and abstracting services, book publishing services, online curator, freelance fee based services and book vendor services that are profit oriented thereby becoming real entrepreneurs to run on their own rather than wait for employment by the Federal or State Governments. Entrepreneurship education is obviously the starting key to the Nigerian economy as well as in Benue State. Library and information educators would essentially key into it and foster inclusion into its curriculum in line with Sredojevic and Shan in (2005) and (2003) posited respectively that entrepreneurship education should be based on the elements of skills in ICT, Individual attitudes which is measure by sense of integrity etc.

III. METHODOLOGY

This is a descriptive study of two universities offering library and information science in Benue State namely, Benue State University [BSU] and University of Agriculture Makurdi [UAM]. A structured questionnaire (CTLISE) was used to collect data from the Lecturers in the department of Library and Information Sciences on the entrepreneurship curriculum contents inclusion. Fifteen (15) numbers of lecturers from the two universities formed the study population, which is 8 Lecturers from BSU and 7 lecturers from UAM. Owing to the small size of the population total enumeration technique was employed. Twelve questionnaires representing (80%) out of 15 questionnaires administered to the respondents available and valid for data analysis was returned and found valid for data analysis. Data generated were analyzed using simple percentage and presented in the descriptive form.

IV. RESEARCH FINDINGS

The result of data analysis is presented below. Findings revealed that the entire 12 questionnaire that was administered in the two universities were returned.

S/n	Respondents	Frequencies	percentages %	Valid %	cumulative %
1.	Asst. Lect.	1	8.33	8.33	8.33
2.	Lect. II	3	25.0	25.0	25.0
3.	Lect. I	2	16.66	16.66	16.66
4.	Senior Lect.	3	25.00	25.00	25.00
5.	Associate Prof.	2	16.66	16.00	16.66
6.	Professor	1	8.33	8.33	8.33
	TOTAL	12	100	100	100

Table 1: Rank of the respondents

BIO DATA OF RESPONENTS



- 1 Prof
- 2 Assc. Prof
- 3 Snr. Lect
- 4 Lect I
- 5 Lect II
- 6 Asst. Lect

Figure 1

Table 1 revealed that there are three each (3) Lecturers II and Senior Lecturer, two (2) each of Associate Professor and

Lectures I, and one (1) each of Professor and Assistant Lecturer in the two Universities which indicates a good mix for a curriculum inclusion and delivery.

S/n	Educational Background	Frequencies	percentages %	Valid %	cumulative %
1.	MLIS	5	41.65	41.65	41.65
2.	PhD	7	58.31	58.31	58.31
	TOTAL	12	100	100	100

Table 2: Educational background of respondents

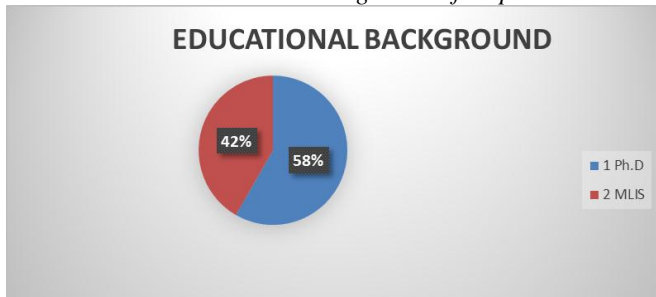


Figure 2

Table 2 indicates that all lecturers in the two universities have a good educational background with seven (7) of them having PhD degree and five (5) with Masters' Degree.

S/N	STATEMENT	Frequencies	percentages %
1	Entrepreneurship education	5	42
2	Indexing and abstracting	12	100
3	Information brokerage education	7	58
4	Skills in entrepreneurship training	5	42
5	Electronic information services training	8	67
6	Development of computer software education	6	50
7	Operation of library services and equipment	8	67

Table 3: Ascertain the adequacy of the LIS curriculum including current trends

A four likert scale of Highly Adequate, Adequate, Fairly Adequate, Less Adequate was used to determine the adequacy of the entrepreneurship curriculum included in the LIS schools. Where 80%-100% was regarded as highly adequate, 60%-70% = Adequate, and 50%-58% is fairly adequate.

Table 3 revealed that adequacy in LIS current trends curriculum in Entrepreneurship education is 42% while skills in entrepreneurship training is 42% and development of computer software education is 50%. This implies that there is need for improvement on current trends in LIS curriculum.

S/No	FACTORS FOR ITS RELEVANCE	Frequencies	percentages %
1	Creation of Business opportunities	8	67
2	Creates Job Opportunities to LIS graduates	9	75
3	Improves National GDP in terms of Employment	11	92
4	Boost Publishing capabilities by the LIS graduates	10	83
5	Information brokerage	8	67

6	services is enhanced Promotes LIS studies to broaden scope of intellectual activity	9	75
7	Facilitation and development of necessary competencies in entrepreneurship training in LIS.	8	67

Table 4: Relevance of Entrepreneurship education in LIS current trends

A four likert scale was used to determine the relevance of entrepreneurship education in LIS curriculum in Benue State; where Highly Relevant is rated 76%-100%, Relevant is rated 60%-75%, Fairly Relevant is rated 50% and Not Relevant is rate 49% below.

Table 4 revealed that relevance of Entrepreneurship inclusion would improve the National GDP in terms of employment by 92% and 83% suggest the relevance of entrepreneurship would boost publishing capabilities of the LIS graduates while 75% accorded relevance to Creation of Job Opportunities to the LIS graduates. This relevance could be attributed to the assertions on (Abubakar and Abbas 2014)

S/N	FACTORS	Frequencies	Percentage %
1	Poor funding to LIS Departments	11	92
2	Insecurity Threats in the region could delay NUC body visits	7	58
3	Lack of Workshops and Laboratories	6	50
4	Ignorance/Non-challant attitude of LIS undergraduates	6	50
5	Non- collaborative programme between practitioners and educators	10	83
6	Poor curriculum design, implementation and evaluation	8	67
7	Inadequate personnel skilled in Library Entrepreneurship	10	83

Table 5: Challenges against adopting Entrepreneurship Education in LIS

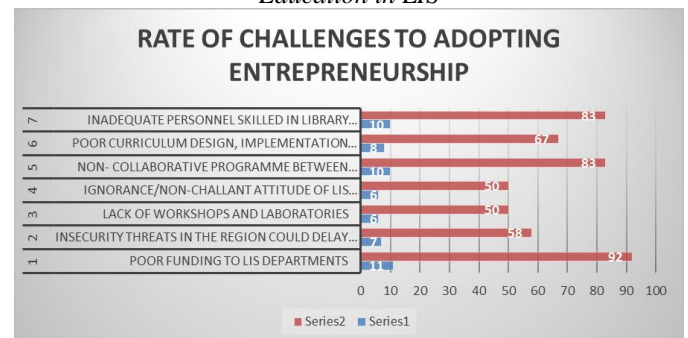


Figure 3

A four likert scale was used to determine challenges in adopting entrepreneurship education in LIS curriculum thus; Strongly Agree =80% -100%, Agree 60%-70%, Disagree and Strongly Disagree = 50% and below.

Table 5 revealed that 92% opined that poor funding to the LIS departments is a great challenge to entrepreneurship education, while 83% challenge rate is both in non-collaborative programme between practitioners/Librarians and educators as well as inadequate personnel skilled in Library entrepreneurship education.

V. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The result from the findings revealed that adequacy in LIS current trends curriculum in Entrepreneurship education is 42% while skills in entrepreneurship training is 42% and development of computer software education is 50%. This implies that there is absolute need for improvement on current trends in LIS curriculum. Results of the finding also revealed some relevant factors if entrepreneurship education is included in the LIS curriculum which includes; increase in National GDP in terms of employment by 92% and 83% suggest the relevance of entrepreneurship would boost publishing capabilities of the LIS graduates while 75% accorded relevance to Creation of Job Opportunities to the LIS graduates.

In the light of fore goings, the challenges posed to library and information science education in Benue State are hereby discussed: Findings revealed a number of factors militating against the inclusion of entrepreneurship education in the LIS curriculum which some of them include the following; Poor funding to the LIS departments, non-collaborative programme between practitioners/Librarians and educators, inadequate personnel skilled in Library entrepreneurship education, deprived curriculum design, implementation and evaluation, Insecurity Threats in the state in particular could delay National University Commission (NUC) body visits to screen and advice on the preparedness or need to include entrepreneurship and Lack of workshops and Laboratories to house entrepreneurship training skills is major factor militating against adopting entrepreneurship education.

VI. CONCLUSION

Entrepreneurship education in Library and information science will not deliver its relevance and dividends in the long run if pragmatic efforts are not made to ensure that entrepreneurship programme is practically oriented with full implementation to ensure added value to both Benue State and Nigeria in general. Information professionals are considered as pillars that support intellectual development, therefore their training should be well structured in the curriculum to provide man power development as well as enrich LIS graduates finances in terms of economic growth.

Government at all level has a role to provide basic infrastructures which are important for requisite facilities for example the laboratories and workshops which would enhance the teaching of entrepreneurship in LIS education.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- ✓ The inadequacies in entrepreneurship education and training of LIS students in the Universities should be adequately enforced by the NUC and University council so that graduates of LIS could fit into the changing society in terms of entrepreneurial skills acquisition for competencies.
- ✓ The LIS curriculum should be designed and constantly reviewed to capture emerging trends in other to meet global demands for information professional services.
- ✓ Provision of finances to implement educational policies as well as prompt attention in these policies would foster positive contribution of the LIS graduates to National Gross Domestic Product (GDP) as they contribute their quota to State Development.

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