

Entrepreneurship Skills Development of Library and Information Science Professionals in the 21st Century

Richard Iorver Tondo

Department of Midwifery
Benue State School of Midwifery
Makurdi, Nigeria
E-mail: tondorichard@gmail.com

Terlanga Ugba

Department of Midwifery
College of Education Katsina-Ala
Benue, Nigeria
Tel: 8065067151

Received: 20-Jan-2023, Manuscript No. IJLIS-23-87571; **Editor assigned:** 23-Jan-2022, PreQC No. IJLIS-23-87571 (PQ); **Reviewed:** 06-Feb-2022, QC No. IJLIS-23-87571; **Revised:** 20-April-2023, Manuscript No. IJLIS-23-87571 (R); **Published:** 28-April-2023, DOI: 10.35248/2231-4911.23.13.842

Abstract: *This article hinged on entrepreneurship skills development of library and information science professionals in the 21st century. Entrepreneurship is widely understood as the process of starting and owning a business that provides goods or services to people in exchange for money. A person who has created and owns a business is known as an entrepreneur. But some people believe entrepreneurship is more than just starting a business. It is a mind set, a way of thinking and acting. Entrepreneurship in this modern age involves thinking of new ways to solve problems and create value. An entrepreneurial spirit is said to be characterized by innovation and risk-taking. The development of entrepreneurship skills will be of great benefits to graduates of library and information science as it will help them to establish their own small and medium scale business after graduation. Entrepreneurship prepares library and information science graduates for self-employment and occupational field to create wealth. This chapter discusses benefits of entrepreneurship education to library and information science, entrepreneurship skills required by library and information graduates in an entrepreneurial environment, entrepreneurship opportunities for library and information science entrepreneurs and challenges hindering entrepreneurship skills development for library and information science graduate employability in the 21st century.*

Keywords: Stakeholders, Information science, Goods, Services, Entrepreneurship

Introduction

Library and information science is a discipline designed to produce information professionals that will completely serve different stakeholders for development. The graduates of library and information science need to be empowered through practical entrepreneurship skills. They ought to be given core entrepreneurship training in relation to library and information services so that upon graduation, they can become self-employed and self-reliant instead of depending wholly on paid jobs. That is to say, the potential graduates should be adequately trained in theory and practical knowledge of the profession as well as entrepreneurship skills so that upon graduation they will be self-employed.

Today, unemployment is one of the major economic problems in our contemporary society. Institutions of higher learning on yearly basis graduate millions of graduates who are pushed into the labour market without corresponding jobs. It is therefore, imperative for library and

information science graduates to acquire the necessary entrepreneurship skills that will help them fit in and remain relevant in this complex and changing society.

Entrepreneurship is very important in library and information science as it concerns library and information science graduates among the unemployed [1]. Entrepreneurship is not an easy task; it requires risk taking, dedication, innovation and creativity. Risk taking is a part of cooperate life, and one cannot do without it. There is the phobia that, the rate at which library schools are admitting students in the library and information science, by the time they graduate and go to the labour market, there may be problems if they do not know how to create and employ an entrepreneurial mindset [2].

Umunadi attests that, the world is witnessing a wave of entrepreneurship happening with millions of people seeking for self-employment and business ownership. Entrepreneurship is now a key driver of our economy because we are in an entrepreneurial age where entrepreneurs are driving a revolution that is transforming and renewing economics worldwide which library and information science profession is not exceptional.

Similarly, Oteh points out that, people are now willing to be innovative, creative, identify, establish and run their own venture, rather than waiting for the government alone to provide jobs for everybody. This shows that, entrepreneurship skills development is a catalyst for library and information science graduate employability as it improves quality, number and variety of job opportunities.

Mangla suggests that, library and information science programmes should be designed to equip students with, knowledge and techniques to handle the immediate job requirements in an efficient manner. However, curriculum planners should be able to offer broad based, flexible and diversified library and information science curriculum and training programmes that can suit manpower requirements in different sectors of economy. With this, Omekwu and Echezona observes that, library and information science schools must seek ways of providing their students with quality of skills to operate in the technological platforms within the framework of entrepreneurship [3,4].

Department of library and information science in Nigerian universities have also come up with library and information science related entrepreneurship courses [5]. The author further explained that, although the course descriptions of about 25 approved library and information science programmes in Nigerian universities indicates the entrepreneurship courses peculiar to the field are hardly offered presently, apart from the general course. Among the few library and information science departments offering entrepreneurship courses related to library and information science are those at the university of Ilorin, Ahmadu Bello university, Zaria, Babcock university, Ilesha and a few of them. According to Umerah, the university of Ilorin in library and information science programme offer LIS 402; entrepreneurship in information. In its justification for offering the course, the department stated that, it is intended to circumvent unemployment of librarians in the public and private sectors, thus, encouraging their graduates to be self-employed and create employment for others as well. This chapter therefore focused on entrepreneurship skills development and library and information science employability in the 21st century [6].

Objective

The objective of this pepper is to educate library and information science students and professionals on the:

- Benefits of entrepreneurship education to library and information science professionals.
- Entrepreneurship skills required by library and information graduates in an entrepreneurial environment in the 21st century.
- Entrepreneurship opportunities for library and information science entrepreneurs in the 21st century.

- Challenges hindering entrepreneurship skills development for library and information science graduate employability in the 21st century.

Literature Review

Conceptual clarification

Concept of entrepreneurship: Entrepreneurship is a word derived from the French word “entreprendre” which means to “undertake”. An entrepreneur can be defined as an innovating individual who has developed an ongoing business activity where none existed before [7]. Meredith cited in Arogundade, defined an entrepreneur as a person who possesses the ability to recognize and evaluate business opportunities, assemble the necessary resources to take advantage of them and take appropriate action to ensure success. Entrepreneurs are people who constantly discover new markets and try to figure out how to supply those markets efficiently and make profit. He is a person that searches for change, responds to change, and exploits change by converting change into business opportunity [8].

To Casson, an entrepreneur is someone who specializes in making judgmental decisions about the coordination of scarce resources. This means that, the entrepreneurs is an individual. Also, the term judgmental implies that, the decision cannot be simply a routine application for a standard rule because the perception of opportunities is subjective, while opportunities are objectives [9].

Entrepreneurship is therefore, defined as the activity that involves the discovery, evaluation and exploitation of opportunities within the framework of an individual opportunity nexus [10]. Entrepreneurship is also defined as the activities and processes undertaken to discover, define, and exploit opportunities in order to enhance wealth by creating new ventures in an innovative manner. The key concepts of entrepreneurship are innovation, market orientation and system change.

There are two types of entrepreneurship *viz*: Necessity entrepreneurship and opportunities entrepreneurship. Aces distinguish the two types of entrepreneurship. According to the author, “necessity entrepreneurship”, has to become an entrepreneur because you have no better option, while opportunity entrepreneurship is an active choice to start a new enterprise based on the perception that an unexploited or under exploited business opportunity exists. The author went on to explain that, necessity entrepreneurship has no effect on economic development while opportunity entrepreneurship has a positive and significant effect on economy. Since discovery, evaluation and exploitation of opportunities is central to entrepreneurship, understanding why, when and how opportunities come into existence is very important.

Concept of library and information science

Library and information science is the academic and professional study of how information and information carriers are produced, selected, acquired, organized, evaluated, managed and disseminated. Library and information profession serves the information needs of a democratic, progressive technologically sophisticated and culturally diverse society. A key focus of the profession is enabling people to connect with the world of information, interacting with and utilizing information in all aspects of their lives. The profession fosters lifelong learning, personal fulfillment, improved decision making, knowledge development, innovation, imagination, creativity and cultural continuity [11]. People who work in the profession have specialized knowledge and skills of producing, selecting, acquiring, organizing, evaluating, managing and disseminating information resources and services.

Concept of employability

Employability can be defined as a set of achievement, skills, understanding and personal attributes that make graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy. It also enables students to acquire the knowledge, personal and professional skills and encourage the attitudes that will support their future development and employment.

According to Knight, the term employability refers to capability of getting and keeping satisfactory work, getting work from somebody for pay or state of being employed. More comprehensively, employability is the capability to move self-sufficiently within the market to realize potential through sustainable employment. In simple terms, employability is about being capable of getting and keeping fulfilling work.

Employability of an individual depends on the knowledge, skills and abilities they possess. Library and information science students should be aware of competencies and skills required for getting a job. The major competency and skills required by library and information science student for getting a job upon graduation in this information age is entrepreneurship skills development which guarantee self-employment [12].

Benefits of entrepreneurship education to library and information science: The role of entrepreneurship in library and information science is very essential such that entrepreneurship can be defined as solving problems in library and information science profession using entrepreneurship skills, skill acquisition, self-employment, marketing of library and information science products and many more. Entrepreneurship skills development would be of great benefits to graduates of library and information science in the following ways:

- Entrepreneurship empowers library and information science graduates to create job for themselves and be self-employed as well as self-reliant.
- Entrepreneurship equip library and information science graduates with diversified knowledge and creative abilities to initiate, establish and run business that will contribute to national development [13].
- Entrepreneurship provide library and information science graduates with additional skills that empowered them to transform their ideas into visible ventures.
- Entrepreneurship promotes innovation by introducing new products and services as well as market strategies to library and information science graduates to become outstanding entrepreneur [14].
- Entrepreneurship is an effective method of bridging the gap between science and the market place creating new enterprise [15].
- It helps to develop innovative skills in potential librarians and information scientists.
- Entrepreneurship prepares library and information science graduates with the necessary skills to create and successfully operate business ventures.
- Entrepreneurship reposition library and information science graduates so that they can succeed and remain relevant in this entrepreneurial economy.

Entrepreneurship skills are simply business skills which an individual acquires for him to function effectively in the turbulent business as an entrepreneur or a self-reliant.

Entrepreneurship Skills required by Library and Information Science Graduates in an Entrepreneurial Environment in the 21st Century

Various skills are required to be merged and used for successful entrepreneurial ventures. In order to identify these desirable skills, it is necessary to group them into different categories required to demonstrate these skills in variety of students. Igbo cited in Umunadi identified four major categories of competencies or skills needed for success in entrepreneurship.

- **Managerial skills:** These include ability to communicate effectively using oral and written skills, knowledge and method of conducting effective meetings, ability to do long and short term planning, knowledge of factors involved in overhead control, knowledge of inventory control and turnover, acquisition of management and supervisory skills, ability to manage time and meet job schedule, good human relationship, knowledge of need for employee growth and development, ability to determine personal salary.
- **Accounting and financial skills:** These are knowledge of account, knowledge of costing, ability to interpret financial statements, ability to understand payroll and various deductions, ability to know gross and net profit, ability to know source of funds; ability to know how to obtain loans, knowledge of factors involved in decision to grant loan by financial houses, knowledge of business laws, knowledge of safety rules involved in own types of business, awareness of existence and use of professionals like lawyers, bankers, advert using agents etc. Knowledge of the use of insurance, knowledge of total business or industry being entered, awareness of manufacturing and production method; knowledge of importance of space, traffic flow, site of business, parking lot and convenience.
- **Marketing and sales skills:** These include knowledge of seasonal fluctuation of goods, ability to determine the effect to which products will sell, familiarity with various aspects of sales and salesmanship, ability to budget and forecast, ability to determine current and future trends in sales of products, knowledge of how to determine availability of good materials for production and storage of finished goods; ability to determine and interpret factors which indicate extent and strength of competition; ability to determine what customer need, knowledge of advertising.
- **General business skills:** These skills according to Umunadi include:
 - Knowledge of typing/ownership of business (sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, etc.,)
 - Understanding basic steps involved in starting a business.
 - Awareness of facilities available for supplying information on starting small business (governmental agencies, trade association resource).
 - Familiarization with purchasing of fixtures, equipment and furnishing.
 - Ability to assess facilities and equipment required.
 - Knowledge of building and space utilization.
 - Ability to judge performance of employees.
 - Ability to find out source of capital to start business.
 - Knowledge of how to determine employee wages and allowance.
 - Know-how to hire and fire employees.

Hisrich (2002) also listed the following skills required in entrepreneurship:

- **Technical skills:** Writing, oral communication, monitoring environment, technology business management, technology, interpersonal, listening, ability to organize, network building, management style, coaching, being a team player.
- **Business management skills:** Planning and goal setting, human relations, marketing, finance, accounting, management, control, negotiation, venture, managing growth.
- **Personal entrepreneurship skills:** These include inner control/discipline, research (to find relevant information), risk taking, innovative, charge oriented, persistent, visionary leader, ability to manage change.

Umerah stated that library and information science students need to acquire skills and experience in the aspect of entrepreneurship. Those skills according to the author include:

- **Information technology skills:** These include networking, library automation and digitalization, web based services, database creation and management systems, content

development, desktop publishing, internet, presentation, reprography, micrographs, facsimile, video text, tele text, hardware and software skills, and rational databases including the ability to create data structures which facilitates the indexing and retrieval of information. Other skills include, network administration, efficient use of search engines, use of social media tools such as blogs, Facebook, twitter, etc., to provide information services, web cast and search skills.

- **Information literacy skills:** This is the ability to recognize when information is needed and locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information. Also, included here is the marketing of information products and services, information resource management, information processing and organization, video conferencing, multimedia and e-mail.
- **Knowledge management skills:** This is required for managing organizational knowledge to solve the organizational problems.

Entrepreneurship opportunity for library and information science entrepreneurs in the 21st Century

- **Information brokerage:** This involves supply information to users for a fee. In this information age businesses, individuals, and commercial organizations have become conscious of information as a resource. Therefore, the services of information brokers are employed for faster response to their information needs. An information broker is an individual who searches for information for clients by using various resources such as online and offline. An information broker is thus an information consultant who provides professional information for a fee. An information broker must know when information is needed, be able to formulate an effective search strategy in a variety of sources. He should be able to critically evaluate content, its accuracy and source and thereafter effectively use information to meet the client's goals. This implies that, library and information entrepreneurs should have the skills to generate, or create information, organized or classify and summarize information in a way that it can be accessible to users for a free.
- **Publishing:** This is the process of producing books, films, computer programs, records, newspapers, magazines, discs, bulletins and periodicals, etc., for dissemination, reading, studying, searching and entertainment/relaxation. The publisher assumes the responsibility for the issuance of a book to the public. The publisher is different from a printer and the binder who manufactures. The publisher maintains the stock of copies and handles sales to wholesaler and retailer bookstore as well as individual purchases. The publishing sector is a viable option for library and information science entrepreneurs. Library and information science graduates will be better disposed to undertake ventures in publishing because of the professional training they received on book production and publishing.
- **Production and sale of library equipment:** Production of library equipment is another option available to graduate of library and information science. Graduates of library and information science can involve in the production and sale of equipment that is used in library and information centers. Such equipment includes, catalogue cards, catalogue cabinet's book stand to mention but a few.
- **Book selling business:** Library and information science graduates can involve themselves in book selling business. With their professional knowledge, library and information science graduates are better disposed to serve the various libraries by supplying books to them and as well liaise with the management of tertiary institution to sell books to their students.
- **Indexing and abstracting:** This is another area that can attract entrepreneurship. For example, book indexing and abstracting.
- **Compilation of bibliographies:** This is another area where library and information

graduates can make impact through entrepreneurship.

Discussion

Challenges hindering entrepreneurship skills development for library and information science graduate employability in the 21st century

A lot of scholars have identified challenges hindering entrepreneurship skills development for library and information science graduates. Horstall identified lack of capital, bad business decision, economic crises, poor market demand, technology/ICT skills requirements, lack of managerial functions and knowledge/ entrepreneurial mindset and poor education and training as challenges associated with entrepreneurship for library and information science graduates. Other scholars such as Umerah identified non-challant attitudes of students, lack of functional workshops and laboratories, and unavailability of funds as challenges of entrepreneurship in library and information science in Nigeria.

The following are challenges hindering entrepreneurship skills development for library and information science graduates in the 21st century.

- **Lack of ICT skills:** In this digital age, where virtually every aspect of human endeavour is ICT driven, it goes to mean that lack of ICT skills is a limiting factor to effective development of entrepreneurship skills by library and information science graduates. The practical approach to entrepreneurial opportunities is not possible without basic ICT skills.
- Non-inclusion of entrepreneurship course related to library and information science in library and information science curriculum. Umunadi asserted that, the government in 2006 directed that entrepreneurship education be incorporated as a mandatory component of all programmes run in Nigeria institutions. The aim of this according to the author is to produce crops of graduate with appropriate entrepreneurial skills and attitude for creativity, innovation and enterprise. However, the only entrepreneurship education received by library and information science students in library schools is that which is been taught at general studies. This means that, entrepreneurship education is not incorporated in library and information science curriculum. The one taught as general studies is not related to library and information science. This hinders the development of entrepreneurship skills by library and information graduates.
- **Lack of lecturers that are entrepreneurial conscious:** Most lecturers in library schools are not entrepreneurial conscious. This according to the author affects their mode of teaching. This apparently affects the overall objective of entrepreneurship education.
- **Lack of funds:** Behind any successful project is availability of funds for entrepreneurship education to be fully incorporated into the library and information science curriculum and achieve its objective, fund ought to be available. If there is no fund, how will the library schools manufacture the necessary equipment needed to impact the right skill to students?
- Lack of functional workshops and laboratories. Most of the Nigerian library schools lack functional workshops and laboratories. According to Umerah a visit to those laboratories will reveal that Nigerian library schools lack the standing focus to teach entrepreneurship. In actual sense the available workshops cannot empower effective teaching.

Conclusion

Entrepreneurship skills development plays a vital role in library and information science

graduate employability and supports economic development. Library and information science as a discipline should ensure full incorporation of entrepreneurship skills development in the training of library and information science practitioners both in theory and practical. If this is done, library and information science graduates with apply the acquired entrepreneurship skills in library and information science practices as such a new breed of library and information science professionals will emerge. This will affect the society in a way that poverty, unemployment and underemployment in the field of library and information science will be no more.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made:

- Acquisition of ICT skills by library and information science professionals.
- The library and information science curriculum in Nigerian library schools should be reviewed to ensure that entrepreneurship education courses are incorporated into the programme. And the teaching of entrepreneurship courses to library and information science should be handled in the department of library and information science. This will enhance the customization of the programme to reflect the specific needs of library and information science.
- Innovative training and re-training in entrepreneurship among library and information science educators to meet students need.
- Provision of funds by the various stakeholders in our educational system for acquisition of relevant equipment as well as training of lecturers.
- Upgrading of workshops and laboratories in library schools.

References

1. Acs, Z. "How is entrepreneurship good for economic growth?." *Innovations*, Winter (2006): 97-107.
2. Amoor, S., S. "Integrating entrepreneurship education into business education curriculum in Nigeria universities." *Zaria Journal of Liberal Arts* 2.2 (2008): 1-12.
3. Arogundade, B, B. "Entrepreneurship education: An imperative for sustainable development." *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies* (2011).
4. Casson, M. "Entrepreneurship, business culture and the theory of the firm." *Handbook of entrepreneurship research: An interdisciplinary survey and introduction*. 5 (2010): 249-271.
5. Hisrich, R, D. "Entrepreneurship." Irwin/McGraw-Hill. Pennsylvania State University. (2002): 681.
6. Horstall, M, N. "Entrepreneurship and wealth creation as the game changer for unemployed graduates of library and information science in contemporary era." *Compendium of papers presented at the 1st international conference and home coming of the department of library and information, University of Nigeria, Nsukka*. (2017).

7. Iorfa, T., Tondo, R, I., and Kabir, I. “Library and information science graduate employability.” A paper presented at the national conference of faculty of education, Federal University Dutsin-ma, Katsina State, Nigeria. (2019): 29-30.
8. Jegbefume, C, M., and Ikhimeakhu, D, S. “Library and information science for entrepreneurship and wealth creation.” Compendium of papers presented at the 1st international conference and home coming of the department of library and information, university of Nigeria, Nsukka. (2017): 14-24.
9. Knight, J. “The contemporary library and information services manager: Skills and knowledge requirements.” *Business Information Review* 26.1 (2009): 51-56.
10. Mangla, P, B. “Contents and courses at the post graduate level.” *Journal of Library and Information Science* 4.1 (2002): 100-112.
11. Njoku, O, C. “The state of implementation of handicraft component of the Nigerian Primary Education Curriculum: Implication for entrepreneurial skills development and job creation.” *International Journal of Education Research* 13.1 (2014): 35-46.
12. Okafor, V, N., et al. “Entrepreneurial librarianship: The need of information brokerage in Nigeria.” Compendium of papers presented at the 1st International conference and home coming of the department of library and information, university of Nigeria, Nsukka. (2017).
13. Omekwu, C, O., and Echezona, I, R. “Emerging challenges and opportunities for Nigerian libraries in a global information environment.” *Library review* 58.7 (2009): 482-492.
14. Umerah, P, I. “Recreating library and information science for entrepreneurship and wealth creation.” Compendium of papers presented at the 1st international conference and home coming of the department of library and information, university of Nigeria, Nsukka (2017): 37-46.
15. Umunadi, E, K. “Acquisition of entrepreneurial and technical education skills for global competitiveness and job creation.” *International Journal of Educational Research* 13.1 (2014): 128-144.