

Entrepreneurship in Library and Information Technology for Self Reliance

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Abstract

This paper examined the concept of entrepreneurship as the person who assumes the responsibility in risk taking for business venture or undertaking with the ultimate aim of making profit, and remain independent of his own. Entrepreneurship has been found and accepted worldwide as indispensable driver of skill, knowledge propeller and capacity driven when possessed, drives away poverty from the possessor – individual, family or nations worldwide. Thus entrepreneur is a self-reliant, successful business-man or woman in his chosen field of business, trade, or venture undertaking. It is the backbone spirit and zeal of any great and developed nations like China, United States (US), and Japan to mention a few. This study further sees entrepreneurs as job-creators or providers, initiators of successful business men and women worldwide. Entrepreneurs channel their natural energies, talents, zeal and gifts towards the production of goods and services for exchange of monetary reward. The study therefore, concludes by stressing and recommending full adaptation and inclusion of entrepreneurial subjects into library and information technology curriculum for the training and education of upcoming graduates of the Federal Technology, Minna, as a right step in the right direction, and compliance to the National Universities Commission (NUC) mandate and clarion call.

Introduction

The present information ruling age, according to Bygrave (2003) is an entrepreneurial revolution and driving force age for mobilization of economic and social transformation worldwide. In other words, entrepreneurship is ongoing key driver of many economies worldwide including of course Nigerian economy as this concept is stressed through Nigerian universities. Entrepreneurship as noted by Inegbenebor (2005) in the last three decades has emerged as an area of study by economists, sociologists, anthropologists and management scientists and has developed worldwide as an academic discipline. Entrepreneurship is indispensable for economic and social development of Nigerian (Ojukwu, 1999).

The term entrepreneurship originates from the word “entrepreneur”. According to Encarta (2009) an entrepreneur is one who assumes the responsibility and the risk for a business operation with the expectation of making a profit. The entrepreneur generally decides on the product, acquires the facilities, and brings together the labor force, capital, and production materials. Investopedia also defines an entrepreneur as an individual who, rather than working as an employee, runs a small business and assumes all the risk and reward of a given business venture, idea, or goods or service(s) offered for sale. The entrepreneur is commonly seen as a business leader and innovator of new ideas and business processes. Meredith (1983) added that an entrepreneur as a person(s) 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.

Qualities and Skills for Entrepreneurial Success

Some of the qualities as advocated below by Fijo and Obi (2012), success is sure; an entrepreneur ought to be;

- Committed, determined and persevering.
- Confident, vision driven.
- Creative and innovative
- Willing to work hard

- Able to handle responsibilities
- Goal-oriented and self-confident
- Action-oriented and good leader.
- Problem solver and self-reliant
- Willing to take calculated risk
- Realist and quick learner.
- Open to feedback. Etc.

The term entrepreneurship can be approached from different angles and by various authorities but one common denominator in all these explanations is that they all revolve around business, job creation/self-reliance, productivity and development. Okeke (2007) views entrepreneurship as the ownership and management of a private business and the bedrock of small scale business oriented towards the production of goods and services to satisfy the needs and wants of consumers. Dawodu (2005) observed that entrepreneurship enhances economic development, creates job opportunities, transforms traditional industries, and stimulates investment opportunities and increase per capital income and output respectively.

Hisrich and Peters (2002) opines entrepreneurship as the process of creating something new of value by devoting the necessary time and effort, assuming the accompanying financial, psychic and social risks, and receiving the resulting rewards of monetary and personal satisfaction and independence. Entrepreneurship according to Eke, Igwesi and Orji (2011) is a programme that inculcates creative, innovative, productive and managerial skills needed in business enterprises for self-reliance and national development. Entrepreneurship therefore is a crucial ingredient towards economic growth and job creation (Marshall and Samuel, 2006).

Self-Reliance

“One of the reasons for America's founding and continuous success was that her people were dedicated to self-reliance” - Roy Posner. A person, who is self-reliant, is one who is self-employed, because self-employment is one of the major keys to working out of poverty. Self-reliance simply means reliance on one's own efforts and abilities (Merriam, 2006). Further, Igweh (2008) stressed that if somebody acquires skills in any occupation, such person can establish his or her own business and even employ others; such person according to him is self-reliant. Therefore, Igweh (2008) emphasized that self-reliance, “leads ultimately to national development”.

Bassey (2009), in his opinion declared, self-reliance as that which pre-supposes the attainment and autonomy without unnecessarily resorting to begging or borrowing. He emphasized that, “a self-reliant individual is one that achieves steady supply of his needs, one that diversifies his resources to reduce dependency on others for assistance” Thus, self-reliance sparks growth and development in the life of a citizen, politically, socially and economically (Nwogu and Nwanoruo, 2011).

Causes of Unemployment among Graduates

Self-reliance would not have to come into play if there are enough jobs or employment for every individual; this is why it is necessary to briefly state reasons for unemployment among graduates. Nnadozie, Akanwa and Nnadozie (2013) had this to say about unemployment. “Many reasons have been advanced to explain the rising level of unemployment amongst graduates, in general and Nigerian library professionals and cutting across many professions. One is the quality of practical and theoretical training to which these employees-to-be were exposed.

This is exacerbated by the global economic melt-down which has constrained the ability of the public (government) and private sectors to employ and retain librarians and other categories of library workers. Experts have also hinted at a possible mismatch between the type of education

received in Nigeria's tertiary institutions and the actual needs of industries and other employers of labour, (Obisesan, 2010 and Ekere and Ekere, 2012). The third and perhaps, most poignant factor is the general orthodox orientation of Nigerian graduates, including library professionals, to depend on paid employment upon graduation rather than use their training and exposure to create jobs and allied economically-viable businesses”.

Compelling Reasons for Repositioning Library and Information Graduates for Self-Employment

Is entrepreneurship really important? If yes, why is it? According to Anyanwu, Oduagwu, Ossai-Onah and Amaechi (2013), the following were stated as the rationale for repositioning library and information science graduates through entrepreneurship education.

Entrepreneurship education will provide library and Information science graduates the additional skills that will empower them to transform their ideas into visible business.

It will empower the graduates to create jobs for themselves.

Entrepreneurship education according to Amoor (2008) when integrated into the curriculum of Nigerian universities will create a motivation into the students to dream big dreams of business ownership and work hard to make things happen.

Entrepreneurship and small business has been acknowledged as a fundamental component of economic growth and health (Plumly et al, 2008).

Since Nigeria is driving towards entrepreneurial economy, library and information science graduates need to be repositioned through entrepreneurship education for them to succeed.

Many have this erroneous assumption that a graduate of library and information technology ends up in the four walls of a library and no place elsewhere because such people they think that the knowledge graduates possess can only be effectively utilized within the library. It is worthy to note that entrepreneurial skills are taught to students of library and information technology to equip them, sharpen their intellect, embolden their skill such they can compete in the world of work outside a library.

Richen and Salagrik (2003) noted that entrepreneurial skills are acquired through training that emphasizes the acquisition and development of appropriate knowledge and skills that will enable an individual to maximize the resources and opportunities around him within the limits of his capacity.

Importance of Entrepreneurship and Self-reliance

Jimoh (2010) also opined that the importance and benefits of being self-reliant through entrepreneurship can never be over-emphasized. Since entrepreneurship is the backbone of any great and developed nation today, such nations like China, United States, and Japan etc, are good model examples which we can borrow a lift from. Hence, the importance and benefits of being self-reliant through entrepreneurship can further be summarized as follows:

You are responsible for your own success and you can determine what that success will be

The sky is not the limit of an entrepreneur but his stepping-stone.

The satisfaction of achieving a goal for your personal benefit

You are the “Boss” of yourself

You are able to control your own destiny as you have self-esteem, respect and self-confidence.

It encourages risk taking and learning from failure, learn to identify and recognize useful opportunities.

It helps in writing business plan in applying economic principles and basic marketing skills for proper idea generation in assessing feasible idea and manages risk

Creating of employment opportunities for others, thereby contributing positively to the

growth and development of your society.

Total freedom to choice and enjoy the wishes of your heart.

There is sense of security and happiness that you will be doing what you created and you do not have limits unless you limit yourself.

There is a personal sense of satisfaction, accomplishment and fulfillment.

It is an open-ended opportunities and challenges you get out of it what you put into it. If you put a lot in, you get a lot out.

Demonstration of proper skills in setting up a business and the skills of maintaining the longevity of the business.

Ways by which a person can become self-reliant through entrepreneurship

Jimoh (2010) in an article mentioned a few but general ways by which an individual can be self-reliant through entrepreneurship. They are as follows:

Develop the spirit of wealth creation and self-employment: Wealth and joy lies in self-employment, not on salaried jobs e.g. in India the talents have gravitated to the security of salaried jobs in the government where the present as well as the future is secured.

Risk-taking: people take note of a rising star when his coffers are receiving cascades of fortune. Common prudence sees that the continuous RISKS he takes make him a notable. A man risks has all-may be a small fortune-and success and comes by a few crores should he desire to rise, life at every step demands his risk all at the moment.

Translating of dream and vision into reality: An entrepreneur person is a dreamer who accomplishes his dream through creating, organization and production of idea

Asinclusive in capacities and skills when you have to earn for yourself, you become part of the social existence that can support an income.

Proper utilization of every difficult situation: A trial or hard circumstances around man is always a period of exploring and discovering human hiding potentials

Developing and creating of school-to-work strategy: This is a strong strategy for allowing young people and students to have practical work experience before students graduate from school. Such strategy as the establishment of school plant, farm, shops and other vocational training or activities

Skills necessary for entrepreneurial venture

Entrepreneurial skills and attributes provide benefits to society, even beyond their application to business activity. Obviously, personal qualities that are relevant to entrepreneurship such as creativity and a spirit of initiative can be useful to everyone in their working responsibilities and in their day-to-day existence. Also the relevant technical and business skills need to be provided to those who choose to be self-employed and or to start their own venture or might do so in the future. – Ojeifo (2013).

The Encarta dictionary (2009), defines skill as ability to do something well or something requiring training to do well: something that requires training and experience to do well, e.g. an art or trade. "Skills are abilities or proficiencies required of a person in a position to plan and execute an action geared at accomplishing some tasks or achieving some goals. Skills are the learned capacity to carry out predetermined tasks with the minimum outlay of time and energy" – Ugwu and Ezeani (2012).

According to Ugwu and Ezeani (2012), information technology and management have become synonymous with librarians and information professionals. For them to key into the dynamism of change, they must 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. They went further to highlight some of the skills which are relevant to library and information profession.

Professional Skills include:

Information technology skills : These include networking, library automation and digitization, web based services, reprography, micrographs, facsimile, video text, teletext, database creation and management systems including CDS,ISIS,LIBSYS, content development, desktop publishing, intranet, presentation, hardware/software skills and relational databases including the ability to create data structures which facilitate the indexing and retrieval of information and thesaurus development. Farkas (2006) noted some specific technical skills like HMTL, network administration, PHP and MYSQL, efficient use of search engines, use of blogs to provide services, web cast and search skills.

Information literacy skills: Information literacy skill is the skill, know-how and ability which learner, student or researcher possess to locate information efficiently and effectively, evaluate information critically and competently and using information accurately and creatively to solve a problem or task before him or he. Also included here is the economics and marketing of information products and services, information resource management, information processing and organizing, e-mail, multimedia perspectives and video conferencing. Information literacy forms the basis for lifelong learning and enables learners to master content and extend their investigations to become more self-directed, thereby assuming greater control over their own learning.

Other Skills include:

Managerial skills: These are the business management skills such as marketing, financing, accounting, control, planning and goal setting, decision making, human relations and managing growth. They are essential in launching and growing a new venture. Embedded here is also the knowledge of records management principles and electronic book keeping.

Personal entrepreneurial skills: These include inner control/discipline, risk taking, innovativeness, change orientation and ability to manage change, persistence, and visionary leadership.

Technical skills: Written and oral communication, interpersonal, monitoring environment, the ability to organize, and network building. These skills form the basis of the modular approach to an entrepreneurship curriculum. Farkas (2006) noted that by laying out the modules, a course or sequence of courses can be developed depending on the needs, interests, and resources of the particular department. This approach will help to ensure that the most important areas of the field are covered in the courses offered.

Self-Employment Opportunities Available to Library and Information Science Graduates in Nigeria

The diversity nature of the field of study, library and information science presents its graduates with various prospects within the subject field and other areas, a few of these opportunities are stated below as highlighted by Anyanwu (2013) and they are as follows:

Publishing: The publishing sector is a viable option for library and information science graduates. With proper entrepreneurship education, the graduates of library and information will be better disposed to undertake ventures in publishing.

Development of Computer Software: Graduates of library and information science can take the option of developing computer software that will be used specifically for specific tasks in libraries and information centres.

Production and Sale of Library Equipment's: Production of library equipment is another option available to students of library and information science. Graduates in library

science can be involved in the production audio visual equipment, catalogue cards, metal shelf, bookstands e.t.c use in library and information centres Information Brokerage and Consultancy Services: Graduates in library and information science can be involved in information brokerage and consultancy service whereby they will be re-packaging information for clients for a fee.

Book selling Business: Graduates in library and information science can be involved in book selling business. With the knowledge of librarianship they are better disposed to serve the various libraries by supplying books to them and as well liaise with management of tertiary institution to sell books to their students.

Operation of Business Centres and Cyber Café Business: Graduates of library science can take the option of running a business centre where computer related activities such as typesetting, computer training, graphic designs and photocopying services amongst others can be carried out. The option of running a cyber café business is also available to him.

Computer Maintenance: This is another option available to graduates in library science. Knowledge of computer maintenance puts the graduate in a position to be self-employed. Nnadozie, Akanwa, and Nnadozie (2013) stated that a lot of career opportunities abound for the qualified and versatile library and information science professional at all levels within the library profession. Some of these traditional library positions include acquisitions librarian, abstractor, circulation librarian, serials librarian, reference librarian, indexer, classifier, curator, archivist, and book selling/publishing (Edoka, 1991 and Anyanwu, Amadi and Oparaku, 2010)..

Other Career options include;

- Teaching/lecturing
- Printing and/or publishing
- Book selling/vending
- Freelance writing
- Librarianship

Challenges of Entrepreneurship and Job Creation in Nigeria

Some of the challenges have been pointed out by eminent scholars such as Gana (2000), Aiyeduso (2004), Osuala (2010) and they include:

Poor funding by government and non-governmental organizations.

Poor or ineffective planning, supervision information and evaluation of the programme across the board.

Inadequate teaching materials, equipment and infrastructure facilities.

The challenges posed on globalization, information and communication technology (ICT) have effect on curriculum, methodology, facilities, staff and equipment.

Inadequate qualified teachers and instructors as well as supporting staff at all level.

Inadequate motivation for available teaching and non-teaching staff which affects staff efficiency, retention, creativity and initiative.

Emphasis on theoretical Knowledge rather than practical knowledge due to lack of entrepreneurship education centre.

High level of corruption and very poor maintenance culture in the system.

Poor enabling business environment, access to credit/ loan, infrastructural decay, mass poverty, inflation, technological infraction, political instability and insecurity of lives and properties which hamper economic and business activities.

Strategies for Effective Entrepreneurship and Job Creation in Nigeria

The following strategies according to Ayodele (2006) will help to solve the problem of entrepreneurship education in the country.

There should be some form of genuine school- work based learning incorporated in some

studies as part of the national economic development strategies. This implies enriching the curriculum to incorporate more vocational and technical training. The development of apprenticeship scheme would give new graduates some work skills and experiences.

There should be School-based enterprises where students identify potential business, plan, create and operate small business by using the school as mini incubators.

Government should establish small business schools where interested students and community members can participate. This will make students to be self-reliant.

Government should develop entrepreneur internship programme by matching students with locally successful entrepreneurs with clearly established education programmes.

The Government should establish an enterprise college aimed at fostering the specific skills required for entrepreneurship. This will serve as skill acquisition centre for the youths.

Government should create an economic friendly environment. This centres on reduction of taxes on small scale businesses.

There should be enough incentives for students of vocational and technical schools. This will motivate them to establish their businesses after school.

Conclusion

The study concludes that entrepreneurial subjects and skills should be included in the study of Library and Information Technology (LIT) Career in Federal University of Technology, Minna in particular and similarly in other courses in other Nigerian Universities system generally. This is the right step in the right direction, above all compliance to National Universities Commission (NUC) mandate. This will reverse the ever job seeking pattern after graduation to job creators / providers in the immediate future and drive away poverty in our midst.

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