

# Productivity, Profitability and Entrepreneurial Skills Needed in Setting Up and Maintaining Library and Information Science Firms: A Study of Abuja, Nigeria.

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## **Abstract**

The study examined productivity, profitability and entrepreneurial skills as fundamental requirements in setting up and maintaining library and information firms in Abuja, Nigeria. The research design used for the study is survey. Purposive (judgmental) random sampling technique was used to select the sampled respondents through unequal quota system across five (5) different Municipal Area Councils of Federal Capital Territory (FCT) namely: Kubwa, Gwagwalada, Dutse, Mpape and Bwari. A self constructed instrument tagged Productivity, Profitability and Entrepreneurial Skills (PPES) which was validated at  $r=0.88$  was administered to 100 respondents in the sampled Municipal Area Councils. A non-parametric statistical T-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used to analyse the collected data which were presented in form of tables, percentages and frequency counts. Out of the 100 copies of the instrument administered 86 were retrieved and used for the analysis. The findings of the study revealed the following amongst others. An array of entrepreneurial activities that productive librarians and information science professionals could engage in; a plethora of entrepreneurial skills and the problems that constitute stumbling blocks to successful entrepreneurial activities were presented. It is recommended that the curriculum of library schools in Nigeria should be reviewed for maximum employability; and that the government at all levels in Nigeria should provide enabling environment for entrepreneurial activities to thrive.

## **Introduction**

Productivity put succinctly is a state of excellence in a given undertaking. It is doing something original and different from others.

It implies doing a particular task better than others. It is a kind of commitment where an individual or a group of individuals devotes all their talent, time, energy, resources and where withal to ensuring that a given assignment produces the best result compared with what others are doing or have done. It is simply a state of fruitfulness and fulfilment. Librarians and Information Science professionals that are productive in this age of dwindling job prospects would definitely be profitable. The reason is that profitable librarians and information science professionals would under normal circumstances be gainfully employed, while others go about searching for non-existing jobs, productive librarians and information science professionals who are loaded with creative and innovative ideas would be making choices among plethora of job opportunities that are opened before them (Babalola, 2014; Babalola & Abifarin, 2014). The global economic recession of the 21st century is characterised by: dwindling job prospects (Eke, Igwesi & Orji, 2011), and cut in budget, amongst other things and it is only forward looking, productive, profitable, creative, imaginative and innovative library and information science professionals that would experience accelerated breakthrough economically and professionally than becoming job seekers.

Productive and creative library and information science professionals would become job providers and job selectors. Rather than becoming liabilities, they would become assets anywhere and anytime. No information organisation would be willing to employ mediocre. Creative, imaginative and productive library and information science professionals are needed everywhere for optimum productivity and profitability. In other words, librarians and information science professionals that are productive, would be profitable. Profitability would engender their continual employability either in their own businesses or in the businesses of others. Hardworking, committed, dedicated, skillful, creative, productive, profitable and entrepreneurial minded library and information science professionals would not be scrambling for non-existing jobs. Rather, job opportunities and privileges would definitely run after

them. Magari (2014) viewed economic growth and enhanced productivity as a means to create employment, thereby reducing poverty. Entrepreneurial mindedness, productivity and creativity are precursors to job creation and economic emancipation.

Entrepreneurship education is the process of inculcating the knowledge of creating value by pooling together a unique package of resources to exploit an opportunity (Anyanwu, Oyenike, & Ossai-Onah, 2012). It is crucial for Library and Information Science (LIS) schools in Nigeria to incorporate entrepreneurship into the curriculum so that undergraduates would be equipped with adequate skills for self employment opportunities with high level of productivity and efficiency (Anyanwu, Idegho & Ainabor, 2011; Oyenike & Ossai-Onah, 2012; Ejiogu & Nwajiuba, 2012; Ansari, 2014). The LIS students would require entrepreneurial skills for proper marketing of information resources and services (Musa, Gana, & Mohammad, 2014).

A gory picture of the poverty situation across the globe and especially as it affects the developing nations is given by the reports of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2013 that:

- There has been progress made towards meeting target set for 2015;
- Poverty rate has been halved globally;
- Over 60% of ordinary workers in developing countries still live on US \$4 per day; and in sub-Sahara, 27% of people are under-nourished.

The way out of the quagmire of poverty and penury across the globe especially in developing nations is productivity which would definitely translate into profitability and employability. A productive librarian would be creative and innovative. Magari (2014) described innovation and entrepreneurship as the core of initiatives and efforts to build sustainable economic growth. Innovation entails translating ideas and thoughts into tangible resources that can generate values.

He observed further that entrepreneurship is a function of innovation in the sense that a thought or idea is converted into a commodity which can be sold to generate revenue.

Creativity and innovativeness are the universal marks of entrepreneurship. Creativity is the thinking process involved in producing an idea or a concept that is new, original, useful and satisfying to its creator or to someone else. (Reu & Byers, 2003; Rogers, 2003; Chukwu, Gana & Mohammed, 2014; Oboh, Umeh & Gana, 2014;). While taking a cursory look at entrepreneurship, productivity, creativity and innovation in another way, Ekoja (2014) remarked that entrepreneurial skills, know-how, attitudes, etcetera are therefore of immense benefits to all societies because apart from learning how to set up businesses, people engender creativity and the spirit of initiative among other qualities in beneficiaries. Ezema (2003) earlier toed the above line of reasoning.

The major problem facing the Nigerian graduating youths of today is that of unemployment. It has become so serious that the undergraduates approach their graduating days with fear and dread (Obierika & Nwachokor, 2011; Garba & Indabawa, 2014). Acquisition of requisite entrepreneurial skills by library and information science undergraduates remains the sine qua non to the phobia of uncertain or bleak future for the intending graduates. Ekoja (2014) suggested that LIS students should be given adequate practical intuition in LIS laboratories that are fully connected to the internet. He added further that the ICT facilities in such laboratories should be made accessible to students on a daily basis and if possible 24/7. He went further to say that undergraduate LIS students could also be taking to existing enterprises where the skills that they are acquiring could be experienced first-hand. Finally he stated that by participating in the activities of Entrepreneurship in Action and US (ENACTUS) which until October, 2012 was known as Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE) the practical experience and entrepreneurship acumen of LIS

students could receive a boost.

The study focused on entrepreneurial skills needed in setting up and maintaining library and information firms in Abuja, Nigeria. The choice of Abuja for the study is deliberate. Abuja is the Capital city and the seat of Nigerian Government. It is the image maker for all other cities in Nigeria. It is hoped that a model for all other cities and state capitals in Nigeria could be got in Abuja.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Ubiquitous economic recession coupled with increasing global unemployment, general poverty, dwindling job opportunities for intending graduates and youth restiveness are some of the problems that are starring all professions, including LIS on the face in the 21st century. The study, therefore, examined how a productive, profitable and entrepreneurial-minded LIS professional could use his professional ingenuity and acumen to get out of the above highlighted quagmires.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The main objective (purpose) of the study is to examine productivity, profitability and entrepreneurial skills as they affect the setting up and maintenance of Library and Information firms in Abuja, Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

1. Identify the available library and information entrepreneurial activities in Abuja, Nigeria.
2. Determine the entrepreneurial skills that are employed by library and information firms in Abuja, Nigeria.
3. Ascertain the problems encountered in setting up and maintaining library and information firms in Abuja, Nigeria.

### **Research Questions**

In a bid to achieve the objectives of the study, the following research questions were asked and answered:

1. What are the library and information firm entrepreneurial activities that are available in Abuja, Nigeria?
2. What are the entrepreneurial skills that are employed by library and information firms in Abuja, Nigeria?
3. What are the problems encountered in setting up library and information firms in Abuja, Nigeria?

### **Hypothesis**

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

$H_{01}$ : There is no significant relationship between setting up of library and information science firms and entrepreneurial skills.

### **Methodology**

The research design used for the study is survey. Purposive (judgmental) random sampling technique was used to select the sampled respondents. Unequal quota system was used to select respondents from five (5) different Municipal Area Councils of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) namely: Kubwa, Gwagwalada, Dutse, Mpape and Bwari as follows: Thirty (30) respondents were picked from Kubwa, thirty (30) from Gwagwalada, 15 from Dutse, 10 from Mpape and 15 from Bwari. A self constructed instrument tagged "Productivity, Profitability and Entrepreneurial Skills" (PPES) questionnaire which was validated at  $r=0.88$  was personally administered by the researchers to the respondents. A non parametric statistical T-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used to analyse the collected data.

### **Results**

The results of the study are presented in form of tables, percentages, and frequency counts. Out of the 100 copies of the instrument that were administered to the respondents, only 86 (86%) were retrieved and used for the analysis.

**Table 1: Response Rate**

S/N	Municipal Area Councils	Copies of Instrument Administered	Copies of Instrument Received	Percentage (%)
	Kubwa	30	27	31.4%
	Gwagwalada	30	25	29.1%
	Dutse	15	13	15.0%
	Mpape	10	0.9	10.5%
	Bwari	15	12	14.0%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 1 gives a vivid description of the copies of the instrument administered in and retrieved from each of the five (5) Municipal Area Councils in FCT.

Research Question 1: What are the library and information firm entrepreneurial activities that are available in Abuja, Nigeria?

**Table 2: Library and Information Firm Entrepreneurial Activities.**

S/N	Types of entrepreneurial activities	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
1	Owning bookshop	67	77.9
2	Selling Dailies/Magazines	30	34.9
3	Owning Library	7	8.1
4	Consultancy Services	14	16.3
5	Telecommunication Centres	18	20.9
6	Publishing	52	60.5
7	Information Centres	14	16.3
8	Cybercafé Centres	34	39.5
9	Mass Media Centres	4	4.7
10	Information Training Institutes	23	26.7

In Table 2, the Library and Information entrepreneurial activity that has the highest patronage is owning bookshop as indicated by 67 (77.9%) respondents followed by publishing as signified by 52 (60.5%) respectively; while mass media has the lowest patronage as indicated by 4 (4.7%) respondents.

Research Question 2: What are the entrepreneurial skills that are employed by library and information firms in Abuja, Nigeria?

**Table 3: Entrepreneurial Skills Employed by Library and Information Firms.**

S/N	Entrepreneurial Skills	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
1	Information Technology Skills	72	83.7
2	Information Literacy Skills	79	91.9
3	Managerial Skills	11	12.8
4	Personal Entrepreneurial Skills	57	66.3
5	Technical Skills	37	43.0
6	Time Management Skills	34	39.5
7	Communication/Presentation Skills	50	58.1
8	Evaluation and Assessment Skills	14	16.3
9	Marketing and promotion of library and information product skills	81	94.2
10	Knowledge Management Skills	20	23.3

In Table 3, marketing and promotion of library and information product skills appeared to be the mode among all other entrepreneurial skills that are employed by Library and Information Science professionals in FCT as indicated by 81 (94.2%) respondent. This was closely followed by information literacy skills as indicated by 79 (91.9%) respondents while managerial skills have the lowest respondents of 11(12.8%).

Research Question 3: What are the problems encountered in setting up library and information Firms?



**Table 4: Problems Encountered in setting up Library and Information Firms**

S/N	Problems Identified	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
1	Poor Power supply	59	68.6
2	Transportation Problem	20	23.3
3	Lack of fund to start or maintain business	37	43.0
4	Lack of demand in the field	05	5.8
5	Absence of business infrastructure	04	4.7
6	High Cost of Utility	10	11.6
7	Serious Competition in the field	11	12.8
8	Lack of entrepreneurial Skills especially in ICT	29	33.7

The respondents could pick as many options as possible.

In Table 4, the greatest problem encountered by library and information firms in Abuja, Nigeria is poor power supply as it is indicated by 59 (68.6%) respondents; followed by lack of fund 37 (43.0%) respondents; while absence of business infrastructure has the lowest respondents of 4 (4.7%). Lack of entrepreneurial skills especially in ICT has 29 (33.7%) respondents.

### Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between setting up of Library and Information firms and entrepreneurial skills.

**Table 5: t-test Analysis between Library and Information Firms and Entrepreneurial Skills**

Group	N	Sampled Mean	df	95CI	t	P-Value
Library and Information Firms	86	10.63	17.987	0.6869	-4.3481	0.085
Entrepreneurial Skills	86	11.07		-1.1330		

In table 5, the P-Value is greater than 0.05 which implies that it is not significant at 95 percent confidence interval. Therefore, the null hypothesis will be accepted and the alternate hypothesis will be rejected. That is, there is a strong relationship between setting up of Library and Information firms and entrepreneurial skills.

## Discussion

A plethora of information firm entrepreneurial activities are found in the five Municipal Area Councils in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). The entrepreneurial activities that are found in the sampled areas are not exhaustive. Those entrepreneurial activities in library and information science as found in FCT are part and parcel of the gamut of career path and entrepreneurial activities that are available to professionals in library and information science. This is in consonance with the findings of Ugwu & Ezeani (2012); Wayne (2013); Anyanwu, Oduagwu, Ossai-Onah & Amaechi (2013); Babalola & Abifarin (2014).

Therefore, any productive, creative and profitable library and information science professionals would always be employable within the arrays of limitless job opportunities in the profession (Babalola, 2014; Babalola & Abifarin, 2014). Such highly productive, innovative and creative library and information science professionals would be creators of jobs, rather than job cutters. In an age characterised by dwindling job opportunities, productive library and information professionals would always be smiling as they would be picking from avalanche of job opportunities that are available for productive, industrious and creative minds.

Productivity, profitability and employability of librarians and information science professionals would appear as a mirage without the possession of requisite skills. This corroborates the findings of Edegbo (2011) and Wayne (2013) skilful librarians and information science professionals would be creative. Creative ideas would normally flow in the mind of skilful librarians and information science professionals. Creativity would engender innovativeness which would in turn culminate in high employability, profitability and productivity (Edegbo, 2011; Wayne, 2013; Babalola, 2014; Babalola & Abifarin, 2014). The study aptly described entrepreneurial skills as a pivot upon which successful and enduring library and information

science firms are hinged. The findings of the study corroborate the findings of Ugwu & Ezeani (2012); Anyanwu, Oduagwu, Ossai-Onah & Amaechi (2013); Ekoja (2014); Magari (2014). It is crucial for library and information science professionals to identify a group or a combination of groups of entrepreneurial skills that are germane to the successful setting up and maintenance of their own library and information firms. It should be added that high business acumen, ingenuity, and creativity are fundamental to the success of any entrepreneurial organisation including library and information firms.

Finally, the study identified some teething problems that constitute encumbrances to the successful setting up and maintenance of library and information firms in Abuja. This agrees with the findings of Ikoja (2006) some of the identified problems are not peculiar to the information science profession. They are problems that affect other businesses. The identified problems would require relentless individual, corporate and government efforts for successful and hitch free entrepreneurial activities. This confirms the findings of (Edegbo, 2011; Eke, Igwesi & Orji, 2011; Ugwu & Ezeani, 2012; Ansari, 2014). Lack of entrepreneurial skills especially in ICT for library and information science professionals is a serious problem in view of the fact that, most entrepreneurial activities of the age are thriving on the platform of ICT skills. Library and information science professionals who are deficient in ICT skills are most likely to be limited in their entrepreneurial engagements. The findings authenticate the findings of Edegbo (2011); Ugwu & Ezeani (2012).

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

From the foregoing discussion, it is apt to conclude that entrepreneurial skills, productivity and profitability of library and information science professionals are fundamental and basic to the setting up and maintenance of successful entrepreneurial businesses in Abuja and in any other part of the globe.

In the light of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. The curriculum of library schools in Nigeria should be reviewed to accommodate enough practicals geared towards making the would be graduates to be able to stand on their own. Training on ICT skills in this information driven age should be emphasized.
2. All library and information science professionals should be profitable in whatever organisations that they are found to engender their continuous productivity and employability.
3. The government at all levels should do everything possible, especially in information provision to enhance maximum productivity for all entrepreneurs including library and information professionals.

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