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Entrepreneurship Education in Library and Information Science: Fostering Economic Growth and Development in Nigeria

Jamilu Abdullahi

Library, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Bauchi, Nigeria, jamiluabdu@gmail.com

Amina Barkindo

Library, Modibbo Adama University of Technology Yola, Nigeria, mee.barkindo@yahoo.com

Ezeabasili Augusta Chioma

Department of Library and Information Science Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka, Nigeria, ac.ezeabasili@yahoo.com

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Introduction

The strategic value of Library and Information Science (LIS) professionals in the 21st century cannot be underrated due to emergence of information economy. The new concept of information economy is seen as an economic system whereby knowledge, information and services are considered more valuable than manufacturing. The technological revolution as a result of the application of computerized information systems and information economy has increase the rate at which the industrialized countries are shifting from manufacturing based economies toward service-based economies (Cambridge, 2015). According to Cogburn and Adeya (1999) information economy is closely related to knowledge economy and often used synonymously; it refers to “a specific component of the emerging knowledge economy wherein the production of information goods and services dominates wealth and job creation”. Information economy is therefore a kind of economy in which knowledge is the primary raw material and equally a source of value. This type of economy is also characterized by prevalent influence of Information Technology (IT) on economic interest such that the labour force are becoming information workers and the most creativity and outcome are information products (Cambridge, 2015).

In most significant case, economic and technological changes across the globe have influence on information resources production, storage, preservation and distribution. These are key activities in library and information service. McDaniel and Epp (1995) pointed out that in the information age the customer-oriented information research and document delivery services offered by LIS professionals provide up to date focused information to various clients thereby helping them to meet their business needs. In the contemporary world, many business outlets, associations and individuals understand the commercial value of competitive intelligence and information research for conducting their operations. Therefore, LIS entrepreneurs provide the most information resources and technologies that are essential to managing modern businesses.

Library and Information Science Education in Nigeria

There are several institutions across the globe offering LIS education and training. However, in the West African sub region Nigeria has become the centre of LIS program as a result of the establishment of first LIS school at the University College Ibadan in 1959 (Olakunle, 2014). Subsequently, various public and private tertiary institutions in the country

such as Colleges of Education, Polytechnics and Universities mounted the program. They awarded certificates, diplomas (ND, DLS, DLIS and DLIM), Bachelor (BLS, BLIS, BTech LIS and BED LIS), Masters (MLS, MLIS) and PhD (Diso and Njoku, 2007). According to Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria (2014) the aims and objectives of education for LIS in Nigeria are as follows:

- 1) To produce LIS professionals for all types of libraries, information and documentation centres.
- 2) To equip the product of the program with relevant theoretical knowledge, practical skills and techniques to develop and enhance their performance.
- 3) To encourage the spirit of enquiry and creativity among the LIS professionals so that they are capable of understanding the emerging concepts of the role of information in a complex multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and largely non-literate society like Nigeria.
- 4) To provide prospective LIS professionals with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignments and to make them adaptable to any changing situation.
- 5) To provide an understanding of the role of the new communication technology (example, the Internet) in the handling of information.

Strategic Economic Advantage of Library and Information Science Education

Library and Information Science (LIS) education and practice are of strategic economic importance to Nigeria in the information age. As a matter of strategy, the LIS training and practice must accommodate the present and future economic development needs of the country. In recent years, the economic progress of Nigeria has been a major issue of discussion within national development context. Likewise, development agencies at national and international levels provide indices on clear direction of economic growth and development of countries including Nigeria. For instance, in 2016 the World Bank observed that with over 170 million people and a high rate of population growth, Nigeria needs to create 40 – 50 million additional jobs between 2010 and 2030. Hitherto, the issue of youth unemployment has continued to pose a serious challenge owing to the fact that about 2 million Nigerian youths enter the labour market every year (Olajide 2016).

However, in an attempt to develop a nationally oriented driven agenda to confront the challenge of youth unemployment in Nigeria, Rufai (2011) advocated that the Nigerian tertiary institutions have a distinctive role to play in the transformation process of the country. This role can be achieved through developing appropriate capacity and generating new knowledge that could be utilized to foster the development of creative and innovative minds to steer the country economically, technologically, socially and otherwise. For Nigeria to realize sustainable economic development it needs to promote high productivity, create and adopt new goods and services, new skills and new knowledge. All these factors according to Mitra, Abubakar and Sagagi (2011) can be achieved through entrepreneurship.

The schools of LIS in Nigeria are part and parcel of the economic transformation process of the country. Transformation and improvement in the society influence what librarians do, how they work, where they work, how they are perceived and what competencies they need to succeed in the information and knowledge environment (Bedford, Donley and Lensenmayer, 2015). The LIS schools are responsible for imparting skills and competencies to their students for survival in the 21st century knowledge economy. For this reason, therefore, they must deliver what librarianship as a profession signifies and advocates so that to shape the future occupational life of their students or perhaps have a source of acquiring the basic means of livelihoods after graduation. This responsibility is an essential avenue of encouraging the students to develop interest and participate in entrepreneurship as economic development strategy and equally ensure best practices. According to the International Institute for Educational Planning (2006) skills development together with other social protection measures can certainly constitute a powerful tool for poverty reduction. Hence, the LIS skills and competencies are vital components that can help build human capital for the realization of entrepreneurship in Nigeria thereby alleviating poverty and other social vices.

In 2006 the Federal Government of Nigeria directed all the Higher Institutions of Learning to introduce Entrepreneurship Education as a compulsory course for all students irrespective of area of specialization (Onuma, 2016 and Akinboade, 2014). This effort according to Yahya (2011) aims at fostering entrepreneurship culture among students, address problem of growing graduate unemployment and under employment, generate and manage knowledge and other competencies for building the requisite entrepreneurial human capital for national

development. Yahya further expanded that, LIS is key to the development of Higher Educational Institutions in Nigeria as they develop gradually towards addressing the country's development agenda. Therefore, the LIS education must of necessity derive its contents from the philosophy of the Nigeria's National Policy on Education as follows:

- 1) Acquisition, development and inculcation of proper value-oriented for survival of the individual and society.
- 2) Development of the intellectual capacities of individuals to ensure good and proper understanding and appreciation of the environment.
- 3) Skills acquisition for useful life and society.

Interestingly, entrepreneurship and innovation are vital factors of development in the 21st century and has reached clear status within LIS education. Haruna (2011) considered entrepreneurship education in LIS to be instructions given or knowledge imparted to a group or group of persons with a view to developing their careers in librarianship so as to be business – oriented or self-employed. It aims at developing skills acquisition among students and encouraging them to be self-employed like their counterparts in developed nations. By inference, entrepreneurship education develops enterprising people and inculcates an attitude of self-reliance, using appropriate learning processes. Going by this, therefore, many LIS schools are now incorporating entrepreneurship skills in to their curriculum.

In the present time, there is an interesting debate on the role of Nigerian LIS schools in preparing their students to the task required by the information economy. Abdullahi (2014) asserted that the country needs innovative LIS graduates that can utilize information and knowledge to produce goods and services or high quality creativity and output to compete satisfactorily at both national and global market places. Entrepreneurship and innovation activities demand hard work and creativity output among LIS graduates in Nigeria. Certainly, the LIS education will provide modern techniques for improving performance in a work place or business situation in the 21st century. Thus, the Partnership for 21st Century Skills (2007) stated that learning and innovation skills are increasingly seen as the skills that separate students who are prepared for increasingly complex life and work environments in the 21st century, and those who are not. For instance, a special focus by LIS schools on creativity, critical thinking,

communication and collaboration is essential to prepare their students for the demand of the future life.

In a similar way, however, the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) greatly influence education and training on information resource generation and distribution for economic gain and development. The ICT is providing new professional and entrepreneurial learning in LIS schools. Lemu (2011) revealed that the library school at the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria designed many ICT related courses to provide students with relevant competencies for innovation and entrepreneurship in the digital economy. These courses are: Introduction to Information Technology in Society, Management Information Systems and Services, Computer Operating Systems, Media Resources and Services in Information Work and Information and Communication Technology.

However, LIS skills and competencies can be applied to all sectors of the Nigeria’s economy for national development. Onaade (2012) maintained that almost all specialization areas in librarianship are practicable in Nigeria. Therefore, the LIS curriculum is essential to addressing the issues related to innovative and creative venture. Saroja (n.d) remarked that the LIS courses have lot of potential to develop the knowledge and skills required to sustain and survive in the present knowledge society. Globalization and liberalization has opened up multiple career options to the LIS professionals. LIS courses have the potential of empowering students to become self employed in the competitive economic environment. Yahya (2011) asserted that, the Nigerian entrepreneurship educators in LIS are expected to help their students to develop key entrepreneurial competencies. Suggesting that, the characteristics of modern LIS education should comprised of IT skills, public relations skills, team work, management communication and leadership skills, research and information packaging along with decision making skills as enumerated below:

Characteristics of Modern LIS Education				
IT Skills	Public Relation Skills	Team Work	Management, Communication and Leadership Skills	Research and Information Packaging Skills

Fig. 1 Characteristics of Modern LIS Education

Source: Yahya (2011)

Remarkably, entrepreneurship education in LIS is becoming increasingly sophisticated as a result of globalization. Olakunle (2014) is of the view that, there is need to blend global tendencies with local responses because globalization has had a structural impact on higher education and the LIS education in Nigeria is as well subject to transformation. Similarly, several aspects of modern professional life, best practices and skills need to be reflected in the learning process of LIS entrepreneurs. The Partnership for 21st Century Skills (2007) advocated that students' success in the global economy require certain outcomes and support systems as follows:

Learning and Innovation Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creativity and Innovation • Critical Thinking and Problem Solving • Communication and Collaboration
Information, Media and Technology Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information Literacy • Media Literacy • ICT Literacy
Life and Career Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility and Adaptability • Initiative and Self-Direction • Social and Cross-Cultural Skills • Productivity and Accountability • Leadership and Responsibility

Fig. 2 Outcomes and Support Systems for Student's Success

Furthermore, according to Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (2010) limitations related to “cultural factors and economic development level, as well as specific government policies, can affect the nature and impact of education and training generally”. But then, despite the foregoing scenario, the Nigerian LIS schools mostly offered courses on Publishing and Book Trade, Information Analysis and Repackaging, Bibliographic Compilation, Research and Statistics, Content Analysis, Communication Skills and Web Design. All these modules can be regarded as support systems for the realization of innovation in LIS industry.

Establishing New Businesses in LIS: Driving Changes and Growth

In Nigeria LIS graduates can serve as agent of economic growth and change. Having acquired the LIS training, a graduate can move to start an innovative venture at small medium or

big enterprise level depending on the adequacy of the resources involved. Innovation is a technique of transforming an idea or invention into a good or service which can produce value in which customers will pay (Business Dictionary, 2014). It also involves the purposeful use of information, imagination and initiative in getting greater or different values from resources by including all the method of which new ideas are generated and transformed into useful products. Whereas, a venture is as an enterprise or initiative whether small, medium or big aims at providing products and services to customers with the aim of making profit. From the foregoing, innovative venture in LIS can clearly refer to establishing an information and document delivery enterprise for the purpose of serving variety of clients. It can be an information brokerage firm, consultancy outlet, publishing and book trade or any related agency that deliver fee based information resources and services.

Innovative ventures having entrepreneurship potentialities in LIS are many. Igbeka (2008) enumerated work of LIS entrepreneurs in Nigeria as follows:

- Indexing services
- Abstracting services
- Retrospective conservation
- Cataloging and classification
- Literature Reviews
- Online literature search
- Print searches for clients
- Private library services, bookshop and interlibrary loan
- Packaging information
- Editing and publishing
- Developing hyper media-products
- Translation
- Marketing management
- Organizing seminars, conferences and workshops
- Presentations
- Creating databases and website design

Besides, there are several other areas of revenue generation in LIS that meet the requirement of Nigeria's economic development as pointed out below by Malumfashi (2011):

- Service to Special Group
- Compilation
- Bindery and Lamination Services
- Newspaper Distribution

- Internet Café Services
- Facility and Event Management
- Short Message Service (SMS)
- Stationery Store Services

Challenges and Prospects of LIS Entrepreneurship Financing and Marketing

There must be potential challenges and possibilities in any competitive market place. Essentially, two major challenges of entrepreneurship in LIS are hereby highlighted:

Access to Capital: the lack of adequate fund has been a major problem to many businesses including LIS entrepreneurship. According to Anthony (2014) the major problem faced by entrepreneurs in Nigeria is the problem of insufficient capital to start a new business. Therefore, LIS entrepreneurs in the country require access to two broad categories of capital as follows:

- i. **Equity Capital:** this type of capital is owned by the investor. It refers to the contribution of the investors to the business. Equity capital is therefore the act of financing private business through various sources using regulations. LIS entrepreneurs can identify potential business investors by selling ownership shares in return for capital to be used to manage the business operations. The LIS entrepreneurship outlet provides information about its undertakings, administrative and management officers/Librarians, financial statement and risk circumstances to the investors.
- ii. **Debt Capital:** this is a type of financing that involves loan or borrowing that often goes with interest. It is provided on short term, medium term and long term basis. Debt capital is indispensable for take up, maintenance and general operations of LIS entrepreneurship. It provides business funding that supposes to be repaid by the LIS entrepreneur at a stipulated period.

Access to Market Outlet: There is lack of awareness among potential customers about the role of LIS entrepreneurs in Nigeria. LIS entrepreneurs need to select appropriate market outlets to deliver their products and services. However, different consumers of products and services include companies, farmers, schools, Banks, hospitals, individuals and government ministries. Target customers purchase information products and utilize the services of LIS entrepreneurs to satisfy various demands at the work place and sometimes individual needs.

Conclusion and Recommendation

As the needs for entrepreneurship education continue to grow in Nigeria, the LIS schools in the country have to continue to adopt new patterns of education and training. Information has now become an economic resource and a commodity that can be marketed. In the information age, individuals and organizations face the need to remain competitive and informed so that to enhance their businesses. LIS entrepreneurs work in support of many organizations and individuals to meet their needs by providing resources, services and expertise to address diverse requirements of customers.

Nigeria as a developing country will attain sustainable economic development by discovering a lot of opportunities offered by entrepreneurship education and practice in LIS. The country, will however, promote entrepreneurship education and practice in LIS by adopting and implementing the following recommendations:

- 1) The LIS schools in Nigeria should reinforce practice-based teaching and learning. They should also continue to encourage creativity using new technologies, new skills and explore new opportunities in LIS entrepreneurship.
- 2) There is need for LIS schools to prepare future Nigerian LIS entrepreneurs through diverse career path and adapt to changing economic situations.
- 3) Programs on continuing education should be introduced on LIS entrepreneurship in Nigerian Universities. In the same way, other professional forums like seminars, conferences and workshops should be conducted on regular basis by LIS schools in Nigeria.
- 4) There is need for the creation of Nigerian Association of LIS Entrepreneurs under the umbrella of the Nigerian Library Association (NLA).
- 5) The Nigerian government and private sectors should facilitate access to loan, facilities and other support services needed by LIS entrepreneurs.

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