



Navigating Towards Entrepreneurial Librarianship in Nigeria: A Gateway to Wealth Creation

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Abstract

This article examined the fact that Librarians are not only meant to sit in the library and attend to the users alone but also to be creative, innovative, collaborative oriented and to be entrepreneurs. This will enable them to navigate and diversify in a lifelong learning process to be more relevant in the society. Reviewed were concept of entrepreneurial librarianship and opportunities for librarians to explore to be financially independent. Recommendations were made as solutions to some of the challenges facing them in their personal and professional development.

Keywords

Entrepreneurial, Librarianship, Nigeria, Wealth Creation

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Introduction

One of the major challenges facing higher education in Nigeria is the integrating theoretical learning with skill acquisition through entrepreneurship education in all the disciplines including Library and Information Science. Differentiating itself from other parts of business curricula, entrepreneurial librarianship emphasizes the idea that an entrepreneurial perspective may be acquired via both theoretical and practical training. In addition to integrating business skills, particularly financial marketing and fund raising, entrepreneurial librarianship offers a way to use these skills towards a range of objectives, from social or nonprofit efforts to commercial enterprise (Chung, 2010). The goal of entrepreneurship librarianship is to cultivate entrepreneurial thinking in order to advance social, cognitive, professional, and managerial abilities. Library and information science (LIS) graduates don't need to worry about entering the workforce. They remain the custodians of information which support creative thinking and business activities for a sustainable future. This they do through the provision of information in different formats. However, it has always been a trend that libraries are not profit-oriented thus, librarians are frequently not

trained differently towards entrepreneurial activities, even though some of their daily activities could be geared towards preparation for self-employment or the purpose of money-making.

Entrepreneurial librarianship entails innovation, risk-taking, creativity, initiative, and the capacity to organize and direct initiatives to meet goals in library and information services. According to Phanal, (2014), the establishment of a social or commercial activity rests on it. Therefore, entrepreneurship is all about spotting an opportunity, coming up with a plan to take advantage of it, and creating an atmosphere that would allow one to take on the accompanying risks and reap the benefits that come with them. To take advantage of these commercial opportunities, LIS professionals need to choose which business endeavour to start. He goes on to say that LIS experts can pursue chances as entrepreneurs in fields like business services, consulting, book repair, information brokerage, packaging information, etc. He suggests that when a firm reaches out to someone, they should inquire about certain fundamental details.

Therefore, graduates of Nigeria can create jobs because entrepreneurial message is

self-sufficiency and self-reliance driven (Amza et al., 2021). It is common for librarians to lack prior entrepreneurial training. This may be a result of the free library culture, which promotes libraries as non-profit organizations whose primary goals are service instead of profit. As a result, library staff do not need to be taught in business models, which are frequently used in entrepreneurial endeavors and have components of personal financial risk and potential financial gain associated with them (Zahel, 2016). However, the advent of ICT in which providing access to information is a more significant commercial activity, along with recent technological advancements that have brought previously separate activities in information supply together, has changed the role of libraries and librarians (Norris, 2017). As a result, it is important for librarians' training to promote entrepreneurial thinking among librarians and Library and Information Science graduates who may not be employed in libraries but will be able to become self-employed through acquired skills. To produce a generation of Library and Information Science graduates who can support themselves financially using their skills, knowledge and talents, enthusiasm for librarianship is required (Scanlon and Muhud, 2011).

Entrepreneurial Librarianship

University libraries are experiencing a severe survival dilemma in the age of innovation, entrepreneurship, and the quick development of information technology. Thus these libraries have experienced crisis, but they have also benefited from the rise of the network and the information society. Innovation and entrepreneurial service are key components of university libraries' competitiveness in providing information. Scanlon and Muhud (2011) observed that subject librarians using the library's expert information to create creative and entrepreneurial services for professionals to study, teach, and research is the growing

trend of university libraries' information services. Librarians must deal with the current crisis, research on how to seize the opportunity it presents, learn how to effectively utilize the development of information technology and the information society, to modify and provide entrepreneurship services in order to resurrect itself. Since individuals are in need of knowledge, librarians must fill that need by providing current information. As a result, the information resources and technology most needed for operating modern enterprises are most frequently provided by librarians.

A change in the function of libraries and librarians has been brought about by the advent of the information age, in which providing access to information is a crucial economic activity. The new technical advancements have also integrated previously disjointed information supply activities. This is made worse by new entries into the field of information management, which was previously the domain of librarians, creating a crisis of unemployment. Because of this, it is important for librarians to receive good training in order to encourage entrepreneurial thinking among librarians and the students in Library Schools who may not be employed in libraries but will be able to meet their needs. These good training to encourage entrepreneurial thinking among librarians according to Muhud, (2015) are as follows:

- Technological and digital literacy: Librarians needs to be trained and be comfortable with emerging technologies and have a solid understanding of its applications.
- Data analysis and interpretation: The ability to gather, organize, analysis and interpret data is essential in a data driven society.
- Information literacy: Librarians effectively use of information in

various sources or formats is crucial in navigating the abundance information available in the digital age.

- Creativity and innovation: Creative thinking generate innovative solution to complex problems in a highly valued and rapidly changing society.
- Collaboration and interdisciplinary skills: Collaborating with professionals from diverse background are essential for addressing complex societal challenges.
- Lifelong learning: Willingness and ability to continuously learn and adapt to new technologies in evolving societal needs are critical for sustaining entrepreneurial librarianship.

This kind of strategy is required in order to produce a generation of Library and Information Science graduates who will be able to support themselves financially using their skills, knowledge, talents, and enthusiasm for librarianship from the training acquired. In both personal and professional lives, librarians should cultivate relationships. The emergence of social networking tools like instant messaging, wikis, blogs, and networking sites will be a gateway towards advertising their entrepreneurial activities. Libraries should be more actively involved in ongoing, in-depth evaluation that goes beyond the usual gate counts and circulation figures. The utilization of collections, services, and physical space must be constantly assessed for potential improvements, and adjustments must be made as necessary. This can be done by paying attention, listening, and communicating with the users more amiably. Information explosion is the norm today as the world has essentially become a global village. Because of this, Khan, et al. (2014) noted that it is essential for librarians to look

for new means of sustaining themselves and earning a living by providing unique services to the local community. These means of sustenance by librarians include:

- Emerging technologies consultant: Librarians can work as consultants, guiding organizations in leveraging these technologies for information management, (eg) web developers.
- Information analyst: Government agencies, non- profit organizations, research institutions often need policy analyst in relation to information access, intellectual property, privacy and information ethics which a contemporary librarian should aim to provide.
- Information brokerage: Information brokers allow their clients access to information, for a fee. They use various resources including the internet, online services that geared towards rendering services for a fee to the users.
- Data curator: With the increasing importance of data management and curation, there is a growing demand for LIS professionals who specialize in handling and organizing large datasets which librarians can dive into.
- Typing and photocopying: Librarians can establish a typing and photocopying site to compliment what they are doing and as a means of getting money.

Entrepreneurial Librarianship and Financial Exploits

Entrepreneurship is the practice of running and owning an organization for the purpose of self-employment as well as the development of work possibilities through the creation and marketing of goods and services. It is a special combination of creativity, risk-taking, and invention with

goals to build and maintain the value enjoyed by the users. In the field of librarianship, entrepreneurship refers to the establishment and use of a business that delivers information and documents as a product to benefit its patrons (Ghosh, 2019). Librarian can provide other services for their self development and money making purposes which include the following:

- Fee-based information resources
- Consulting services
- Book stores
- Publishing houses

Librarians after gaining the necessary skills can move on to launch a creative business at a small, medium, or large scale, depending on the resources and funding available.

The librarianship of the 20th century excelled in bringing entrepreneurial elements to promote and make libraries more enterprising, a ground for societal change, and a tool for development and advancement (Ghosh, 2019). As of late, librarianship has evolved from its prior state of neglect to a modern conception of a technique and a vocation. The printing press's emergence in the fifteenth century marked the starting of the modern period of library growth and provided a huge boost to the creation and acquisition of books. The change that has made today's librarians more business-minded by allowing them to serve their clients and make a good living (Aliyu and Achal, 2019).

Interested Library and Information Science professionals may explore the possibilities to start a new venture and become successful and fulfill their entrepreneurial dreams. Therefore, Shuman (2011) enumerated the following areas for librarians to key into this business:

- book publishing industry: librarians can establish a book publishing industries, train and employ people

that will be working with him in the publishing enterprise.

- book distribution agency: someone who does not have money to start up a publishing company, can be a distributor of any publishing company. The person can be a liason officer for the company and be distributing books to all vendors or establishment that wants the book.
- periodical subscription agency: another opportunity can be seen in someone being an agent on the subscription of periodicals and other databases.
- newspaper dealership: some can embark on newspaper dealers and sellers to make money.
- stationary shop: selling of stationary both in wholesale and retail and supply to other establishment that may be needing them.
- binding workshop: binding and repairing of worn out book.
- consultancy services: librarians can do consultancy jobs to render seasoned services to companies or other libraries that need services.
- library software developing industry: contemporary librarians need to be familiar with software and know how to develop them, thus use it to make money.
- online book store: creating of websites and social media platforms to sell and advertised books online for users to pick up
- Writing journals and writing of biographies: librarians can be writing articles for publication and biographies for people for a fee.

For librarians and potential librarians to inculcate the habit and entrepreneurial thinking from the onset, LIS curriculum needs

to be amended and updated to accommodate these opportunities to be explored by students during their programme. These areas of study that should be incorporated in the curriculum include:

- Opportunity search and employment creation: students should be taught how to search opportunities that will create employment for them.
- Marketing strategies: how to create awareness and market themselves to the world on how best they can do whatever they are doing.
- Business plans and proposals: teach students an effective way of drafting and accomplishing business proposals.
- Business enterprise: all aspects of business creation and engagement should be taught in the classroom so as to enable them start on time and build that zealous thinking before graduation.
- Growth in entrepreneurship: how best to sustain and grow in any establishment they are into.
- Collaboration: in order to address complex societal challenges and illuminate the path to a brighter future, collaboration with diverse professionals is important hence collaboration as a concept should be taught in the classroom so it will be part of them.
- Constant assessment: there is need for constant examination of the students by their lecturers to ensure they are doing well and adjust accordingly.

There are some aspects of librarianship that are naturally suited to entrepreneurship programs, while other aspects demand careful consideration and creative thought to make them work with various entrepreneurship programs. It is possible for

librarians to succeed both as entrepreneurs and as librarians. This is in reference to both the individual and corporate levels, or the entire library. A simple entrepreneurial program can be implemented in areas like collection, cataloguing, classification, indexing, abstracting and binding to improve the efficiency, speed, and responsiveness of their customer services. Librarians who are versatile in these areas can also use it to improve their lives through money making. Media sections equipment such as computers and accessories, seats, microphones, printers and desks are specialized and require thorough organization and planning before being commercialized (Aliyu & Achal, 2019).

As far as individual practice is concerned, a librarian or group of librarians can use entrepreneurialism and librarianship to succeed and raise their organization to new heights. Entrepreneurial librarianship as a consultancy business can be started by a librarian. Entrepreneurial activities expose the librarian to other specialists like those who will collaborate with them to create software for library usage. In an effort to stay relevant in the information service industry, librarians are developing and experimenting with a variety of user-reach strategies (Edewor & Omosor, 2012). Without regard to a person's social, educational, or physical position, librarians have proven to be the most effective at gathering, organizing, and making information in all kinds and formats available to and accessible to all.

The construction and delivery of fee-based, profit-oriented services to all types of information consumers, to the extent that they can pay, forms the basis of entrepreneurship in libraries and information services. Making a career for oneself and others represents a paradigm shift in this situation. It is important to comprehend and value wealth creation for oneself and others when engaging in library and information service entrepreneurship. Today's Nigeria of

the twenty-first century is a place where entrepreneurship is now required. In order to increase employment and create jobs, the government increasingly supports various sectors involvement in entrepreneurship. Librarians must therefore not be left out.

Due to the current global economic crisis and the high percentage of unemployment among recent graduates in the nation, job development, self-employment, and subsistence are hot topics everywhere. This circumstance has prompted discussions about entrepreneurs and with regard to recent graduates from Library and Information Science discipline. People need employment, but employment is scarce. Therefore, there is need to create job not by the government this time, but, by these fresh graduates who do not understand what entrepreneurship is all about. Numerous writers have therefore given various interpretations and descriptions of the idea of entrepreneurship. Researchers and writers have long described entrepreneurship using words like new, innovative, adaptable, dynamic, creative, and risk-taking. Ali (2021) rightly defined entrepreneurship as having to do with spotting and seizing opportunities. The process of developing a new product or service, starting or expanding a profitable firm, and purposefully creating value through organization by a single contributor or small group of partners are all aspects of entrepreneurship.

In order to address user requirements in novel and imaginative ways, entrepreneurial librarianship focuses on taking initiative or offering information services and products. In this new idea of entrepreneurial innovation, collaboration is a crucial component. For the purpose of innovation or creative thinking in terms of the use and development of information resources, it is necessary for librarianship training to be able to promote an entrepreneurial spirit. Business abilities, particularly those related to financial marketing and fund raising, can be applied to

a variety of objectives, from commercial enterprise to social or non-profit endeavors (Chung, 2010). To enhance the social, cognitive, career, and managerial abilities, entrepreneurial librarianship requires encouraging entrepreneurial thinking. Innovative people that are successful employ both the left and right sides of their minds.

In all these, entrepreneurial minded persons examine data, people and determine analytically what the innovation must be in order to capitalize on an opportunity, and then they go out and observe potential customers in order to ascertain their requirements, values, and expectations (Okolo & Ivwighrehweta, 2021). Librarians are expected to start new ventures, accept the difficulties brought on by this new order, and make adjustments as needed. An entrepreneur librarian must constantly be aware of various types of information available in print and electronic resources in order to provide information consultancy and bibliographic services. Librarians will therefore be in the greatest possible position to give clients the most useful, strategic, up-to-date, and pertinent information.

It offers a way not only to incorporate business abilities, in particular financial marketing and fund raising, but also to use them towards a variety of purposes, from commercial company to social or non-profit enterprises (Chung, 2010). Fostering entrepreneurial thinking is a component of entrepreneurship librarianship, which aims to advance management, social, and cognitive abilities.

Murray (2018) insisted that graduates of Library and Information Science should demonstrate their skills as information providers in this generation where unemployment is a common occurrence. Librarians can therefore key into so many available services to sustain themselves in this age of ICT. These include services to the visually impaired, bindery and repair services,

book vendors, publishing, reprographic services, services for online and computer businesses, software store for libraries, career counseling, establishing and managing libraries, book publishing, compilation of directories, compilation of bibliographies.

Challenges of Entrepreneurial Librarianship

In spite of the place of entrepreneurship in libraries and in the life of librarians, it has been observed that there are many challenges that hinder the growth of entrepreneurial librarianship in the Information Age. These include:

Financial challenge

This constitutes a major bottleneck in Entrepreneurial development. Everything associated with business depends so much on fund availability. According to Okolo and Ivwighrehweta (2021) Finance is one of the key challenges of entrepreneurship in this age. The fact that the economy is unfavorable to small-scale commercial ventures, there is a discouragement among librarians. They therefore show little or no interest in starting their own businesses. He added that companies, especially those who are just starting out, may find it quite aggravating because they cannot easily access fund from numerous financial institutions.

Difficulties in sourcing loan

In most situations, business plans are forfeited rather than go through the difficult loan application process. Sourcing of business fund is a serious challenge of infopreneurship in the information age. The poor economic situation of our time coupled with the difficulty in accessing soft loan and the conditions of payment are really very strong impediment to the rise of entrepreneurial librarians in the information age.

Unfriendly Government Policies

This has to do with policies, especially business policies that discourage entrepreneurial development. Ali (2021) concurred that government policies includes

corporate licensing, policy, and legal requirement and compliance that may not favour investment. In the words of Okolo and Ivwighrehweta (2021), making policies is done with the intention of achieving a specific aim or goal. The reverse is the case in Nigeria where in some cases policies are made by a selected few who serve as representatives in government. Often times, they do not put the interests of the majority or the citizens into consideration. Thus, in the past, Government has destroyed homes, shops, markets, and other business structures without giving the owners advance notice, eliminating the entrepreneurial spirit.

Similarly, commercial attempts are being hampered by recurring revenue charges, high interest rates, and growing tax charges. Invariably, this also has a way of demoralizing librarians' positive quest towards entrepreneurship.

University curriculum content

This has to do with the curriculum contents of Library and Information Science for entrepreneurial skill development. Edewor and Omosor (2012) observed that entrepreneurship is not covered in the Nigerian curriculum for Library and Information Science. The lack of fundamentals for entrepreneurship training in school curriculum and structural issues with the education system present a significant barrier to entrepreneurship, leading many librarians to look to other professional literature for models of entrepreneurship that can be applied to librarianship.

According to LuPa-wóJcik (2020) school curricula largely ignores the value of developing soft competencies, which are essential for managing a business. The lack of entrepreneurial contents in Library Science curriculum can discourage graduates from embarking on such ventures that they are not abreast with.

Managerial problem

Managerial issues are also worthy of note as hindrances to entrepreneurial development in libraries. This has to do with business and entrepreneurial plans on a personal level. Ali (2021) maintains that many students, especially professionals, lack the inclination toward entrepreneurship that would allow them to launch a lucrative business and become significant members of the knowledge society. He also pointed out that infopreneurship's obstacles, such as the difficulty in coming up with business concepts, budgeting, and poor planning, are a significant hindrance to entrepreneurial librarianship. Okolo and Ivwighrehweta (2021) highlighted that, among other things, librarians' poor attitudes towards entrepreneurship, a lack of entrepreneurial spirit, problems coming up with attractive business ideas, and other factors prevent them from starting their own businesses. Edewor and Omosor (2012) highlighted the steps involved in developing entrepreneurial managerialability as following: the surroundings to find market needs, creating a product or service to address market trends and needs, putting together a budget and marketing strategy to promote the chosen product or idea. These all pose challenges to Library and Information Science graduates towards managing their businesses.

Seasoned personnel and facilities are insufficient

General observation shows that technical knowhow, infrastructural development and technological advancement have not been favourable to entrepreneurs. Inadequate electricity supply and access to information and communication technologies have constituted bottlenecks to entrepreneurial librarianship (Innocent, 2020). Entrepreneurial endeavors are now expensive and less profitable due to lack of relevant infrastructure.

Attitudinal Challenges cannot be left out among several other challenges. The attitude of librarians towards entrepreneurship is not encouraging. Some do not want to venture into any type of business because they consider such risk. Okolo and Ivwighrehweta (2021) observed that this risk also frequently has a direct correlation with the potential rewards. Mamza; Waba & Mundi (2021) observed that the most important qualities of a successful business minded librarian are motivation and enthusiasm. The person attempting to launch a business must comprehend that if he does not possess the motivation to carry through; no one else can. Suffice it to say that the wrong attitude of librarians towards entrepreneurship is a major challenge facing entrepreneurial librarianship in the information age.

Solutions to the problems of Entrepreneurial librarianship

Based on the problems that have befallen entrepreneurial librarianship in our age, there are some solutions that will necessitate improvement.

Review of interest charges

Economically, there is need to review interest charged to small scale industries and entrepreneurs. Governmental incentives can also encourage the young librarians to embark on entrepreneurial activities. In the words of Okolo and Ivwighrehweta (2021), Without it, there can be no real and lasting wealth creation, no job creation, and thus no economic progress. It is therefore pertinent that Government at all levels supports entrepreneurial librarianship in order to achieve this goal.

Standard university curriculum

Library and Information Science curriculum should be redesigned to incorporate courses on Entrepreneurship. Mamza, Waba and Mundi (2021) suggested a change of library school curricula in Nigeria. A review of the

curricula should include courses on IT and entrepreneurial studies. Library and Information Science students will find these courses useful while in school and in the labour market.

Provision of facilities and training on the part of librarians

There is also the need for the government to improve on infrastructural facilities in universities, and empower graduates who have chosen librarianship as a career in the area of finance. This will serve as motivation and invariably increase their passion for business. Mamza, Waba and Mund1 (2021) emphasized the need for redesigning and improving user services and instruction while saving resources and utilizing their skills. With their professional training, librarians are to evaluate the level of their experience, establish collections, and make sure that the learning environment is inviting and effectively connected to the internet for information searchers. With this arrangement, the environment will be ready for entrepreneurial activities.

Adequate planning and management

Librarians on a personal level should plan and manage their entrepreneur ventures effectively for self development and posterity sake.

Conclusion

With the knowledge and abilities gained from librarianship education, practicing librarians, graduates of Library and Information Science and librarians who are not currently employed will be able to engage them and meet their needs. Librarianship is a training that will support entrepreneurial thinking among librarians. It is necessary for librarians and information providers to receive some cutting-edge training and skills needed to address in order to address patrons' requirements in original and creative ways. Entrepreneurial librarianship should therefore focus on igniting the

entrepreneurial spirit. The curriculum for library and information science education in Nigeria should be adjusted in this way to help current and future librarians acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to beat their rivals in the delivery of services and in the area of creating employment for themselves.

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