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### Entrepreneurship Education in Library and Information Science: Information Brokerage Perspectives

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#### Abstract

**Purpose:** This paper discussed the entrepreneurship education in Library and Information Science from the information brokerage perspectives in the 21st century. Entrepreneurship was defined as individual's ability to turn ideas into action which includes creativity, sense of initiation, innovation and risk-taking, as well as the ability to plan and manage project in order to achieve objectives. While information broking the other end is defined as the art of providing information services to clientele or customers on demand for a fee. That is, it is a business which is aimed at profit making by providing information-oriented services to those who need them. Areas of both entrepreneurship education and information broking were mentioned.

**Method:** The research adopted expository and analytical methodology. The expository character will expose some basic elements of Entrepreneurship Education in Library and Information Science from the information brokerage perspectives. The article also highlights who an entrepreneur is, the meaning of entrepreneurship education in LIS, three

(3) point enablers were identified by Rosen (2011) <sup>[14]</sup> for entrepreneurship education and training in information science, basic skills for graduates in LIS were also identified. Factors responsible for the growth of information broking business were also identified as well as the impediments and benefits of information broking to entrepreneurship.

**Result:** Information professionals if given adequate human resources, training and focus, they will be capable of handling any of the services and this will also require lots of changes in the LIS curriculum. These changes will need a great deal of capital generation in the library schools and the library to purchase relevant infrastructures for effective teaching and research.

**Contribution:** It has been identified as a solution to the problems of unemployment because, it provides a lot of opportunities for employment, self-reliance, skills and knowledge development and success in life for graduates of LIS.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneur, Entrepreneurship, Education, Library and Information Science, Information Brokerage

#### Introduction

As the world changes, the profession of Library and Information Science also changes. Due to the present economic realities and the challenges in labour market, it will be needful to equip undergraduates with the basic entrepreneurial skills that would enable them to be self-employed after graduation. It can also be noticed that users of library no longer see the need to visit the library since library services are not attractive and packaged in ways preferred by them. It will be necessary therefore, to make library services attractive and profitable and this requires turning library services into marketable products that can be put up for sale to generate income for the library. This will also attract more users into the library. Information broking and entrepreneurship education in Nigerian library schools, are faced with issues like product branding, pricing, funding raising for entrepreneurship training, influencing, advocacy strategies by the library etc.. All these must be addressed by any library or library school that wishes to engage in marketing of its services and adding entrepreneurship education in its curriculum. In view of this, it will be necessary to give an overview of these concepts.

#### Conceptual Clarifications

##### Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship refers to an individual's ability to manipulate ideas and turn them into reality. That is, individual's ability to turn ideas into action. It includes creativity, sense of initiation, innovation and risk-taking, as well as the ability to plan and manage project in order to achieve objectives.

According to Higgins, entrepreneurship is the "function of seeking investment and production opportunities, organising an

enterprise to undertake a new production process, raising capital, hiring, labour, arranging the supply of raw materials, finding site, introducing a new technique, discovering new sources of raw materials and selecting top managers for day-to-day operations of the enterprise”.

According to Morrison (2006) <sup>[10]</sup> entrepreneurship is “the willingness and ability of a person(s) to acquire Educational skills to explore and exploit investment opportunities, establish and manage a successful business enterprise”. As a concept, it has been described by Hisrich (2008) <sup>[7]</sup> as a process of creating something new with value, devoting necessary time and effort, assuring of accompany of financial psychic, and social risks, and receiving the rewards of monetary and personal satisfaction and independence.

Nwangwu (2007) <sup>[12]</sup> says it is a process of bringing together the factors of production which include land, labour and capital so as to provide a product or services for the public consumption. The term “entrepreneurship” has been viewed from different conceptual perspectives although all revolves around innovation/creativity, competency, risk taking, self-reliance and rewards.

In the various definitions given, it can be deduced that, entrepreneurship is the process through which entrepreneurs create, nurture and grow enterprises using a reasonable degree of initiative, skills and competencies necessary to transform change into opportunities thereby deriving personal satisfaction, monetary rewards and independence. That is, entrepreneurship is the capacity and willingness to develop, organize and manage a business venture along with any of its risks in order to make profit.

Entrepreneurial spirit is characterized by innovation and risk-taking, and is an essential part of a nation’s ability to succeed in an ever changing and increasingly competitive global market place (<http://www.businessdictionary.com>, accessed July 2015). It is the bed-rock of industrial development throughout the world, especially in developed countries. In fact, the rapid emergence of entrepreneurship is being driven to an extent by technology.

### Entrepreneur

Entrepreneur is a French word which means to undertake, to pursue opportunities, to fulfill needs and wants of the people through innovation and starting business. An entrepreneur does the following:

(i) undertakes a venture, (ii) organizes it, (iii) raises capital to finance it, (iv) and assumes the whole or major part of the risk of business.

An entrepreneur is one of the most important inputs and segments of economic growth. He/she is one of the responsible persons who can set up a business or an enterprise. The Longman Dictionary of English Language and Culture defines an entrepreneur as a person who starts a company or arranges for piece of work to be done, and takes business risks in the hope of making profit. He or she is the person who perceives the market opportunity and then has the motivation, drive and ability to mobilize resources to meet it.

An entrepreneur is skilled in the use of available resources to create something new and which can sustain the individual or provide him a means of livelihood.

According to the Bureau of Public Reforms (BRP) (2009) <sup>[5]</sup>, an entrepreneur is simply a person who is able to come up with a specific business idea and skills, ability and finance to transform it into a viable business concern.

### Entrepreneurship Education in Library and Information Science

In order for graduates to be able to provide for themselves a means of living, create job opportunities for others, add value to the life and their communities and also assist in the development of their nation, there has been the inclusion of entrepreneurship education in the curriculum of tertiary institution. This is meant to increase the innovation and creativity level in students at the end of their study in the institution. Many reasons have been pointed out to justify the inclusion of entrepreneurship education in the curriculum of tertiary institutions, more importantly, in Library and Information Science.

Entrepreneurship education according to Paul (2005) <sup>[13]</sup> stands to achieve the following objectives: (i) offers functional skills for the youth that will enable them to be self-employed and self-reliant; (ii) provide the youth graduates with adequate training that will enable them to be creative and innovative in identifying novel business opportunities (iv) serve as a catalyst for economic growth and development (v) offer tertiary institution graduate with adequate training in risk management to make certain bearing feasible (vi) reduce high rate of poverty (vii) employment generation.

(viii) provide the young graduates with enough training and support that will enable them to establish a career in small and medium size business (ix) inculcate the spirit of perseverance in the youths and adults that will enable them to persist in any business venture they may embark on (x) and create smooth transition from traditional to a modern industrial economy.

According to Babalola (2011) <sup>[4]</sup>, entrepreneurship in library and information science is all about attitudinal change and development, behaviour of library and information science practitioners at the individual level to pursue opportunities through innovative leveraging of resources that for the most part are not controlled internally. Entrepreneurship makes an individual to be self-reliant, focused, functional, realistic, productive, reliable and creative where he/she can manage and utilize available resources for income generation and survival.

The issue of marketing of library services has been an unending debate because many hold it that the library is meant to provide services that is not profit targeted or centred Librarians. Entrepreneurship Education in Library and Information Science however, are faced with constant pressure of becoming more competitive and to provide information products and services to diverse users that need them. The challenges of budget cuts, increased user base, the rapid growth of material, rising costs, networking demands, competition by database vendors, and complexity in information requirements are also forcing librarianship professionals to adopt marketing strategies in order to improve the management of their library and information centres (Madhusudhan, 2008) <sup>[9]</sup>.

Umar (2009) <sup>[15]</sup> expressed that globalization and growth of ICTs have revolutionized the world in such a way that professions including Library and Information Science have to define their skills and competencies in order to create and gain competitive advantage.

From onset, libraries and information centres deals extensively with information products and services that could aid their use and reuse in creating wealth and generating more useful information and new knowledge in

line with the dictate of the society and cultural advancement. According to Joseph-Jestin and Parameswari, (2002) <sup>[8]</sup> it is a known fact that “a society that consumes and generates the most of knowledge and information is the strongest society”. “Education and training should make room for advanced knowledge and new skills in order to accommodate modern and latest developments in Library and Information Science Schools”. Ajidahun (2007) <sup>[2]</sup> citing Nzotta (1984).

Anyawu (2013) <sup>[3]</sup> identified the opportunities available to graduates of LIS as follows:

- Publishing
- Development of computer software
- Production and sale of library equipment
- Information brokerage and consultancy services
- Book selling business
- Operation of business centre and cyber café business and
- Computer maintenance.

In order to simplify these opportunities and arrange alphabetically, one can say entrepreneurship education in Library and Information Science involves the following areas;

Abstracting and indexing services; Advertising in hypertext environment; Bibliometrics; Cloud computing; Communication and technical writing; Cyber security; Databases design and management; Document procurement services; Documentation of indigenous knowledge and practices; Editing services Electronic resources acquisition and management; Financial management; Information audit; Information consulting; Information products and services; Information retrieval services/metadata mining; Lamination Service; Managerial studies; Networking and troubleshooting; Principles of environmental scanning; Programming; Publishing and printing using POD facilities; Skills acquisition in programming; Systems analysis and design; Translation services and Website design and maintenance.

To become handy, Rosen (2011) <sup>[14]</sup> identified three-point enablers that will contemplate effective delivery on the promise of entrepreneurship education and training in librarianship and information science;

- Having a curriculum that is oriented toward experiential learning and must include activities that will help students practice the skills and mind set of negotiation and also high academic standards in mathematics and related courses such as economics.
- Effective educators who have completed training in entrepreneurship and experiential learning must be one who will deliver the instruction and must continue to pursue on-going professional development.
- Volunteers should give time to reinforcing experiential learning through building business-plan, coaching, and field trips to businesses.

In a cost-effective manner, computer assisted learning can also be integrated into the process of teaching and learning of entrepreneurial skills so as to facilitate sustainable viability of the LIS profession. Conclusively, in Nigeria LIS students can be equipped with the basic entrepreneurial skills that would enable them to be self-employed after graduation through the following:

- Necessary skills that will enable LIS students to meet up with the needs of the society should be acquired.

- Professional and regulatory bodies such as Nigerian Library Association (NLA), Librarians Registration Council (LRCN), library schools and departments of library and information science should organise seminars, conferences and workshops on how best to inculcate entrepreneurship education in the LIS curriculum so as to reposition the LIS graduates to be self-reliant.
- In order to start up their own business, there should be provision of soft loans for LIS graduates by Governments at all levels and other relevant agencies.
- For reposition of LIS lecturers to impart positively, training and re-training in respect to entrepreneurial education should be intensified.
- Practical aspects of entrepreneurial education should be to LIS students and not just theory so that they can see for themselves real situation.
- Adequate funding of the library schools and libraries should be done by government so that they can provide necessary materials in our libraries and laboratories in higher institution for effective and efficient teaching and learning process.
- Enlightenment programmes on how to venture into business and necessary skills on steps to be follow when in backing in business venture should be organised by external bodies such as stakeholders in business circle; that is, managers and captains of industries.
- Excursion visits and industrial training should be encouraged in order for the LIS graduates to acquire practical work and entrepreneurial skills.

### Information Broking

The provision of processed information has for centuries been carried out without cost to the beneficiaries. Nevertheless, this attitude is fast changing and fees are now being charged for information processing, provision and service. Information broking is simply the art of providing information services to clientele or customers on demand for a fee. That is, it is a business which is aimed at profit making by providing information-oriented services to those who need them. The person who carries out this business is known as information broker. That is, he is a person who has been trained in the business of brokering information. Information broker can be seen as an independent information management professional, librarian, information scientist, or information resource manager.

Services provided by information broker are as follows:

- (i) Advisory service
- (ii) bibliographic compilation
- (iii) bindery
- (iv) Current Awareness Service
- (v) Cataloguing & Classification
- (vi) C.D ROM database searching
- (vii) Document delivery service
- (viii) Editing
- (ix) Graphic design
- (xi) Indexing and Abstracting
- (xii) Internet /E-mail Service
- (xiii) Information repackaging
- (xiv) Information management training
- (xv) Lamination Service
- (xvi) On-line database searching
- (xvii) Photocopying service
- (xviii) Publishing service
- (xix) Reference or Referral services
- (xx) Statistical data analysis
- (xxi) Software designing service
- (xxii) Telephone/Telex Service.
- (xxiii) Technical writing
- (xxiv) Video rentals.

### Factors Responsible for the Growth of Information Broking Business

**(i) The Need for Self-Employment:** Most Africa countries have triggered the interest of the LIS graduates to set up information broking business.

**(ii) The Value Placed on Information by the Managers in Organisation:** Most managers in organisation particularly corporate organisations have seen information as assets, an indispensable factor input in the provision of goods and services. Hence, the needs for the services of information brokers are necessary.

**(iii) Ability to take Risk and Problem Solving:** Information brokers have ability to take risk more the in-house information management personnel in an organisation. The need to make profit as also contributed to the reason. Information brokers have ability for problem solving and face challenges associated with their business.

**(iv) Saves Time and Effort:** Information brokers can easily package information that the client needs on time, thereby saving the client's effort of searching and acquiring the same information.

**(v) Convenience:** This involves the use of the principle of convenience by organisation demanding for the service of information brokers.

**(vi) The Cost Control and Cost Effectiveness:** Instead of employing information managers or personnel, an organisation may decide to hire the service of information brokers to reduce labour. In most cases, it is cheaper and cost effective to hire the business of an information broker when compared with average cost of rendering the same service of in-house information management worker.

**(vii) Willingness to Pay for Information Brokering Service:** May organisations are now willing to pay for information products and services and therefore making information broking to flourish.

### Impediments (Barriers) to Information Broking

**(i) Liability:** An information broker is liable for every job undertake. The reason being that an agreement has to be signed by the two party's ad failure to assignment based on business contract makes information broker liable.

**(ii) Ethical Problems:** The professional code of ethics may serve as impediment to information broking business. An information broker should not misrepresent the client and the profession.

**(iii) Copyright ad Intellectual Property Issues:** This has placed many obstacles on the part of information brokers in performing their assigned duties.

**(iv) Data Protection Act:** This is a legislation that safeguards unauthorized access and the use of personal information.

**(v) Industrial Espionage ad Illegal Act:** Spying to obtain needed information for client and other methods which may serve as illicit which could make information broker to earn more income are prohibited in information broking business.

### Benefits of Information Brokering to an Entrepreneur

The inclusion of entrepreneurship in the new curriculum of Nigerian tertiary institutions recently by the federal government of Nigeria has served as a good ground for the take-off of information brokerage. An enabling environment coupled with the awareness that library and information services as a profession is becoming one of the fastest growing and viable ventures in this age of information

telecommunications technology is required. According to Ocholla, (2009), there is an international association of information brokers -Association of Independent Information Professionals - with over 700 people who either own businesses or are interested in doing so. This can be practised also in Nigeria.

The following are some of the benefits of Information Brokering to an Entrepreneur:

(i)Business opportunities (ii) A new focus on info-entrepreneurs (iii)Employment in corporate organisations (iv) Creation of specialised areas (v) Re-Branding of information profession (different nomenclatures) (vi) Strategizing for competitive intelligence of an organisation (vii) Assisting government in drafting information policy (viii) Document delivery(ix) Boosting the frontier of entrepreneurship in Nigeria. (x) Code of conduct and ethical business practice in case of competitive intelligence work.

### Conclusion

Library is a growing organism, depending on which area of librarianship and information one finds himself or herself (Aguolu & Aguolu 2000) <sup>[1]</sup>. If Nigerian information professionals are given adequate human resources, training and focus, they will be capable of handling any of the services earlier on mentioned. This will also require lots of changes in the LIS curriculum as earlier mentioned. These changes will need a great deal of capital generation in the library schools and the library to purchase relevant infrastructures for effective teaching and research. Information broking will also emanate, just as mass communication emanated from library and information.

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