

Information Literacy Level of Lis Undergraduates towards Entrepreneurship Skills for Employment in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: The paper examines the level of Information Literacy (IL) of Library and information Science (LIS) undergraduates in their quest for entrepreneurship skills necessary for employment in Nigeria. A set of questionnaire was constructed with which data were collected and used to answer five research questions formulated for the work. It was found among others that undergraduates LIS students were information literates, book publishing and trade were the most likely entrepreneurship skill pursued by undergraduates, prospective career path heavily influenced undergraduates in their choice of entrepreneurship skill and lack of learning resources was also found to be a challenge to undergraduates in their choice of skill. Some recommendations were made including the provision of avenues for undergraduates to learn diverse skills that will enable them discover their passion early and thus ensure self-dependent.

Keywords: Information, Literacy, Entrepreneurship, Skills, Employment

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I. INTRODUCTION

Library and Information Science (LIS) is a course of discipline with bias for information literacy, reading and research in all fields of human endeavour. It is, therefore, expected that its practitioners should not only be information literate, but should have hunger for books or reading materials and research. This information literacy should be all encompassing including knowledge of the different entrepreneurship skills required for possible employment in Nigeria. It has long been suggested that graduates of any academic discipline should in addition possess one or two entrepreneurship skills that would serve as a back-up coping strategy in the event of inability to secure employment with the academic qualification. In this regard, library and information science graduates cannot be an exception.

From 1974 when the German Lawyer, Zurkowski coined the term "Information Literacy", so much has been written by librarians, information scientists and other experts on the subject matter which has become a recurring decimal in research and social discourse. Oji, Bello and Igwe (2014) cite Zurkowski as positing that information literacy can only apply to those who have learnt techniques and skills for utilizing the wide range of information tools and other primary sources in fashioning out solutions to their problems. Similarly, ACRL (2000) describes information literacy (IL) as a set of abilities that require individuals to recognize when information is needed and possessing the skill to locate and evaluate the needed information effectively.

According to Unesco (2005), information literacy lies at the base of lifelong learning given the fact that it empowers people to seek, evaluate, use and create information effectively. It is also a tool used by individual users to achieve their personal, social, professional and educational targets. It summarizes by asserting that IL is more than a concept but a basic human right in a digital world. Issa, Igwe and Ugwogu (2014) posit that information literacy contributes to several aspects of life, including learning for life, creation of new knowledge, acquisition of skills and sustenance. It also contributes to participative citizenship, personal, vocational, corporate and organizational empowerment. Others have argued that information literacy is a critical competency not only for educational success, but also for workforce readiness, development of entrepreneurial opportunities and everyday life (Enyang and Enuon, 2009 and Kiyanyui and Ocholla, 2012).

As far as IFLA/ALP; (2007) is concerned, information literacy is a self-empowering attitude and commitment by individuals at all levels of society. The purpose being to seek, access, analyze, translate, transform information and create knowledge to solve problems for the improvement of quality of life. This also implies that for someone to be considered information literate, such a person must be able to recognize when information is needed and in addition possess the ability to locate, evaluate, synthesize and use the in problem solving and decision making.

Having been convinced of the difficulty faced by students in an effort to learn everything they need to know in their various fields of study within the academic duration, Akidi & Agbese (2014) assert that information literacy, therefore, provides a helping hand in equipping them with the needed critical skills to become independent learners. They argue that acquisition of skills in information literacy enhances opportunities for self-directed learning of citizens. It therefore, goes without saying that provision of information will not in itself create a more informed citizenry without a complementary cluster of abilities necessary to use information effectively. Findings from a research by Pounak, Givi and Fateme (2016), show that the level of media and information literacy of students is desirable, while the level of characteristics of entrepreneurship is relatively desirable. According to the research, the impact of information literacy on entrepreneurial ability was confirmed and the impact of media literacy on entrepreneurial ability was rejected.

Entrepreneurial skills are critical for undergraduates, especially in the face of high-level unemployment in Nigeria. These are possible skills that are capable of equipping graduates with the capacity to set up business enterprises on their own if they are unable to secure government employment or by choice decide to be in the private sector. Library schools have realized the importance of entrepreneurship skills to few graduates and, have therefore, included them in their curricula. Many LIS Schools now teach courses with heavy doses of entrepreneurship skills in them.

Forbes Magazine (2018) has identified top skills that every entrepreneur requires. These include the following:

1. **Resiliency** – ability to weather the ups and downs of any business;
2. **Focus** – being focused in chosen entrepreneurship;
3. **Invest for the long term** – Planning on quarterly basis rather than working on overnight success;
4. **Find and Manage People** – networking to find and meet the right people;
5. **Sell** – every entrepreneur is a sales person: either selling their ideas, products or success;
6. **Learn** – successful entrepreneurs accept that they do not know it all and, therefore, are always ready to learn;
7. **Self-Reflection** – reflecting on the past and planning for the future; and
8. **Self-Reliance** – being resourceful enough to depend on themselves.

Similarly, Idea and Value (2018), highlights seven essential skills needed by any entrepreneur who intends to succeed, including Ambition, Willingness to learn, Ability to Listen, Creativity, Assertiveness/Confidence, Perseverance and Courage/Risk taking.

Due to the growing affinity between entrepreneurial skills and employment opportunities for librarians, it has, therefore, become necessary to investigate the information literacy level of LIS undergraduates towards these critical concepts.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Information literacy may be defined as recognition of when and why information is needed, where to find it, how to access and evaluate, use and communicate it in an ethical manner. According to Boeriswati (2012) information literacy is the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate, and compute information, using printed and written materials associated with varying contexts. LIS undergraduates are expected to be exposed to information literacy on entrepreneurship to enable them create jobs for themselves as there is very limited white-collar jobs available and the alternative way to survive in this era is to be self-dependent. According to Bruce (2003), information literacy has been identified to include the capability of individuals to identify, locate and critically evaluate information for decision-making, knowledge creation and problem solving. Embracing information literacy on entrepreneurship by LIS undergraduates will help them in making decision and identifying possible suitable jobs to be created. LIS undergraduates who are information literate will be able to recognize the need for information especially on entrepreneurship skills, determine the extent of entrepreneurship information needed, critically evaluate the information and its sources, use the information effectively to learn, create new knowledge (jobs), solve problems and make decisions on the type of entrepreneurship skill to engage in.

Garner (2005) argues that ‘information literacy encompasses knowledge of one’s information concern and needs and the ability to identify, locate, organize and effectively create, use and communicate information to address issues or problems at hand; it is prerequisite for participating effectively in the information society, and it is part of the basic human right of lifelong learning.’ Newton (2006) opines that information literacy knowledge has to do with knowing: when you have a need for information; the resources available to you; how to find information; the need to evaluate results; how to work with or exploit results; the ethics and responsibility of using information; how to communicate and share and manage your research findings. With the full knowledge that thousands of professional librarians are being graduated each year from different institutions, it is important for LIS undergraduates to come to proper understanding that there is a lot of

competition in the labour market with few opportunities of being employed. It is therefore advisable that students should take advantage of opportunities provided on campus to specialize on any entrepreneurship skills in librarianship.

According to IFLA/ALP (2007), information literacy is defined as a self-empowering attitude and commitment by individuals at all strata of the society, to seek, access, analyze, translate and transform information and create knowledge to solve problems in order to achieve personal, social, occupational and learning goals for the improvement of quality of life. Information literacy is basically a set of skills allowing people to make the most of both formal and informal learning opportunities. From the foregoing definition, LIS undergraduates are exposed to information that will help them to cultivate the culture of empowering themselves through their profession rather than sit down expecting white collar jobs or employment which may not be available. This self-empowering will not only be beneficial to LIS undergraduates but to the society at large.

Concept of Entrepreneurship

The word entrepreneurship as defined by Ronstadt (1996) is the dynamic process of creating incremental wealth, created by individuals who assume the major risk in terms of equity, time and/or career commitment of providing value for some product or service. The product or service rendered by the entrepreneur may not be new but must add certain value to make it unique in order to sell in the labour market. Darma(2004), asserts that entrepreneurship involves bringing about change to achieve some benefit which may be financial or self-satisfaction to the entrepreneur. Some undergraduates want to be independent with little or no interest in working for other people, but they rather bring innovation to their profession as well as enjoy the benefit of being their own bosses. According to Ugoani and Nwaubani (2014), entrepreneurship is the willingness and ability of individuals to seek out investment opportunities, establish and run enterprises successfully. LIS undergraduates are now exposed to entrepreneurship through information literacy and are willing to take up the opportunities in creating investment through their profession. They are now more exposed and aware of the entrepreneurship opportunities associated with their profession. From the above definitions, entrepreneurship involves the acquisition of certain skills in a field of study as a means of establishing investment and wealth creation.

Entrepreneurship Education in Librarianship

Entrepreneurship education according to Emeraton (2008) deals with those attitudes and skills that are necessary for the individual to respond to his environment in the process of conserving, starting and managing a business enterprise. According to the author, it was observed that teaching propels students to develop skills or attitude towards engaging in creating or managing their own business. In librarianship education, some students direct their passion into book publishing or information consultancy based on the lecture they had in the class and so redirect their passion into establishing publishing firm.

Saka (2014), states that entrepreneurship education focuses on developing understanding and capacity for entrepreneurial behaviours, skills and attributes in widely different context. This view aligns with the view that LIS undergraduates undergo entrepreneurship training through courses like information brokering, indexing and abstracting, book trading etc. which develop students' understanding and knowledge on entrepreneurship and expose them to entrepreneurial spirit.

Areas of entrepreneurship for LIS undergraduates

Luka & Hajara (2013), identify some areas of entrepreneurship for librarians to include:

Book Publishing

Indexing and Abstracting

Information Consultancy

Organizing seminars and workshops

These and many other areas have been identified to be among entrepreneurship areas in librarianship that make this field a profession which allows undergraduates to acquire entrepreneurial skills to develop and sustain businesses.

Benefits of Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is regarded as the practice of beginning a new trade, innovation or reviving an existing business, for capitalizing on fresh opportunities. Ordinarily, entrepreneurship can be difficult as many business ventures fail to survive initially especially at the take-off stage. Irrespective of these difficulties, entrepreneurship has a lot of benefits for both the entrepreneur and the society at large.

Steven (2012) and Clayton (2015), identify some benefits of entrepreneurship to include:

1. Opportunity to gain control.

Owning a firm or a business endows the entrepreneurs with the independence and opportunity to control their own business. They can aim to achieve targets that are important to them. Entrepreneurship provides entrepreneurs a chance to take decisions according to their own wishes. LIS undergraduates just like other undergraduates take this opportunity to establish their own businesses in order to take decision according to their own wishes.

2. Offers a chance to make a difference

Some people work hard aiming to make a difference in the society which gives rise to a recent phenomenon known as social entrepreneurship. People often work hard to locate significant opportunities and try to find innovative solutions, pressing and challenging issues of society. Some LIS undergraduates set up business outfits with the aim of creating employment for the public and ultimately reduce unemployment in the society.

3. Makes for High Profits

High profit return is one of the critical factors that motivate entrepreneurs to take up all the challenges associated with business. Profits play a vital role in any decision made by entrepreneurs. Many LIS undergraduates, who aim at becoming wealthy, resolve to take the path of entrepreneurship to achieve wealth.

4. Helps people attend full potential

Many entrepreneurs are known to enjoy their vocation or occupation and therefore consider their enterprise to be an instrument of self-actualization and expression. Owning a business outfit acts as a test for creativity skills, abilities, and determination of an entrepreneur. It is also taken up as a challenge towards the achievement of success.

5. Offers a chance to pursue specific interests.

Many entrepreneurs initially do not have faith in their enterprise except to the point that such outfits are often closely associated with their interests. In such circumstance, there is hardly any age of retirement by entrepreneurs. Therefore, many LIS undergraduates find fulfillment in the acquisition of entrepreneurship skills. With all these benefits, LIS undergraduates can now consider the alternative of running their own professional businesses rather than looking for white collar job or doing jobs for others.

Challenges of entrepreneurship skills in LIS undergraduates

There are many factors that hinder LIS undergraduates or librarians from acquiring entrepreneurial skills. Ugwu & Ezeani (2012), Molaro (2013) and Farkas (2006) identified some challenges as follows:

1. Lack of entrepreneurial spirit: Many LIS undergraduates or LIS professionals lack the entrepreneurial spirit to establish viable businesses that would make them relevant in the knowledge age. Rather, they go about looking for already made job opportunities while a good number of non-librarians are being magnificently enterprising.

2. Fear of competition and failure: fear of competition and failures hinder LIS undergraduates and professionals from venturing into entrepreneurship. These fears may arise out of lack of basic entrepreneurship training which would enable them to identify and harness the abundant opportunities available in their environment.

3. Lack of specific skills: Many LIS undergraduates or professionals lack various forms of ICT skills relevant for successful entrepreneurship. ICT is now in every facet of life and LIS undergraduates who fail to learn these skills during their school days are bound to face a challenge posed by ICT at the outside world.

4. Problem of generating compelling business ideas: Several LIS professionals have all it takes to become successful entrepreneurs. However, LIS undergraduates aspiring to be entrepreneurs are faced with the problem of how to generate compelling business ideas for new businesses. Not knowing how to generate ideas would breed frustration and make the aspiring LIS undergraduate end up starting a business akin to the one he has seen around him which may not be his heart desire.

III. METHODOLOGY

A descriptive survey research design was adopted to elicit responses from the entire student population of two hundred and twenty nine (229) from the Department of Library and Information Science, Abia State University, Uturu that constitute the population of the population. Copies of the questionnaire designed were distributed to the entire population of 229, and 207 copies of the questionnaire were retrieved and found usable. The respondents were made to answer the questions in the questionnaire using a 4-point Likert scale. Items with mean value of 3.00 and above were given positive interpretation, while those that are below the mean value of 3.00 were given negative interpretation. Data collected were analyzed with the use of mean.

IV. FINDINGS

Research Question 1: What is the information literacy level of LIS undergraduates of ABSU towards entrepreneurship skills for employment?

Table 1: Information Literacy Skills

NO	Questionnaire items	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Mean
1	Surfing the web to monetary purpose	116	72	16	3	3.45
2	Using the Internet to generate traffic	124	55	20	8	3.42
3	Aware that web development fetches income	134	46	19	8	3.47
4	Knowledge of learning bibliography online and making side income	97	84	17	9	2.89
5	Book publishing procedures could be seen on YouTube and made a source of income	89	73	31	14	3.14
	Grand mean					3.27

Table 1 reveals that library and information science students were information literate to a very high extent as all questionnaire items register mean scores greater than the bench mark of 2.5. Items 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 returned mean scores of 3.45, 3.42, 3.47, 2.89 and 3.14 respectively. While the benchmark returned 3.27 which is well above the criterion bench mark of 2.5. This therefore indicates that undergraduates were information literate.

Research Question 2: What entrepreneurship skills are LIS undergraduates of ABSU likely to prefer?

Table 2: Entrepreneurship skill likely preferred by LIS undergraduates

NO	Questionnaire Items	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Mean
1	Book publishing and trade	122	48	25	12	3.35
2	Information brokerage and consultancy	114	47	28	18	3.24
3	Compilation of Bibliography	108	58	32	9	3.28
4	Referencing	131	34	21	21	3.32
5	Indexing and Abstracting services	85	74	28	20	3.08
	Grand mean					3.25

Table 2 reveals the entrepreneurship skills that undergraduates of library and information science students are likely to prefer. Item 1 indicates with a mean score of 3.35 that they prefer Book Trade and Publishing is the most preferred entrepreneurship skill while compilation of bibliography and information brokerage and consultancy with mean scores of 3.28 and 3.24 respectively are the second and third most preferred skills by students of ABSU. Items 4 and 5 indicate mean scores of 3.32 and 3.08 indicate that a few undergraduates also prefer referencing and indexing abstracting services as entrepreneurship skills.

Research Question 3: What are the factors that influence undergraduate preferences to entrepreneurship skills?

Table 3: Factors influencing undergraduate preferences to entrepreneurship skill

NO	Questionnaire Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean
1	Prospective career path	106	48	34	19	3.16
2	Cash flow of the moment	88	68	29	22	3.07
3	Prospect of being independent	124	34	25	24	3.24
4	Exploration of new ideas	64	74	38	31	2.52
5.	Passion for entrepreneurship	85	74	28	20	3.08
	Grand mean					3.25

Table 3 reveals factors influencing undergraduates' preferences to entrepreneurship skill. All items returned mean scores above 2.5 which is the mean bench mark. This, in essence reveals mean scores of 3.16,

3.07, 3.24, 2.52 and 3.08. Considering the bench mark of 2.5 and the grand mean score of 3.25, all items are acceptable as joining in shaping the career prospects of undergraduates.

Research Question 4: What are the challenges faced by undergraduate in their choice of skills?

Table 4: Challenges faced by undergraduates in their choice of skills

NO	Questionnaire Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean
1	Fear of failure	72	58	42	35	2.08
2	Poor enlightenment	89	65	41	12	3.11
3	Absence of skilled resources	146	29	19	13	3.48
4	Lack of learning resources	152	34	12	0	3.63
5	Financial Backup	138	34	12	3	3.57
	Grand mean					3.31

Table 4 shows the challenges faced by undergraduates in their choice of entrepreneur skill. Item 1 revealed with a mean score of 2.08 that undergraduates are not perturbed with fear of failure in choosing a skill, however with a mean score of 3.11, item 2 revealed that poor enlightenment was a challenge as regards the choice of skill. Items 3, 4 and 5 revealed mean scores of 3.48, 3.63 and 3.57 that absence of skilled resources, lack of learning resources and financial back up were challenges faced by undergraduates.

Research Question 5: What are the possible solutions to the challenges?

The respondents provided varied solutions to the challenges faced by undergraduates in their choice entrepreneurial skills. Some of the solutions advanced by the respondents include the following:

- (i). Introduction of full-fledged entrepreneurial courses to prepare undergraduates to take advantage of the skills being acquired without being afraid of the future.
- (ii). Setting up of a mechanism for the sensitization and enlightenment of undergraduates on entrepreneurship skills for employment.
- (iii). Emphasizing possible avenues and tactics to securing funds or loans in order put acquired skills to use.

V. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Findings from this study reveal that undergraduates are information literate which is beneficial for the survival of our youths. These findings agree with findings of Boeriswati (2012) who defined information literacy as the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate, and compute information, using printed and written materials associated with varying contexts. This ability will to a large extent ensure that knowledge is dispersed as much as possible between students.

The findings from this study reveal that book publishing and trade are the most likely entrepreneurship skills preferred and pursued by undergraduates. This finding is in line with Saka (2014) assertion that entrepreneurship education focuses on developing understanding and capacity for pursuit of entrepreneurial behaviours, skills and attributes in widely different context. This implies that undergraduates might have varying degrees on why to pursue book publishing and trade.

The findings from this study reveal that prospective career path will be a big influence on the undergraduates' selection or preference of skill. This study aligns with Steven (2012) and Clayton (2015) who identified benefits which might influence undergraduate career paths, amongst others to include: Opportunity to get control, offers a chance to make a difference, to reap high profits, helps people work to their full potential, and offers a chance to pursue their interests. It is pertinent to note that all aspects of life incentives play great role in shaping the career paths chosen by people.

The findings from this study reveal that a lack of learning resources poses a great challenge on the undergraduates succeeding in their paths, this also could ball down to finances which is also high on the list. This finding also aligns with the findings of Ugwu and Ezeani (2012), Molaro (2013) and Farkas (2006) who identified challenges that hinder undergraduates from pursuing skills, among others are: lack of entrepreneurial spirit, fear of competition and failure, lack of specific skills, and problem of generating compelling business ideas.

VI. CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results presented as well as the findings made, the following conclusions are hereby drawn:

1. It was found that undergraduates LIS students were information literates.
2. It was revealed that book publishing and trade were the most likely entrepreneurship skill pursued by undergraduates.

3. This study also established that prospective career path heavily influenced undergraduates as a factor in choice of entrepreneurship skill.
4. Lack of learning resources was also found to be a challenge to undergraduates in their choice of skill.

In consideration of the result from the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Undergraduates should be provided the avenue to learn diverse skills that will enable them discover their passion on time and thus ensuring self-dependent.
2. Other skills should be introduced to the undergraduates to ensure that they have a variety of options to choose from as there are several skills other than book publishing.
3. It will be necessary to teach the student also the joy in passion of one's job, that way ensuring that it is not just about money but job fulfillment also.
4. Finances and resources should be provided for easy learning and understanding as such enabling the students to pursue whatever skill they wish to pursue.

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