

Entrepreneurship Education as Tool for Economic Growth in Nigeria: The Roles of Libraries

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship as a tool for the economic growth of a country depends on the willingness of the citizens to embark on training and education which may be informal or formal education. To acquire entrepreneurship skills, the entrepreneurs need to embark on entrepreneurship education to be self-reliant after graduation and even become employers' of labour to increase the economic growth of the country. Given these benefits of entrepreneurship in the nation's economy, the Nigerian government introduced the study of entrepreneurship as a course of study in Nigerian educational systems. Libraries have roles of providing relevant information resources and services to aid these undergraduates in acquiring the necessary entrepreneurial skills for the creation and management of a business enterprise. Based on this background, this paper will discuss the concept of entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship education, libraries, roles the libraries can play in entrepreneurship education for the economic growth of Nigeria. Hence the growth of any country's economy depends largely on the educational status and level of access to relevant information by the citizenry. The relevant information needed is acquired, processed and stored in the libraries under the supervision of librarians. To become a successful entrepreneur one needs access to relevant information on how to create a business, target your customers, market, position your product and compete with competitors. The paper also explored the challenges libraries face in promoting entrepreneurship in Nigeria, which included poor funding, inadequate manpower, low internet bandwidth, poor reading habits and inadequate facilities.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurship Education, Libraries, Economic Growth

Introduction

Entrepreneurship is "an 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 the project to achieve objectives" (Awujoola & Ikegune, 2018:1). Entrepreneurship involves developing new ideas, creating a lasting and establishing successful business that will stand the

test of time. Filion (2011) defined entrepreneurship based on six components comprising of innovation of ideas, opportunity recognition, risk management, action, use of resources and added value. Fayolle, Fernandes and Raposo (2017) describe entrepreneurship as the process of making the required changes in the labour market rules to create more employment and promote the efficient distribution of jobs at various levels which results in the development of self-employment culture and reduction in social gaps. Diandra and Azmy (2020) defined entrepreneurship as an act of recognizing an opportunity, creating of business and nurturing the business while considering the environmental factors, functioning of institutions and then the market. The individual identifies an opportunity to be pursued and then as an entrepreneur seeks the resources from the broader society to achieve its goals. Entrepreneurship is aimed at identifying and exploiting opportunities. It is not just meant to reduce unemployment, poverty and under-employment in the developing countries but it is targeted as a technique for fast economic growth among developed and developing countries (Ubong 2013). Ogunlana (2018) asserts that entrepreneurship helps in fostering the economic growth of a country during a recession by providing job opportunities, reducing unemployment, creating products and increasing productivity and savings.

Entrepreneurship education is vital in the economic growth of a country due to an increase in unemployment and social vices which are attributed to unemployment like drug abuse, cultism, kidnapping, poverty and an increase in prostitution as witnessed in Nigeria today. Every year many educational institutions in the country produce thousands of graduates that lack the required skills to start their business and to be employed by some industries thereby becoming a burden to society. According to Ogunlana (2018: p1) "Nigeria has sizeable human

capacity with an estimated population of 195 million. Seventy per cent of this population are in youth demography. This growing youth population urgently needs empowerment system to engage the abundant human resource."

Currently, in Nigeria unemployment, insecurity, crime and even global economic recession have caused salaried workers to be prematurely retired or even sacked outrightly without benefits. This calls for rethinking, re-orientation, guidance and counselling about our career goals and academic pursuit. Furthermore, Okafor (2011) observed that Nigerian streets are filled with many young hawkers who could be gainfully employed in some enterprises and still be employers of labour. These social problems lead to the inclusion of entrepreneurial studies in Nigeria education.

The Federal Ministry of Education revised the minimum academic standard on August 4, 2004, as cited by Onifade (2004), he pointed out that the inclusion of entrepreneurial studies in Nigeria educational system is to reposition the curriculum to produce knowledgeable skilled and entrepreneurial graduates that would meet the needs of the labour market, be self-employed and create a job for others to enhance the economic development of the Nigerian citizens. In support of this view Awujoola and Ikegune (2018) emphasised that the inclusion of entrepreneurship education in the curriculum of the tertiary institution is aimed at increasing the innovation and creativity level in students while undergoing their studies, so that at the end of their study they will be able to provide for themselves a means of living, create job opportunities for others, add value to their lives and their communities while assisting the government in economic and nation-building. Ediagbonya (2013) pointed out that entrepreneurship education is a kind of education given to students aiming at developing entrepreneurship qualities in them which

should be followed up with supportive services to ensure smooth take-off and success running of the business. The supportive services invariably should could information on funding, how to source fund, referral services, guidance and counselling services.

George in Idogbe and Philip (2020:3) defined a library as "a collection of resources in a variety of format that is organized by information professional or other experts who provide physical, digital, bibliographic, or intellectual access with the mission of educating, informing, or entertaining a variety of audience and the goal of stimulating individual learning and advancing society as a whole". The services the libraries provide to users in the physical environment and virtual space (Online) are information literacy (user education), reprographics services, book reservation services, consultancy services, inter-library loan and document delivery service, abstracting and indexing services, translation services, Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI), referral services, current awareness services and literature search. Based on the above background, the focus of this study is to examine the roles of libraries in promoting entrepreneurship education as tool for economic growth in Nigeria.

Entrepreneurship Education and Economic Growth

Entrepreneurship and economic development are interwoven notwithstanding the form of the economic and political set-up of a country, for a country's economy to grow there must be high entrepreneurship development (Schumpeter in Abosede and Onakoya, 2013). Entrepreneurship education is aimed at equipping an individual with the necessary skills and knowledge needed for acquiring initiative on how to create jobs, create innovations and ideas which will increase individual and national income to affect the economic growth of one's country. With the knowledge of mastering skills for identifying opportunities and moving

towards developing these opportunities in creating wealth, entrepreneurs can be regarded as pioneers of change in any country's economy

Economic growth or development as explained by Gamede and Uleanya (2020: P 2) is progress in the economy or the qualitative measures of economic development which are the adoption of new technology and the transition from agricultural-based to an industrial-based economy which brings improvement of standards of living of people in a country". So economic growth of any country can be realized when there is an increase in the productivity of the nation through trade and industries which enhances the economic, political and social well-being of the citizens of such nation.

Goods and services produced by entrepreneurs after their graduation can be exported to other countries to attract foreign exchange. Exportation of goods and services increases a country's foreign exchange reserve and an increase in foreign reserve will help the Nigerian government in the importation of capital goods for domestic production while helping in balancing deficit payment for the country. Jordaan and Eita, in Gamede and Uleanya (2020) stated that the export of goods and services increases investment level, increase the wider market for domestic products and job opportunities to enhance economic growth.

According to Abosede and Onakoya, (2013:2), entrepreneurship with innovation is a vehicle to return the economy to a period of sustained economic growth, brings about a better standard of living and is a key to economic dynamism during an economic crisis. So for the entrepreneurs to become innovative they must be informed on the economic status of the country and the crisis the country is facing or the economic crises other nations of the world have faced

and the strategies they employed in getting out of these crises. The information will help the new entrepreneurs to know how to start their own business and how to manage the risks involved in the business. All this information can be accessed in the information resources and databases available in libraries. Also, the mastering of entrepreneurship skills will bring social profit for the society and the government. This will ensure decent distribution of income, reduces social problems, increase technology transfers and motivates investment (Badria, Nahidib and Ghalamic, 2018).

Roles of Libraries in Entrepreneurship Education in Nigeria

Entrepreneurship should be seen as a process of creating something new with values by improving on present ideas, time and energy in pursuing opportunities without regrets to the resources currently controlled. This is why entrepreneurs are seen as innovation and risk-takers which could be achieved effectively through education and training whether formal or informal. Entrepreneurship education helps in inculcating the knowledge of value by pulling together a unique package of resources to exploit opportunities. The education of entrepreneurs cannot be effective without functional libraries that will supply the needed information resources for the inculcation of the knowledge and skills needed for the exploitation of business opportunities. The objectives of libraries whether public, schools, special, academic and national are to acquire, process, store and provide current, accurate and relevant information resources and services to these trainee entrepreneurs. These libraries provide links to information for reading, research, information on how to target consumer for your product, market the product and acquire self-knowledge.

Self-knowledge and receptiveness to ideas are some of the attributes of an entrepreneur which implies understanding and not overestimating his strength and weakness but the entrepreneur should appreciate his abilities and understand his limitations (Uba and Oseni in Okongwu and Saleh 2004). This can only be done through acquiring relevant knowledge and information which are orally or documented experiences of people which are collected, processed and made available in the libraries for present and future use.

Furthermore, receptive to new ideas which imply a flexible frame of mind and readiness to accept current trends create the dynamism required to propel the business ventures to a profitable level and possibly expand the business. Entrepreneurship encourages an individual to be positive in absorbing new things, knowledge, ideas and process, solve problems encountered in acquiring the new ideas. This knowledge is documented in books and non-books materials and kept in the libraries for the education and training of new entrepreneurs.

Libraries help in inculcating self-confidence and self-esteem in entrepreneurs by providing relevant information and linking the students involved in entrepreneurship education with local and internal business experts for them to share knowledge and experiences. This is carried out using reference sources like the business directory and who is who in the business world. In support of this Yusufu (2011) pointed out that the reference desk now houses a special collection for entrepreneurs to enable them to find information on local and international businesses.

Information found in libraries helps an entrepreneur in conducting a feasibility study of his small-scale business which may include financial aspect, technical and special considerations for the projection of intended business. Libraries help entrepreneurs to keep up to date with the

current industry news, gossip, warning of potentials dangers in business through the consultation of library resources like the printed books, eBooks, abstracts, indexes, journals. Industrial profile, directories, trade catalogues, local and databases.

Entrepreneurial education and skill acquisition in various communities in Nigeria cannot function effectively without the provision of functional libraries in the primary, secondary and tertiary institution for effective learning and skills acquisitions. Entrepreneurship education helps students to acquire skills, knowledge and competencies for self-employment and the creation of job for others in the future which helps in the economic growth of any nation. Job creation will help a lot in solving the problems of unemployment and insecurity in Nigeria since there is an adage that says that “an idle mind is a devil’s workshop”. When people are gainfully employed they have less time to think of engaging in crime. To achieve the acquisition of knowledge and skills needed in creating these job in institutions of learning the library is the heart of any academic institution because of its functions. The library provided information resources for research, teaching and studies. To produce a knowledgeable entrepreneur in Nigeria there is the need for the establishment and proper funding of functional libraries which should not be swept under the carpet because of the vital roles they play.

Entrepreneurs are taught how to access relevant information using the internet available in libraries. Also, the students involved in entrepreneurship education can be taught how to obtain loans and how to service the loans during the seminars and workshop. The information shared on such seminars and workshops will be recorded on CDs, DVDs and the video recording uploaded to the library website to viewed by the users whenever they need information.

In a nutshell, Schoenbrum (2017) concluded that libraries are responsible for driving education for economic development and nation-building by providing a conducive reading environment for citizens to access a broad range of information to meet their information needs.

Challenges Libraries face in Encouraging Entrepreneurship in Nigeria

1. Poor funding of the libraries as most libraries in Nigeria is stocked with old and outdated information resources especially the public libraries located in communities where these unemployed youths are seen in large numbers.
2. Lack of human resources to teach entrepreneurship studies and professional librarians who should be in charge of the libraries to manage the libraries.
3. Poor infrastructures as some of these libraries are poorly equipped for imparting entrepreneurship skills to their users. Infrastructures like computers, chairs, reading table, internet connectivity for searching and accessing information from the web.
4. Some librarians hide their lights under a bushel by failing to promote their library services to users through proper advocacy using the library website, posters, keyways to make the new and intended entrepreneurs identify their presence and services they will offer to faculty and students involved in entrepreneurship education. To achieve this there is an urgent need for the librarians to market the library resources and services to the citizens of this country to create awareness of information resources and services available for entrepreneurship education.
5. The poor reading culture among the citizens of the country affects the utilization of the available information resources in the libraries. The libraries may be sited in our communities with relevant collections for the acquisition of entrepreneurship information resources but not

many people are ready to use these information resources for the acquisition of relevant knowledge and skills for entrepreneurship education and training.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion, the following recommendations were made;

1. The libraries should organise seminars and conference for the youths in their various communities to encourage the growth of entrepreneurship in Nigeria. The libraries can invite experts as quest speakers or resources persons to come and share their experiences on how they started their businesses, challenges and strategies they employed in solving these problems.
2. The use of mobile libraries in local areas where libraries are far from the citizen should be reintroduced and encouraged to help the citizenry have access to relevant information needed for the growth of entrepreneurship among the people especially the youths of this country. Such activities will help a lot in reducing the high rate of unemployment, increase economic growth in the country.
3. The federal government of Nigeria should award the scholarship to students studying entrepreneurship in higher institutions to encourage more students to enrol in this field of study. Furthermore, the allocation of fund given to libraries irrespective of their types should be increased for them to acquire relevant and current information resources and infrastructures for the libraries.
4. There should be in-service training and retraining of teachers in the field of entrepreneurial studies and librarians for the effective functioning of the libraries and the program. Entrepreneurship education should be included in the curriculum of library and information science to help prepare the undergraduate students in library and information science for the

necessary skills needed for the acquisition and provision of information resources and services for entrepreneurial education.

5. Reading culture should be encouraged among the children, youths and adults in all levels of education and the communities to enhance the acquisition of knowledge, skills and new trend in entrepreneurship for the economic development of the nation.

6. The Nigerian government should see the urgent need for the standardization of our libraries to serve the citizenry effectively with this information. The standardization of the libraries entails engaging qualified professionals to manage the libraries, provision of relevant information resources and other facilities especially Information Communication Technologies (ICTs).

7. Government should promote the collection and preservation of indigenous knowledge from members of the community. This is done by granting access to indigenous knowledge through creating an environment that permits face-to-face discussion and informal teaching on issues that might be useful to members of the community on the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills and such recordings should be kept in the libraries for the present and future use.

8. The Nigerian government should see the urgent need for the standardization of our libraries to serve the citizenry effectively with required information. The standardization of the libraries entails engaging qualified professionals to manage the libraries, provision of relevant information resources and other facilities especially Information Communication Technologies.

9. Also, the government should promote the collection and preservation of indigenous knowledge from members of the community. This is done by granting access to indigenous knowledge through creating an environment that permits face-to-face discussion and informal teaching on issues that might be useful to members of the community on the acquisition of

entrepreneurial skills and such recordings should be kept in the libraries for the present and future use.

Conclusion

The roles of libraries in entrepreneurship education for economic development in Nigeria cannot be overemphasized. Judging from the high rate of unemployed youths, and economic instability, high exchange rate, and increase in crime rate there is an urgent need for the government to invest in entrepreneurship education whether informal or formal education for the realization of self-employment and increase in the economic growth of the country. Libraries play vital roles in entrepreneurship education for the economic growth of the nation through the effective supply of information resources, linking entrepreneurs to local and internal businesses and experts to acquire and share knowledge and skills needed to be innovative in developing new ideas for the recognition of opportunities for creating and managing of business enterprises. When the libraries are functional and have current and relevant information resources on entrepreneurial studies more entrepreneurs will like to patronize the libraries to access information to create new businesses, create jobs, increase productivity, steady market and increase their profits invariable the effect will be felt on the economic growth of the nation. Therefore, there is an urgent need for a skill-based education system and the development of awareness on entrepreneurship to create an entrepreneurial environment that will help entrepreneurs to start their venture and to develop the economy.

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