

## **Role of Libraries in Enhancing Entrepreneurship Education in Nigerian Universities**

**Dim, C.L; Osadebe, N.E.**  
Nnamdi Azikiwe Library,  
University of Nigeria, Nsukka

and  
**Mole, A.J.C**  
Department of Library & Information Science,  
University of Nigeria, Nsukka

### **Abstract**

This paper focused on the role of libraries in enhancing entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities. It examined the concept and significance of entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities; the stipulations of the National Universities Commission on the teaching of entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities, and the present state of teaching entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities. The paper further examined obstacles to effective teaching of entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities, ways the university libraries can contribute to solution of the problem and enhancement of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria universities. Recommendations on ways of promoting the role of the library in enhancing entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities were made. Recommendations include; developing special collections and services to address entrepreneurship education information needs and introduction and improvement of the provision of online library and information services on entrepreneurship education in libraries.

**Key Words:** Entrepreneurship, Education, Library, Role, Universities.

### **Introduction**

The world is currently standing at the threshold of the information age and knowledge society characterized by challenges and promises posed by the momentous changes in our society at

the global and local levels. Many of these changes had their roots in the 20th century, courtesy of advances in technology. At the heart of these advancements is information. Without doubt also, the central custodian of

this information-banking is the library (Iloeje, 2000). The library is a collection of information resources and knowledge organised systematically for ease of access and effective use. Library is the engine room and the power house where information is collected, stored, processed and retrieved for use (Anafulu in Mole, 2007). It is the undisputed provider of information services and resources and in fact constitutes the gateway to the world's information resources.

The library serves as an important source of information in different areas of educational endeavour, including entrepreneurship education. The library is a dynamic instrument of education. It provides education that could be seen as growth in the life of an individual or society (Eke and Ihejirika, 2012). It provides tools and resources which support all educational instructions and development of individuals in skill acquisition which will help in growth and development. Aguolu and Aguolu (2002) indicated that the major role of libraries is facilitating greater access to information for every category of people in its user community.

Libraries can, no doubt, make a significant difference in the way and quality of life of the Nigerian public, in assisting special classes of people, acquire relevant and special education as well as provide information services to support entrepreneurship education; and in packaging information services to enable members of the public to acquire relevant and needed entrepreneurship

education and training (Leeder, 2015). This is aimed at making them to explore opportunities and maximize their potentials and knowledge base necessary to fit into required occupations and vocations.

The library has been found to be a veritable tool for the development of the individual to contribute meaningfully to both self and societal development through a planned and systematic provision of education so desired. Education so desired does not only mean knowledge of concepts, ideas, principles etc but should amongst other things be an instrument for the development and production of a disciplined and skilled labour force. Public Library Research Group of the London and Home Countries Branch of the Library Association of the UK as cited in Boyd (1993) noted that one of the major objectives of libraries is education, in the area of fostering and providing means for the self development of the individual / group at whatever stages of education, closing the gap between the individual and recorded knowledge. All libraries disseminate information to their clients for proper growth and development as well as in entrepreneurship education.

Entrepreneurship is the willingness and ability of an individual to seek out investment opportunities in an environment and be able to establish and run an enterprise successfully based on the identified opportunities (Nwafor, 2007). It is about seeing opportunities and bringing about change (Brooks,

2012). Veronica, (2015) sees it as a willingness and ability to find out an investment opportunity, apply the energy towards the creation of an enterprise and convert a new idea into a successful innovation. According to Entrepreneurship Centre of Miami University of Ohio as cited by Mamman (2008), entrepreneurship is the process of identifying, developing and bringing a vision to life. The vision may be an opportunity or simply a better way to do something. The result of this process is the creation of a new venture, formed under conditions of risk and considerable uncertainty.

Entrepreneurship education, therefore, is the key, the skill that opens the way to economic growth and development. Mole and Dim (2010) asserted that entrepreneurship education is a planned instruction and training that equips an individual with relevant knowledge and skills in a particular occupation or vocation. It stimulates investment interest with business, brings about wealth creation and eradicates hunger and poverty in the society. Arua (2012) sees education as the direct means by which individuals seek to shape their destinies and transform themselves for better. Entrepreneurship education is education for empowerment.

In line with the above, entrepreneurship education is not only significant but strategic because of the continuously increasing strategic importance of entrepreneurs in economic development of the society. The Library should constitute a

veritable vehicle for entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities. How this can be achieved is the focus of this paper. The paper examined the stipulations of the National Universities Commission on the teaching of entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities, and the present state of teaching entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities. The paper also examined obstacles to effective teaching of entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities; ways the university libraries can contribute to solution of the problem and enhancement of entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities, and made recommendations on ways of promoting the role of the library in enhancing entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities.

### **Benefits of Entrepreneurship Education in Universities**

Entrepreneurship education provides the following benefits in universities.

***Reduction of Juvenile Delinquency:*** Entrepreneurship education helps in reducing the rate of juvenile delinquency such as drug abuse, sex abuse as well as the influx of HIV/AIDS and adverse effects on those infected. Drugs or substances, no doubt, may stimulate youth to engage in various delinquent acts such as armed robbery, cultism etc. Ede & Etonyeaku (2008) citing Michael indicated that entrepreneurship education keeps undergraduates develop pragmatic attitude towards theoretical component of education

and consequently, keeps youths out of trouble, adds growth to the economy and establishes an opportunity for a better future of business to come. This is so because it equips them with useful skills with which they can engage themselves in useful and helpful ventures.

***Increase in Self Esteem and Respect:***

Entrepreneurship education helps the student recipients to have high opinion of themselves. If you know what you want and how to get it through problem solving skills then your self esteem keeps increasing. Nwaokolo (1997) states that it is the right and ability to set ones own goals and realizing them as much as possible through ones efforts, using one's factors.

***Promotion of Effective Local Resources Utilization:***

Entrepreneurship education can help in the promotion of effective utilization of available local resources through the enhancement of entrepreneurial expertise and the subsequent establishment of many enterprises. It affords individuals necessary and relevant skills to process and tap the abundant local natural resources in Nigeria. Many of these resources are used in the production of goods and services. The use of all these local resources will immensely reduce the countries dependences on foreign goods and improve on the countries balance of payment deficit.

***Way to Economic Growth and Development:***

According to Mamman (2008), economic growth is an increase or an expansion of the national income and the volume of goods and services in the economy. All these are possible through technological advancement and establishment of many business ventures. Entrepreneurship education leads to wealth creation and facilitates income generation.

**Stipulations of the National Universities Commission (NUC) on the Teaching of Entrepreneurship Education in Nigerian Universities**

Unemployment, crime, and even global economic recession have caused salaried workers to be prematurely retired or even sacked out rightly without benefits. This calls for rethinking, re-orientation, guidance and counseling about our career goals and academic pursuit. The social problems led to the inclusion of entrepreneurial studies in Nigerian universities, when the Federal Ministry of Education revised the minimum academic standard in August 4, 2004. Ekwueme (2012) pointed out that the inclusion of entrepreneurial studies in Nigerian university system is to reposition the curriculum in order to produce knowledgeable skilled and entrepreneurial graduates that would meet the needs of the labour market. Entrepreneurial graduates will be self-employed and create jobs for others to enhance economic development of our country.

However, not a few universities did not take the revised minimum academic standard from the Federal Ministry of Education seriously, especially as it concerns the inclusion of entrepreneurial studies, as it remained non-existent in the curriculum of many Nigerian universities (Arua, 2012). This led to a directive from the National Universities Commission (NUC) for the mandatory introduction of entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities in 2006. Consequently, many Nigerian universities commenced entrepreneurship courses. Entrepreneurship courses advocated by the NUC became part of university academic programme of the universities beginning from the 2007/2008 academic session. The courses are meant for undergraduates of every discipline and are administered to students mainly in their penultimate year of study.

The concept of entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities evolves from the truism that entrepreneurship is innate in some individuals, and therefore, needs to be mobilized and developed deliberately (Eke, Igwesi, and Orji, 2011). It is designed to provide basic encouragement, relevant guidelines and positive mindset for entrepreneurship among undergraduates; to engender creativity, innovation and self-reliance during the formative stages of human development and cause entrepreneurial culture to prevail.

The course content of entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities, according to the NUC bulletin include:

- ❖ Developing entrepreneurship/intrepreneurship in organizations
- ❖ Entrepreneurial environment in Nigeria
- ❖ Intellectual property right in Nigeria
- ❖ Technological entrepreneurship
- ❖ Management of innovation
- ❖ Family business and succession plan
- ❖ Women entrepreneurship
- ❖ Social entrepreneurship
- ❖ Business opportunity evaluation

To facilitate the teaching of entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities, the NUC also stipulated the establishment of Centre for entrepreneurship development in the universities. Such centre are required to among other duties, provide skill acquisition programmes, attract research consultancy projects, and organize workshops, seminars, and conferences for their university communities.

#### **Present State/Scenario of Teaching Entrepreneurship Education in Nigerian Universities**

Mueller (2004) and Scheela & Hoa (2004) also asserted that there is a link between entrepreneurship and economic growth of a nation. In the developed countries of the world, females and males are given equal opportunities for entrepreneurship education to help them acquire

relevant entrepreneurship skills. They experience gender related discrimination, and experience more difficulty when starting up and running a business with their male counterparts (Scheela and Hoa, 2004).

In Nigerian educational system the practice is purely “literal education” or “academic education” which is geared towards certificates consciousness which prepares the citizenry for “white collar” jobs. As a result of this, most Nigerians are not well equipped with appropriate entrepreneurial skills that will enable them to be self employed. Nwafor (2007) indicated that the level of acquisition of entrepreneurial skills in Nigeria is very poor. As a result of this, most Nigerian graduates are unemployed because in Nigeria education is certificates orientated. Today, unemployment among graduates from Nigerian educational system is a cankerworm which has eaten deep into the fabrics of our society. No wonder today most of the state governments are now embracing the introduction of entrepreneurship education into their educational system to enable the citizenry to become self employed in the absence of “white collar jobs.

The Federal Government of Nigeria and other stakeholders in the educational sector have realized that entrepreneurial skills are indispensable in the socio-economic development of the nation thus the emphasis now in the Nigerian university system is on entrepreneurship education.

Consequently, some centres were created out in some universities of the federation for the development of entrepreneurial skills. Such centres include Centre for Entrepreneurship Development and Research at University of Nigeria Nsukka, in Enugu State and the Chike Okoli Centre for entrepreneurship education at the Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka in Anambra State. Ebonyi State has also integrated entrepreneurship education into their educational system.

Entrepreneurship education has also been made a compulsory course in some tertiary institutions in the country such as University of Nigeria Nsukka and so many other universities in Nigeria. These are welcome developments but a lot needs to be done to meet the millennium development goal.

### **Obstacles to Effective Teaching of Entrepreneurship Education in Nigerian Universities**

*Inadequacy of the curriculum:* There is a current dissatisfaction about the inadequacy of the curriculum content of entrepreneurship education to meet the growing individual, organizational, and societal needs (Arua, 2012). This is attributable to a combination of various elements such as globalization, fast technological development, and changing nature of work and occupation.

*Lack of Access to Quality and Up-to-date Information Resources:* Educating the mind and enhancing the

learning process are at the heart of almost every national agenda. Education has been seen as a most effective way of liberating the mind and hence society from the evils of ignorance, disease and poverty (Iloeje, 2001). Also, at the heart of the educational process is information. Thus, education is the delivery of information and its transformation into knowledge which eventually results in associated changes in people's skills and behavior (Adebowale as cited by Okeke 2010). This explains why education relies on information resources such as textbooks and journals, which both the teacher and learner rely on for research and scholarship. However, many people engaged in entrepreneurship education today lack access to quality and up-to-date information resources.

**Transition Challenge:** Opoku (2004) asserted that digital technologies have been integrated into virtually every facet of education, including commerce, health, governance and civil society, and have become critical factors in creating wealth worldwide. Nigerian universities have not yet taken advantage of this to strengthen entrepreneurial studies in the universities.

Other obstacles, according to Sassenberg (2001), include:

- ❖ Absence of technical support for the teaching of entrepreneurship education.
- ❖ Absence of regulatory mechanisms for effective oversight of

entrepreneurial initiatives in Nigeria

- ❖ Poor access to capital which also breeds lack of interest and enthusiasm for entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities.

### **Ways the University Libraries Can Contribute to Solution of the Problem and Enhancement of Entrepreneurship Education in Nigerian Universities**

Many entrepreneurial and skill acquisition opportunities abound in library information resources such as textbooks, manuals, newsletters, newspapers and even reference sources such as yellow pages and directories (Ekwueme, 2012). These contain, among others, information on skill acquisition centers, exchange rates, biographies of notable and successful entrepreneurs, including their rise to wealth; information on how to produce and manufacture various items such as soap, shoes and bags; information on how to acquire and utilize basic skills such as computer literacy skills, ICT skills, computer maintenance skills, marketing skills, electronics skills including phone repair skills, and information on available post-retirement employment opportunities.

The information contained in the library information resources enables entrepreneurs to discover abundant opportunities that would have been lost and turn them into unlimited asset and wealth. Thus, UNESCO public library manifesto, in Boyd (1993) noted that one of the main purposes of

libraries is to be the principal means whereby the record of man's thoughts and ideas and the expression of his creative imagination are made freely available to all.

Library provides atmosphere and materials conducive and necessary for information dissemination for learning, teaching, research as well as in entrepreneurship education. The university libraries can further contribute to solution of the problem and enhancement of entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities through the following roles:

***The Use of Digital information resources:*** Today, computer and internet have formed the latest models of information production and retrieval in the world over. Through the use of internet connectivity, libraries link people from different parts of the world and educate their clients in the current information available in a particular area of educational endeavor. Igbokwe (2008) citing Kreitz, indicated that it is the duty of the librarians in an electronic research environment to use library knowledge and experience to create better opportunities of linking entrepreneurship trainees with a variety of information resources. Igbokwe (2008) citing Kreitz, asserted that it is the duty of librarians in an electronic research environment to use library information resources to create better opportunities linking researchers to a variety of information sources that will make them to be self reliance.

***Information Services for Skills***

***Acquisition:*** The library, through its educational role provides the right information that will lead to acquisition of desired skill which will help entrepreneurship trainees in various agribusiness enterprises. Agribusiness enterprises are the various business involved in food production including farming, seed supply agrichemicals, farm machinery, wholesale and distribution, processing, marketing and retail sales.

***Vocational Education and Practice:***

Through information dissemination, the library, provides vocational education through which it encourages the public to continue to learn and to update their knowledge and skills. They are reminded of what they studied in schools in practical terms by constantly reading and practicing them (Nwafor, 2007). By so doing, libraries also create opportunities for entrepreneurial activities and ventures that will enable the students to be self reliant.

***Organising Seminars and Workshops:***

The library seminar and workshops constitute another means of promoting skills acquisition and entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities. Such programmes which have as resource persons, experts and professionals in the area of entrepreneurship, usually have as participants, undergraduates and unemployed graduates, school



dropouts, retirees and active entrepreneurs.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, entrepreneurship education is expected to enable people to enjoy life by equipping them with knowledge and skills needed to achieve and sustain decent standards of living as well as skills and knowledge necessary to enable them live meaningful and productive life. It is important to note that the library through its role provides education for the empowerment of its citizenry and entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities. However, this study became pertinent in view of the poor state of entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities. The paper has been able to examine the concepts and significance of entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities; the stipulations of the National Universities Commission on the teaching of entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities, and the present state of teaching entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities. The paper has also been able to examine obstacles to effective teaching of entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities, ways the university libraries can contribute to solution of the problem and enhancement of entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities. This paper also made recommendations on ways of promoting the role of the library in enhancing entrepreneurship education

in Nigerian universities. Among recommendations made include developing special collections and services to address entrepreneurship education information needs in Nigerian universities and introduction and improvement of the provision of online library and information services on entrepreneurship education in libraries. It is, therefore, the hope of the researchers that this paper has been able to establish how libraries can help to change this trend and enhance entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities.

### **General Recommendations for Promoting the Role of the Library in Enhancing Entrepreneurship Education in Nigerian Universities**

Libraries of all types should develop/create special collections and services to address entrepreneurship education. These should include information resources of various types and in varying media and format which communicate relevant information on entrepreneurship.

Libraries should introduce and improve their provision of online services to provide for access to up-to-date and remotely located information especially for potential entrepreneurship trainees.

Entrepreneurship trainees in Nigerian universities should consider the acquisition of library and information literacy skill as one of the basic needs for enhancing their entrepreneurial education. This should be complemented by regular library use.

Industries, organizations, governmental agencies and even Non Governmental Organizations can help to complement the effort of libraries in supporting entrepreneurship education by organizing conferences, seminars, workshops and other enlightenment fora. The focus of such fora should be to enlighten and educate potential entrepreneurs and managers of labour on the various ways of planning and managing entrepreneurial ventures. Proceedings of such fora should be deposited at no cost in libraries for public and wide consultation.

Entrepreneurship education should be made compulsory in the curricula of all the programmes of universities, colleges and polytechnics and made compulsory for all students. Libraries should complement the programme by developing rich collections to address the literature needs of such curricula.

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