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## TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE ENTREPRENEURIAL LIBRARIANSHIP: PROBLEMS AND APPROACHES FOR INNOVATIVE ACHIEVEMENT

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**ABSTRACT:** The concept of entrepreneurship in whatsoever discipline extends not only to the theoretical aspects of entrepreneurship as demonstrated in the class situation as a business knowledge acquisition but rather, its applicability should be more of practices that will sustain both the trainer and the trainees as a profession. Many people ignorantly claimed that the digital revolution has indicated the downfall of libraries; some forget the fact that libraries are no longer made up of the collection of physical books and static information repositories but, globalized access to information resources linked all together. Entrepreneurial librarianship has been considered as one of the most viable or virgin areas of business that is yet to be adequately exploited. Owing to the value of the nature of the field and the benefits people stand to gain out of it, numerous groups came up intending to take over the business because most of the professional librarians who would have taken over the task are not yet ready to meet up with the information needs of the century. This study is an attempt to unveil some of the fundamental ingredients of the current profession that were missing in most of our librarians today. The study hammered on who a professional librarian is; the qualities required of an entrepreneurial librarian; challenges associated with the business in question and, strategies were proffered to enable them to remain relevant to move on with the business.

**Keywords:** *Sustainable: Entrepreneurial Librarianship: Problems: Approaches: Innovative Achievement.*

### INTRODUCTION

The general concept of librarianship encompasses sacrificial and community services ranging from social interaction, creativity, and information building for effective awareness among the user community. It is not over-exaggeration that librarians offer community members a voice of wisdom and understanding. It is centered on advocating for academic liberty, equal access to information, and free discourse. It was said to be the first profession that was charged with the responsibility of providing access to reliable information sources and building knowledge networks in our societies. In this world of technological connectivity, libraries are more and more requested to explain their expenditures, facilities, and life. The daunting task of taking lots of time to gather plenty of physical books to search for a piece of information over some

time is an old fashion. It only requires a careful selection of keywords into the system with only a click of a button to get millions of answers, being the latest practice is long overdue. Contemporary academic librarians are becoming more and stronger as innovators who are seriously pursuing with vigor, emerging innovations and innovative concepts in constant pursuit of excellence to make a difference. This group of librarians have been challenged to go back to the drawing board and come out with the zeal of adopting the entrepreneurial spirit to take over their destiny. Unless people begin to understand that librarians and entrepreneurs share lots of traits, such as imagination, perseverance, and enthusiasm, graduates of Library and Information Science will be irrelevant in society with only government jobs (Elonye and Uzuegbu, 2013).

The demand for information is growing in the twenty-first century as people began to understand that information is what distinguishes the wealthy from the poor. The provision of business information according to Edewor and Omosor (2012) was made easier as more and improved facilities have been demanded since there were no corresponding improvements in funding public libraries to provide such information. Surprisingly, many government agencies and even academic libraries are developing methods of generating revenue from users of specific services in order to supplement what they typically receive as budget. For example, most public libraries use information technology facilities such as photocopiers, internet browsing air time, and even bindery services to generate funds for other needs (Nwabueze, and Ebele, 2019). It was extremely wonderful and more than just a mere routine for the people that structured the professional learning program in librarianship. LaGuardia (2014) emphasized the commitment to self-investment to gain new skills by using a variety of complex resources and instruments to stay competitive for the future is very important for effective development in librarianship. Such opportunities could include new employment perspectives, joint or solo ventures, or positions to enable continuing progress and excellence in careers and to develop skills, expertise, experiences, and networks during work abroad. Factors such as time zone differences and access to technical instruments and services made it difficult to maintain a constructive personal approach to learning. Business in librarianship does not only offer a way of incorporating commercial skills, especially economic advertising and fundraising events, but rather to implement them to various objectives, from commercial to social or



non-profit initiatives (Chung, 2010). The goal of business-oriented library and information science studies is to promote entrepreneurial thinking with the goal of improving emotional, cognitive, professional, and management skills. The concept of having good professional librarians as an entrepreneur is based on the natural skills possessed and not the inherent personality of individuals. To be a good entrepreneur or innovator, critical thinking and careful consideration are essential to ensure that the project is valuable. Therefore, business librarianship always seeks to activate an enterprise mind to generate creativity or ingenious insight in the creation and maintenance of information services. It is this ability of information creation and maintenance that allows librarians to learn skills and expertise needed to be superior to several other participants in the fields of information management.

The revision of library school curricular in Nigerian as supported by Edewor and Omosor (2012) made it clear that "library schools have reviewed their curricula to include IT elements, which LIS students carry into the labor market". However, the government has not been kind to the profession because most of the library schools have inadequate ICT infrastructure to properly provide the required education and the skills capable of venturing into entrepreneurial librarianship. Furthermore, Edewor and Omosor reiterated that, in most of the library colleges, audio-visual laboratories were not well equipped. Laboratories for ICT, printing, publishing, book sales, and library facilities, to help and guides for becoming entrepreneur oriented with appropriate skills are all lacking, and yet much is expected from the profession.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The need to extensively elaborate on the viability of entrepreneurial librarianship, as a result of the recent discovery that it is the most lucrative business of the day, is of great importance. It was also wrongly conceived that with the introduction of ICT for information management, librarians would be completely displaced. The purpose of this study is to further expand on the possibilities librarians hold in entrepreneurship as the ICT is just a robot that can only be used in discharging various library operations to guarantee quality service. It equally dwelt on the qualities expected of professional librarians, challenges faced and strategies for effective entrepreneurial librarianship. The universal incorporation of information communication technology into all fields of endeavor is a clear testimony that librarianship as a profession cannot

be effective until after being successfully prepared to efficiently use information and communications technology (Murray, 2014). In recognition of the above assertion, graduates are required to be properly reoriented in the philosophy and practice of successful entrepreneurial thinking of the career experts, being the only avenue through which joblessness can be reduced significantly in Nigeria. While most librarians do not consider themselves entrepreneurs, there is increasing interest in entrepreneurial librarianship, an abstract concept that connects social entrepreneurship with the services librarians provide daily (Prato, 2013). But because of the introduction of information communication technology, many individuals' names such as information technologists, information scientists, information managers, etc started emerging just to exploit information to earn a living employing "Social commercialization"

Social commercialization is the process of finding a societal problem and applying business concepts, such as creativity, to develop and execute projects that contribute meaningfully. Because of the goals and objectives of entrepreneurial librarianship, it was found that both social entrepreneurship and librarianship are very closely related. Social entrepreneurship can be defined as the process of finding a public issue by applying the entrepreneurial concept of creativity, to develop and execute projects that effect change in societal needs. But owing to the earlier notion of librarianship as a service to humanity as well as being identified with offering free services to the general public, most librarians find it difficult to strike a balance between entrepreneurial librarianship and public librarianship. Nonetheless, the distinction is that entrepreneurial Librarian "characterizes why entrepreneurial librarians succeed in the information age." This is achieved through campaigning for revolutionary reform, listening to clients' requests, creating innovative resources, and launching innovative donation drives. The clamor for the introduction of entrepreneurship in librarianship emanated from the concern over response to clients' requests, decreasing financial constraints, evolving resource formats, and other obstacles through introducing new business models to conventional services (Prato, 2013). There is indeed an increase in entrepreneurial training worldwide and academic librarians are expected to work with research universities, and patronize the government donated products, individual donations, and, even seek logistical support for capacity development. The main advantages of engaging in such ventures are



to establish and develop faith and expertise as a leader, establishing close ideas and exposing them considerably to social and economic problems. The program to repackage libraries as platforms and deliver a lot more than just book deposits is the time needed. Many libraries contribute significantly to the economic recovery by assisting much less well-known job creators in meager to larger business opportunities (Pun, 2015).

To actualize the art of entrepreneurship requires the need to redesign and improve teaching and users' services through conserving resources, using their knowledge and resources. The librarians with their professional skills are expected to assess the subject coverage and in-depth skills to develop collections, ensure that the environment is conducive for learning with effective connection to the digital world to attract knowledgeable information seekers. The principle guiding an entrepreneurial approach is based on probing, imagination, and being insightful to ensure that the library is an educational institution and continuously improves as libraries try to be an integrated part of education where learning takes place. With adequate and continuous training, an entrepreneurial librarian would be able to excel with the following qualities:

**The passion for business:** The passion Motivation and enthusiasm are perhaps the greatest characteristics of a good business-minded librarian. The individual who is trying to start a business must understand that if he doesn't have the drive to do this, nobody can do it for him. As a result of this total zeal, an entrepreneur's drive begins to develop new tasks and to learn something new to achieve this goal. Motivations help an entrepreneur retain optimism and conquer challenges as they move towards their goal. Inspiration keeps the blood flowing. Therefore, a good contractor is passionate and inspired in a completely new way.

**The Willingness to Take a Risk:** Entrepreneurs must be willing to plan for the unexpected. You should see hazard as a practice even though it may have a detrimental impact, but, one should be ready to accept either to lose or win. Setting up a business is full of risk-taking, particularly when the money to use for the business is from your pocket. The only consolation is to probably propagate the risk by persuading shareholders that you are a starter in the

business. That is why a partnership is less expensive than a sole trade; you enjoy the profit alone in a sole trade, but risk must be a part of every business.

**The Ability to be Creative:** The ability to innovate new ideas and things to make a difference in society is very important and necessary for entrepreneurial librarianship. Innovation is one of two avenues for successful entrepreneurs. You may bring a completely new product or service, such as newly invented products or the latest ways of solving problems using the newly acquired technology.

**The Ability to be Highly Initiative:** To start a new venture, an enterprise librarian needs a strategy to start aggressively, in the hope of continuing. It is one of the greatest personal qualities of any business-oriented individual. An entrepreneurial person is encouraged to do things that stem from the initiative, and be willing to do it yourself because you want to succeed. The initiative is the capacity, without always being told what to do, to be resourceful and function. It needs to be resilient and determined. There was an error. The initiative is a self-management capacity, and self-management for young professionals is one of five core life and work capacities.

**Autonomous Discipline:** Autonomous discipline is one of the most critical aspects of a good businessman. It is the ability to make one do things that should be done without being told or given inducement. If an entrepreneur can perform important tasks, he can succeed more effectively in any ramifications of life. Personality means the ability to master the inner self and inner feelings to create a sense of accountability for the work to promote self-maintenance and sustainability.

**The Quality of being PERSISTENCE:** The continuity to keep on doing something even if it is difficult or other people want to stop you is very important in the business field. Perseverance is a very strong attribute of entrepreneurs, especially those who might have experienced setbacks and challenges in life. The best tracking mechanism is the prosperous businessman. But you can pick yourself up and move towards your aspirations with determination.



## CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH ENTREPRENEURIAL LIBRARIANSHIP

**Lack of willingness to innovate as professionals:** A brief look at the advanced literature of library management reveals that libraries are not equipped to develop in either way besides how their students grow. They are reluctant to be innovative. When justifying our ideological viewpoint, librarians collectively do not have a legitimate dominance on any array of expertise that could lead to a "generational divide," but independent librarians can use it with significant use over users. While the current state of affairs of reduced jobs is regrettable, many experts in research topics do not aggressively promote the value of work.

**The inability of librarians to question their roles:** A professional librarian is not mature until he or she challenges his or her professional position. Professionalism should be understood by actual thought, and shouldn't be a magic bullet or any other technical term. In its most simple sense, 'competence' can be measured by the extent wherein professional bodies can benefit from an amount of independence and personality when managing their work. Conventionally, nobody enters libraries, except for the profession, to increase their personal reputation and get paid.

**Inability to display our professional capabilities:** The word 'librarian' is used lightly and is often used by the official who is responsible for a selection of books. The name is used by critics. They claimed that librarians know very little about their material and much less about the career they appear to have. This mindset by some authorities leads to a payment that is completely insufficient for the post's responsibilities. The eventual outcome is that today's career offers little to no appeal to an ambitious individual who has a future. The bibliography represents not an exceptionally successful elite that it discusses.

**Stressful nature of library environment:** With the recent increase in the establishment of more libraries across the country, there has been inadequate library staff to effectively handle all the libraries we have, thereby adding unnecessary stress in office practice to professionals. The available professionals are being overstressed while lots of graduates are out there

without a job. It becomes difficult for them to focus on another venture, requiring critical thinking about the nature of the challenges faced in the office.

**Administrative Bottlenecks:** It has been reliably established that the habits of librarians in public institutions do not inspire library staff to invest or spend time and money in business enterprises. They are so very concerned about what becomes of office work if attention is divided. They only see someone as innovative when trying to make users access their information needs. However, sponsoring and granting permission to library personnel to participate in sustainable development and growth programs is a no-go area.

**Inadequate Financial Base:** It is no more news that the gap between the rich and the poor is expanding now and then, so that it becomes difficult for the poor to excel even if the zeal for business is there. Zeal and plan cannot work in entrepreneurial activities without a capital base. Most people have made a move to start a business, but due to financial challenges, they give up. And our financial institutions aren't helping matters by attaching interest charges and requirements to anyone attempting to apply for a loan intern.

**Attitudinal behaviors of librarians toward change:** Owing to the lackadaisical attitudes of librarians, particularly in disadvantaged countries, they are found to have less concern about displaying their innovations and projects across the borders of libraries. The leader neither initiates new ideas nor motivates younger librarians to excel through incentives, but rather discourages them from engaging in activities that are difficult or require a significant amount of energy and time to invest.

**Unstable government policies:** Due to the unstable political administration and continuous change in administration without continuity, business becomes difficult to thrive. Situations like constant changes in the development plan or urban planning make it in-conducive to potential investors and entrepreneurs. In most cases, the issue of short notice to relocate to another place after investing in infrastructure without compensation is very common; the unrealistic vats and revenue generators, the high rate of electricity bill and high cost of importing raw materials makes a business a daunting task to achieve in Nigeria.





**Downtrodden Facilities:** Because social amenities such as the unremarkable state of our roads, ineffective internet and communications networks, the nature of the country's security network ranging from herders, kidnappers, Boko Haram, and even intertribal and regional conflicts are a series of challenges that any business-minded individual should be prepared to face. All these elements are a pointer to negative impacts on businesses and, unfortunately, it does not seem as if the government is taking the fight seriously.

**Absence of Government encouragement and support:** There has been the careless attitude of the government toward developmental assistance to individuals who want to excel. Advanced countries like the United State of America have contributed a lot to the lives of individuals that distinguished themselves exceptionally by giving them moral and financial support. Young men and women have been endowed with numerous talents to display in entrepreneurship or academics, but because they are not financially secure, they die with their visions and talents.

## STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE ENTREPRENEURIAL LIBRARIANSHIP

**Business-oriented librarians must move with the current trend of technology:** In this digital age, librarians need to acquire stronger library technology literacy skills for efficiency in service delivery. Though librarianship has been democratized in previous years by professionals from bookstore keepers, we now see a development in academic libraries that requires sophisticated computer expertise rather than just recruiting IT people; librarians need to upgrade themselves with IT expertise. The complexities of electronic resources include developing one role as a librarian for electronic resources and getting a clever, energetic librarian who can manage anything related to digital.

**Entrepreneurial librarians should sell themselves to the public:** Librarians who are entrepreneurially motivated need to advertise themselves as facilitators in all academic institutions because they are from a broad variety of academic experiences. If you, as a professional entrepreneurial librarian, must survive as a career businessman, you should show the world the stuff in you and not wait until someone says something about you. They are best positioned "in academic and trendy areas to identify ties between knowledge domains.

Librarians are supposed to be better known than university professors, as they are custodians in charge of providing knowledge to all user communities.

**Establishment of a professional relationship:** Entrepreneurial librarians must establish effective interpersonal relationships within the business domain. This new form of cooperation could be promoted with the emergence of online networking instruments, such as Electronic Communication, wikis, forums, and media websites. It facilitates creativity through distinct groups through the development of communication networks. In this type of partnership, titles and status should be downplayed. To have a real effective impact, the libraries must find a process of integrating employees from many other organizations to exchange ideas.

**Cultivating the habit of reading beyond librarianship:** Librarians are an emporium of knowledge and this calls for the need to read to acquire more. The secret to reading widely as a professional is that you stand a good chance of winning the hearts of many people. The professional studies, especially in the fields of information and communication, Support service, advertisement, administration, and other related areas.

**Consistent in reviewing approach:** Entrepreneurial Librarians should be more proactive in approaching both clientele and presentation means as it will go beyond the normal diffusion of the gateway. Periodic review is needed of the usage of resources, facilities, and even the physical space if need be and the improved techniques of using them for easy service. The role of being current in the world of information makes a great difference in the achievement of goals among experts. It has a significant effect on the degree of achievement because it affects the means through which information is accessed, interpreted, and disseminated among the user community.

**Professional librarians should vigorously acquire ICT literacy:** Because ICT is the current trend of the century, librarianship is generally concerned with the best way to access current and relevant information regardless of the source, form, or writing surfaces. The current professional practice emphasizes the ability to acquire skills that will enable them to unveil information irrespective of the presentation. Any prospective entrepreneurial librarian that is still tied down with the conventional library operation should better not attempt to



expose his primitiveness because he has nothing to offer in the circle of information.

**Entrepreneurial librarianship must break free from the constraints of being a public librarian:** Librarians wishing to enhance their knowledge, skills, and skills to improve their learning within their businesses or to advance their professions must increase their career growth. Working experience is a type of extensive and continuous expertise defined as information-based entrepreneurial planning in several institutions. This background means the difference between skill and learning in both technical and library work.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

As a result, a successful entrepreneurial librarian must maintain his or her genius, natural creativity, and experience, knowing full well that the ability to exploit outside the home necessitates vigorous expertise in the field of librarianship. The lack of managerial abilities, marketing capacity, or financial power, the unwillingness to innovate as professionals, the inability to demonstrate our professional capabilities, Administrative bottlenecks, fears, and a lack of foresight; a lack of entrepreneurial spirits; a lack of technical roles; a lack of understanding about how such abilities are acquired in bibliography teaching methods, and many other factors. Furthermore, most entrepreneurial activities do not appear to thrive because it is difficult to communicate with appropriate authorities such as banks, manufacturers, clients, investment bankers, suppliers, and advertisers due to the stifling conditions usually attached to obtaining loans. For these reasons, many professional graduates could not engage in entrepreneurship and join the tradition of setting up business in Nigeria.

Entrepreneurial librarianship is a lucrative business of the century since every aspect of life boils down to access to relevant and timely information. Furthermore, librarians were the first professional area of study that started with the aim of providing information to the user community based on their training, though, many groups of people emerged and were scrambling over the ownership of the profession. Having considered the numerous challenges bedeviling success in entrepreneurial librarianship, it is therefore recommended that: entrepreneurial librarians should move with the current trend of technology; they should sell themselves to the public by dynamic in

innovations; consistent in reviewing their manner of approach to cultivate the habit of reading beyond librarianship, etc.

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