

CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION AND THE PROSPECTS OF SELF-EMPLOYMENT AMONG LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE STUDENTS IN UNIVERSITIES IN SOUTH-SOUTH, NIGERIA

By

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Abstract

This study examined curriculum implementation and the prospects of self-employment among library and information science students in universities in South-South Nigeria. Two research questions and two hypotheses were formulated to guide the study covering the influence of acquisition of library and information science brokerage skills on the prospects of self-employment and the extent to which acquisition of library and information science information publishing skills influence the prospects of self-employment. Descriptive survey design was used with a population of 416 final year students from four universities of Department of Library and Information Science in South-South Nigeria. A sample of 208 students were selected using multi stage sampling approach involving stratified, purposive and simple random sampling techniques. For appropriate data collection, a structured instrument entitled “Curriculum Implementation and the Prospects of Self-Employment Questionnaire (CIPSEQ)” was used for the study. The research data was analysed with descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings revealed that there is a significant influence of information brokerage skills on the prospects of self-employment (* $p < .05$, $df = 2, 202$, $p = .018$) and acquisition of publishing skills significantly influence the prospects of self-employment (($*p < .05$, $df = 2, 202$, $p = .000$). It was concluded that the variables under study was found to enhance the students’ prospects of self-employment. The study therefore, recommends among others include that encouragement such as financial incentives should be given to students to enable them sustain what they have all learnt in school thereby establishing their own business and becoming self-reliant.

Keywords: Curriculum Implementation, Library and Information Science Students. Prospects, Self-Employment,

Introduction

Every society, public or private needs individuals who are well trained academically to stand the teste of time. The influx of students in the academic environment has led to high level of competition in the labour market coupled with the limited job opportunities to cater for the increasing number of unemployed graduates in Nigeria. To this end, unemployment has posed great problems to the entire society. Unemployment can be defined as a situation in which persons capable and willing to work are unable to find suitable paid employment (National Bureau of Statistics, 2019). It is also a situation where those of working age who are

not in employment, but are willing to work but cannot find any job. Unemployment is a universal phenomenon which transverses every length and breadth of the world. The deteriorating unemployment situation in Nigeria has become a source of worry, with the attendant social dislocation exemplified by high crime rate and youth restiveness assailing in the country (Echebiri, 2005).

Unemployment is now an economic problem in our contemporary society. Universities offering library and information science in South-South Nigeria graduate students every end of academic sessions and these graduates find themselves into the labour market in search of jobs. Those who may be lucky secure jobs fast while others continue their search hunt. Those unable to secure jobs become agitated thereby indulging in various crimes such as kidnapping, armed robbery, cultism and the rest. This is as a result of the fact that the government no longer possess corresponding job opportunities to match this turn outs. This scenario has eaten deep into the fabric of the society that the need to curb this menace is now inevitable. The high level of graduate unemployment and its associated social ills have been traced to poor development of skills among students. This is manifested in a number of deficiencies that these graduates exhibit in their work places such as: lack of analytical skills; lack of innovative business ideas and problem solving/decision making skills; and inadequate technical and vocational skills (Ugwu & Ezeani, 2012).

Library and information science curriculum implementation plays a significant role in this direction. Library and information science curriculum implementation therefore refers to how the planned or designed course of study is translated by the teacher into syllabus, scheme of work and lessons to be delivered to students. The field of library and information science (LIS) is undergoing an immense transformation and this transformation has affected the institutions offering library and information services. In our contemporary society where education has become the hub upon which information development rotates, the place of library and information science cannot be ignored (Mu'azu & Mohammed, 2016).

Skills offered in library and information science curriculum was meant to stem the scenario whereby students remained unemployed after graduation. These skills are introduced to help students prepare themselves for self-employment after graduation. It is disheartening to observe that despite the shift in the curriculum, many students of library and information science still remain unemployed after graduation. This clearly points to the fact that the change in curriculum implementation has not yet been actualized.

This must have informed why the National Universities Commission (NUC) and National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) decided to introduce entrepreneurship education into the educational system; and the introduction of entrepreneurship in library and information science department inclusive. Nigeria as a nation no longer have ready-made jobs waiting for the large graduating students coming out from their various institutions every year. In the face of this ugly scenario, it is pertinent that library and information science students must possess the requisite prospect for self-employment that will prepare them to fit into the labour force after graduation.

In furtherance of the need to streamline library and information science curriculum implementation towards self-employment at the undergraduate level, some experts who were invited by the National Universities Commission (NUC) to review the existing curriculum and to come up with a new one that would meet modern realities proposed for the inclusion of courses that is geared towards self-employment. Oparah (2006) observed that until 1999, there was no uniform or harmonized curriculum for Nigerian university library and information science schools. Each school may have implemented its own curriculum content. Observations of Nigerian curriculum of these schools revealed that while some schools emphasized more library science courses which may not reflect individuals' creativity, innovation and self-employment, other schools could have struck a balance between theory and practical skills needed for self-employment.

Although, the new curriculum has been implemented over the years now, it is not certain whether universities in South-South Nigeria are sufficiently provided with the relevant human and material resources to run the programmes smoothly (Oparah (2006). Rather, it is presumed that the curriculum implemented remains theoretical because of the absence of facilities for practical teaching. Eya (2015) argued that the curriculum implemented was previously designed to make university graduates fit for office work and to enhance their readiness for the same white-collar jobs. Skills can be acquired through: Information brokerage. Acquiring information brokerage skill is one channel geared towards self-employment. Many students though possess business ideas but lack the capacity and ability to turn their thoughts into viable business ventures.

Library and information science publishing skills is another viable option for library and information science students. One can become a publisher, an editor or a reference book critic. With proper skills in publishing, students of library and information science can be

better disposed to undertake ventures in publishing. The library and information science publishing skills can be e-mailing publishing also known as newsletter publishing where news items, articles and short newsletters are sorted out and sent to clients' e-mail box; and web publishing where students can provide original content on the internet to users for a fee. The process involves building and uploading websites, updating the associated webpages and posting content to webpages online while desktop publishing involves the creation of documents using page layout skill on a computer for print. Desktop publishing generates layouts through the use of software that produces typographic quality text and images. Students can acquire these skills thereby make out a living for themselves. They are expected to draw from the various skills and knowledge which abound in the library settings and be repositioned towards self-employment. As noted by Combes (2011), students are key stakeholders in library and information science, this assertion implies that the students should be adequately repositioned in theory and practical knowledge of the profession and as well have a mind-set that this is the only way of reducing the unemployment rate.

The focus of this study therefore, is to find out curriculum implementation on areas of library and information science brokerage skill, and library and information science publishing skill on the prospects of self-employment among library and information science students in universities in South-South Nigeria.

Statement of the problem

The rate at which the labour market is growing with job seekers competing for government paid jobs has made things more difficult to find jobs these days. Regrettably, many graduates from the department of library and information science from the various universities in the South-South Nigeria are not left out from this ugly experience. This is because they lack the prerequisite potentials for self-employment despite being thought various courses relating to self-employment, embedded in their curriculum content.

Some of these graduates who eventually have ventured into self-employment businesses complain of multiple taxation, harsh business regulations, inadequate infrastructural facilities for small businesses, lack of electricity, high cost of running generator, high rate of inflation, labour regulations in setting up a new business venture, etc. there is need for a concerted efforts by both government, school authorities and stakeholders to wade into these problems.

In an effort in solving these problems, the government education authorities like National Universities Commission (NUC) and National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) introduced compulsory entrepreneurial courses in curricula of programmes where specialized courses have become increasingly common but the extent to which all these has been promoted and sustained among students remain issues that deserve investigations. The problem of this study put in a sentence is: to examine curriculum implementation and the prospects of self-employment among library and information science students in universities in South-South, Nigeria. This is the problem of this study.

Research questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide this study:

1. To what extent does the acquisition of library and information science brokerage skills influence the prospects of self-employment?
2. What is the extent to which acquisition of library and information science information publishing skills influence the prospects of self-employment?

Research hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to serve as a guide to this study:

1. Acquisition of library and information science information brokerage skills does not significantly influence the prospects of self-employment.
2. Acquisition of library and information science publishing skills does not significantly influence the prospects of self-employment.

Literature Review

Library and information science students possess business ideas but only few have the capacity and ability to turn it into viable businesses. One of the strategies that may be used by library and information science students to develop a winning strategy is the acquisition of information brokerage skills. Information brokerage skills depends on library and information science students' readiness to turn their ideas into business. This means that the discovery of opportunity, and ability to utilize the opportunity is a function of the readiness of people to engage in such self-employment activities. Barringer and Ireland (2015) opined that the low level of untapped business opportunity on information brokerage skills is as a result of lack of necessary skills to run such self-employment activities. Adetayo, Oke and Aderonmu (2015) assessed the impact of entrepreneurship education on employment generation among Nigerian

graduates. The result showed that majority of the respondents have minimum of 2 years of entrepreneurial education and training while in the University.

The study is also in alignment with that of Okeke, Okonkwo and Oboreh (2016) study on entrepreneurship education as a catalyst for entrepreneurial inclination in selected universities in the South-East Zone. The mean response of male undergraduates on the impact of entrepreneurship education on inclination towards self-employment was 2.89 with a standard deviation of 0.81 while the mean response of female undergraduates was 2.73 and a standard deviation of 0.81. The test of hypothesis revealed no significant differences in the cluster mean ratings between male and female undergraduates on the impact of entrepreneurial education and inclination to self-employment.

Also, Mba (2014) conducted a study on entrepreneurship intentions and skill capabilities among students in Batangas State University. The findings placed emphasis on the importance of entrepreneurship education in enhancing entrepreneurial inclination and the fact that entrepreneurship is not gender specific. It was recommendations amongst others that efforts should be intensified in exposing undergraduates in Nigerian universities to entrepreneurship education.

Mu'azu and Mohammed (2016) study on challenges of teaching and learning entrepreneurship education in library and information science schools in Nigeria revealed that poor funding, insufficient teaching gadgets for practical-oriented training, emphases on theoretical knowledge, poor enabling environment, ineffective style of instruction, poor or ineffective planning, supervision and evaluation of the programme across board among others. The study recommends more emphases on practical knowledge and practical-oriented training programme across board.

Alabi (2014) study on education and curriculum content as employment generation in Ondo state university of science and technology. Finding showed that the curriculum content such as information brokerage, computer operation, publishing, reprography and information and communication technology were taught in the schools but that it lacked the wide participation of strong local roots to enable it to impact fully on the job creation potentials of the students taught. The researcher therefore recommended that modalities to incorporate practical with the students should be included in the curriculum content to afford students experimental knowledge that can yield positive impact on their job creation potentials.

Ekuyo (2017) opines that to be in the publishing business, you have to source for authors and manuscripts. But with diskettes, you do not go about again with manuscript and typescripts. You can receive manuscripts by electronic mail. More so, one can venture into journal publishing. Journal publishing is interesting but more demanding. The reason for this is simple: you need plenty articles and by implication involves various authors, collating, reviewing, peer reviewing, etc.

Adejor (2017) study on competencies possessed by library and information science students for entrepreneurship in three Nigerian universities showed that up to 70 percent of the students have not possessed entrepreneurship competencies crucial for the entrepreneurship opportunities in library and information science. Gbemisola and Adeola (2015) study on assessment of new trade/entrepreneurship education in Ilesha state university of technology, Oyo state. The findings revealed that not all the content of the curriculum has been adopted. Only one tenth of the study area has complied with new curriculum since its commencement in 2011.

Nwogu, Owhoundah and Aleru (2013) conducted a study on the role of entrepreneurship education as a tool for economic security used survey design for the study. The result of the findings revealed that government has not improved funding of entrepreneurship education which is imperative to recruit more teachers to the programme. The inadequacy of the teachers for the curriculum content is seen as one of the major challenges confronting entrepreneurship education as a strategic tool for economic empowerment of the students. They recommended that more funds should be injected into the programme to allow for the recruitment of qualified and experienced teachers.

Research Methodology

The study adopts a descriptive survey design, a population of 416 final year students from four universities of department of Library and Information Science in South-South Nigeria was used. A sample of 208 students were selected using multi stage sampling approach, which involved stratified, purposive and simple random sampling techniques. For appropriate data collection, a structured instrument titled “Curriculum Implementation and the Prospects of Self-Employment Questionnaire (CIPSEQ)” was used. The instrument was validated by two experts in Measurement and Evaluation. To establish the reliability of the instrument, Split-half reliability test of internal consistency was obtained using Spearman-

Brown prophecy formula to step up the coefficient obtained with Pearson Product Moment Correlation with an index of 0.73 and 0.82 coefficient after a pilot test. The researcher collected all the distributed questionnaires immediately after it had been responded to. Hence, the study recorded a 100% response rate. The data were analysed using one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). All the hypotheses were tested at .05 level of significance.

Findings and Discussion

The data collected for this study was analyzed using analysis of variance (ANOVA). In each of the hypothesis tested, the independent and dependent variable were identified and data was transformed to fit the appropriate statistical requirement. The results are presented in tables and interpreted at .05 level of significance.

TABLE 1: Sample distribution of library and information science final year 2017/2018 students in the four selected universities in South-South Nigeria

S/N	Universities	No of Students		Total
		Male (50%)	Female (50%)	
1	Ambrose Ali University	34	42	76
2	Delta State University	47	22	69
3	University of Calabar	18	16	34
4	University of Uyo	11	18	29
	Total	110	98	208

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Research question one: To what extent does the acquisition of library and information science brokerage skills influence the prospects of self-employment?

Table 2: The Extent to which the acquisition of library and information science brokerage skills influence the prospects of self-employment

Levels of information brokerage skills	Descriptive Statistics		
	N	\bar{X}	SD
Online information gathering skill	74	15.84	2.28
Repackaging information skill	99	16.97	2.73
Consultancy service skill	35	16.39	2.42
Total	208	16.48	2.57

It is evident from research question one as showed in Table 2 with the descriptive statistics that the total of 74 LIS students utilized online information gathering skill with a mean and standard deviation of 15.84 and 2.28. Repackaging information skill constituted 99 respondents with mean of 16.97 and standard deviation of 2.73. Consultancy service skill had 35 respondents with mean and standard deviation of 16.39 and 2.42 as presented in Table 3.

Hypothesis one: Acquisition of information brokerage skills does not significantly influence the prospects of self-employment.

Table 3: Summary of one-way analysis of variance with the influence of acquisition of information brokerage skills on the prospects of self-employment

Sources of variance	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F-value	p-value
Between Group	52.45	2	26.23		
With Groups	1290.74	206	6.39	4.105	.018
Total	1343.190	208			

*p<.05

One-way Analysis of variance (one-way ANOVA) was employed and the result is presented in Table 2. The result of the analysis in Table 3 showed that at .05 level of significance and degree of freedom 203, the critical t-value is 1.960. the calculated t-value obtained in establishing acquisition of information brokerage skills on the prospects of self-employment is .018 (p<.05). The calculated t-value is seen to be greater than the critical t-value with the obtained significant value less than .05 level of significance used in the study. These results lead to the rejection of the null hypothesis which stated that acquisition of information brokerage skills does not significantly influence the prospects of self-employment. It was alternately accepted that acquisition of information brokerage skills significantly influence the prospects of self-employment.

The result of the first research questions indicated that acquisition of information brokerage skills significantly influenced the prospects of self-employment. Many university graduates of nowadays possess business ideas but only few have the capacity and ability to turn it into viable businesses. One of such strategies that may be used by library and

information science students to develop a winning strategy is the acquiring of information brokerage skills. This means that the discovery of opportunity and ability to utilize the opportunity may be due to function of their readiness to engage in such self-employment activities. The finding agrees with that by Adetayo, Oke and Aderonmu (2015) which showed that majority of the respondents have minimum of 2 years of entrepreneurial education and training while in the University.

This finding is consistent with the empirical findings of Mba (2014) study found that entrepreneurial intention is independent on their profile variables. Mu'azu and Mohammed (2016) study revealed that poor funding, insufficient teaching gadgets for practical-oriented training, emphases on theoretical knowledge, poor enabling environment, ineffective style of instruction, poor or ineffective planning, supervision and evaluation of the programme across board among others limits students' acquisition of entrepreneurship skills.

Research Question Two: What is the extent to which acquisition of library and information science information publishing skills influence the prospects of self-employment?

TABLE 4: The extent to which acquisition of library and information science information publishing skills influence the prospects of self-employment

Descriptive Statistics			
Levels of acquisition of publishing skills	N	\bar{X}	SD
E-mail publishing skill	54	15.85	2.49
Web publishing skill	96	17.65	3.41
Desktop publishing skill	58	16.11	2.56
Total	208	16.76	3.08

It is evident from research question two as showed in Table 4 with the descriptive statistics that the total of 54 LIS students utilized e-mail publishing skill with a mean and standard deviation of 15.85 and 2.49. Web publishing skill constituted 96 respondents with mean of 17.65 and standard deviation of 3.41. Desktop publishing skill had 58 respondents with mean and standard deviation of 16.11 and 2.56 as presented in Table 5.

Hypothesis Two: Acquisition of publishing skills does not significantly influence the prospects of self-employment.

Table 5: Summary of one-way analysis of variance with the influence of acquisition of publishing skills on the prospects of self-employment

Sources of variance	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F-value	p-value
Between Group	143.169	2	71.585	8.087	.000
With Groups	1788.119	206	8.852		
Total	1931.288	208			

*p<.05

One-way Analysis of variance (one-way ANOVA) was employed and the result is presented in Table 5. The result of the analysis in Table 5 showed that at .05 level of significance and degree of freedom 203, the critical t-value is 1.960. the calculated t-value obtained in establishing acquisition of publishing skills on the prospects of self-employment is .000 (p<.05). The calculated t-value is seen to be greater than the critical t-value with the obtained significant value less than .05 level of significance used in the study. These results lead to the rejection of the null hypothesis which stated that acquisition of publishing skills does not significantly influence the prospects of self-employment. It was alternately accepted that acquisition of publishing skills significantly influence the prospects of self-employment.

The second hypothesis showed that there is a significant influence of acquisition of publishing skills on the prospects of self-employment. Library and information science students can acquire publishing skills that may enable them venture into the publishing business where there are a lot of things to do. One can become a publisher, an editor, a reference book critic, children’s books reviewer, do promotion-marketing books in libraries or own a bookshop. Ekuoye (2017) opines that to be in the publishing business, you have to source for authors and manuscripts. You can receive manuscripts by electronic mailing. More so, one can venture into journal publishing. Journal publishing is interesting but more demanding. The reason for this is simple: you need plenty articles and by implication involves various authors, collating, reviewing, peer reviewing, etc. The findings agree with that by Alabi (2014) study which indicated that the curriculum content such as information brokerage, computer operation, publishing, reprography and information and communication technology were taught in the schools but that it lacked the wide participation of strong local roots to enable it to impact fully on the job creation potentials of the students taught.

Adejor (2017) findings showed that up to 70 percent of the students have not possessed entrepreneurship competencies crucial for the entrepreneurship opportunities in Library and Information Science. Gbemisola and Adeola (2015) findings revealed that not all the content of the curriculum has been adopted. Only one tenth of the study area has complied with new curriculum since its commencement in 2011.

Nwogu, Owhoundah and Aleru (2013) result findings revealed that government has not improved funding of entrepreneurship education which is imperative to recruit more teachers to the programme. The inadequacy of the teachers for the curriculum content is seen as one of the major challenges confronting entrepreneurship education as a strategic tool for economic empowerment of students.

Conclusion

It is obvious that there are serious concerns for the curriculum implementation of library and information science education to meet the present employment scourge in our society. This research work has established the importance of the consideration of curriculum implementation in strengthening library and information science students' prospects of self-employment. However, the curriculum content in universities in south-south Nigeria lacks practical emphasis.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made;

1. Lecturers in library schools should be encouraged to develop standardized curriculum content on information brokerage skills geared towards self-employment and job creation among students. This may be achieved through practical oriented teaching by lecturers.
2. National Association of Library and Information Science Educators (NALISE) and the Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN) as a matter of urgency should organise symposium where all stakeholders in library and information science can agree on a unified curriculum content that incorporates publishing skills.
3. There should be periodical stakeholders' meeting where policies concerning students' prospects of self-employment can be implemented.
3. Students with prospects for self-employment should be encouraged. This may go a long way in encouraging their business idea. This will encourage more students to embrace self-

employment initiatives and acquisition of practical skills on information brokerage and publishing skills.

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