Value of Library and Information Science (LIS) Degree for Side Business Practices among Employed Library and Information Science Professionals in Nigeria: a Preliminary Survey

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Value of Library and Information Science Degree and Side Business Practices among Employed Library and Information Science Professionals in Nigeria: a Preliminary Survey

Abstract

The study is a preliminary survey that investigated the perception of the value of library and information science (LIS) degree and side business practices among Library and Information Science professionals in Nigeria. The study employed survey as the design using a combination of web-based and hard copy questionnaire to elicit information from 176 working librarians in academic libraries in Nigeria. The study was guided by four objectives. Quantitative analyses were carried out on the data. This consisted of descriptive statistics of frequency and percentages. The Results revealed that the librarians perceive a high value of LIS degree. The majority of them engage in one side business or another. However, the side business engagements of the librarians are mostly in the traditional core librarianship areas while opportunities in information and communication technology (ICT) are not maximally exploited as a result of skills inadequacies. Obstacles that hinder the librarians from engaging in side businesses as well as the strategies that can be employed to enhance engagement in side businesses are identified. It was recommended among others that librarians should acquire or upgrade their skills in ICT to be able to take up the opportunities that it offers for engaging in entrepreneurial activities.

Introduction

The financial demands of modern society are putting a lot of pressure on most working individuals to have multiple streams of income as cope mechanisms. This is even more imperative in the developing countries where poor performing economies and high cost of living coupled with pressure from both near and distant relatives (given the extended family system practiced in these countries) makes it difficult for many to cope with just one stream of income. As a result of these and other factors, many individuals, including those in paid employment are not averse to engaging in side businesses to augment their incomes. A side business as used in this study refers to any part-time revenue-producing activity done outside one's regular job (Dority, 2018).

For many working professionals, the side businesses they engage in are mostly in the area of their professional training or expertise. For example, many medical doctors who are in paid employment also engage in private practice after the working hours. Some accountants are known to have private firms that specialize in offering financial consultancy services to clients, while teachers often offer fee-paying tutorials in addition to their regular jobs and so forth. This is not to say that individuals may not engage in side businesses that are outside their field of professional training. However, it does lay credence to the fact that tertiary education should not be for mere purposes of professional qualification. Rather, it should equip students with skills and competencies that they can market or use to generate extra income during their schooling or upon graduation should they choose to. This can afford them a better chance of improving their standard of living. Without a doubt, it was in recognition of the need to address the problem of unemployment and to also encourage people to engage in ventures other than white-collar jobs that entrepreneurship courses were

introduced in tertiary institutions in Nigeria in line with the directives of the National Universities Commission (Oluwadare and Kayode, 2014). The idea is to produce graduates with skills that can make them self reliant rather than hope for the elusive white-collar job. Eke, Igwesi and Orji (2011) define entrepreneurship as a "programme that inculcates creative, innovative, productive and managerial skills needed in business enterprises for self-reliance and national development." In essence, skills learnt from entrepreneurship education can also be employed to establish a side business that can earn one some much needed income. However, from the view expressed by Eke, Igwesi and Orji (2011) it could be inferred that in addition to possessing marketable skills and competencies, an individual who desires to engage in a side business must also be creative and innovative. Furthermore, he/she has to be productive and possess sufficient managerial skills that will enable him/her to identify and exploit business opportunities for incremental wealth. To that extent, an already employed librarian who possesses the requisite entrepreneurial qualities can, in addition to his/her paid job, engage in other ventures, and this can become a side business. Such side business can also become a major source of income in the event of retirement or disengagement from work.

The foregoing raises the question: do librarians in Nigeria engage in side business for additional income, and if they do, what are these side businesses? To answer this question, however, it is also needful to ascertain first, librarians' perception of the value of the library and information science degree. No doubt, perception influences attitude and choice. To that extent, a perception of high value will likely enable individuals to see the possibilities that are inherent in a professional field. On the hand, where a low value is placed on it, it will serve as a de-motivator.

The motivation for this study came from a comment made by a former lecturer in library and information science who went ahead to obtain a law degree. Upon a question by one of the researchers as to why he felt the need for a law degree, his response was 'librarianship has no second-hand value.' By that, he meant that there are very limited opportunities in library and information science and so it is difficult for librarians to engage in side business or have something to fall back on in the event of loss of employment or retirement. Rather unfortunate coming from a teacher of librarians but it got the researchers thinking. Moreover, a careful search of the literature revealed a gap as most of the available literature in Nigeria focused on entrepreneurship in library and information science, often exploring the subject from a conceptual perspective. Therefore, this study represents an empirical attempt on the subject of entrepreneurship and side business engagements among library and information science practitioners in Nigeria. The findings of this study are expected to provide insight into the perception of the value of library and information science education among librarians in Nigeria. It is also expected to throw more light on what types of (if any), side business library and information science professionals in Nigeria engage in while also enlightening librarians on the income-generating opportunities that are open to them. The knowledge from this study will ultimately contribute to the body of literature.

Research Objectives

1. Ascertain the views of librarians in Nigeria on the value of a library and information science degree
2. Ascertain whether librarians in Nigeria engage in side business
3. **Determine the types of side business librarians in Nigeria are engaged in**
4. **Find out the obstacles to engaging in side business among librarians in Nigeria**
5. **Ascertain the strategies that can be employed to enhance librarians' engaging in side business.**

Literature Review

One of the major reasons for which people go to school is to get a good job after graduation and earn a salary that will enable them to meet their needs reasonably well. But the reality of the times in Nigeria today is that there are very few job opportunities available. Also, even individuals that are lucky to secure employment after graduation realize all too soon that the salary that comes in at the end of the month is grossly inadequate to meet one's many needs. To have a measure of income stability, therefore, some working individuals engage in side businesses. A side business not only provides extra income but can also come in handy if/when an individual voluntarily quits paid job, retires from active service or for some reason(s) has his/her job terminated. However, success in side business is only possible if individuals can acquire not only educational qualifications but also marketable skills and competencies which they can deplore to make money. This is in addition to the ability to identify and exploit available business opportunities. Where this is not possible, there is the tendency for frustrations and doubts to arise in the minds of professional regarding the value of their training.

In fact, the question, "what is the value of a library and information science degree?" has often been asked by students and graduates of library and information science in Nigeria and elsewhere as they try to strike a balance between theoretical learning and the reality of the job market. In an attempt to answer this question in the United States of America, the Library Research Service (2018) launched a 60-minute survey on its lib serv. The respondents were asked seven questions including two key questions: (1) Do you feel your MLIS degree was/is worth the time and money invested in it? (2) If asked today, would you recommend pursuing an MLIS degree?

The survey revealed that generally, librarians were satisfied with their MLIS degree and would recommend it to others. This was implied from an analysis of comments that indicated that nine out of 10 (89%) persons said that they felt the degree was worth the time and money they invested in it. To buttress this position, 86% of the respondents said they would recommend the degree to others.

Furthermore, the survey revealed that out of 95 per cent of librarians that received their degree 16 or more years earlier felt that their degree was worth it. They were also most likely to recommend the degree to others. On the other hand, those who graduated in the last 5 years were the least likely to feel their MLIS has value, with 81 per cent indicating the degree was worth it and 82 per cent indicating that they would recommend it to others. The reasons for the gap in the perceived value of the degree between MLIS graduates based on the comments

of the newly graduated library and information science professionals included concerns about job availability, adequate compensation and paying off student loans. Nevertheless, while the older graduates believed that their MLIS was valuable in their career, they expressed concerns that the profession had changed considerably from when they graduated. They also wondered at the value of the degree presently and the future of librarianship in the age of Google.

However, a different study also conducted in the United States of America that examined the characteristics and motivations of academic library professionals came out with a different finding. The study focused on 193 academic library professionals who were employed in professional positions in academic libraries but who did not possess a degree in librarianship. The study found that a majority of academic library professionals have no intention of, and do not see the value in, pursuing a graduate degree in librarianship (Oliver and Prosser, 2018).

In Nigeria, this question is also cogent as some studies have revealed that many undergraduates of library and information science opted to study librarianship for some reasons including their inability to gain admission into their first choice of study, influence from relatives or teachers, and earlier employment in a library (Issa and Nwalo, 2008; Oluwanle and Abayomi, 2010). Oftentimes, anxiety, doubt and discontent arise when individuals, employed or unemployed, are not sure about how to put their degree to good use This may result from their inability to identify and pursue available business opportunities. There is no doubt therefore, that an awareness of the opportunities that exist in any given professional field can be useful to professionals that may be considering taking up one side business or another.

In library and information science, some existing opportunities that could be exploited by library and information science professionals in Nigeria have been identified to include information brokerage, book publishing and trading, establishing and maintaining libraries for private organizations, compilation of bibliographies and freelancing (Elonye and Uzuegbu, 2013). Other possible business opportunities are contract cataloguing, indexing, abstracting, literature review, online information retrieval, computer operation services, document delivery services, records and archives management, cyber café business, photocopying services, production and sale of library equipment, computer maintenance, newspaper distributorship, and owning and running a telephone/GSM call centre (Kumbhar, 2010; Ekere and Ekere 2012; Anyanwu, Oduagwu, Ossai-Onah and Amaechi, 2013; Nwosu and Unagha, 2014, Nnadozie, 2013).

In the United States of America, Dorty (2018) counsels librarians to engage in side business such as:

- ➢ Book author
- ➢ Business writer
- ➢ Cataloguer
- ➢ Grant writer for nonprofit

- ➢ Indexer for publishing companies
- ➢ Information curator
- ➢ Instructional designer
- ➢ Online instructor
- ➢ Researcher
- ➢ Social media content developer
- ➢ Special topic blogger
- ➢ Website developer/manager
- ➢ User experience consultant.

A close look at most of the opportunities listed above shows that unlike in the past when libraries and librarians were mostly concerned with selecting, organizing, preserving and disseminating information mostly in print format, presently information and communication technology (ICT) is impacting the information landscape greatly, and so has opened up a lot of opportunities from which librarians can make extra income (Dorty, 2018).
However, only librarians who have the necessary skills and competencies can benefit from these opportunities. In essence, factors such as lack of skill and competence can be a barrier to fully maximizing income-generating opportunities even when they exist.

In Nigeria, some factors are said to hinder librarians from engaging in side business. These include lack of awareness of entrepreneurial opportunities, lack of entrepreneurial spirit, fear of competition and failure, lack of specific skills, and difficulty in generating compelling business ideas (Ugwu & Ezeani and Molaro cited in Eleonye & Uzuegbu, 2013). Laying credence to this, a study found that 70% of library and information science students in South-East Nigeria were not aware of the opportunities that were available in librarianship (Ugwu and Ezeani, 2012). The implication was that they could not maximize these opportunities for income generation. It is also likely that if this challenge is not addressed while still in school, it would continue even after graduation. As mentioned earlier, this is also among the contributory factors to the incidence of graduate unemployment in Nigeria.

Other challenges include unavailability of funds, shortcomings in the library and information science curriculum, unfavorable business environment and societal apathy to library and information science (Anyanwu, Oduagwu, Ossai-Onah & Amaechi, 2013; Nnadozie, 2013, Omehia, 2019). On the issue of shortcomings in the library and information science curriculum, it has been observed that this is particularly so in the area of information and communication technology courses. This arises from the fact that while these courses exist in the curriculum, they are often not taught due to the inadequacy of personnel and equipment (Edegbo, 2011).

Some strategies that could enhance the engagement of librarians in Nigeria in side business have been advanced. This includes acquiring specific skills in information and communication technology to be able to maximize the opportunities that are open in information management in the digital age (Elonye and Uzuegbu (2013). It is also advised that library and information science professionals should have an entrepreneurial mindset that will dissipate fear of failure. They also need to obtain business skills that would enable them

to succeed in business. The place of creativity and imitativeness for all kinds of ideas, innovativeness in the selection of value-adding ideas, and acquire entrepreneurship skills to succeed in side businesses cannot be overemphasized (Nwadiani, 2011). In the same vein, the acquisition of work experience and business knowledge/ideas are a major factor that inspire individuals to create new ventures that could serve as a strong push into entrepreneurship (Sinnott, 2008).

Some views about re-jigging the library and information science curriculum in the area of entrepreneurship have been articulated by Akinseinde (2011) in his hypothetical model of entrepreneurship education and system in training as depicted in the diagram below.

Education and Training in Library and Information Science

Entrepreneurial Initiative	Resource Inputs	Develop entrepreneurial ability Identify business Opportunity

Instruction in Library & Information
Creativity Innovative Productivity
Managerial Skills
Creation of Wealth Employment

Conduct Needs Assessment

Implementation Plans/Activities

Retrain

Retool

Redesign

Re-evaluate

Review

Repackaged

Course lecturers
Conference/Seminars

Guest lecturers

Case studies Internship Study projects

Determine experience needed (education & Training)

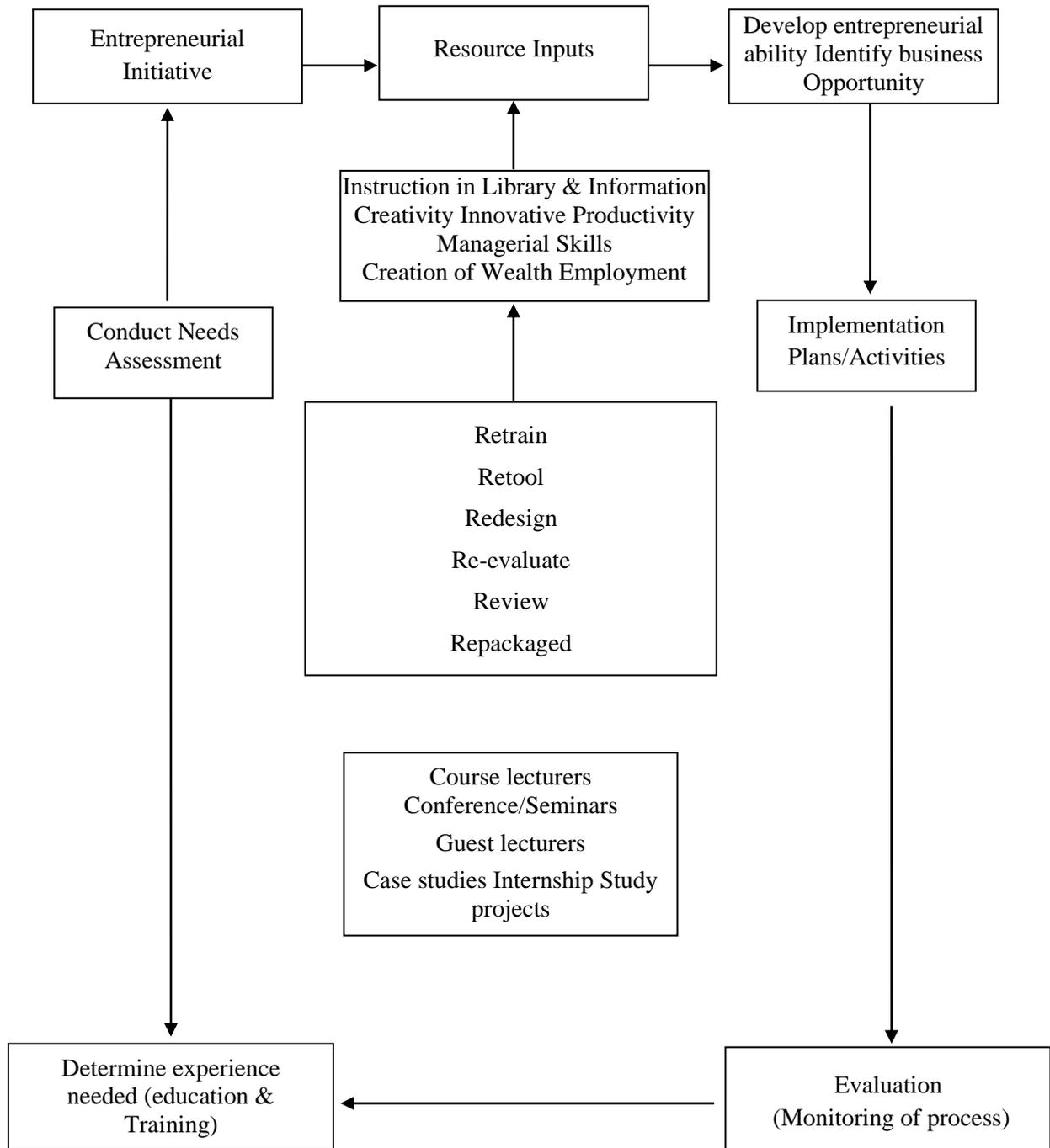Evaluation (Monitoring of process)

Fig 1: Adaptation of Hypothetical Model for Entrepreneurship Education and System

The model shows that Akinseinde (2011) considers as important, an overhauling of the library and information science educational system and the introduction of more entrepreneurship education content. In his view, that is important for building a culture of self-reliance among library and information science undergraduates in Nigeria. This in turn will equip them with the capacity to be able to identify income yielding opportunities during and after their training.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire that was self-developed from the literature by the researchers. The questionnaire had two parts. Part 1 had four variables and covered the demographics of the respondents. Part 2 had 4 clusters and focused on eliciting data on the 4 research objectives that were formulated for the study. Cluster 1 with seven items focused on respondents' perception of the value of library and information science degree. Cluster 2 aimed at eliciting information on the side businesses the respondents engaged in. A comment section was also provided to enable respondents supply information that may not have been covered in the questionnaire. Cluster 3 with nine items sought to know the perceived obstacles to engaging in side businesses while cluster 4 with 6 items sought to determine the strategies that could be employed to enhance librarians' engagement in side businesses. To elicit responses, clusters 1 and 3 were ranked on a four-point scale. The responses were scored quantitatively using Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D), Agree (A) and Strongly Agree (SA) to which real limits of numbers- 1, 2, 3, 4- were assigned respectively. Cluster 2 had two option responses of Yes and No. Cluster 4 with a four-point scale of Very Highly Inappropriate (VHI), Highly Inappropriate (HI), Highly Appropriate (HA) and Very Highly Appropriate (VHA) were also scored quantitatively using real limits of numbers - 1, 2, 3, 4. Because it was not mandatory to obtain ethical clearance before carrying out the study, a covering note was attached to the questionnaire to explain the purpose of the research and to also; solicit the cooperation of the respondents in filling it out. The covering note assured respondents of the confidentiality of their responses.

The study began in February 2020. It was initially conceived to be carried out among librarians in Enugu State, Nigeria. Therefore, it began with the distribution of a print questionnaire for data collection. However, with the discovery of cases of Covid-19 pandemic positive persons in Nigeria and the subsequent lockdown in March 2020 occasioned by the need to combat the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic in Nigeria, the researchers realized that relying solely on the print questionnaire would pose a serious challenge. As a result, a decision was taken to extend the study beyond Enugu State to include librarians in other states of the country. To achieve this, the questionnaire was converted into a web-based format using the Google Docs application software. The distribution of the physical copies of the questionnaire covered mostly librarians in the Nnamdi Azikiwe Library system, University of Nigeria, Nsukka and other librarians in various libraries in Enugu State, Nigeria. The web version was posted to the Whatsapp page of the Academic and Research Libraries Section (ARLS) of the Nigerian Library Association as well as librarians on the contact lists of the researchers. Repeated reminders were sent out to encourage people to respond. By August 2020, one hundred and fifteen web responses were received. The data collected with the print copies of the questionnaire and the web version was merged to make 176 response rates.

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for analyses. Descriptive statistics of frequencies and percentages were used to analyze the demographic data and the research questions. The results were presented in tables, charts and graphs for more clarity.
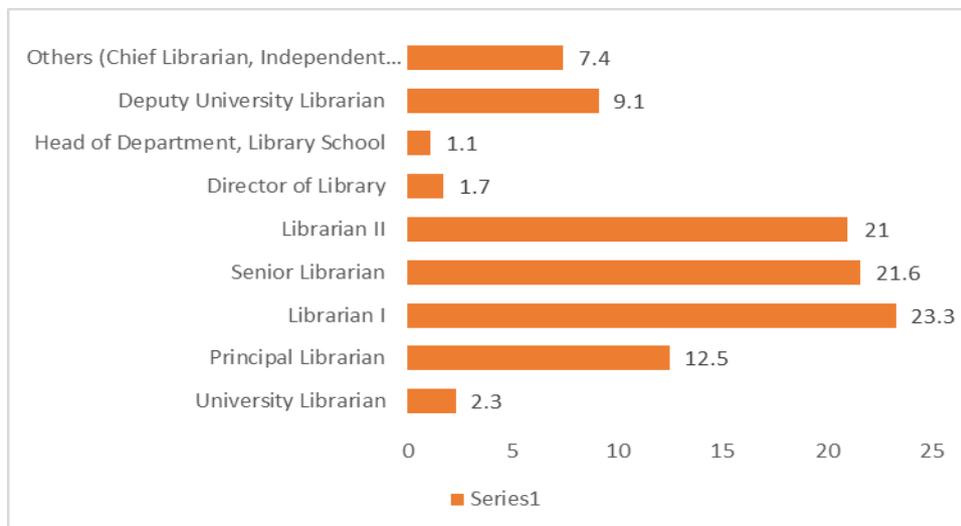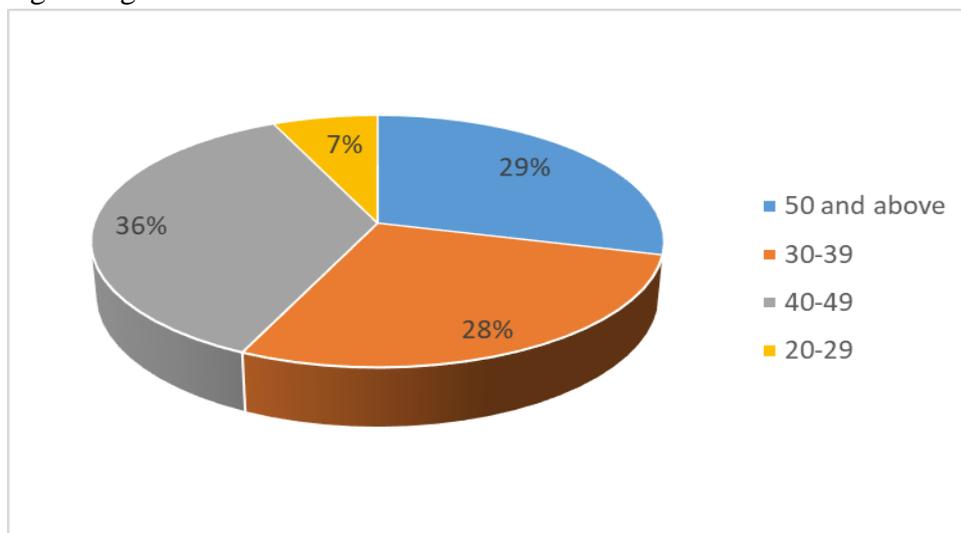
Results

Demographics

Fig 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents
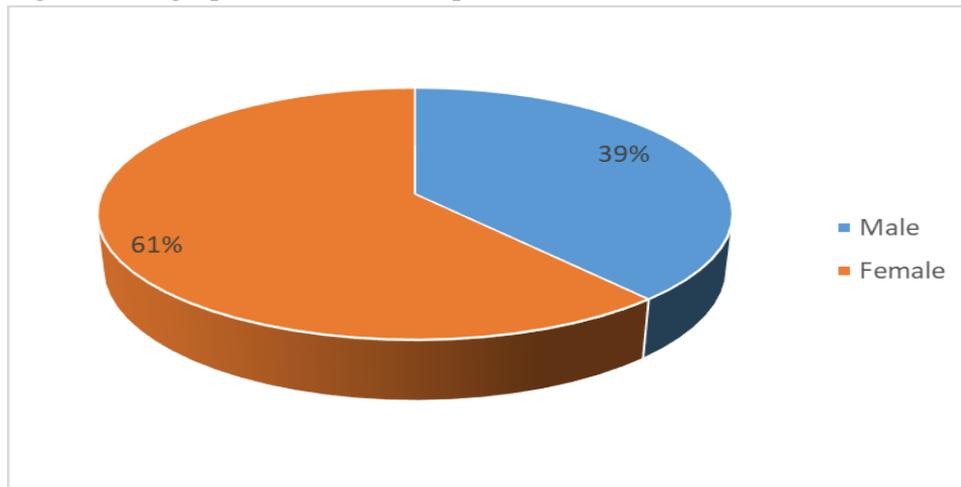
Professional status

Age Range

Years of Work Experience
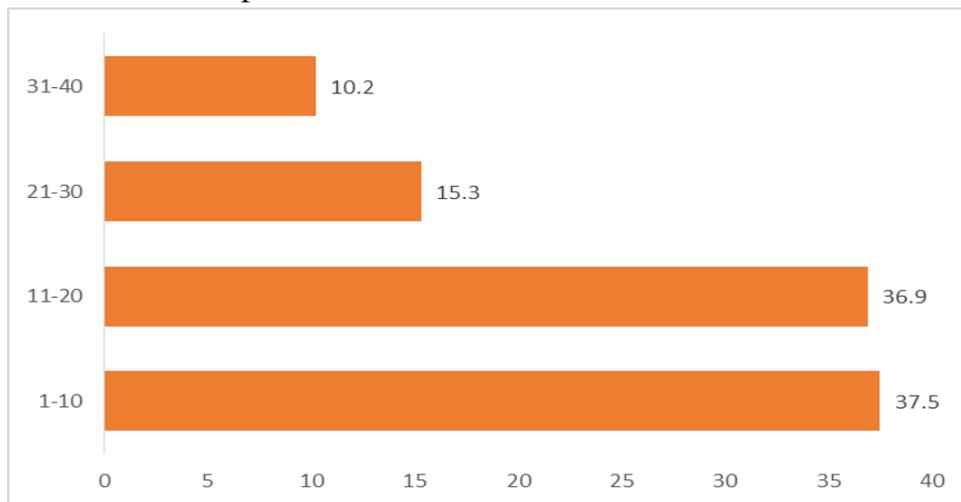
Fig. 1 presents the demographics of the respondents. Data analysis was based on 176 (83%) returned questionnaire (print and electronic). The fig. shows that the majority of the respondents 108, (61.4%) are female while only 68 (38.6%) are male. In terms of professional status, Librarian I constitute the highest number 41 (23.3 %,) while Head of Department, Library School constitute the least 2, (1.1 %). Furthermore, in terms of age, the majority 64 (36.4%) fall within the age range of 40-49. Finally, in terms of years of work experience, respondents who have worked for 1-10 years are in the majority 66 (37.5%).

Perception of Library and Information Science Professionals on the Value of Library and Information Science Degree

This research question assessed the views of the librarians on the value of Library and Information Science Degree. The responses are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Value of Library and Information Science Degree

Statements	SD	D	A	SA
Librarianship is relevant in today's society	6 (3.4%)	3 (1.7%)	12 (6.85%)	155 (88.1%)
Librarianship equips one with marketable skills	6 (3.4%)	6 (3.4%)	70 (39.8%)	94 (53.4%)
There are many job opportunities for graduates of Librarianship	6 (3.4%)	14 (8.0%)	66 (37.5%)	90 (51.1%)
Entrepreneurial opportunities in librarianship are lucrative	3 (1.7%)	30 (17.0%)	89 (50.7%)	54 (30.7%)
With librarianship skills, one can engage in side business.	3 (1.7%)	9 (5.1%)	71 (40.3%)	93 (52.8%)
Investment in librarianship education was worth it	6 (3.4%)	17 (9.7%)	55 (31.3%)	98 (55.7%)
I will recommend a degree in librarianship to someone	6 (3.4%)	14 (8.0%)	53 (30.1%)	103 (58.5%)

Results in Table 1 show the descriptive statistics of the responses on the value of a library and information science degree. The analysis shows that the respondents agree with all the statements. Notwithstanding, the item which states that "Librarianship is relevant in today's society", attracted the highest percentage agreement, this was followed by the statements, "librarianship equips one with marketable skills"; "with librarianship skills one can engage in side business" and "I will recommend a degree in librarianship to someone". Other positive assertions by the respondents on the value of library and information science degree include, "Investment in librarianship education was worth it" and "entrepreneurship opportunities in librarianship are lucrative"

Engagement in Side Businesses by Library and Information Science Professionals
Librarians were asked to indicate whether they engage in side business or not. Data in Table 2 below show their responses.

Table 2: Engagement in Side Businesses by Librarians

Items	Frequency	Percent
Yes	123	69.9
No	53	30.1

Evidence from the table 2 above shows that 123, representing 69.9% of professional librarians are engaged in side businesses while only 53(30.1) are not engaged in any.

Side Business Engagement of Library and Information Science Professionals

Following from 123 respondents in Table 2 who indicated that they engage in side businesses, a list of library and information science business ventures was provided in which they were required to indicate the various kinds of business ventures they engage in. The responses are presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Side Business Engaged Professional Librarians   **N=123**

Items	Yes		No	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Information brokerage and freelancing	31	25.2	92	74.7
Document delivery services	22	17.8	101	82.1
Book publishing and trading,	78	63.4	45	36.5
Establishment and maintenance of private libraries	0	0	123	100
Bibliographies compilation	44	35.7	79	64.2
Management of records and archives	60	48.7	63	51.2
Establishing and operating cybercafe business	36	29.2	87	70.7
Provision of photocopying services	52	42.2	71	57.7
Owning and running a telephone /GSM call centre	15	12.1	107	87.8
Production and sales of library equipment	24	19.5	99	80.4
Provision of computer maintenance services	17	13.8	106	86.1
Involvement in newspaper distributorship	20	16.2	103	83.7
Book authoring	86	69.9	37	30.0
Provision of cataloguing services	115	93.4	7	5.6
Business proposals writing	57	46.3	66	53.6
Special topic blogging services	40	32.5	83	67.4
Social media content development	52	42.2	71	57.7
Research and literature search services	111	90.2	12	9.7
Online instruction services	56	45.5	67	54.4
Instructional design services	44	35.7	79	64.2
Information curate services	53	43.0	70	56..9
Indexing for publishing companies	92	74.7	31	25.2
Grant writing for clients	39	31.7	84	68.2

The results in Table 3 show that of all the opportunities listed, the respondents indicated that they engage more in the following: provision of cataloguing services (93.4%), research and literature search services (90.2%), indexing for publishing companies (74.7%), book authoring (69.9%), book publishing and trading (63.4%). On the other hand, the opportunities that are least engaged in include, the establishment of private libraries (0%), owning and running a telephone/GSM services (12.1%), provision of computer maintenance services (13.8%) and document delivery services (17.8%). Since the respondents were given room to indicate any other side businesses they engage in that are not captured in the list, fifteen

representing 12% of the respondents indicated farming while thirty-five (28%) indicated buying and selling or retail business.

Obstacles of Engaging in Side Businesses among Library and Information Science Professionals

A number of factors were identified as challenges of engaging in side businesses, and the library and information science professionals were required to indicate their level of agreement about them. Table 4 below presents the responses.

Table 4: Obstacles to Engaging in Side Business by Library and Information Science Professionals

Items	SD	D	A	SA
Lack of entrepreneurial spirit	17 (9.7%)	21 (11.9%)	65 (36.9%)	73 (41.5%)
Fear of competition and failure	29 (16.5%)	26 (14.8%)	73 (41.5%)	48 (27.3%)
Lack of specific skills	9 (5.15%)	24 (13.6%)	58 (33.0%)	85 (48.3%)
Difficulty in generating compelling business ideas	6 (3.4%)	33 (18.8%)	83 (47.2%)	54 (30.7%)
Unavailability of funds	18 (10.2%)	15 (8.5%)	37 (21.0%)	106 (60.2%)
Shortcomings in the library and information science curriculum	12 (6.8%)	42 (23.9%)	56 (31.8%)	66 (37.5%)
Unfavorable business environment	6 (3.4%)	39 (22.2%)	65 (36.9%)	66 (37.5%)
Societal apathy to library and information science	18 (10.2%)	36 (20.5%)	53 (30.1%)	69 (39.2%)

The results of the analysis on the obstacles to engaging in side business are displayed in Table 4 above. The results show that all the statements listed are perceived to be obstacles in one way or another giving the have high percentage agreement of the respondents in all the items. This implies that the factors that pose as obstacles to the professionals in engaging in side businesses are, lack of entrepreneurial spirit, fear of competition, lack of specific skills and difficulty in generating compelling business ideas. Others include unavailability of funds, shortcomings in the curriculum of training, unfavorable business environment and societal apathy in library and information science profession.

Strategies for Enhancing Library Professionals Engagement in Side Businesses

The respondents were instructed to indicate their opinion on the extent adequacy of some identified strategies that can be employed in enhancing their engagement in side businesses using four parameters of VHI-Very highly inadequate, HI-highly inadequate, HA-Highly adequate and VHA-Very highly inadequate. Table 5 shows the responses.

Table 5: Enhancing Library Professionals' Engagement in Side Businesses

Items	VHI	HI	HA	VHA
Acquisition of specific skills in information and communication technology	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	20 (11.4)	156 (88.6)
Possession of creative and initiative ability for all kinds of ideas and entrepreneurship skills.	0 (0.0)	3 (1.7)	41 (23.3)	132 (75.0)
Innovativeness in the selection of value-adding ideas	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	65 (36.9)	111 (63.1)
Obtaining of business skills	0 (0.0)	3 (1.7)	53 (30.1)	120 (68.2)
Cultivation of entrepreneurship mindset	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	61 (34.7)	115 (65.3)
Dissipation of fear of failure	0 (0.0)	11 (6.3)	57 (32.4)	108 (61.4)

The results on the strategies that could be employed to enhance librarians' engaging in side businesses are presented in Table 5 above. The analysis shows that all the outlined strategies are considered to be appropriate for the purpose. This is inferred from the positive high percentage scores of highly adequate and very highly adequate in all the items. Hence the strategies for enhancing library professionals' engagement in side business are: acquisition of specific skills in information and communication technology; possession of creative and initiative ability for all kinds of ideas and entrepreneurship skills and innovativeness in the selection of value-adding ideas. Others include obtaining of business skills; cultivation of entrepreneurship mindset and dissipation of fear of failure.

Discussion

The findings on the perception of the value of library and information science degree reveal that the librarians agree that the library and information science degree has value. As the analysis reveals, all the individual items were agreed on as indicated by the high percentage scores, as the values of library and information science degree by the respondents. This goes on to strengthen the position that although the literature suggests that many librarians in Nigeria chose to study library and information science as a second choice of course of study especially at the undergraduate level (Issa and Nwalo, 2008; Oluwanle and Abayomi, 2010), most have grown to perceive it as a worthwhile profession. The fact that they perceive the investment in librarianship education as a worthwhile venture supports this assertion. Also, a good number of them will recommend the degree to someone else. These findings are supported by the findings of the study conducted in the United States of America by the

Library Research Service (2018). The LRS study revealed that generally, librarians are satisfied with their MLIS degree and would recommend it to others even though there was a slight difference between the perception of graduates of sixteen years and above and those who graduated in the last five years. The concern about job availability, adequate compensation and paying off student loans was the reason for the slight difference in the perceived value of the MLS degree between the older graduate librarians and the newly graduated librarians.

Moreover, the findings of the current study reveal that librarians are of the view that librarianship equips one with marketable skills, offer many job opportunities and can enable one engage in side business with the skills acquired. No doubt professionals desire to be equipped with skills that can make them productive beyond the four walls of a conventional library. This raises some questions about the reports that there is a noticeable deficiency in the Nigerian library and information science programme (Anyanwu, Oduagwu, Ossai-Onah & Amaechi, 2013; Nnadozie, 2013, Omehia, 2019). On the other hand, these skills may have been acquired through personal professional development efforts.

Furthermore, the findings reveal that the librarians engage in several side businesses to augment their income. Also, the findings reveal that most of the respondents engage in side businesses that are not necessarily in core traditional library and information science areas. This is because, with the exception of provision of cataloguing services and research and literature search services, the other opportunities can be utilized by non library and information science professionals if they possess the skills. In essence, one does not have to be a graduate of library and information science to pick up such skills. Another thing to note here is that traditional library and information science skills have higher percentage score indicating that many of the respondents are more adept in these areas. This includes provision of cataloguing services, research and literature search services, indexing, bibliographies compilation and so on. This is further buttressed by the fact that opportunities in application of information technology are not highly engaged in. This includes special topic blogging services, social media content development, online instruction services and instructional design services. One wonders if this is a pointer to the deficiency in Nigerian library and information science curriculum in the area of information and communication technology as posited by some researchers (Anyanwu, Oduagwu, Ossai-Onah & Amaechi, 2013; Nnadozie, 2013, Omehia, 2019).

On the perceived obstacles to engaging in side businesses among the librarians, the findings reveal that all the outlined factors are considered as obstacles. This includes unavailability of funds, lack of specific skills, lack of entrepreneurial spirit, difficulty in generating compelling business ideas, unfavourable business environment, shortcomings in the library and information science curriculum and societal apathy to library and information science. This supports the findings of previous studies (Ugwu & Ezeani and Molaro cited in Eleonye & Uzuegbu, 2013; Anyanwu, Oduagwu, Ossai-Onah & Amaechi, 2013; Nnadozie, 2013 and Omehia, 2019). Be that as it may, it is important to note that while shortcomings in the library and information science curriculum is considered an obstacle, it does not appear to be the most compelling as it comes seventh in the ratings by most to least obstacle.

The findings on the strategies that can be employed to enhance librarians' engaging in side business also reveal that all the outlined suggestions are perceived as very highly appropriate. This corroborates the findings of Elonye and Uzuegbu (2013), Nwadiani, (2011), Sinnott, (2008) and Akinseinde, (2011) who indentified acquisition of specific skills in information and communication technology, possession of creative and initiative ability for all kinds of ideas and entrepreneurship skills, obtaining of business skills, cultivation of entrepreneurial mindset, innovativeness in the selection of value-adding ideas, innovativeness in the selection of value-adding ideas, and dissipation of fears as appropriate strategies that can be employed to ensure that library and information science professionals engage in side business/entrepreneurship.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study was carried out to determine the perception of the value of library and information science training and side business practices among employed library and information science professionals in Nigeria. The findings of this study have revealed that generally, the librarians are of the view that the library and information science degree has value and that it is capable of enabling them to have the skills that can be channeled towards making extra income. The study found that many of the working librarians who participated in the study also engage in side businesses. However, this is mostly in traditional library science core areas. On the other hand, while opportunities in information and communication technology abound they are not very highly explored. This could be attributed to the inadequacy of skills in this area. Also, the study revealed that some respondents engage in farming and retail (buying and selling) for additional income. Some obstacles that hinder librarians from engaging in side business as well as the strategies that can help to improve on these obstacles were also highlighted.

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

Librarians should acquire and update skills in the area of information and communication technology. This is important because as information professionals in the digital age, career success is contingent on the possession of the requisite ICT skills. Additionally, the information field is dynamic and the ability of professionals to be flexible and adaptive is key if one is to get the most benefit from it.

There is the need to inject library and information science departments with lecturers who are adept with information technology and communication skills. On the other hand, the existing lecturers should improve on their skills in this field. The expectation that graduates of library and information science programme will thrive in the job market or become self-reliant with the traditional librarianship skills alone is rather unrealistic.

The government should ensure that tertiary institutions are implementing the policy on entrepreneurship, and it is imperative that the relevant agencies such as the NUC should monitor compliance. This is because it is one thing to have entrepreneurship courses in the curriculum and another thing to have students benefit from it.

It is recommended that the scope of this study be expanded to enable for comparison of findings.

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