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Adopting the Social Media and Infopreneurship Skills for Overcoming the Unemployment Problems of University Graduates in Nigeria

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Abstract.

Social media is currently changing the terrain in our day-to-day communication and interaction in our society and organizations. Currently, many library graduates are becoming “netizens” and digital natives who are no longer comfortable with the conventional traditional library education after graduation. In the same vein, there is this driving zeal of these new breed librarians to become job creators and no longer job seekers especially after graduation, hence, the need for adopting entrepreneurship stance such as the introduction of “Infopreneur” to their library education. This is because, joblessness has been on the increase for so many years. Library graduates are roaming the street jobless and many are found idle. This paper considers the adoption of social media and infopreneurship skills to be acquired by our graduating students so as to mitigate the unemployment problems of library graduates in Nigeria. The paper also explored several existing body of knowledge that can do this, highlighted ways of transforming library education to gainful employment. It further stated the ways in which social media and infopreneurship can be eventful in Nigeria and concluded that the Nigerian education planners should try to encourage and expand the social media and infopreneurship education in our universities to help the outcoming graduates to provide jobs for themselves and others.

KEYWORDS: Social media; Library graduates; Infopreneurship; Library education; Nigerian education.

Introduction:

The tenets of any worthwhile librarian are his/her ability to harmonize, package and disseminate information to desiring users at the right place and the right time. This is in tandem with the Ranganathan's five principles of librarianship. Of-course, today's library users have been challenged to move from the simple declaration of "save the time of the user" to meeting other challenging needs of instant service, remotely and seamlessly. All these have continued to keep librarianship afloat and making the professionals to look downwards towards offering users the best services. Many librarians have grown in service, though conventionally. But today, due to the emergence of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), the place of librarianship has been churning out different platforms for effective service delivery. Such platforms have included but not limited to social media and infopreneurships.

Social media, according to Afebuameh (2015)¹ are "Internet-based tools for sharing and discussing information among human beings". The term often refers to activities that integrate technology, social interactions and the construction of words, pictures, videos and audios. Accordingly, social media has become a library technology. This has helped the library to achieve its aim of offering every user his 'book' anywhere and at any time.

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1. A. J. Afebuameh. Application of social media in libraries: challenges and prospects for Nigerian libraries. *Global Review of Library and Information Science*, University of Nigeria Nsukka, Vol. 11. 2015. p.11-21.

An Infopreneur in the other hand, is an extension of two distinct fields as the term has its etymology from the words, ‘information’ and ‘entrepreneurship’. The term ‘infopreneur’ is considered to be a neologism portmanteau and is derived from the words ‘information’ and ‘entrepreneur’.² Usually, the term is referred to any person or process which its primary business is gathering and selling electronic information. However, the practice is an emerging business model in mainstreaming the information practice that is profit-oriented in nature based on a vision and passion for using the internet medium to create and or develop, package and sell information products and services for the purposes of generating income³. The concept of wealth creation is premised on entrepreneurship in librarianship. The end product is the development and application of entrepreneurial skills which can be used to establish business enterprises to create employment and wealth. An entrepreneurial mind set is ‘sine qua non’ to wealth creation⁴. It is the thinking of a person who does not rely on paid employment but rather would like to work for him/herself. He/she actualizes the innate potentials and develops a character that is not dependent but independent.

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2. L. S. Ramugondo.. *An exploratory study of infopreneurship as a job option for Library and Information Science Students: A literature review*. A paper presented at the Department of Information Science Annual Conference held from 2nd – 3rd September, 2010 at Richardsbay University of Zululand, South Africa.
 3. L.A. Dare, A.U. Ogbonna. *Infopreneurship potentials to financial downturn of the unemployed graduates in Nigeria*. An unpublished Ph.D. seminar paper at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. 2019.
 4. S.C.Ugwuoke, C. Onomereroso, C. E. Ebenda. Assessment of the level of implementation of Universal Basic Education in Junior Secondary Schools in Enugu state. *International Journal of Educational Research, University of Nigeria, Nsukka*, Vol. 11, 2014, no.1, p. 215-224.

Overview of Social Media in Libraries:

Accordingly, “social media have been a large population of users that libraries have to key in to, so as to serve a wider community especially, with the fact that most of the social media platforms render services across the borders of our immediate environments”. As a matter of fact, the most commonly used social media in libraries include but not limited to Blogs, Facebooks, Youtube, WhatsApp, Pinterest, Flickr, Twitter, Google+. These media can be applied in the libraries in numerous ways. These include:

Relieving and marketing library services to attract new library users: There have been great needs to reach more desiring library users, especially now that there is a proliferation of androids, Smartphones and other handheld devices. This has been discovered from the fact that most entertainment industries have been distracting users from direct library use. As a result, librarians are seeing the need to draw or chase these users with their services through the various social media platforms. Statistics of social media usage have shown that there are nearly seven hundred (700) million active Facebook users, over one hundred (100) million LinkedIn members, five billion images on Flickr photostreams, three hundred (300) million Twitter users and two thousand, nine hundred (2,900) billion hours of Youtube watching per month (Tortorella, 2012)⁵. This therefore, shows that with social media, library services can be effectively used to promote increased library services and the creation of open windows for a fee-based library opportunity.

D.Tortorella. Faculty speaker: using social media strategically, 2012.

<http://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/sjsuasist/16>. Assesed in May, 2020

Increased Awareness of New Arrivals: Libraries on a daily, weekly and monthly basis acquire resources to improve library use hence; social media can be used to let the clientele know their arrival, instantly. This is because, many users may not know of their existence without them being informed. In the conventional library services, there are usually displays in the form of fliers as “new arrivals” or “additions” telling users that new resources according to disciplines are available in the library. In this case, social media are very important in releasing this kind of information.

Response to Reference Queries: Library users often ask questions relating to their assignments or research interests. Without being physical present in the library, they can log into the library site through any of their handles to pose their queries to the administrator and could be responded to, instantly, using social media. In many library sites, there are usually blog sites embedded and which have a “frequently asked questions” (FAQ) platforms to enable users ask questions and receive answers to what they want to know about the library services.

Sharing of Links of Journal Articles, Maps and Videos. Librarians usually come across web contents that are relevant and helpful to library users. There are many web links to numerous databases both online and offline in forms of journal articles, graphics, maps and videos. Sharing of these links helps to boost the image of the library as many users can access the resources remotely and seamlessly.

Community Information: Librarians can conveniently pass information of significance to the user community through the use of social media channels. It is of-course, important and natural that library should include materials on leisure reading like newspapers, radios and televisions.

With social media platforms, users can get varied information on or about the community of users without their being physical present in the library.

Nowadays, it has become widely known that infopreneurships are gradually becoming the engine of library education and the world economic growth. It is assumed that the economic development driver at this levels are growing graciously.⁶ In tackling the global crisis of graduate unemployment, “the policy makers and stakeholders in developed countries such as England, USA, and Germany, advocated a refocus of educational systems towards acquisition of vocational and technical skills to enhance smooth transition into jobs for school leavers particularly graduates from universities⁷. This owes to the fact that education is important to the development of any society particularly because the goals of wealth creation, poverty reduction and value re-orientation can only be attained and sustained through an efficient educational system which impacts relevant skills, knowledge, capacities, attitudes and values in individuals”⁸.The importance of infopreneurship has made some developed countries like the USA, Japan etc. to utilize it in their development plans, to achieve the objectives of employment creation, mobilization of savings for investment, efficient use of capital, and production of basic consumer goods and services⁹.

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5. A.S. Thomas, S. L. Mueller. A case for comparative entrepreneurship: Assessing the relevance of culture. *Journal of International Business Studies*,2000, Vol 31, no.2, p. 287.
 6. S. Gana. Effect of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intentions among Undergraduate students of Bingham University, Karu Nasarawa State, *Master degree thesis submitted to the department of Business Administration, 2019.*
 7. U.K Agi, N.A. Yellowe. Management strategies for regenerating secondary education for National Development and Self-Reliance. *Journal of Teacher Perspectives, Vol. 7, 2013, no.2, p. 1 12.*
 8. C.L.Emmanuel.. *Entrepreneurship: a conceptual approach*, 2013, Lagos, Pumark Nigeria
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As a matter of fact, infopreneurial activities have been found to be capable of making impacts on the economy of any nation and the quality of life of the people¹⁰. Studies have established its positive relationship with stimulation of economic growth; employment generation; and empowerment of the disadvantaged segment of the population, which include women and the poor¹¹. For many developing countries, infopreneurship has been a powerful engine of economic growth and wealth creation, as well as being crucial for improving the quality, number and variety of employment opportunities for the poor¹². Existing evidence in literature has also shown a correlation between economic growth and the level of infopreneurial activity. A study by the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (2019) showed that economic growth of a country is directly correlated to her level of infopreneurial activity. The benefits of infopreneurship in a developing country like Nigeria cannot be overemphasized. Infopreneurship has many multiplier effects on the economy as it spurs innovation, and fosters investment in people, which is a better source of competitive advantage than other natural resources, which can be depleted. Infopreneurs create new information jobs, new commercial activities, and new economic sectors. They generate jobs for others; they produce goods and services for the society; introduce new technologies and improve or lower cost outputs; and they earn foreign exchange through export expansion or the substitution of imports.

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9. S. N. Adejumo. *Entrepreneur and national building: case of graduate upliftment in Nigeria*. Fourth Dimension Publishers, Enugu, Nigeria, 2001.
 10. A. S. Thomas, S. L. Mueller. A case for comparative entrepreneurship: assessing the relevance of culture. *Journal of International Business Studies*, Vol. 31, 2010. no.2, p. 287.
 11. A. Oteh. *The role of entrepreneurship in transforming the Nigerian economy*, Seventh Convocation Lecture, 2009. Igbinedion University, Okada, Benin.

Lahm and Stowe (2011)¹², asserts that Harold F. Weitzen registered a trademark for “infopreneur”, indicating its first use in commerce as at January 31, 1984. Similarly, David and Dube (2014)¹³ asserts that an infopreneur is one who identifies opportunities for creating information-based businesses by identifying knowledge deficiency situations and selling target-based information products and services, mainly through the internet. Further, they noted that infopreneurs are defined as curious, enthusiasts who have the adventurous and driving urge to undertake intelligent searches on wide ranging information (re)sources and to be able to evaluate, repackage and determine the significance, relevance and value of information and information services which they then sell using internet tools to facilitate and enhance their business.

12. R. Lahm, C. Stowe. "Infopreneurship": roots, evolution, and revolution. *Academic Journal Article*. 2011. <https://www.questia.com/library/journal/1G1-263157525/infopreneurship-roots-evolution-and-revolution>

13. R. David, A. Dube. “Infopreneurial behaviour among University Graduates in the Information Science. Faculty of a University in Zimbabwe”- *Infopreneurship Journal, Vol. 1 2014, .no.2*. Accessed on June 19, 2019 at: <http://ir.nust.ac.zw/xmlui/handle/123456789/381>

Infopreneurship is a business model where an individual, or "infopreneur", shares their life experience, knowledge and passion with others through information products and services that create value and generate income. The author further stressed that, an infopreneur is someone who takes that knowledge, turns it into products and services and sells them. These could be things like books/e-books, online courses, coaching, virtual summits, workshops, masterminds, presentations and more and concludes that these products and services are known as “revenue streams”, and without a doubt there are technologies and computer-based services that truly make the creation and distribution of these revenue streams easier than ever before. Today, anyone with internet access can self-publish a book, launch online courses, give presentations,

and market their products and services, and more for very little costs compared to the startup costs of most brick and mortar businesses.

Establishing Infopreneurship Set-up in Nigeria

Infopreneurship is an extremely powerful form of business ownership because it is truly multi-faceted in what it can accomplish, depending on the end goals. Of course, it allows a person to utilize his/her own skills to earn income. Richert (2019)¹⁴ was of the opinion that certain tools have to be provided and utilized for successful Infopreneurship activities. These tools may include several equipment and facilities in enhancing access to information. Establishing infopreneurship businesses in Nigeria requires a very solid foundation with necessary strategies and tools in place. The tools include:

Website: this is a collection of related network web resources, such as web pages, multimedia content. Websites are typically dedicated to a particular topic or purpose, ranging from entertainment and social networking to providing news and education. Website is one of the tools that can provide strong and viable means of promoting Infopreneurship activities.

14.R. Richert. Weblogs: their use and applications in science and technology libraries. *Science and Technology Libraries*, Vol. 25, 2019, no.3, p.105-116

Sales Funnels: The sales funnel (also known as a revenue funnel or sales process) refers to the buying process that organizations lead their patrons through while purchasing products. This

refers to the process through which an organization finds, qualifies, and sells its products to buyers. There is indeed, need for certain tools for operating an infopreneur business apart from the website.

Click Funnel is all-in-one software that gives one everything required to market, sell and deliver information products and services online.

Business Management: They are all the systems, applications, controls, calculating solutions, methodologies, etc. used by organizations to be able to cope with changing markets, ensure a competitive position in them and improve business performance.

Content Creation: Content creation for business is the linchpin of inbound marketing. Quality content do not only drive sales, attracts customers and builds relationships, but also builds credibility and brand awareness, Zen 2019¹⁶. Attracting the consumers is the role of content creation. Sponsored advertisements, banner messaging and other forms of advertising are ignored in this day of consumer driven sales. Therefore, engaging, compelling content must be original and relevant, drawing more interest and visibility toward a brand.

The Skills Needed for Social Media and Infopreneurship in Nigeria

The need for Infopreneurship and social media for our graduates in Nigeria has become a child of necessity as perceived by these researchers. The conditions of young graduates of Nigeria could probably be described as pathetic. It has therefore, become so necessary to highlight the importance of equipping (graduates) with infopreneurial and social media skills¹⁷.

In economies characterized by low labour demand and high rates of youth unemployment, infopreneurship training has the potential to enable youth to gain skills and create their own job¹⁸. Government of Nigeria and stakeholders therefore, need to create enabling environment for the graduates to undertake information businesses and service delivery.

14. C. Zen. *Marketing: content creation for small businesses*. Retrieved from: <https://zenmarketinginc.com/content-creation-and-curation/> 2019. (11:31Pm, 10/07/2019)
15. B.K. Njabulo, S. N. Gugulethun. The importance of infopreneurship training for records and archives management students in Zimbabwe. *Journal of the South African Society of Archivists, Vol.48, 2015*.
16. P. Premand, S. Brodmann, R. Almeida, R. Grun, M. Barouni. *Entrepreneurship training and self employment among University Graduates: evidence from a randomized trial in Tunisia. 2012*. (Online) Available at: <http://ftp.iza.org/dp7079.pdf> (Accessed 22 January 2019)

Meanwhile, Blecher (2013)¹⁹ posited that the real solution for Africa is human creativity and hard work, the spirit of infopreneurship and the creation of small businesses in their millions – leading to job creation.

The "primary purpose of infopreneurship education is to develop infopreneurial capacities and mindsets". Thus, by virtue of strengthening and bolstering infopreneurial activities and training, the Nigerian society will create graduates whose aim will be to avert the unemployment problem rather than add to it. The power of infopreneurship means that graduates do not have to wait to see who will employ them, but rather seize opportunities and in the process create jobs²⁰.

It is obvious to mention that information has become a commodity and so it must be harnessed and made available for consumption, Vengadasalam (2017)²¹ posited that infopreneurship as a business is important due to the information era which has turned information into a commodity

that could be packaged and sold to consumers and information had become the underlying vitality in today's success to both individuals and organizations.

On the other hand, organizations and countries are increasingly accepting the importance of information and knowledge for their survival, and therefore invest a great deal in information as a commodity.

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17. T. Blecher. *For Africa, entrepreneurship is the way*. (Online) Available at: <http://skollworldforum.org/2013/01/15/for-africa-entrepreneurship-isthe-way/> 2013. (Accessed 27 June 2019).
 18. T. O. Elumelu. *African entrepreneurs will create the jobs Africa needs*. 2014 (Online) Available at: <http://www.africanglobe.net/business/african-entrepreneurs-create-jobsafrica/> (Accessed 27 June 2015).
 19. Vengadasalam (2007) details not available

Ngulube (2011)²² postulated that the information society requires record managers and archivists who can efficiently contribute to the development of society by having portable and comparable qualifications that can be used across the board to harness the advantages offered by the information age. Therefore, the need for Infopreneurship is now glaring. It helps to eliminate the problems of unemployment, redundancy of our graduates, untapped information, dwindling socio and political economy.

Conclusion and Recommendations

From the above mentioned exploration, it is clear that infopreneurship is the instrument of socioeconomic development of any form of economy of any nation in terms of information generation and service delivery. Therefore, Infopreneurship which is an offshoot of academic prowess is highly taking over the information world thereby, creating avenue for wealth creation

and overall economic development. The Nigerian high school graduates should begin to take advantage of these new economic activities to better their social welfare and contribute to the overall wellbeing of the society.

This work concludes with the words of Nolan Bushne in Richert (2019), “the critical ingredient of living is getting off your butt and doing something. It’s as simple as that. A lot of people have ideas, but there are few who decide to do something about them now. Not tomorrow. Not next week. But today, the true infopreneur is a doer, not a dreamer.”

It therefore, recommends that the Nigerian National University Commission should as a matter of urgency, encourage Infopreneurship in the LIS curriculum so that the students can get greater height to be self-employed when they graduate.

There should be vigorous campaign, orientation and public enlightenment to our teeming graduates to embrace infopreneurship as a source of livelihood. Government should provide quiet and serene environment for a business of information to thrive and sustained with friendly information policies and regulations. Undergraduate students should also do well to embrace infopreneurship education while in school so as to become able to create job for themselves after graduation.

20. P. Ngulube. Guidelines and standards for records management education and training: model for Anglophone Africa. *Records Management Journal*, Vol. 11, 2011, no.3, p. 155–173.

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