

## **Bindery: An Entrepreneurial Service In Prof. Ben Nwabueze Library, Federal College Of Education (Technical) Umunze, Anambra State, Nigeria**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The study aimed at determining the entrepreneurial bindery services carried out in Prof. Ben Nwabueze Library, Federal College of Education Umunze, Anambra State, Nigeria; and the extent of patronage of the services. Survey research design was used for the study and the population comprised of 11 bindery staff of the library. There was no sample size because the population was quite manageable by the researchers. Two research questions guided the study. The instrument for data collection was questionnaire. Data collected were analyzed using frequency counts, percentages and mean. The finding revealed that six entrepreneurial services were offered in bindery section of the library. It also revealed that the patronage of these services was high. The researchers recommended that the Management of the College should equip the bindery unit with modern equipment, employ more bindery staff and provide better accommodation for bindery work.

**Keywords:** Bindery Services, Entrepreneurship, Library.

### **Introduction**

Entrepreneurship is the process of designing, launching and running a new business, that is, a start-up company offering a product, process or service. It has also been defined as the capacity and willingness to develop, organize and manage a business venture along with any of its risks in order to make a profit. The exploitation of entrepreneurial opportunities may include actions such as developing a business plan, hiring the human resources, acquiring financial and other required resources, providing leadership and being responsible for the venture success or failure.

The historical study of entrepreneurship has been particularly concerned with understanding the process of transformation of businesses. Recently, entrepreneurship ceases to focus primarily on new businesses or firm formation, but rather, on the varying forms that innovative activities have taken and on the changes brought about by those activities. McGraw (2006) is of the opinion that social scientific investigation of entrepreneurship has stopped focusing only on entrepreneurs and their firms but also on the changes which they bring into the industries, markets, societies, economies and political systems in which they operate. In recent years, "entrepreneurship" has been extended from its original in-for-profit businesses to include craft entrepreneurship and thus, the concept of craft entrepreneur. Entrepreneurial activities differ substantially depending on the type of organization and creativity involved.

Libraries as social institutions were previously left out on this subject of interest (entrepreneurship) until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Before now, the common views of librarians and libraries include the perception that library services as demanding as they are should be free-based. Libraries had taken their functions of identifying, selecting, acquiring, preserving and disseminating information resources to their

patrons the academic institutions judiciously without thinking of another way of making these activities easier through internally generated funds.

Academic libraries particularly serve two complementary purposes; to support their parent institutions' curriculum and to support the research of their faculties and students. Singh & Kaur (2009) stressed that preservation and access to knowledge and information are the main mandate of academic libraries alongside supporting the mission of their parent institutions which is teaching and research. The purpose of an academic library also is to provide information and support for members of the academic community in their pursuit of excellence, utilizing the latest in technological opportunities; the library provides access to collections and resources and offers instructions in their analysis and application.

Academic libraries are operating in an era of dwindling finances. They have over the years, derived the greater part of their funds from the government (both state and federal). This must have been because library services are traditionally regarded as social services provided free of charge to the target audience. Reports from different states of the nation show that there is low technology acquisition as well as inadequate collection of both print and electronic resources. All libraries experience a measure of these problems (Okojie, 2008). The result is that libraries may not be meeting the expectation of the new age library users and lack of funds is the cause of these problems (Amkpa & Abba, 2009). Considering the financial state of most libraries, Anyaoku (2012) stated that the dwindling finances have led to inability of most academic libraries to sustain their services and institute new programmes.

Entrepreneurial services are presented as the major strategies to improve library finances. The interest in entrepreneurial activities has tremendously increased over the past few

decades in libraries like other service centres such as education, health, transportation, insurance, banking etc. The benefits that can accrue to an academic library through entrepreneurial services include; income generation, boosting library image and creating new opportunities within the parent organization (Anyaoku, 2012). In his view, Koulikov (2008) opines that in contrast to general view, libraries for ages have always charged fee for services. Librarians are discovering that by using entrepreneurial principles and techniques, they can improve funding, communicate more effectively with a variety of external audiences and achieve greater efficiency and optimum result in delivering products and services that meet the identified needs of their clients.

While many think of innovation and entrepreneurship as only related to business or artistic creation, librarians and libraries have a history of innovating in order to provide both needed resources in the right quantity and programming for their patrons and to incorporate technology into their professional duties (Scanlon & Crumpton, 2011). This has led some libraries, for example, Prof. Ben Nwabueze Library, Federal College of Education, Umunze, Anambra State, into commercializing their bindery unit among other services.

The bindery unit has been an integral part of the library throughout history from the foundation of the first library with its primary objective of preservation of information materials. Thus, every reasonable academic library renders bindery services to itself and its parent institution. What most libraries do not know is that book binding is not just an activity that involves the preservation of a particular library collection using fresh cover but also, a profitable business through which the library can make a lot of money from its user community. According to Taubler (2000), librarians depend on binderies as a means of reducing the time and cost involved in replacing books and promotion of scholarship and national development. Binderies play the role of amendment of old and torn books, they bind journals, pamphlets, research report, newspapers etc. (Dirisu, 2010).

According to the Columbia Encyclopedia (2016), the art and business of bookbinding began with the protection of parchment manuscripts with boards. Papyrus had originally been produced in rolls but sheets of parchment came to be folded and fastened together with sewing around the 2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D. In the middle ages, the practice of making fine binding for these sewn volumes rose to great heights, books were rear and precious articles and many were treated with exquisite binding. They were gilded, jeweled, fashioned of ivory, wood, leather and brass.

### Statement of Problem

Nigeria as a country is bedeviled with serious financial handicap, thereby, joining the rest of the world in the current global economic recession. This has greatly contributed to the decrease in government budget. One of the consequences of this austerity is the decrease in government funding of its numerous agencies and projects including higher institutions and their libraries.

For this reason, Nigerian academic libraries, the hub-nub of tertiary education are still handicapped by mirage of

problems which include poor funding, inadequate library resources, obsolete library equipment, poor or lack of technological infrastructure, lack of Internet connectivity, lack or absence of power supply and underdeveloped manpower. Coupled with these problems, is the lack of management or administrative support on the general welfare of libraries. The end result of all these is continued degeneration of academic libraries in most Nigerian tertiary institutions. What then could be the possible solution to this catalogue of problems? How can the library stand on its feet to combat these problems? What bindery services are entrepreneurial? What is the extent of their patronage in the library?

### Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are:

1. To determine the entrepreneurial bindery services carried out in the library.
2. Determine the extent of patronage of these services.

### Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the entrepreneurial bindery services carried out in the library?
2. What is the extent of patronage of these services?

### Review of Related Literature

The main focus of entrepreneurship is to identify opportunities, achieve self-dependency, increase customer base by providing superior services, customer loyalty and increased revenue (Arua, 2012). It has also been defined as the process of designing, launching and running a new business, that is, a startup company offering a product, process or service (Yetisen *et al*, 2015). This goes a long way to say that one cannot talk of entrepreneurship without talking about a business venture or an enterprise.

An entrepreneur is mainly seen as a person who engages in business enterprises, often with some financial risks. Chell (2013) focuses on the dominant "opportunity recognition" theory which defines the roles of the entrepreneur as being the person that discovers new opportunities that already exist and subsequently develops or exploits these opportunities but according to Arua (2012), an entrepreneur may be a sole trader or in partnership or a shareholder in a joint stock company.

A list of entrepreneurial activities or skills is required for a successful entrepreneur. Mitchelmore & Rowley (2013) suggest a framework which identifies, in addition to a range of other managerial and related skills and competencies, six main entrepreneurship competencies:

1. Identification and definition of a viable market niche
2. Development of products or services appropriate to the firm's market niche or product innovations
3. Idea generation
4. Environment scanning
5. Recognition and envisioning taking advantage of opportunities

## 6. Formulating strategies for taking advantage of opportunities.

These attributes according to Georgina (2000), include being self-directed, self-nurturing, action-oriented, highly energetic and tolerant to uncertainty. In Chell's words, the knowledge, skills and abilities of entrepreneurs and innovators are many and various, but as with personality traits, they interact with situations Chell (2013). One implication of these observations is that, while there may be some personality traits that are associated with entrepreneurial behavior, in principle, it is possible to identify a range of entrepreneurial skills that can be learnt, practiced and improved, in turn, enhancing the prospects of business survival and growth. Hayton (2015) defines entrepreneurship skills as identifying customer needs, technical or market opportunities and pursuing opportunities. He identifies a positive relationship between entrepreneurship skills and some of these attributes according to Georgina (2000), include being self-directed, self-nurturing, action-oriented, highly energetic and tolerant to uncertainty and identifies a positive relationship between entrepreneurship skills and some measures of business performance.

Entrepreneurship is not confined to any one particular industry, country or group of persons; it exists in everybody but depends on individual's desire. Entrepreneurial behavior has been found in all societies and in all types of economic circumstances. While the term usually refers just to an individual, it is also possible to find whole organizations (like a library) that can be classified as entrepreneurial in the way they do business and seek to grow (Schaper, 2004).

Bookbinding is the process of physically assembling a book from an ordered stack of paper sheets that are folded together into sections or sometimes left as a stack of individual sheets. The stack is then bound together along one edge by either sewing with thread through the folds or by a layer of flexible adhesive. Also, according to Merriam-Webster (2002), bookbinding is the art or trade of binding books. Binding is the sewing of the outside covering on a volume of printed or blank leaves (Reitz, 2004). It also refers to the process of fastening the leaves or sections of a publication together by sewing or stitching or by applying adhesive to the back and then attaching a cover by hand or by machine under the

supervision of a skilled binder. Folding the printed sheets is a process that requires meticulous care and competence in collation (Greenfield, 2002).

Parker (2012) identifies various types of bookbinding that are currently in use and they include; hardcover, tape, perfect, sewn, wire-o, velo and spiral binding. Out of all these types of binding, the case binding, also known as hardcover binding is considered the most commonly used in commercial binderies. Case binding is the method of making hard covers separately before gluing or stitching them to the document to be bound (Advantage Bookbinding, 2016). This method of bookbinding is also called cloth binding or edition binding because the hard covers are made with strawboards covered in coloured cloth mainly made of leather. This is the type of binding one sees on students' research projects, thesis and dissertations. It is also used for textbooks due to its durability. According to Reitz (2004), a bindery is an establishment that performs one or more of the various types of binding. Some large libraries and library systems have an in-house bindery usually associated with centralized technical processing. Tauber (2000) contends that librarians depend on binderies as a means of reducing the time and cost involved in replacing books and as a way of preserving irreplaceable materials. Dirisu (2010) stated that the relationship between the entire library and the bindery is unique. The bindery helps in fostering scholarship by mending worn out information materials as there is information hunger in the world. Most bindery units charge binding fees depending on the size, complexity, type and the owner of the document to be bound.

### Method

Survey research design was used for the study and the population comprised of 11 bindery staff of the library. The instrument for data collection was questionnaire. Data collected were analyzed using frequency counts, percentages and mean. The findings revealed that six entrepreneurial services were offered in bindery section of the library. It also revealed that the patronage of those services was high.

### Result

**Research Question 1:** What are the entrepreneurial bindery services offered in your library?

**Table 1:** Percentage scores of the responses of the bindery staffs on the entrepreneurial bindery services offered in the library.

Items	F	%
Bookbinding	11	100
Lamination	Nil	0
Printing Work	11	100
Research project binding and printing for college students	11	100
Research project binding and printing for non-college students	11	100
Binding and printing on other documents	11	100
Document Repair for customers	Nil	0
Reprographic Services (photocopying)	11	100
Others	Nil	0

Table 1 showed that the bindery unit of Prof. Ben Nwabueze Library offers six entrepreneurial services which include; bookbinding, printing, research project binding and printing for the college students, research project binding and printing for non-college students, binding and printing on other documents and reprography (photocopying). All the bindery

staff agreed that they offer the services, which is represented by 100%. This also shows that the bindery services such as lamination and document repair for customers are not offered in the library, therefore having 0% each.

**Research Question 2:** What is the extent of patronage of the bindery services in your library?

**Table 2:** Mean scores of responses of Prof. Ben Nwabueze Library's bindery staff on the extent of patronage of the bindery services in the library.

Items	Mean	Remarks
Bookbinding	3.91	Very high extent
Lamination	0	0
Printing Work	3.27	High extent
Research project binding and printing for college students	3.91	Very high extent
Research project binding and printing for non-college students	1.64	Very low extent
Binding and printing on other documents	2.27	Low extent
Document Repair for customers	0	0
Reprographic Services	4	Very high extent
<b>Grand mean</b>	<b>3.17</b>	<b>High Extent</b>

Table 2 showed that bookbinding, research project binding and printing work for college students and reprography had very high extent of patronage with mean scores of 3.91, 3.91 and 4.00 respectively. Printing work had a high extent of patronage with a mean score of 3.27. Binding and printing work on other documents had a low extent of patronage with a mean score of 2.27 and research project binding and printing for non-college students had a very low extent of patronage with a mean score of 1.64. The grand mean was 3.17, showing a high extent of patronage of bindery services in the library.

### Findings and Discussion

The result obtained from the respondents shows that they all agreed on the six services offered as follows: bookbinding, printing work, research project binding and printing for college students, research project binding and printing for non-college students, binding and printing on other documents and reprographic service (photocopying).

It was discovered from the study that apart from research project binding and printing work for non-college students and binding and printing of other documents which were not highly patronized, all the other services offered had a high extent of patronage. The patrons are the students, lecturers, non-academic staff and people from all works of life coming into the bindery to get one thing or the other done for them. This notwithstanding, it was noticed that a few of the students, staff, researchers etc from the college of education patronize other binderies outside the college. Illinois State Library (2010) posited that they prefer to pay for bindery services outside the institutions for their personal reasons which may include; their nearness to the bindery of choice, their individual tastes and the quality of services. This is contradictory to the finding that there were high extents of patronage of the entrepreneurial bindery services offered in the library.

### Recommendations

From the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made to help improve the bindery business in Prof. Ben Nwabueze Library, Federal College of Education (Technical), Umunze, Anambra State, Nigeria.

1. More bindery equipment should be acquired to ease the stress of manual operation on the bindery workers.
2. More bindery staff should be employed and trained to face the workload coming into the bindery especially during the second semester when students have to bind and print their research projects. This is because the daily output is a function of the amount of labour input.

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