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Fostering innovation for library and information science graduate employability: alumni and employer roles in two Nigerian universities

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ABSTRACT

Innovation driving new methodologies and techniques is a primary catalyst for organizational growth and competitiveness in the contemporary labor market. This study examined the roles of alumni bodies and industry employers in fostering innovation to enhance the employability of Library and Information Science (LIS) graduates within two Nigerian universities. Guided by three research objectives and three hypotheses, the study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The target population comprised 108 postgraduate students and educators, from whom 40 usable responses were retrieved via a structured Google Forms questionnaire distributed through WhatsApp. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) to answer the research questions, utilizing a 3.0 benchmark criterion for item acceptance. The findings revealed that exposing graduates to diverse areas of innovation both within and outside their core discipline significantly enhances their competitiveness in the labor market. Additionally, industry employers play a critical role in facilitating a smooth professional transition for graduates. The study concludes that alumni associations and employers, acting as key institutional stakeholders, should collaborate to design and implement structured, innovation-driven training programs. These interventions are essential for equipping LIS graduates with the practical, market-ready skills required for sustainable employment.

1. Introduction

Invention and innovation are the key drivers of society's growth and development. Growth and development can only be made possible in any society when the mind is trained to think and nurture new ways by which things (task or roles) could be done differently aside the already existing norms. An innovative mindset is one set and ready to work with current trends at all time to achieve the desired outcome. Since the advancement in the modern technologies, the job market is no longer business as usual. There seem to be a mismatch between the demands of employers of labour and employment seekers as a result of the nature of the job roles and opportunities available which are rooted more in technology, prioritizing employees with innovative mindsets and skills to work remotely regardless of location and the nature of the jobs. This has resulted to a large number of unemployment and underemployment among higher institutions' graduates. Yearly, thousands of graduates are being produced and pushed to the labour market with high hopes of securing good jobs or white collar jobs in order to better their lives and that of their relatives but that dream sometimes seem to be dashed in the air when they are not able to do so as a result of misfit in the available opportunities.

More recently, in the labour market, job employers are more interested in employees with innovative and technology incline mindset. Though this has been in existence for quite some

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time but was fueled more during Covid-19 pandemic when virtually most of the companies' operations was shut-down for fear of wide spread of the disease. This has led to the expansion of job market to accommodate more of off-site job execution. With employers scouting for more of innovative mindset oriented employees. This ongoing industrial shift has exponentially increased the demand for innovation capabilities, cognitive adaptability, and creative problem-solving skills, making sustainable employability increasingly dependent on an individual's capacity to innovate. The International Labour Organization (ILO, 2024) reports that over 40% of workplace activities will experience major disruption due to automation, highlighting a critical need for graduates who can drive organizational adaptation and innovative practices.

Furthermore, World Bank (2023) estimates that while millions of routine job roles may be displaced by technological changes by 2030, a vast array of new, highly specialized roles requiring advanced creative and innovation capabilities will emerge. Unfortunately, most of higher institutions curriculum does not align with the latest trends in the job industry making it difficult for the graduates to find their feet in the employment industry due to lack of the needed competencies. For this reason, there is need for employers of labour to work in *pari passu* with higher institutions to intimate them with the necessary skills needed and the nature of the jobs currently available for better employability opportunities. The alumni bodies as integral part of the institutions sometimes form a greater part of the employers association are in better positions to provide these opportunities for the graduates. Having established strong connections with most of the employers of labour can create the avenue through which these graduates can be acquainted with the innovation areas and the necessary skills needed to excel in them. Because many higher education graduates lack essential competencies such as systems thinking, creative problem-solving and entrepreneurial innovation, this has led to rising rates of structural unemployment and underemployment. While advanced economies are increasingly restructuring their tertiary education systems to foster innovation-driven learning, developing economies continue to struggle with a persistent mismatch between static academic outputs and highly dynamic industry expectations (OECD, 2022).

This challenge is particularly severe in Africa due to weak institutional infrastructure, underdeveloped innovation ecosystems, and a historical reliance on passive learning models in academic curricula. The African Development Bank (AfDB, 2022) reports youth unemployment rates exceeding 30%, with tertiary-educated graduates forming a significant and troubling proportion of this demographic. Furthermore, UNESCO (2023) indicates that higher education institutions in Africa have been slow to cultivate the creative and innovative mindsets required in emerging high-growth sectors, severely limiting African graduates' competitiveness in a rapidly evolving, knowledge-driven global economy.

Nigeria reflects these challenging sub-Saharan trends. Despite a sharp increase in university enrollment (National Bureau of Statistics [NBS], 2023), graduate unemployment and underemployment continue to rise. While Nigeria's digital and service-driven sectors have enormous growth potential, the World Bank (2024) observes that their productivity is heavily constrained by a critical shortage of creative human capital capable of driving innovation. This gap is highly pronounced in specialized, information-intensive fields such as Library and Information Science (LIS). Traditionally focused on physical media and print-based repository management, LIS programs in Nigerian universities are under immense pressure to rapidly pivot. To remain relevant, modern LIS graduates require a robust set of innovation skills defined as the capacity to generate, adapt, and apply new ideas, services, and methodologies to improve organizational productivity and information dissemination (OECD, 2022).

While existing literature including our previous inquiries extensively documents the technical digital literacy levels of university graduates, a critical gap remains regarding the cultivation of proactive innovation capabilities within specialized LIS programs. Most studies analyze technical digital skills in isolation, neglecting how academic departments can collaborate with external stakeholders to practicalize and nurture innovative professional mindsets. Specifically, there is limited empirical research on how collaborative interventions

from key external actors namely, alumni associations and industry employers can be leveraged to foster innovation and secure sustainable employability pathways in LIS education. This study addresses this knowledge gap by investigating the specific innovation areas required in LIS education, and examining the roles that alumni associations and employers play in driving employability at two selected institutions: Ignatius Ajuru University of Education (IAUE) and Nnamdi Azikiwe University (UNIZIK).

Alumni as an integral part of every educational institution are those individuals who have passed through the educational institution and as referred to as graduates. So they are the graduates of the educational institution whether at the primary level, secondary level, or tertiary level. Alumni intervention involves all the various ways by which alumni bodies' uses to remain connected to the institution to promote the school existence and its functionality. This could be in form of provision of opportunities, restructuring of the administrative policy, redesigning of the curriculum to the world best standard as well as equipping and furnishing it with the latest infrastructures and technologies. Alumni engagement according to The Council for Advancement and Support of Education (2021) is conceptualized as a multidimensional construct comprising activities valued by graduates that foster enduring, mutually beneficial relationships. This strategic alignment inspires institutional loyalty, stimulates philanthropic support, enhances institutional reputation, and involves alumni in meaningful initiatives dedicated to advancing the university's core mission. Employer could be an individual, or a corporate body that engages people with some task which could be for a short or long period of time for some sort of payment at the end, the engagement could run for hours, days, weeks, months or even years as the case maybe. Employer according to Elsejob (2025) encompasses any individual, enterprise, or institutional body that retains personnel to perform designated duties or services under a contractual agreement for remuneration. Every employer of labour have a critical role to play in ensuring that the right people get the job and are able to accomplish the task to the satisfaction of the organization.

Graduate is anyone who has completed a number of years in a particular discipline as the case maybe as required by the institution and awarded the degree certificate attached to such training by the institution. Graduate employability involves having the ability, skills and behavioral traits needed to secure a job and maintain the job for the period of time that it requires. Read (2025) defines graduate employability as possessing a strategic configuration of competencies, academic knowledge, and professional dispositions that optimize a graduate's readiness and suitability for evolving workforce demands. Meaning that whenever such competencies are lacking in a graduate, then it may be difficult for such a person to be employable most especially in this innovation and technology driven era. Innovation is the reality of the modern day invention and development which sees to the birth of new ideas, techniques and implementation, in relation to the modern day job employment, it ensures that they latest technologies are deployed into operation. In the word of Jain (2023) Innovation translating abstract creative concepts into tangible, value-driven manifestations designed to elevate operational performance and address previously unresolved societal or market needs. Library and information science as a field of study that produces graduates who are to manage human knowledge inform of information cannot afford to lag behind in the area of innovation because with the current trend in technology, they are no longer book custodians but rather information managers regardless of the format in which they appear. Library and information science as a multidisciplinary discipline encompasses the systemic principles and operational practices essential for the curation, governance, and diffusion of information across diverse institutional and digital landscapes (Library Academy Team, 2024). For any graduate to excel in the field of information management, such an individual must possess technology and innovation driven mindset.

Studies conducted recently indicate that graduates need to be trained in key innovation area such entrepreneurship and digital technologies to enhance employability for instance Guin (2025) in his study opine that entrepreneurship training should be incorporated in LIS education

in order to enable them become self employed individuals and own a business. While Portocarero Rames, Rodriguez and Vega (2025) found that AI skills significantly improve job opportunities and productivity among graduates. Similarly, Huang, Yuan, Sun, and Li (2025) revealed that entrepreneurship education enhances innovation capacity and employability. Also, a study by Tumpa, Rahman, and Ali (2023) on project management graduates found that group-based and project-based learning significantly improve innovation skills such as teamwork, leadership and problem-solving. Furthermore Iwara (2025) highlighted that many African graduates remain unemployed due to a mismatch between university training and labour market need. A study on university industry collaboration emphasized on the importance of innovation skills. Bapir, Abduliah and Maolood (2025) highlighted the role of IT skills, collaborative learning and critical thinking as essential innovation competencies. MDPI (2025) findings suggest that higher education institutions must prioritize innovation-orientation training to prepare graduates for the demand of the modern labour market. Furfuri (2023) also identifies these areas such as online publishing, data management, data science, database administrator and web content manager under digital scholarship as the new jobs in which LIS graduates needs to be trained on for a better employability opportunities. Atram (2025) also identified digital preservation, digitization and digital libraries, digital media and information literacy, automation, semantic web, AI and machine learning cataloguing, discovery and recommendations and reference services as some of the innovation areas that the students need to be trained on. On that same note, Ohanado (2023) stressed that the students need to be equipped with knowledge on data management, information retrieval, digital preservation, and user experience design; emphasizing on the need to engage them with hand-on training on artificial intelligence, machine learning, data analytics, data mining, data virtualization, search algorithm, metadata, and statistical analysis. While Tondo and Ugbu (2023) explained that the students should be exposed to entrepreneurship opportunities within LIS field in the 21st Century and acquaint them with necessary skills needed to succeed in each of them after graduation (publishing, indexing and abstracting, compilation of bibliographies, information brokerage(marketing)). It is important to note that the employability chances of LIS graduates cannot be fully utilized when there is a gap between their technological skills and the innovative mindset possessed.

The employability of Library and Information Science (LIS) graduates has emerged as a critical concern amidst a rapidly evolving information landscape, digital disruption, and shifting labor market demands. While higher education institutions are tasked with providing foundational knowledge, growing evidence suggests that academic preparation alone is insufficient to guarantee workplace readiness. A persistent skills gap exists between graduate competencies and employer demands, particularly regarding digital curation, data management, emerging technologies, and the professional soft skills necessitated by the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) (Mncube & Pillay, 2024). While Oumer (2021) highlights that strategies such as partnership with higher education institutions, serving as training center for both graduates and instructors. Consequently, scholars have shifted focus toward the role of employers in bridging this divide. Employers are no longer viewed as passive recipients of graduates but as active stakeholders whose interventions ranging from mentorship to curriculum co-creation significantly shape professional outcomes (Ogunmodede & Popoola, 2020). This review synthesizes current scholarship on five key employer-driven strategies: Establishing structured mentorship programs, providing access to modern digital infrastructure, Collaborating on curriculum relevance, Offering continuous professional development (CPD), Structuring industrial attachments and internships.

Employer-Driven Strategies for Employability

1. **Mentorship and Professional Identity:** Mentorship is a primary developmental mechanism for bridging the gap between theory and practice. Recent systematic reviews indicate that mentorship fosters professional identity, confidence, and career readiness

(Raju, 2019). While technology-supported mentoring has increased accessibility and peer learning, the development of hard skills via mentorship remains context-dependent (Mncube & Pillay, 2024). In academic library settings, successful mentoring requires intentional matching, role clarity, and organizational readiness, positioning it as a strategic investment in both equity and faculty development.

2. **Access to Modern Digital Infrastructure:** The 4IR demands proficiency in information duration, cloud data expansion, and data analytics. Employers play a vital role by providing the physical and digital environments where graduates can apply theoretical knowledge to practical challenges. This is particularly critical in the African context, where a mismatch persists between graduate skills and the requirements of 4IR (Ogunmodede & Popoola, 2020). By exposing new hires and interns to Library Management Systems (LMS), institutional repositories, and AI-assisted reference tools, employers facilitate the translation of theory into practice (Sibiya & Ngulube, 2024).
3. **Collaborative Curriculum Design:** To ensure LIS education remains aligned with industry realities, strong university-industry partnerships are essential (Springer Nature Link, 2025). Industry stakeholders contribute by providing regular feedback loops that identify gaps in educational offerings. Scholars argue that LIS schools must work closely with employers to repackage curricula, specifically integrating digital literacy and research data management (RDM) (Mubofu & Mambo, 2023). This collaboration ensures that the academic landscape evolves in tandem with the professional field.
4. **Continuous Professional Development (CPD):** CPD is essential for ensuring that LIS professionals remain current in a fluctuating technological environment. Employers who institutionalize CPD through workshops, discussion groups, and online forums report higher levels of innovation and better alignment with user needs (Elsevier, n.d.). However, the literature identifies significant barriers to CPD, including financial constraints, lack of institutional policy, and inadequate support (Ullah, Usman, & Rafiq, 2023). In regions like Nigeria, the upgrading of library laboratories and the retraining of faculty are recommended to ensure that CPD remains practice-oriented.
5. **Structured Internships and Industrial Attachments:** Internships serve as a critical bridge to employability, developing essential job-ready skills such as communication, teamwork, and critical thinking (Adebayo & Adeyemi, 2024). Bibliometric analyses confirm that structured attachments benefit all stakeholders: graduates gain hands-on experience, universities refine their curricula based on placement feedback, and employers utilize these programs as a cost-effective recruitment and talent-identification pipeline. Despite the benefits of collaboration, several obstacles hinder effective employer engagement. Key challenges identified in the literature include:
Financial Constraints: Limited funding for training and infrastructure. Policy Gaps: A lack of formal institutional CPD policies. Collaboration Deficits: Weak links between academia and industry stakeholders (Ullah et al., 2023). This review demonstrates that enhancing LIS graduate employability is a shared responsibility. While universities provide the theoretical bedrock, employers are essential in providing the practical scaffolding through mentorship, infrastructure, and curriculum input. Empirical research on employer engagement in Library and Information Science (LIS) is predominantly concentrated in Nigeria, South Africa, and Tanzania. This regional focus underscores an urgent need to address graduate support within resource-constrained yet increasingly technology-driven environments. Recent scholarship focuses on three primary empirical themes: the impact of mentorship, curriculum-industry alignment, and the efficacy of structured internships.

Recent studies emphasize mentorship as a significant predictor of early career success. Iglesias et al. (2023) found a strong correlation between participation in mentoring programs during LIS studies and successful job search outcomes for academic librarians. Beyond placement, mentorship serves as a vital conduit for the transfer of soft and hard competencies.

Mncube and Pillay (2024), alongside Rushton et al. (2025), argue that experienced practitioners are essential for transmitting professional ethics and 4IR-specific skills such as cloud data expansion, digital preservation, and analytical thinking which are often difficult to master through theoretical study alone.

There is a documented disparity between institutional training and the technical requirements of Industry 4.0. Raju (2019) identified substantial gaps in South African LIS curricula, noting that course descriptions often fail to align with the emerging competencies found in modern job descriptions for scholarly communications librarians. This misalignment is a global trend, prompting the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA, 2022) to stress that program development must incorporate diverse stakeholder input to maintain global quality standards. Consequently, scholars urge African LIS schools to transition from isolated planning to collaborative course design with employers to ensure graduates remain competitive.

The transition from education to employment remains a significant hurdle, particularly in Nigeria where LIS graduates face a 33% unemployment rate (Balbin & Dolendo, 2023). Empirical evidence suggests this is largely due to a skills mismatch; many internship programs remain static and fail to evolve alongside entrepreneurial or digital labor market trends. However, when internships are intentionally structured, the outcomes are markedly positive. Research indicates that structured programs allow students to bridge the education-employment gap and build critical professional networks. Furthermore, innovative employer-led initiatives, such as paid specialized internships in medical data, have shown success in improving the recruitment and representation of minority professionals within the field. Oumer et al. (2021) in their study revealed that employers 147(93.6%) do not partake in higher education institution activities. This in turn affects the employability enhancement of graduate students. Furthermore, they affirm that most graduates desire to be employed in their respective careers either in privates or public firms but very unfortunate that the industries have limited slots to absorb them because most institutions prepare them only for national labor market rather than discipline based.

No educational institution can function effectively without the vital support of its alumni associations. Ultimately, every leader whether a CEO, manager, director, school proprietor, head of department, dean, vice-chancellor, or political leader is a graduate of some institution, be it through formal or informal learning. Alumni associations are integral part of every institution and one of the strongest stakeholders of every institution. They assist in shaping the institutional policies which in turn leads to positive learning outcome on the part of the students as well as peaceful coexistence among the students and the school administration. They contribute in the curriculum design and implementation so as to ensure that the teaching and learning outcome is equal to the global standard. They are like the mirror of every institution. According to Obeng-Ofori and Kwart (2021) they serve as a vital nexus where shared experiences and common goals converge. Furthermore, by fostering meaningful engagement among key stakeholders, these organizations strengthen the bond between current students and graduates while driving the university's holistic development. They also express that as lifelong ambassadors, alumni are instrumental in elevating their alma mater's global profile, securing diverse revenue streams, and opening doors for student career placements. They undertake those roles such as continuous engagement with the institutions, financial and project contributions, they serve as role model and inspiration, career mentors, they provide expertise, opportunity to access professional development, improve student recruitment efforts, support the university's reputation as well as institutional governance (Obeng-Ofori et al, 2021). Tulankar and Grampurohit (2020) explain that strategic institutional growth relies on maintaining strong ties with alumni. Engaging them in decision-making and development processes ensures that their expertise and networks contribute directly to the university's progress. Bieger (2024) in his study states that alumni bodies has the capacity to provide corporate knowledge and networks which can include industry trends, marketplace experiences

to inform programme design and school strategy as well as the necessary funding. On the same note, Hinterstoisser (2024) explain that alumni support graduates' employment through provision of mentorship, access to professional networks including other employment necessary connections. Furthermore, Pook and Fusco (2020) connect by expressing that alumni bodies provide insights to graduates on the available job roles, industries standards as well as companies' cultures for better choices. Oumer et al. (2021) in their study found out those professional associations are not actively participating in the employability enhancement of their graduates as well as assuring necessary skills needed by the graduates. They also found out that majority of the participants do not participate in alumni bodies making it difficult for them to contribute immensely to the enhancement of the employability of the graduates.

Statement of problem

In the global knowledge economy, sustainable Library and Information Science (LIS) employability demands proactive innovation capabilities, such as systems thinking, creative problem-solving, and cognitive adaptability. Ideally, higher education institutions should cultivate these competencies by maintaining dynamic synergies with external stakeholders—particularly industry employers and alumni associations to practicalize curricula, provide strategic mentorship, and offer real-world professional pathways.

However, a critical gap exists between LIS academic output and the contemporary demands of the Nigerian labor market. LIS programs at institutions like Ignatius Ajuru University of Education (IAUE) and Nnamdi Azikiwe University (UNIZIK) struggle with a mismatch between static, classroom-bound learning and a highly dynamic, innovation-driven industry. While digital literacy is often taught, LIS departments lack structured frameworks to cultivate active innovation mindsets. Furthermore, the strategic, practical contributions of alumni associations and industry employers in bridging this gap remain largely untapped, unstructured, and under-researched in the LIS context. Unaddressed, LIS postgraduates will continue to face severe structural unemployment and underemployment due to obsolete skills, while higher education institutions remain isolated from evolving industry realities. Therefore, this study addresses this challenge by identifying the critical innovation areas required for LIS postgraduates and educators, and examining the strategic roles that alumni associations and employers must play to foster sustainable graduate employability at IAUE and UNIZIK.

Research Purposes

1. Find out innovation areas postgraduates and educators need to be trained on at Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Nnamdi Azikiwe University.
2. Determine roles of employers in promotion of graduates' employability.
3. Find out roles of alumni associations towards promotion of graduates' employability

Research Questions

1. What are the innovation areas LIS postgraduates and educators needs to be trained on at Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Nnamdi Azikiwe University?
2. What are the roles of employers in promotion of graduates' employability in these selected universities?
3. What are the roles of alumni associations towards promotion of graduates' employability in these selected universities?

Methods

This study adopted a survey research design conducted at Ignatius Ajuru University of Education (IAUE), Rivers State, and Nnamdi Azikiwe University (UNIZIK), Anambra State. Using purposive sampling, 108 Library and Information Science (LIS) educators and postgraduate students (M.Sc. and Ph.D.) enrolled during the 2024/2025 and 2025/2026 academic sessions was used. Data were gathered over two weeks using a Google Forms

electronic questionnaire consisting of three research questions and 16 items. Responses were rated on a 5-point Likert scale (5 = Strongly Agree to 1 = Strongly Disagree). A total of 40 valid responses were retrieved. Face and content validity were established by two senior lecturers from the Faculty of Education (Departments of LIS and Educational Foundations). Data were analyzed using SPSS. Mean and standard deviation addressed the research questions, using a 3.00 criterion mean for acceptance.

Results and Discussions of findings

Research Question One: What are the innovation areas LIS graduates needs to be trained on?

Table 1: Mean responses on the innovation areas LIS graduates needs to be trained on N=40

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	Information Entrepreneurship	3.98	.768	Accepted
2.	Artificial Intelligent Integration	3.58	.958	Accepted
3.	Maker space Management	3.53	.877	Accepted
4.	Digital Humanities	3.65	.921	Accepted
5.	Data Virtualization	4.13	.723	Accepted
6.	Mobile App Literacy	3.98	.768	Accepted
		3.81	0.84	Accepted

Table 1 reveals that innovation practices are very necessary for every LIS graduates to enable them to compete effectively within the labor market irrespective the nature of the job or employment package. This is evident from the responses with the grant mean of 3.81 and the standard deviation of 0.84. Data virtualization (4.13) having the highest mean while information entrepreneurship (3.98) and Mobile App Literacy (3.98) have the same mean scores, decentralization of resources for effective management of resource whether hardware or software as well as information marketing with the current trend is the order of the day but if these graduates are not trained on this part then it would be very difficult for them to compete effectively at the global market where innovative practices is the key player.

The findings revealed that the respondents were in agreement that the students should be exposed and trained on those innovation areas from their responses since the world is already in transition to a technology based environment as well as its operations and service. There is need to help the students to blend quickly and easily with the trend while still in school as a way of bridging the gap between the old mode of operation and the new mode. This finding corroborates with the findings of a study carried out by Ohanado (2023) in which she identifies some of the innovation areas to include data management, information retrieval, digital preservation, and user experience design, artificial intelligence, machine learning, data analytics, data mining, data virtualization, search algorithm, metadata, and statistical analysis. While on the other hand, Tondo et al. (2023) suggests that the students should be exposed to entrepreneurship opportunities within LIS field in the 21st Century and acquaint them with necessary skills needed to succeed in each of them after graduation (publishing, indexing and abstracting, compilation of bibliographies, information brokerage(marketing)).

Research Question Two: What are the roles of employers in promotion of graduates' employability?

Table 2: Mean responses on the roles of employers towards the promotion of LIS graduates employability N=40

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remark
7.	Establishing mentorship programs where experienced libraries guide new graduates in professional ethics and digital trends.	4.50	.506	Accepted
8.	Investing in modern digital infrastructure that allows graduates to practice innovative library skills.	2.98	1.577	Rejected

9.	Collaborating with universities to provide feedbacks on curriculum relevance based on industry trends.	4.33	.656	Accepted
10.	Offering career professional development and workshops for new hires to bridge the gap between school and work.	4.38	.586	Accepted
11.	Provision of structured industrial attachment and internship slots for LIS students.	4.55	.504	Accepted
		4.15	0.77	Accepted

Table 2 reveals that the employers have important roles to play as a way of preparing the graduates for a smooth and effective transition from the academic world into the labour market with a better performance outcome from the responses obtained based on the grand mean score (4.15) and the standard deviation (0.77). All the items (no. 35, 31, 34, 33) in the table had a very high mean score except item no.32 with the lowest mean score (2.98) which indicates that the roles of employers in the enhancement of graduates' employability is necessary.

The findings revealed that employers have great roles to play through their various responses that yield a very high mean score. Four out of the five items were accepted as the roles of employers towards the promotion of employability of LIS graduates. This finding conforms with that of Iglesias, et al. 2023, Adebayo & Adeyemi, 2024, and Raju, 2019 whose studies lay strong emphasis on mentorship, collaboration, professional development and internship/industrial attachment as the best opportunity offers that employers of labor could provide for the students. But on contrary, Oumer et al. (2021) found out that employers do not partake in higher institution activities which also affect the graduates' employability chances.

Research Question Three: What are the roles of alumni associations towards promotion of graduates' employability?

Table 3: mean responses on the roles of alumni bodies towards the promotion of LIS graduates' employability N=40

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remark
12.	Establishment of an alumni job linkage scheme to share vacancy advertisement especially with recent graduates.	4.40	.591	Accepted
13.	Sponsoring specialized digital certification exams like Google Data Analytics, Microsoft for indigent LIS students.	4.38	.586	Accepted
14.	Serving as guest lecturers/facilitators to share real world library experiences with current students.	4.48	.506	Accepted
15.	Providing funding for library technology upgrades within the LIS department.	4.43	.594	Accepted
16.	Offering networking platforms where graduates can connect with senior professionals in high paying sectors like the oil and gas/banking information units.	4.45	.552	Accepted
		4.43	0.57	Accepted

Table 3 indicates that every alumni bodies have important contributions to make in promoting that employability of their graduate owing to the fact that they are part of the key stakeholders in every institution based on the grand mean score (4.43) and standard deviation (0.57) obtained. All the 5 items listed in the table has very high mean scores showing that the respondents agreed that they synergy should be established for better employment opportunities for the graduates.

The findings of this study revealed that alumni bodies are formidable force that every institution reckons with because of the irreplaceable roles they play in the formation of the educational activities of the institution which sometimes transcend beyond the academic

environment. From the result of the findings, the respondents agreed that all the items enlisted were very important roles that alumni bodies play in order to enhance the employability of the graduates. This findings is in line with that of Obeng-Ofori, et al. (2021) who revealed that alumni bodies undertake those roles such as continuous engagement with the institutions, financial and project contributions, they serve as role model and inspiration, career mentors, they provide expertise, opportunity to access professional development, improve student recruitment efforts, support the university's reputation as well as institutional governance. While this same findings contradicts that of Oumer et al. (2021) whose study revealed that those professional associations do not actively participating in the employability enhancement of their graduates as well as assuring necessary skills needed by the graduates. They also found out that majority of the participants do not participate in alumni bodies making it difficult for them to contribute immensely to the enhancement of the employability of the graduates.

Conclusion

This study concludes that exposing graduates to contemporary innovative practices significantly enhances their employability. Furthermore, this training complements the critical role of alumni associations and employers who serve as key institutional ambassadors in shaping recruitment decisions and providing ongoing career opportunities.

Recommendation

1. Institutions should create avenues to engage the students with innovation practices especially in the current innovation areas within and outside their discipline most especially for the fresh graduates in form of on the job trainings to sharpen their experiences in relation to the available roles and tasks within the industries.
2. The employers of labour should work in hand with the institutions to establish functional ICT centers where graduates could enroll on short term practical based training in the areas of innovations for smooth transition into the labour market.
3. Alumni bodies should make their presence to be felt by the fresh graduates at their point of convocations by offering them short time engagements within the industries especially in the areas of tech-driven services to enable them gain first-hand experience which in turn adds to their chances of employability.

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