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Effective Resource Sharing Services In University Libraries In North Central Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Albeit university libraries in Nigeria have a long history of resource sharing services, but its yield in the past have not been impactful. The passiveness of university libraries generates of syndrome of insufficiency and will linger for a long time in as much university libraries in North Central Nigeria continues to shy away from resource sharing services. This paper addresses the constraints and benefits of embracing resource sharing services. The study adopted survey research design and the population comprised a total of sixty (60) librarians' twenty (20) universities libraries in North Central Nigeria. Findings revealed that e-books, e-journals, e-magazines, e-newspapers, human resources, e-theses and e-dissertations are the resources shared among university libraries, resource sharing affects the library's resource acquisition such as the library possessing the ability to subscribe to many databases, university libraries in North Central Nigeria has ability to offer between delivery services, ability to access electronic journals which will eliminate demand for large library space and shelving cost, ability to able to exchange professional ideas with other libraries, ability to acquire more titles relevant to institutional curriculum, consortium training, ability to acquire more titles with less fund, benefit from cooperative collection development and bibliographic processing. Benefits of resource sharing among libraries are networking, Cooperative processing (Cataloguing and classification), exchange of information materials (e-resources), library security: Radio Frequency Identification (RFID), cooperative acquisition and joint publication. Findings further reveal that resource sharing services in university libraries in North Central, Nigeria is at an optimal level coupled with challenges of buoyant finances which affects university libraries in achieving full library automation.

Keywords: Resource Sharing, Services, University Libraries, North Central, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Resource sharing services among university libraries in Nigeria has assumed unprecedented improvement not because the country is passing through period of austerity measures, but because of the present era of information explosion. Resource sharing is a vital practice in every library especially academic libraries, this is as a result of the fact that no library can boast of self-sufficiency because learning has continued to grow over the years due to the high rate at which researches are conducted and their findings published for the purpose of educating people and societal development. Individual libraries are looking for new and better ways to render library services to new and existing clienteles using technology. Effective resource sharing services among university in North Central Nigeria depends upon the strength of individual libraries.

The availability of vast information, rising cost of documents and limited budgets prompts university libraries in sharing their resources. To overcome these problems, there is possibility of cooperation in various activities of the libraries such as abstracting and indexing services, acquisition, bibliographic access, cataloguing, circulation, literature searching and referral services. This is also known as library consortium.

Ejedafiru (2010), agreed that there is no way a single library can satisfy het demands of its users. But when libraries cooperate and make their resources accessible to one and another, we see results. The justification for resources sharing is hinged on the fact that no library, however large, could be completely self-sufficient.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to examine effective resource sharing services in university libraries in North Central Nigeria. The specific objectives are aimed at:

- identifying the types of information resources mostly shared among university libraries in North Central Nigeria.
- determining the effect of resource sharing arrangement on effective resource acquisition among university libraries in North Central Nigeria.
- ascertaining the overall benefits of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in resource sharing among university libraries in North Central Nigeria.

- constraints associated with resource sharing in university libraries in North Central Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The main assumption guiding resource sharing services is that there is no library that can provide for all the needs of its clientele. In order to remedy this norm, the need for resource sharing arises, as it creates avenue to obtain materials not available in one library from another library.

The growth of all forms of literature, increase in information reliance to enable the digital society function effectively, rising cost of information materials and rapid increase in availability of technology suggests the need for effective resource sharing services.

Turner (2013), was of the view that the role of consortium arrangements in effective resource acquisition among university libraries is to share physical resources amongst consortium members as access to resource is now considered more important than collection building. The advent of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) has changed the sophistication and pattern of information needs of users. These developments in information technology have made powerful changes in the collection, storage, retrieval, distribution and access process of information. One of the products of these developments which have become indispensable for academic activities worldwide is electronic information resources. These resources in recent times represent an increasingly important component of academic library collections.

Mindful of the opportunities provided by developments in information dissemination and exchange made possible by Information and Communication Technology (ICT), some academic libraries in Nigeria have made efforts to digitize their collections to make it available to the world knowledge (Felix, 2009).

Aina (2013) is of the view that Web 2.0 principles and technologies offer academic libraries many opportunities to serve their patrons and to reach out beyond the walls and web sites of the institutions to reach potential beneficiaries where they happen to be undertaken. Usman & Adam (2013), found out that lack of finance, lack of well-developed Information Communication Technology (ICT) infrastructure; lack of requisite skills in Information and Communication Technology (ICT); faculty formation strategies; unstable power supply and low level conversion

of local content are major barriers towards effective resource sharing services in university libraries.

However, the panacea to the problems of information explosion, ever changing needs of users, increasing amount required for subscription to same number of periodicals, dwindling library budget, and devaluation of the naira and its impact on library acquisitions can best overcome upon certain level by the following means; use of computer and communication networks for resource sharing; use of national and international databases through communications networks; and introduction to full text CD based systems

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopted survey research design and the population comprised a total of sixty (60) librarians' twenty (20) universities libraries in North Central Nigeria. The target population, that is, subjects of the study comprises the University librarian, Collection Development librarian and Readers Services librarian in university libraries of public and private institutions in six states, Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger, Plateau and FCT Abuja in North Central Nigeria. Questionnaire was used in data collection. Mean, standard deviation and PPMC were used to analyse the research questions and test the null hypothesis. The purpose of a survey is to collect quantitative information, usually through the use of a structured and standardized questionnaire (Ibrahim, 2013).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the study are presented below:

Out of 60 copies of questionnaire administered 59 were found useable and used for data analysis. The status of the respondents are shown in table 1, table 2 reveals the distribution of respondents by gender, table 3 further reveals the distribution of respondents by designation and table 4 reveals the distribution of respondents based on academic qualifications.

Table 1. Number of Administered and Retrieved Questionnaire

S/No	Universities	Administered	Retrieved and Usable	Percentage %
1	Benue State University Library, Makurdi, Benue State	3	3	5
2	Francis Suleiman Idachaba Library, University of Agriculture , Makurdi, Benue State	3	2	3

3	University of Mkar Library, Gboko, Benue State	3	3	5
4	Baze University Library , Abuja, F.C.T	3	3	5
5	Nile University of Nigeria Library, Abuja, F.C.T	3	3	5
6	Samuel Osaigbovo Ogbemudia Library, University of Abuja, F.C.T	3	3	5
7	Veritas University Library, Abuja, F.C.T	3	3	5
8	Federal University Lokoja Library, Kogi State	3	3	5
9	Kogi State University Library, Anyingba, Kogi State	3	3	5
10	Salem University Library, Lokoja, Kogi State	3	3	5
11	Al-Hikma University Library, Ilorin, Kwara State	3	3	5
12	Kwara State University Library, Malete, Kwara State	3	3	5
13	Landmark University Center for Learning and Resources, Omuaran, Kwara State	3	3	5
14	University of Ilorin Library, Ilorin, Kwara State	3	3	5
15	ECWA Bingham University Library, Karu Nasarawa State	3	3	5
16	Federal University Lafia Library, Nasarawa State	3	3	5
17	Nasarawa State University Library, Keffi, Nasarawa State	3	3	5
18	Abubakar Gimba Library, Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University, Lapai, Niger State	3	3	5
19	Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida Library, Federal University of Technology, Minna, Niger State	3	3	5
20	University of Jos Library, Jos, Plateau State	3	3	5
Total		60	59	98%

Table 1 revealed that 59 (98%) out of the total 60 copies of the questionnaire distributed were completed, returned and useful for the study. Thus, the response rate was very high.

Table 2. Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentages %
Male	39	66.1
Female	20	33.9
Total		100%

Table 2 shows that 39 (66.1%) of the respondents were males, while 20 (33.9%) were females.

Table 3. Distribution of Respondents Based on Designation

Qualification	Frequency	Percentages %
University Librarian	19	32.2
Collection Development Librarian	20	33.9
Readers Services Librarian	20	33.9
Total	59	100%

Table 3 indicates that 19 (32%) of the respondents were University Librarians, 20 (34%) of the respondents were Collection Development Librarians and 20 (34%) of the respondents were Reader Services Librarians.

Table 4. Distribution of Respondents Based on Academic Qualifications

Qualification	Frequency	Percentages %
Ph.D.	16	27.1
Masters	34	57.6
First Degree	9	15.3
Total	59	100%

Table 4 indicates that 16 (27%) of the respondents have Ph.D, 34 (58%) of the respondents have Masters and 9(15%) of the respondents have first degree.

Table 5. Types of Information Resources Mostly Shared Among University Libraries in North Central Nigeria

S/N	Statements	SA 4	A 3	D 2	SD 1	\bar{X}	StD	Dec
1.	My library shares e-books with other cooperating libraries	15(25.4)	20(33.9)	21(35.6)	3(5.1)	2.80	0.89	Accepted
2.	My library shares e-magazines with other cooperating libraries	13(22)	21(35.6)	22(37.3)	3(5.1)	2.75	0.86	Accepted

3.	My library shares e-thesis and e-dissertation with other cooperating libraries	12(20.3)	16(27.1)	27(45.8)	4(6.8)	2.61	0.89	Accepted
4.	My library shares e-newspapers with other cooperating libraries	14(23.7)	9(15.3)	32(54.2)	4(6.8)	2.56	0.93	Accepted
5.	My libraries shares e-journals with other cooperating libraries	10(16.9)	24(40.7)	21(35.6)	4(6.8)	2.68	0.84	Accepted
6.	My library shares human resources with other cooperating libraries	13(22)	22(37.3)	21(35.6)	3(5.1)	2.76	0.87	Accepted
Grand Mean						2.69		

Table 5 revealed that e-books, e-journals, e-magazines, e-newspapers, human resources, e-theses and e-dissertations are the resources shared among university libraries in North Central, Nigeria. These resources mostly shared could be because they are the resources that meet the information needs of the users of the library. The information needs in the university environment revolves round teaching, learning, research and community services. The reason why these resources are mostly shared could also be that these materials are the most consulted in the library. Therefore, there is the need for adequate provision of these resources. Finally, the resources are mostly shared because they are portable, that is, they are easy to move from one spot to the other. The findings of this study is in line with the study of Adam and Usman (2013) who in their study revealed that textbooks and periodicals are the major materials commonly shared among libraries as they are used mainly for teaching and research. Furthermore, Islam (2012) conducted a study which looked at the present status of library cooperation, networking and resource sharing in

Bangladesh using Web-based Library Cooperation for Access to World-wide Information. The findings revealed that in terms of collection of information resources, the efforts of most of the libraries were confined to acquiring books only.

Table 6. The Effect of Resource Sharing Arrangement on Effective Resource Acquisition

S/No	Statements	SA 4	A 3	D 2	SD 1	\bar{X}	StD	Dec.
1.	My library is able to acquire more titles with less fund	16(27.1)	35(59.3)	6(10.2)	2(3.4)	3.10	0.71	Accepted
2.	My library is able to subscribe to many databases	22(37.3)	26(44.1)	26(44.1)	11(18.6)	3.32	0.66	Accepted
3.	I am able to exchange professional ideas with other libraries	27(45.8)	22(37.30)	8(13.6)	2(3.4)	3.25	0.82	Accepted
4.	As a librarian, my Bibliographic processing is much easier	13(22)	35(59.3)	9(15.3)	2(3.4)	3.00	0.72	Accepted
5.	As a librarian, I am benefitting from consortium training	21(35.6)	26(44.1)	10(16.9)	2(3.4)	3.12	0.81	Accepted
6.	I am able to acquire more titles relevant to my institutional curriculum	22(37.3)	28(47.5)	8(13.6)	1(1.7)	3.20	0.74	Accepted
7.	My library benefits from cooperative collection development	23(39.0)	22(37.3)	10(16.9)	4(6.8)	3.08	0.92	Accepted
8.	My library is able to offer better delivery of services	30(50.8)	20(33.9)	7(11.9)	2(3.4)	3.32	0.82	Accepted
9.	I have a better understanding of copyrights laws	16(58)	29(49.2)	10(16.9)	3(5.1.)	3.00	0.82	Accepted
10.	My library has the ability to access electronic journals which will eliminate demand for large library space and shelving cost	16(27.1)	35(59.3)	6(10.2)	2(3.4)	3.31	0.65	Accepted

Grand Mean

3.17

Analysis from table 6 revealed that information resources sharing affects the library's resource acquisition such as the library possessing the ability to subscribe to many databases, the library has ability to offer between delivery services, ability to access electronic journals which will eliminate demand for large library space and shelving cost, ability to able to exchange professional ideas with other libraries, ability to acquire more titles relevant to institutional curriculum, consortium training, ability to acquire more titles with less fund, benefit from cooperative collection development and bibliographic processing. This is similar to the findings of Ogunrewo, Zubairu and Peter (2015) who carried out an investigation on Information Resource Sharing among Selected Academic Libraries in South-West Nigeria. The selected academic libraries are that of Joseph Ayo Babalola University, Osun State, Federal University of Technology Akure, Ondo State and Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State. The researchers discovered that resource sharing is very important for the survival of library, computerised information resources are mostly used in resource sharing and resource sharing will not affect the confidentiality of the library.

Table 7. Benefits of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on Resource Sharing in University Libraries in North Central Nigeria.

S/N	Statements	SA 4	A 3	D 2	SD 1	\bar{X}	StD	Remark
1.	My library benefits in cooperative processing (cataloguing and classification)	26(45.8)	27(45.8)	6(10.2)	0	3.34	0.66	Accepted
2	My library benefits in cooperative acquisition	18(30.5)	28(47.5)	11(18.6)	2(3.4)	3.05	0.80	Accepted
3.	My library benefits in exchange of information materials (e-	27(45.8)	24(40.7)	8(13.6)	0	3.32	0.71	Accepted

	resources)							
4.	My library benefits in joint publication	13(22)	30(50.8)	13(22)	3(5.1)	2.90	0.80	Accepted
5.	My library benefits in networking	25(42.4)	30(50.8)	4(6.8)	0	3.36	0.61	Accepted
6.	My library benefits library security: Radio Frequency Identification (RFID)	23(39)	23(39)	12(20.3)	1(1.7)	3.15	0.81	Accepted

Table 7 revealed that some of the benefits of resource sharing among libraries are networking, Cooperative processing (Cataloguing and classification), exchange of information materials (e-resources), library security: Radio Frequency Identification (RFID), cooperative acquisition and joint publication. This findings is similar to that of Awa and Kalu (2017) who conducted a study on “Academic Library Partnership as Strategic Tool for Proactive Library Services in Nigeria” whose findings revealed that cooperative acquisition, partnership in cataloguing, strategic resource sharing, partnership in staff development and partnership with users as areas of strategic partnership among academic libraries are some of the benefits derived in information resource sharing.

Table 8. Constraints Against Effective Resource Sharing in University Libraries in North Central Nigeria

S/No	Statement	SA 4	A 3	D 2	SD 1	\bar{X}	StD	Dec
1.	My library lacks buoyant financial base	21(35.6)	14(23.7)	13(22)	11(18.6)	2.76	1.14	Accepted
2	My library lacks a library web page	1(1.7)	5(8.5)	32(54.2)	21(35.6)	1.76	0.68	Rejected
3.	My library lacks adequate computer system	4(6.8)	7(11.9)	27(45.8)	21(35.6)	1.90	0.87	Rejected

4.	My computers often suffer system failure	5(8.5)	20(33.9)	18(30.5)	16(27.1)	2.24	0.95	Rejected
5.	My library lacks access to the Internet	3(5.1)	11(18.6)	25(42.4)	20(33.9)	1.95	0.86	Rejected
6.	My library lacks skilled manpower	1(1.7)	5(8.5)	30(50.8)	23(39)	1.73	0.69	Rejected
7.	My library lacks basic ICT infrastructure	0	9(15.3)	31(52.5)	19(32.2)	1.83	0.67	Rejected
8.	My library is in a state of low budgetary allocation	7(11.9)	27(45.8)	10(16.9)	15(25.4)	2.44	1.01	Rejected
9.	My library has not undergone automation	16(27.1)	21(35.6)	7(11.9)	15(25.4)	2.64	0.99	Accepted
10.	My library has low bandwidth of Internet connectivity	11(18.6)	16(27.1)	12(20.3)	20(33.9)	2.31	1.13	Rejected
11.	My library experiences epileptic power supply regularly	16(27.1)	11(18.6)	19(32.2)	13(22.0)	2.42	1.04	Rejected
12.	My library does not have a document policy on resources sharing	6(10.2)	18(30.5)	25(42.4)	10(16.9)	2.34	0.88	Rejected
13.	My library lacks political will of the founding father	2(3.4)	10(16.9)	31(52.5)	16(27.1)	1.97	0.77	Rejected

Analysis from table 8 revealed that the challenges militating against the university libraries studied are lack of buoyant finances and low level of full automation. The financial challenges experienced by the libraries studied could be traced to a cut down in library budget. This same financial issue is what is affecting university libraries in achieving full library automation. This is similar to the findings of Rabiou (2012), who carried out a study to determine library and librarians' role in Information Resource Sharing in the Emerging Information Society whose findings revealed that the major problems militating against the application of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) to knowledge sharing are: operational orientation, financial conundrum, lack of library web page, computer system failure, low budgetary allocation, low human capacity, low bandwidth of connectivity, lack of basic infrastructure and lack of political will.

CONCLUSION

University libraries in North Central Nigeria must key into new opportunities offered by Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to establish effective resource sharing services. However, finance and lack of full library automation are still challenges affecting effective resource sharing in universities in North Central, Nigeria and this makes it difficult for university libraries to subscribe to journals and to acquire other information materials. It is, therefore necessary that appropriate measures should be taken by university librarians in universities in North Central, to improve the current trend and be at par with their counterparts in the western world.

RECOMMENDATION

The extent of resource sharing services in university libraries in North Central Nigeria is low. Based on the conclusion the following recommendations were made to university libraries in North Central Nigeria.

- There is need for the university librarians to provide adequate and current electronic information resources in their various libraries.
- Management of university libraries in North Central Nigeria should work toward provisions to enhance co-operation and co-ordination among libraries.
- University libraries and the management of the various institutions should come together and address the challenges as raised in the study so as to facilitate attainment of benefits of effective resource sharing services among various university libraries.
- There is need for the university management to ensure that statutory budgetary allocations to the university libraries are disbursed.

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