

Full Length Research

The Role of Library Consortium in enhancing Academic Performance of Students in Nigerian Universities

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This study was designed to examine role of library consortium in enhancing academic performance of students in Nigerian Universities. The study was conducted in Makurdi Local Government Area of Benue State Three objectives achieved and 3 research questions answered. Population for the study was 103 subjects comprising 11 library staff University of Agriculture and 92 library staff of Benue State University and was used as sample because the population size. Data was collected and analysed using mean, standard deviation and t-test statistics. Findings for the study revealed no significant difference in the mean ratings of University of Agriculture Makurdi and Benue state University Library staff on the benefits (t-cal = -6.71 < t-tab 1.98 at 0.05 df), challenges confronting consortia (t-cal = -5.37 < t-tab = 1.98 at 0.05 df) and the strategies of overcoming challenges confronting consortia (t-cal = -5.75 which < 1.98 at 0.05 d f). The study concluded that for any library or group of libraries to successfully practice consortium or effective satisfaction of the information needs of its academic activities, there should be necessary facilities and infrastructure put in place to ensure that these resources are put to maximum use. When these infrastructure or facilities are not made readily available, the whole essence of consortia that represent the possibility to test alternatives to the traditional automated library that enhance sound academic performance of students may be made futile. It was recommended that there must be training and re-training of library patrons in order for them to fully maximizes the e-resources. Without adequate training the resources that could have cost the institution huge amount of funds would not be maximized. Universities should provide adequate information technologies. There should be total quality management implementation and other management techniques and Universities should provide access to end users' information resources.

Keywords: Role, Library, Consortium, Enhancement and Academic Performance.

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INTRODUCTION

Library is a store house of books, journals and other non-book learning materials-backdated definition. In modern era, library is not confined into a room or building Virtual Library. Itreaches to the users through online and

24x7 hrs. Library contains the different types of reading materials namely books, periodicals, maps, microforms, sound recordings, video recordings, electronic resources etc. These are procured to meet the information

requirements of the user community. It is necessary to conduct user studies to examine the use of these reading materials to design a need-based acquisition policy, develop a balanced collection in the prevailing environment of diminishing budgetary provisions and maximize the use of collection (Abubakar, 2011) and (Ochogwu, 2010).

Consortia are an association of institution and organization. The term can be appropriately applied to any form of cooperation whereby organization resolves to work together for common purpose. Library consortium are created to help libraries obtain better prices by buying joint access for a greater number of users, expanding access to print and electronic collections and developing new services to meet their customers' needs. This paper attempts to address a short historic view of library consortium, the advantages and disadvantages of consortium for libraries, consortia activities in developing countries in general and in India in particular. The purpose is to give a picture of current trends regarding consortia in developing countries (GoodLuck, 2012 and Edem, 2010).

"Library consortium" refers to the co-operation, co-ordination and collaboration between and among libraries for the purpose of sharing information resources. A review of the literature shows that "library consortia" is not a new concept. Early examples, from the late 1960s include the development of the Ohio College Libraries Center (OCLC) as a regional computer system for 54 Ohio college libraries to share their resources and to reduce costs, and the Birmingham Libraries Co-operative Mechanisation Project (BLCMP) in the UK. However, consortium was not really common until the 1980s. The main driving forces for collaboration among libraries, especially academic libraries, has been the increase in numbers of publications and the rise in the cost of publications as well as the decline in library budgets. The increase in student enrolment in higher education and increasing demands for library services and collections were other factors given, from the 1980s onwards, for collaborative efforts by Nfila and Darko-Ampem (2002).

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Historically, the common form of library co-operation was the sharing of union catalogue information, storage facilities, collection development and human resources at local, national and regional levels in the US (Payne, 1998). Later, other countries also ventured into co-operative efforts. In the period between 1980 and 1990 many libraries in Western countries were involved with library automation, coupled with the increased use of computers in bibliographic processing activities and database searching. There was a need to share expertise

on library automation and this was considered as a possible reason to move toward library consortium in the 1980s by Nfila and Darko-Ampem (2002).

Consortium & Memberships

Consortium and national initiatives

- Association of Research Libraries (ARL)
- Big Ten Academic Alliance (BTAA)
- Black Metropolis Research Consortium (BMRC)
- Center for Research Libraries (CRL)
- Chicago Collections Consortium
- Coalition for Networked Information (CNI)
- Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois (CARLI)
- Council on Library & Information Resources (CLIR)

Memberships and projects

- Chicago Summer Business Institute (CSBI)
- Digital Public Library of America (DPLA)
- Dura Space (Samvera & Fedora)
- Hathi Trust
- International Association of University Libraries (IATUL)
- International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA)
- Library Publishing Coalition (LPC)
- Open Textbook Network (OTN)
- ORCID
- Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC)
- SHARE

This were the countries that have consortium their names and operation according to Krieb, 2011, Chauchan, 2011, Ossai, 2010, Lugya, 2010, ASLP and EFLC, 2010 and Kumbar, 2004

Academic performance is the extent to which a student, teacher or institution has achieved their short or long-term educational goals (Bossaert, Doumen, Buyse and Verschueren, 2011). Academic performance is a way wherein a person excels in terms of school requirements, tasks, awards and achievements. Academic performance means being a successful student who does well in school and engages in student activities.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this study is to examine role of

library consortium in enhancing academic performance of students in Nigerian Universities: specific objectives of the study are:

1. To examine the benefits of consortium in University Libraries
2. To identify the challenges confronting consortia in University Libraries
3. To explore strategies of overcoming challenges confronting consortium in University Libraries.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the benefits of consortium in University Libraries?
2. What are the challenges confronting consortium in University Libraries?
3. What are the strategies of overcoming challenges confronting consortium in University Libraries?

HYPOTHESES

1. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of University of Agriculture Makurdi and Benue state University Library staff on the benefits of consortium
2. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of University of Agriculture Makurdi and Benue state University Library staff on the challenges confronting consortium
3. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of University of Agriculture Makurdi and Benue state University Library staff on the strategies of overcoming challenges confronting consortium

METHODOLOGY

The area of the study is Makurdi Local Government Area of Benue State. There are two Universities in Makurdi. These are Federal University of Agriculture and Benue State University. These Universities operate full time library services.

This study employed a survey research design. This design is suitable because the researcher collected and described the characteristics or facts about the population under study. The survey design also offers research subjects the opportunity to express their opinions based on their experiences and the researcher could collect data from small sample drawn from the population in order to draw inferences.

The population for this study is 103 subjects comprising 11 library staff University of Agriculture and 92 library

staff of Benue State University.

There was no sampling for the study. The entire population of 103 made up of 11 library staff University of Agriculture and 92 library staff of Benue State University was used for the study as sample because the population size could be handled effectively by the researcher.

The instrument for the study is was a structured questionnaire titled "Role of Library Consortium in Enhancing Academic Performance of Students Questionnaire (RLCEAPSQ)". The instrument was developed by the researcher using the literature reviewed. The questionnaire was divided three sections based on the research questions. The questionnaire had restricted response options of strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD). These have corresponding values of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively.

The questionnaire was validated by two experts; from the National Library Makurdi. Both content and face validation of the instrument was done.

Data collected was analysed using descriptive statistics. Mean was used to answer the research questions. The bench mark for this was 2.50 ($4+3+2+1=10/4=2.50$). The decision rule was: any item with a mean value of 2.50 or above was regarded as required while any item with a mean value of less than 2.50 was regarded as not required. Inferential statistics (t-test) was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The decision rule was: any cluster of the related items with a value of 0.05 and above was regarded as significant while any cluster of related items that obtained a value below 0.05 was considered not significant.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question 1

What are the benefits of consortium in University Libraries?

Data for answering research question 1 is presented in Table 1:

Result in Table 1 shows that all 11 items had their FUAM Library staff mean values ranging from 2.54 to 3.27 while the mean values of BSU Library staff range from 2.50 to 3.00 and were above the bench mark of 2.50. This shows that the respondents agreed that the 11 items were benefits of consortia in University Libraries. The FUAM Library staff standard deviation ranged from 0.92 to 1.13 and standard deviation of BSU Library staff range from 0.98 to 1.19 which is an indication that the respondents were not too far from one another in their responses on the benefits of consortium in University Libraries.

Table 1:Views of respondents on benefits of consortium in University Libraries

S/N	Item Statement	\bar{x}_1	\bar{x}_2	SD ₁	SD ₂	Remarks
1	Building a highly comprehensive collection	3.18	2.36	0.98	1.04	Agree
2	Create easy access to resource sharing on internet by developing common resources databases	3.27	3.01	1.00	1.05	Agree
3	Reduce cost of information	3.00	2.85	0.89	1.14	Agree
4	Ensure time saving	2.63	3.10	0.92	1.03	Agree
5	Improve resource sharing	2.54	2.84	1.03	1.02	Agree
6	Provide more professional services to users	2.74	2.81	1.03	1.15	Agree
7	Develop a competitive professionalism among Library and Information science professionals.	2.90	2.78	1.13	1.16	Agree
8	Create new working tools	3.00	3.00	1.26	1.03	Agree
9	Improve services in libraries	2.63	2.80	1.02	0.98	Agree
10	Build a digital library	2.64	2.57	1.03	1.12	Agree
11	Ensure better advantages of resources in libraries	2.54	2.61	1.12	1.19	Agree
Grand Mean		2.8	2.79			

\bar{x}_1 = Mean of FUAM Library staff, \bar{x}_2 = mean of BSU Library staff, SD₁= standard deviation of FUAM Library staff and SD₂= standard deviation for BSU Library staff

Source: Field survey, 2019

Research Question 2

What are the challenges confronting consortium in University Libraries?

Data for answering research question 2 is presented in Table 2:

Result in Table 2 shows that all 10 items had their FUAM Library staff mean values ranging from 2.81 to 3.09 while the mean values of BSU Library staff range from 2.56 to 2.89 and were above the bench mark of 2.50. This shows that the respondents agreed that the 11 items were challenges confronting consortia in University Libraries. The FUAM Library staff standard deviation ranged from 1.07 to 1.22 and standard deviation of BSU Library staff range from 0.09 to 1.19 which is an indication that the respondents were not too far from one another in their responses on the challenges confronting consortium in University Libraries.

Research Question 3

What are the strategies of overcoming challenges confronting consortium in University Libraries?

Data for answering research question 3 is presented in Table 3:

Result in Table 3 shows that all 7 items had their FUAM Library staff mean values ranging from 2.54 to 3.18 while the mean values of BSU Library staff range from 2.57 to 2.91 and were above the bench mark of 2.50. This shows that the respondents agreed that the 7 items were strategies of overcoming challenges confronting consortium in University Libraries. The FUAM Library staff standard deviation ranged from 0.98 to 1.37 and standard deviation of BSU Library staff range from 0.97 to 1.16 which is an indication that the respondents were not too far from one another in their responses on the strategies of overcoming challenges confronting consortium in University Libraries.

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of University of Agriculture Makurdi and Benue state University Library staff on the benefits of consortium

Test of hypothesis 1 is presented in Table 4:

Test of hypothesis one reveals that the t-calculated was - 6.71 which was less than t-tabulated value of 1.98 at 0.05 level of significance with 101 degree of freedom. This result is not significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of University of Agriculture Makurdi and Benue state University Library staff on the benefits of

Table 2: Views of respondents on the challenges confronting consortium in University Libraries

S/N	Item Statement	\bar{x}_1	\bar{x}_2	SD ₁	SD ₂	Remarks
1	Lack of software uniformity for effective consortium formation	3.00	2.58	1.09	0.19	Agree
2	Poor Commitment for membership subscription and commitment	2.85	2.78	0.23	0.16	Agree
3	Lack of funds for the subscription of e-resources could be an odious task	2.94	2.59	0.21	0.12	Agree
4	Slow pace of uptake of membership that affect the rapid growth of the consortium	3.09	2.89	1.22	0.14	Agree
5	Lack of enough funds to allow for the subscription of several databases and e-resources	3.00	2.77	1.09	0.14	Agree
6	Poor electricity supply required for the building of consortium	2.81	2.61	0.07	0.16	Agree
7	Slow bandwidths and network security necessary for consortium formation	3.00	2.56	1.09	0.16	Agree
8	Keeping archival copies of e-journals and adding them to the catalogues by holdings of the libraries is of great concern	3.00	2.71	1.09	0.12	Agree
9	Poor technical support for the maintenance of the hardware and software	3.09	2.57	1.04	0.09	Agree
10	Unavailability of indigenous collection database that collates these collections	2.81	2.66	0.07	0.15	Agree
Grand Mean		2.96	2.66			

\bar{x}_1 = Mean of FUAM Library staff, \bar{x}_2 = mean of BSU Library staff, SD₁= standard deviation of FUAM Library staff and SD₂= standard deviation for BSU Library staff

Source: Field survey, 2019

Table 3: Views of respondents on the strategies of overcoming challenges confronting consortium in University Libraries

S/N	Item Statement	\bar{x}_1	\bar{x}_2	SD ₁	SD ₂	Remarks
1	User training and re-training	2.63	2.57	1.02	1.01	Agree
2	Adequate information technologies	2.90	2.91	1.37	1.03	Agree
3	Total quality management implementation and other management techniques	2.90	2.76	0.83	1.16	Agree
4	Provide access to end users' information resources	2.63	2.77	1.20	1.02	Agree
5	Adequate cooperate among libraries	2.72	2.82	1.00	0.97	Agree
6	Ensure will to Share Resources	3.18	2.65	0.98	1.10	Agree
Grand Mean		2.82	2.74			

\bar{x}_1 = Mean of FUAM Library staff, \bar{x}_2 = mean of BSU Library staff, SD₁= standard deviation of FUAM Library staff and SD₂= standard deviation for BSU Library staff

Source: Field survey, 2019

consortia is accepted. This implies that the two groups of respondents did not significantly differ in their responses on the benefits of consortia.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of University of Agriculture Makurdi and Benue state

Table 4: t-t result of University of Agriculture Makurdi and Benue state University Library staff on the benefits of consortium

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Dev	Df	t-cal	t-tab	Remarks
FUAM Library staff	92	2.8	0.67	101	-6.71	1.98	NS
BSU Library staff	11	2.79	0.46				
Total	103						

Source: Field survey, 2019

Table 5: t-t result of University of Agriculture Makurdi and Benue state University Library staff on the challenges confronting consortium

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Dev	Df	t-cal	t-tab	Remarks
FUAM Library staff	92	2.67	0.83	101	-5.37	1.98	NS
BSU Library staff	11	2.79	0.47				
Total	103						

Source: Field survey, 2019

Table 6: t-t result of University of Agriculture Makurdi and Benue state University Library staff on the strategies of overcoming challenges confronting consortium

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Dev	Df	t-cal	t-tab	Remarks
FUAM Library staff	92	2.96	0.79	101	-5.75	1.98	NS
BSU Library staff	11	2.66	0.46				
Total	103						

Source: Field survey, 2019

University Library staff on the challenges confronting consortium

Test of hypothesis 2 is presented in Table 5:

Test of hypothesis two reveals that the t-calculated was -5.37 which was less than t-tabulated value of 1.98 at 0.05 level of significance with 101 degree of freedom. This result is not significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of University of Agriculture Makurdi and Benue state University Library staff on the challenges confronting consortia is upheld. This implies that the two groups of respondents did not significantly differ in their responses on the challenges confronting consortia.

Hypothesis 3

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of

University of Agriculture Makurdi and Benue state University Library staff on the strategies of overcoming challenges confronting consortium

Test of hypothesis 3 is presented in Table 6

Test of hypothesis three reveals that the t-calculated was -5.75 which was less than t-tabulated value of 1.98 at 0.05 level of significance with 101 degree of freedom. This result is not significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of University of Agriculture Makurdi and Benue state University Library staff on the strategies of overcoming challenges confronting consortium is not rejected. This implies that the two groups of respondents did not significantly differ in their responses on the strategies of overcoming challenges confronting consortium.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Research question 1 and hypothesis 1 was on the benefits of consortia in University Libraries. Findings revealed that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of University of Agriculture Makurdi and Benue state University Library staff on the benefits of consortium. The study agrees with findings of Manoj (2016) who carried out a study on the Role of Library Consortium in Resource Sharing and its Benefits for Academic Library with Special Reference to UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium, Mizoram University, Aizawl. The study found out that library Consortium building a highly comprehensive collection, ease access to resource sharing on Internet by developing common resources database, reduce cost of information and improve resource sharing in libraries.

Research question 2 and hypothesis 2 was on the challenges confronting consortium in University Libraries. Findings revealed that was no significant difference in the mean ratings of University of Agriculture Makurdi and Benue state University Library staff on the challenges confronting consortium. The findings affirm the study of Miguel (2000) on New Strategies in Library Services Organization, Consortium University Libraries in Spain which found out that poor commitment for membership subscription and commitment, inability of the management of institutions to agree to commit huge amount of funds for the subscription of e-resources could be an odious task, slow pace of uptake of membership is affecting the rapid growth of the consortium, lack of enough funds to allow for the subscription of several databases and poor electricity supply required for the building of consortium are challenges confronting consortium.

Research question 3 and hypothesis 3 was on the strategies of overcoming challenges confronting consortia in University Libraries. Findings revealed that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of University of Agriculture Makurdi and Benue state University Library staff on the strategies of overcoming challenges confronting consortia. The findings are similar to a study conducted by Miguel (2000). The study revealed that provision of adequate information technologies, ensuring total quality management implementation and other management techniques, provision of access to end users' information resources, adequate cooperate among libraries and maintenance of the will to Share Resources would help to overcoming challenges confronting consortia.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the role of library consortium in enhancing academic performance of students in Nigerian

Universities. The ultimate goal of cooperation is to join users and the documents and information they need; establishing relations among participant institutions is a means to that end. This study concludes that; for any library or group of libraries to successfully practice consortium or effective satisfaction of the information needs of its academic activities, there should be necessary facilities and infrastructure put in place to ensure that these resources are put to maximum use. When these infrastructure or facilities are not made readily available, the whole essence of consortia that represent the possibility to test alternatives to the traditional automated library that enhance sound academic performance of students may be made futile.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. There must be training and re-training of library patrons in order for them to fully maximize the e-resources. Without adequate training the resources that could have cost the institution huge amount of funds would not be maximized.
2. Universities should provide adequate information technologies
3. There should be total quality management implementation and other management techniques
4. Universities should provide access to end users' information resources
5. There must be adequate cooperate among libraries
6. All libraries must have the will to share resources for smooth consortia operations

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