Resource sharing model and co-operation tips for university libraries in North-eastern Nigeria

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Abstract: **Library cooperation and networks has grown mostly in the last three decades in different parts of the world in order to lodge the precise requests of the library users by introducing models. Although, few models have been developed to provide these specific services, despite the fact that not all models obey the rules to the essential functions of library networks. These essential functions which include the promotion of Resource Sharing (RS), creation of resource sharing tools like Union Catalogues, validation of acquisition and safeguarding International standards for creation of records should depends on the libraries in selecting a model which is suitable to its requirement. This study is based on mete analysis; Mete analysis is a quantitative, formal, epidemiological study design used to systematically assess the results of previous work of related research; it is also used to combine data from multiple studies. The objective of the research is to develop a Resource sharing model for these university libraries. The result of the study was a developed suggested three types of models to be used for resource sharing and library co-operation in university libraries under survey. Recommendation of types and tips of resource sharing models are stated.**

Keywords: **university libraries, resource sharing models, library networks, types and tips.**

1. INTRODUCTION

Library cooperation and networks has grown mostly in the last three decades in different parts of the world in order to accommodate the specific needs of the library users by introducing models. Quite a few models have emerged so as to provide specific services, despite the fact that not all models obey the rules to the essential functions of library networks. These essential functions which include the promotion of Resource Sharing (RS), creation of resource sharing tools like Union Catalogues, validation of acquisition and safeguarding International standards for creation of records should depends on the libraries in selecting a model which is suitable to its requirement.

Developing countries are left behind in library co-operation and networking, reasons for this are poor funding, limited resources, inadequate support by parent institutions, and the non-existence of the spirit of exchange which is delaying the prospects of resource sharing programme. Ibrahim (2006) was with the opion that "the need for resource sharing stems from three underlying trends of modern society: the growth of all forms of literature, the increasing reliance on information to enable society function: effectively, the inflation in the cost of materials coupled with the increasing availability of technology".

University libraries have made the most progress, as many have automateds their functions and services. In these libraries, the pattern of information handling, provision of services and participation in library co-operation or resource sharing process has transformed. The perception resource sharing among university libraries in Nigeria has record significance importance not because the country is passing through period of irregularity trial, but because of the present era of information explosion. According to Magaji (2012) many new approaches to resource sharing are now emerging worldwide which include the use of the Internet for accessing millions of bits of information all over the globe. The electronic mail, teleconferencing and video conferencing are typical examples. A networking model can be local, regional, national or international. Its main purpose is for the electronic transfer of information between two or more libraries.

Definition of Resource Sharing:

Muthu (2013) defined resource sharing as the activities that result from an agreement, formal or informal, among a group of libraries (usually a consortium or network) to share collections, data, facilities, personnel, etc., for the benefit of their users and to reduce the expense of collection development. He also viewed it as **"**A mode of operation whereby the functions are shared in common by a number of libraries".

The model that is used for networking as well as resource sharing is being developed in stages. At first stage, the model of resource sharing includes the following:

1. Inter-linking between National & International Institute/University and Organization in the field of Environmental studies.

2. One of the national level institutes is taking initiative (IEG) to act as a hub (a central node) for coordinating all networking activities.

3. Central node is supposed to get information from the national level institutions as well as international institutes in the field of environmental studies.

In second stage, the central node accumulates the information from all participating libraries of national and international level and to be disseminated to regional level members. To make this process of information dissemination more effective and useful, a two-way communication should be encouraged. At the final stage, after the networking among international, national, regional libraries, situated at regional level information would be disseminate to the local level members. This model of networking is shown in figure 1.
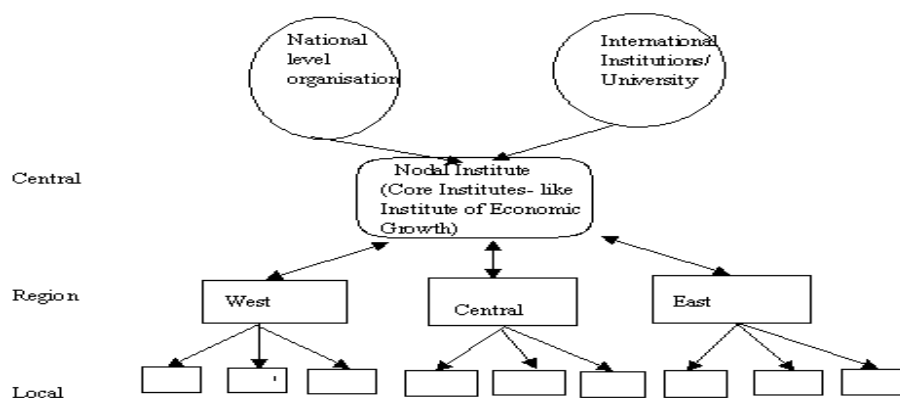

Fig.1 Model of library networking.

 (Source**:** Kaul. 2001**)**

In this model, networking is at the first stage of its operation. To make this network successful there is a need to develop physical and human resources. The nodal library shall take initiative for installing an integrated CD-ROM network system (e.g. Central Library of IIT Madras). Scanners shall also be made available. The human resource shall also be trained to use latest information technology. All the participant institutes in the network would be motivated and encouraged to provide efficient services to the users.

Features of the model-

a) Information generated and created anywhere in the world is disseminated speedily at all levels.

b) There is no concept of membership fee. Participating institutes and will arrange their budget from different sources.

c) Universities libraries are fully equipped with computers and other related equipment for giving document delivery services.

d) Each institute is independent.

e) To make this networking efficient, skilled and experienced human resource is being deployed. The attitude of such people is of critical importance.

f) Use of electronic form of publication for sharing resources

g) At a later stage, duplication of costly and highly used Journals may be avoided by some mutual agreement and the same can be shared through the network.

h) This network is decentralized form of acquisition and storage in building the shared resources. This would be technically valuable and economical also. This model focuses on specific subject; to begin with it is keeping the size of the resources to be shared as small as possible and within manageable limits. It will be economically viable also.

In the next phase, nodal library can also think about the digital libraries. Information may reside on different storage media such as electronics memory or magnetic and optical disk. In order to access digital information it is necessary to use either special purpose, multimedia reader stations or some form of computer system. The information can also be accessed remotely via telephone modems or by means of computer communication networks. This information can be shared at a very low cost. Therefore, while a conventional library might hold one or two copies of a book, a digital library could generate an unlimited number of copies at the touch of a button (Chopra, 1999).

Advantages of Resource Sharing:

Muthu (2013) stated these as some of the importance of resource sharing in libraries.

1. Resource sharing satisfies the fourth law of library science

2. Resource sharing is very economical & Resource helps to save the library space

3. Standardization in classification and cataloguing is possible

4. Resource sharing avoids duplication of documents and work

5. Acquire library materials & Share holdings

6. Provide researchers with an increased number of research materials;

7. Avoid duplicate purchases & Ensure collection of special material and services

8. Establish efficient communication systems

9. Develop an information marketing mechanism through cooperation and control of the quality of collections

Research objective

The main objective of this research work is to develop a Resource sharing model for these universities, through which they can successfully provide their users with information resource in a minimum amount of time.

2.   METHODOLOGY

This research work is based on Mete analysis, is a quantitative, formal, epidemiological study design used to systematically assess the results of previous work of related research; it is also used to combine data from multiple studies.

Recommended Tips for Effective Resource Sharing and Library Cooperation

1. Good planning, a continuing education programme for staff and a well conceived organizational structure should be provided.

2.   Make adequate preparatory study and analysis with clear objectives.

3. Adequate arrangements for monitoring services and for responding to the feedback information thus received need to be made.

4. Ensure technical compatibility between participating institutions.

5. Ensure good transport and communication facilities.

6. Involve those who have high needs and significant resources compared to the other libraries in the consortium, as it's reduces the distance between need and resources, as well as the problem associated with the need for autonomy of action.

7. Involved those that are most capable of keeping agreements, so that `reliance' on other libraries can be acceptable both conceptually and actually acceptable.

At the same time, library personnels need not to be pleased about resource sharing with occasional inter library loan activity. They must make every effort to break self created barriers and look into furthering the resource sharing objectives to optimize benefit to all participanting libraries.

Methods of Resource Sharing

According Sharif (2006), there are two major methods of RS which are generally being practiced internationally: (a) Conventional, and (b) Advanced.

Conventional Method of RS

In this method, RS of traditional printed materials is practiced. Two or more participating libraries issue their catalogues and union lists of periodicals with archival holdings. The participating libraries also publish union lists. On the basis of these lists of holdings, they share their resources through interlibrary loan (ILL) arrangements.
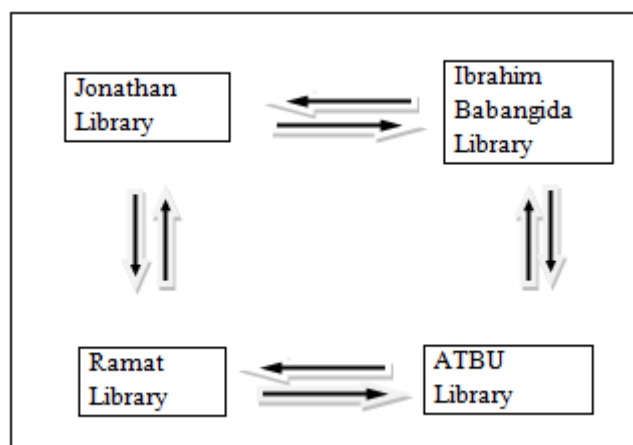
Advanced (Automated) Method of RS

Libraries are making use of information and communication technology (ICT) to further enhance RS initiatives. The advent of electronic formats has increased both the ease and efficiency of finding and producing virtual scholarly documents. This equips libraries to share their information sources to greater extent. The following are some examples of use of ICT tools to facilitate RS.

Proposed/Suggested Resource Sharing Models for University Libraries in North-Eastern States in Nigeria

Under the situation stated above, the followings are some suggested RS models among university libraries in north-eastern Nigeria. The models are set in three different types, in other to suit each of the libraries and some college, special, and public libraries within the same region.

Model-1 (Inter-Type RS)

In the first model, different types of university libraries in the zone, regardless of their scope, resources, and clientele, can share their resources. This model provides an opportunity of RS in a broader scope. Under this arrangement, particular university library (YSU) can share it resources with state or federal university libraries i.e., MAUTECH, UNIMAID or ATBU libraries. The participating libraries may have equal status or not.
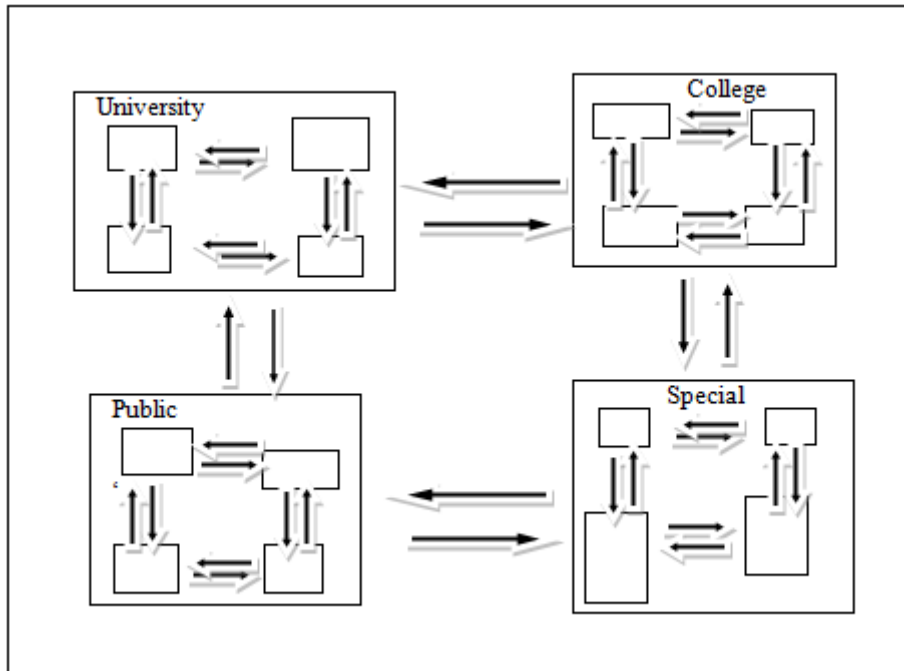

Model 1: Inter-Type RS

Model 2 (Intra-Type RS)

In this second model, a library can share its resources with another library of the same kind, and above or below that level. Since the level of participatory libraries will be nearly the same, this model can be easier and more beneficial to adopt. Thus, amongst university libraries, ATBU University can develop a network with Ebele Jonathan library, Gombe state
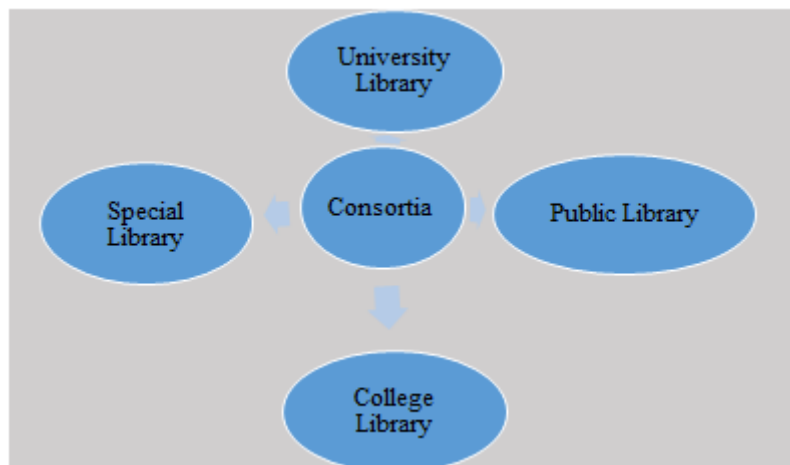
University, Ibrahim Badmasi University library, etc. whereas the participation will go be young university libraries to college, public, and special libraries in a region. There will be a better understanding of resources, services and the clientele among the participating libraries. The same kind of networking can be developed among university, college, public, and special libraries, more than four university libraries can share their resources. Similarly, public and special libraries in a state can also build their own network under this model.

Model 2: Intra-Type RS

Model-3 (RS through consortia)

In this model, resources (print and electronic) can be stored at a central place and access can be provided to the institutions. An example of these online databases exists in Pakistan, as Higher Education Commission (HEC). This provides full access to several databases through a consortium arrangement. Through this model, Universities and organizations are enjoying access to all databases subscribed by the HEC while the private sector has been provided access to some of these databases. The model can be imitated in our areas, where university Libraries can plan resource sharing (RS) projects amongst all the participating libraries of north-eastern Nigeria.

Model 3: RS through consortia

Prospects and Recommendations for successful resource sharing

These are some suggestions made by Abubakar (2012) for success of any resource sharing activities in Nigeria-;

1. There is the need to have a national body which will be responsible for planning resource sharing activities and its effective implementation. Such a body should comprise of the Nigerian Library Associations (NLA); other professional bodies as well as the National Library of Nigeria (NLN). The bodies have a very crucial role to play in bringing an acceptable nationwide resource sharing programme and activities.

2. Improvement on information and communication technologies is very important. This is so because resource sharing activities are more meaningful with the use of latest ICTs, most especially when digitization process has become the hallmark of useful library.

3. There must also be willingness on the part of Nigerian librarians to change their attitude and embrace the ICTs around. The various professional bodies e.g. the Nigerian Library Association (NLA) and others needs to put efforts to sensitize professionals by organizing conferences and activate other forums for awareness drive on the importance of sharing of resource among libraries.

4. That our libraries should also seek more financial assistance especially from other departments, Organizations', NGOs etc. The Nigerian Government must realize that information is a national resource that cannot be toyed with. The professionals can educate people in the corridors of power on the need of cooperation and networking for the use of the country.

5. Finally, a dire need for the standardization of bibliographic data records is felt. The National Library must give priority to this for achieving meaningful development and success, this will in the long run will help to develop international networking and resource sharing.

3. CONCLUSION

RS is an effective tool towards providing widespread access with limited financial resources in libraries. Users' expectations and demands have arisen due to the speedy growth of information resources. With problem of budgetary cuts, libraries are unable to purchase or supply the needed information material, so they should plan and introduce mutual cooperation among each other. With these proposed models, library resources can share their resources for mutual formal cooperative programmes at different levels.

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