



Global Tools for Resource Sharing among Academic libraries in Nigeria

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Abstract: *The article is on global tools for resources sharing activities among libraries in Nigeria. The conventional library is seriously affected by some barriers of information communication, such as indifference of the lending library, conservative attitude, distance, language, cost, time, etc. for inter-library loan. There are also several constraints to resource sharing in the print environment as it existed till recently: open access to shared resource is not possible; service depends upon library performance; and access to shared resource at a cost. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The population of the study is 174 which is made up of all professional librarians in academic libraries of federal owned higher institutions in the South East of Nigeria. The area of study for this research work was the South East of Nigeria which consists of five states namely: Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo states respectively. The study was carried out in federal owned higher Institutions' academic libraries in the South East of Nigeria findings shows that Blogs; social media; Z39.50; Micro-blogging; Wikis; Social Bookmaking; Online Public Access Catalogue; Indexes and Abstracts; Bibliographies; Union catalogue; Web OPAC; Social network software and Directories are tools used in carrying out resource-sharing activities among academic libraries in Nigeria.*

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1. Introduction

Library and information science profession is all about helping and knowledge /resources sharing. No library is able to satisfy all the needs of its clientele, this gave rise to the concept of library cooperation. The concept is now known as resource sharing; library cooperation remained confined to inter-library loan. Even inter-library loan was not being practised widely. Internet and other local and national networks have facilitated resource sharing; E-resources have further facilitated information exchange. Emergence of library consortia is a promising development advent of ICT has opened up new opportunities for greater cooperation among libraries. Emergence of library consortia is a promising development for Resource Sharing (Chatterjee, 2013).

In the past three decades, information technology has made significant progress. The current state of information handling is indeed sufficient to support and encourage the sharing of resources among libraries. The pace of technological improvement shows no

signs of abatement and libraries will find it rewarding to explore the realm of networking possibilities that this new technology makes feasible. Especially, the present decade has seen a greatly renewed interest in library cooperation and mutual benefits, prominently at national and international levels.

Generally, the concept of 'library co-operation' emerged for rendering better services to users' community through borrowing & lending of documents in formal manner. 'library resources' is the term that applies to personnel, material, functions or activities available in a library for satisfying the human needs & demands to acquire their desired knowledge (Biswas, and Dasgupta, 2012). Library co-operation is a very old concept and a form of resource sharing. The new object of resource sharing has changed the old concept due to multi-dimensional growth of published documents through R&D activities in recent past, cost of the information, advancement of newly invented technologies for information processing and dissemination, etc. resource sharing entails apportioning, allocating, distributing or contributing something on a voluntary basis for mutual benefits among a group of libraries with a view to achieving best utilization of resources by the ultimate users at a wider level. Furthermore, Biswas, and Dasgupta opined that for better utilization of resources, participating libraries should come together and cooperate in two broad areas: (a) developing the collection on shared basis; and (b) improving services for exploiting such collection. The conventional library is seriously affected by some barriers of information communication, such as indifference of the lending library, conservative attitude, distance, language, cost, time, etc. for inter-library loan. and there are also several constraints to resource sharing in the print environment as it existed till recently: (a) open access to shared resource is not possible; (b) service depends upon library performance; (c) access to shared resource at a cost; (d) access to shared resource by price hike and devaluation in rupee value; (e) availability of library financial resources not possible; and (f) authenticity of collected information resources on internet. The development in information science and technology (i.e. computer technology and telecommunication technology) is the only panacea to overcome all the barriers of resource sharing programme. Based on the above problems the researchers want to exploits global tools for resource sharing among academic libraries in south-east of Nigeria.

2. Literature Review

It is evident from literature that in this digital era that any students at the higher level intends explore the digital environment with different tools to acquired knowledge more, especially social media tools and other web tools. The researchers will explores some global tools for resources sharing in libraries in the world.

Khan and Bhatti(2012) submitted that The shift of paradigm from Web 1.0 to Web 2.0 is offering new challenges for libraries that how to capture the attention of remote users who are engaged in social media activities. Different applications of Web 2.0 in form of social media are being used by millions of people in the world. Social media is an instrument on communication. It is a broad term and covers a large range of web sites which enable people to interact with other visitors. These media are Social news (Dig, Propeller), Social Bookmarking (Del.lcio.us, Simpy, Blinklist), Social Networking (Facebook,

Myspace, LinkedIn), Social Photo and Video Sharing (YouTube, Vimeo, Flickr) and Wikis ([Wikipedia](#), 2011).

Social media (networking) tools

Social media provides more opportunity to reach your community, target specific audiences, and give them a chance to interact with your library. Statistics of Social media usage shows that there are nearly 900 million active Facebook users, over 120 million LinkedIn members, 7 billion+ images on Flickr, 29 million pages on Wikipedia, 300 million Twitter users posting over 8,000 tweets per second, over 4.9 billion hours of YouTube watching per month ([Tortorella](#), 2012). The whole business of libraries is about connecting people with information and this is what social media is really all about. Social media helps in reaching out to our communities and providing them information that they need in a very accessible way. There are number of libraries that used Wikis, Flickr, or Blogs for publishing historical photos and ask people to identify people, places, or events pictured. Different libraries use Wikis for content creation and to create a collaborative relation between library and the community. Hence IM (Instant Messaging), SMS, Twitter and email are being for answering questions ([Convertive](#), 2011).

Different studies have shown that social media tools are much popular among new users' generations. As they are growing up with modern information technologies, they rely on social media and use it as a tool for communication, information sharing and discussions. [Bart](#) (2010) studied the social media usage among college faculty. It was found that 80% of the respondents had at least one social networking account. They used it for professional purpose. Facebook, Twitter and YouTube were found as most recognizable names among more than 90% of the faculty. It was found that teachers used Facebook, LinkedIn, Skype and YouTube for communicating with peers and students. It was appeared that social media use is more among faculty in the Humanities and Social Sciences than those in Mathematics, Science, Business and Economics. Like [Bart](#) (2010), [Kamdani and Kumbar](#) (2006) also found that majority of the respondents visit institutional web site regularly. It was observed that respondents agreed that libraries should maintain the portal by hosting the Web OPAC. Library portal should provide facility to the users to access library databases. It was concluded that libraries should provide web-based services to their user. [Suraweera et al.](#) (n.d.) explored that social networks are being used by teachers, lectures and students as a communication tool. Many students are using this tool in a very wide range. Teachers, lecturers and professors are using this tool for discussions to post assignment, tests and quizzes. Social networking sites are being used to foster the communication between teachers and parents. [Chand, Suman and Nirmalendu](#) (2008) concluded that adding Web 2.0 studies to the curriculum may also serve to improve the position of LIS programmes. RSS is also very useful to library and information science education and research purpose. With the help of RSS library science students can monitor high school and college scholarship opportunities by using RSS feeds. Library and information science department can also use RSS to communicate departmental news with their students, announcing staff changes, new courses or any other news that is relevant and of interest to the student population ([Khan and Bhatti](#)(2012).

Blog Tools

A blog is one of the tools can be use for resources sharing (a truncation of the expression *weblog*) is a discussion or informational site published on the World Wide Web and consisting of discrete entries ("posts") typically displayed in reverse chronological order (the most recent post appears first). Until 2009 blogs were usually the work of a single individual, occasionally of a small group, and often covered a single subject. More recently "multi-author blogs" (MABs) have developed, with posts written by large numbers of authors and professionally edited. MABs from newspapers, other media outlets, universities, think tanks, advocacy groups and similar institutions account for an increasing quantity of blog traffic. The rise of Twitter and other "microblogging" systems helps integrate MABs and single-author blogs into societal newstreams. The emergence and growth of blogs in the late 1990s coincided with the advent of web publishing tools that facilitated the posting of content by non-technical users. (Previously, a knowledge of such technologies as HTML and FTP had been required to publish content on the Web).

Z39.50 Tools

Z39.50 is a standard communications protocol for the search and retrieval of bibliographic data in online databases. Z39.50 is used on the Internet to search the Online Public Access Catalogues (OPAC) of library holdings. It is also sometimes used to link disparate OPACs into a single "union" OPAC. Z39.50 is an American National Standards Institute (ANSI/NISO) standard(<http://searchoracle.techtarget.com/definition/Z39-50>). **Z39.50** is an international standard client-server, application layer communications protocol for searching and retrieving information from a database over a TCP/IP computer network. Librarians use it for resources sharing. It is covered by ANSI/NISO standard Z39.50, and ISO standard 23950. The standard's maintenance agency is the Library of Congress. Z39.50 is widely used in library environments and is often incorporated into integrated library systems and personal bibliographic reference software. Interlibrary catalogue searches for interlibrary loan are often implemented with Z39.50 queries (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Z39.50>).

It supports a number of actions, including search, retrieval, sort, and browse. Searches are expressed using attributes, typically from the bib-1 attribute set, which defines six attributes to be used in searches of information on the server computer: use, relation, position, structure, truncation, completeness. The syntax of the Z39.50 protocol allows for very complex queries. With the OCLC Z39.50 Cataloging service, libraries access WorldCat to search and retrieve MARC records for cataloging, edit records in their local systems, set holding information on WorldCat, and order cataloging card sets for their local libraries. This service is available to libraries who have a cataloging subscription. Work on the Z39.50 protocol began in the 1970s, and led to successive versions in 1988, 1992, 1995 and 2003. The Contextual Query Language (formerly called the Common Query Language) is based on Z39.50 semantics.

3. Methodology

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The population of the

study is 174 which is made up of all professional librarians in academic libraries of federal owned higher institutions in the South East of Nigeria. The area of study for this research work was the South East of Nigeria which consists of five states namely: Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo states respectively. The study was carried out in federal owned higher Institutions' academic libraries in the South East of Nigeria. Federal owned higher Institutions' academic libraries were chosen because of the fact that to the best of the researcher's knowledge, no thorough study of such nature has been carried out in that area. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire, which was designed by the researchers and titled "Resource Sharing Activities Questionnaire" (RSAQ). The researcher obviously views the questionnaire as a quick and reliable means of obtaining adequate response from the respondents. The questionnaire no doubt facilitates the effective collection of authentic data on the views/opinion of the various respondents. The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach Alpha method. Data generated in the study were analysed using arithmetic mean (\bar{x}).

4. Discussion and Data Interpretation

Table 1: Table showing Extent of Resource Sharing of Activities among Academic Libraries

S/N	ITEMS	MEAN (\bar{x})	DECISION
1.	Co-operative acquisition	2.21	Negative
2.	Inter library loan/document delivery	2.43	Negative
3.	Exchange of bibliographic data	2.37	Negative
4.	Co-operative cataloging	2.19	Negative
5.	Sharing of electronic database and information service	2.53	Positive
6.	Sharing of human resources	2.28	Negative
7.	Electronic content licensing	2.11	Negative
8.	Harmonization of ICT application in library management	2.35	Negative

The result presented in Table 1, shows that the academic libraries carry out sharing of electronic database and information service activities to a high extent, thus the mean score of 2.53. The academic libraries carry out other resource sharing activities like co-operative acquisition; inter-library loan/document delivery; exchange of bibliographic data; co-operative cataloguing; sharing of human resources; electronic content licensing and harmonization of ICT application in library management to a low extent, thus the mean

scores of 2.21; 2.43; 2.37; 2.19; 2.28; 2.11 and 2.30 respectively. A grand mean of 2.30 shows that resource sharing activities among the academic libraries is to a low extent.

Table 2: Table showing Tools used by Academic Libraries to Embark on Resource Sharing Activities

S/N	ITEMS	MEAN (\bar{x})	DECISION
19.	Blogs	2.82	Positive
20.	Social media	3.10	Positive
21.	Z39.50	2.68	Positive
22.	Micro blogging	2.54	Positive
23.	Wikis	2.64	Positive
24.	Social book marking	2.60	Positive
25.	RSS (Really Simple Syndication)	2.48	Negative
26.	OPACS (On Line Public Access Catalogue)	2.97	Positive
27.	Indexes and Abstracts	3.17	Positive
28.	Bibliographies	3.13	Positive
29.	Union catalogue	2.94	Positive
30.	Web OPAC	2.81	Positive
31.	Social network software	2.89	Positive
32.	Directories	2.91	Positive

The result in Table 3 indicated that the respondents agreed that academic libraries use such tools like Blogs; social media; Z39.50; Micro-blogging; Wikis; Social Bookmaking; Online Public Access Catalogue; Indexes and Abstracts; Bibliographies; Union catalogue; Web OPAC; Social network software and Directories in carrying out resource-sharing activities among the libraries, thus the mean score of 2.82; 3.10; 2.68; 2.54; 2.64; 2.60; 2.97; 3.17; 3.13; 2.94; 2.81; 2.89 and 2.91 respectively. The mean score of 2.48 however shows that they do not use Really Simple Syndication (RSS) in carrying out resource-sharing activities among the academic libraries in south-east of Nigeria.

5. Findings

Resource-sharing activities are carried out among academic libraries in Nigeria to a low extent. Proper planning, use of document policy on resource-sharing; capacity-building

through staff training; use of central co-ordination bodies like NUC, NCCE and NBTE; use of co-operative collection development; consortia and networking formation; automation; Online bibliographic access through OPAC, OCIC and provision of adequate funds are strategies activities among academic libraries. Findings also showed that Blogs; social media; Z39.50; Micro-blogging; Wikis; Social Bookmaking; Online Public Access Catalogue; Indexes and Abstracts; Bibliographies; Union catalogue; Web OPAC; Social network software and Directories are tools used in carrying out resource sharing among academic libraries in Nigeria.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

The extent of resource sharing activities among academic libraries in south east of Nigeria is very low. The extent they do cannot yield needed impact. Academic libraries in south east of Nigeria are aware of the use of planning, documented policy on resource sharing, capacity-building through staff training; central co-ordination bodies like NUC, co-operative acquisition and inter-library lending, co-operative collection development, consortia and networking formation, automation, online bibliographic access through OPAC, OCLC, and provision of funds in carrying out resource sharing activities, but lack commitment. Based on the conclusion the following recommendations are recommended to tertiary institutions in Nigeria:

- The academic libraries in liaison with management of the various parent tertiary institutions, the Federal Government and other stakeholders in educational institutions in Nigeria, should show more attention to resource-sharing activities of various academic libraries.
- There should be workshops, and seminars organized for academic librarians in south east of Nigeria so as to make them know global tools for resources sharing.
- The academic libraries, the management of the various institutions, the Federal Government Agencies charged with education mandates, should come together and address the challenges as raised in the study so as to facilitate attainment of benefits of resource sharing among various academic libraries.

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