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RESOURCE SHARING PRACTICES AS STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT IN IMO STATE UNIVERSITY AND FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, OWERRI LIBRARIES

BY

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Abstract

Purpose: This study was carried out to investigate resource sharing practices as strategies for effective collection development in Imo State University (IMSU) and Federal University of Technology (FUTO) Libraries, in Imo State.

Design/Methodology/Approach: The descriptive Survey Research Design was adopted for this study. Four research questions were formulated to guide the study. Total enumeration was used to cover the entire population of 72 librarians in the two universities. Seventy Two (72) copies of questionnaires were distributed to the librarians with a return of Sixty Eight (68) copies. The instrument for the data collection was a six-point structured questionnaire on a 4-point scale of very high extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Low Extent (LE), and Very Low Extent (VLE). The study used mean score as statistical measure for data analysis.

Findings: The findings of this study revealed that inter-library loan with mean score of (2.64), library Consortia with mean score of (2.72), Cooperative acquisition with mean score of (2.64) enhance collection development to a large extent.

Originality/Value: It was recommended that Academic Libraries should strengthen collaborative relationships and adopt sustainable resource sharing policies to enhance collection development efforts.

Implication: academic libraries should strengthen their collaborative relationships and adopt sustainable resource-sharing policies. Doing so will enable them to make better use of available resources and improve their efforts towards developing relevant, current, and user-focused collections.

Paper Type: Empirical.

Keywords: ***Academic libraries, collection development, resource sharing, inter-library loan, library consortia, cooperative acquisition, and challenges.***

Paper type: Empirical research.

INTRODUCTION

Academic libraries are libraries that are sited within the premises of universities and university colleges and they play a significant role in supporting, teaching, research and learning activities of the students, faculties and staff (Benson & Nnadiemele, 2022). They play a vital roles in achieving the goals and objectives of their parent institutions, by serving as centre for study, research and creation through the provision of timely information resources. In today's academic environments, resource sharing has

become an important part of collection development strategy while collection development itself is vital tool (to the work) of academic libraries in pursuit and real setting of its objectives.

Collection development, in turn, remains a fundamental aspect of academic library services because it helps libraries build and maintains collections that support teaching, learning, and research. Through effective resource sharing and collection development practices, academic libraries are better positioned to meet the changing information needs of their users and contribute meaningfully to the overall objectives of their institutions. Collection development refers to the systematic process of selecting, acquiring, evaluating and maintaining library resources to meet the information needs of users. Collection development involves identifying user needs, making informed decisions regarding the acquisition and maintenance of library materials as well as acquiring resource that support the goals and objectives of the parent institution. Effective collection development ensures that library collection remain relevant, current and responsive to users' needs. However, no library can acquire all the necessary resources needed by its users (Johnson, 2018). The rising cost of resources like print and non print resources, and electronic resources together with budget constriction, have forced libraries to shift from self-sufficiency to collaboration.

Resources are the things, actions and persons that are turned to, for aid and help when need arises. In Library and Information Sciences, resources refer to the amalgamation of people, materials, processes, functions, services, infrastructure and money which form the substance of the library, (Isebe & Ejadafuru, 2024). Resource sharing is the arrangement between or among libraries to benefit each other in some areas. It involved libraries allotting, apportioning or contributing the resources they own to benefit each other. Libraries involved in this practice agree willingly to share their resources without reservation, under some sort of formal or information regulations, to cross access specific resources and services in order to satisfactorily meet the needs of their users. Resource sharing practices like library consortia, inter-library loan and cooperative acquisition are strategies for enhancing collection development. Inter-library corporation and loan services contribute significantly to collection development by promoting access to information resources among participating libraries. Through these practices, libraries can expand access to

information resources, reduce duplication of materials and maximize limited resources, Tella and Sadiq (2017). In Nigeria, where academic libraries operate under sever monitory stress, the effectiveness of these practices requires empirical validation (Ifijeh, 2020). This study therefore, examines the extent sharing practices enhance collection development in university libraries especially in IMSU and FUTO.

Statement of The Problem

Academic libraries, particularly in universities, are established to support teaching, learning, and research by providing users with access to a wide range of information resources. However, in today's academic environment, no single library can independently acquire all the materials needed by its users. This is due to the rapid growth of information resources, the increasing volume of academic activities, and inadequate financial allocations for library collections. Despite these challenges, the demand for current, relevant, and diverse information resources among library users continues to increase. This situation has created a growing gap between the information needs of users and the resources available in academic libraries. As a result, libraries are faced with the challenge of finding effective ways to provide their users with access to a wider range of information resources despite the limitations of their individual collections and financial resources.

According to Nwalo, (2021) while library resource sharing like (Cooperation, consortia, inter-library lending) are recognized as a strategic solution for enhancing collection development and maximizing resources, its practical implementation in Nigerian academic libraries is fraught with difficulties, including Poor internet access, erratic power supply, inadequate technological infrastructure, lack of formal binding agreements and policies for cooperation, inadequate funding, lack of trained personnel etc.

Many libraries easily engage in resource sharing without tackling systematic barriers (Anyaogu & Anunobi, 2019) while the absence of data makes it difficult to develop effective policy formation and investment in collaborative models. Consequently, there is a need to evaluate the current resource-sharing practices among institutions as a strategy for improving collection development, using Imo State University and Federal University of Technology Owerri libraries as case studies. This will help to identify the key barriers affecting effective

resource sharing and possible solutions to these challenges. This study therefore aims to fill this gap by examining how these institutions can overcome the impediments to foster effective collection development.

Research Questions

(1.) To what extent does inter=library loan enhance collection development in Imo State University and Federal University of Technology Owerri, libraries?

(2.) To what extent does library consortium enhance collection development?

(3.) To what extent does cooperative acquisition enhance collection development?

(4.) What are the challenges hindering effective collection development among the institutions?

Review of Literature

Resource in Librarianship is described as the term which applies to anything, such as personnel, materials, function or activity for satisfying users needs in order to acquire information. This implies that everything in the library, owned and used for the purpose of performing duties, and rendering services which meet the needs of users is a resource. Akanwa (2016) grouped resource in the library into three; Information, Human and Finance. Information resource comprises all the materials that provide users with information such as textbooks, journals, serials, reference sources, audio and visual materials, e-books, databases, maps, atlas, globe and unpublished works. The financial resource comprises budget allocations and revenues generated internally from fee-based services, while the Human resources are the Personnel or staff of the library who apply the information resources to serve the users, interpret the information resources to users and also convert them to library services for the benefit of library Clientele.

Resource sharing in university libraries refers to the collaborative efforts among libraries to make information resources available to users in the affected institution. This practice is recognized as a strategic approach in addressing the challenges of collection development such as inadequate funding, rising costs of information materials, lack of adequate ICT infrastructure, shortage of skilled personnel, the rapid growth of scholarly publication etc. Aina, (2023), noted that resource sharing enables libraries to maximize limited resources through cooperation, thereby enhancing access to diverse collections. Elijah (2022) citing

Weldon, described resource sharing as organized attempts by libraries to share materials and services cooperatively, so as to provide one another with resources that might otherwise not be available in an individual library. It means that resource sharing represents an attempt to expand the availability of specialized expensive resources, or just a plan to own resources beyond the bonds of a single library. Resource sharing is a network-based system that allows libraries to exchange materials, services and expertise for improved service delivery among themselves.

Library resource sharing practices come in different types. They include the following; inter-library loan, consortia participation, cooperative acquisition, etc. Inter-library loan is an effective strategy for enhancing collection development especially in libraries that are facing budgetary constraints. It broadens access to diverse information resources beyond a library local holding, thereby improving the quality and adequacy of collection available to users through resource sharing among users, Hamby and Neiman (2023). Libraries participating in resource sharing networks are able to meet users' information demands without purchasing every needed materials. It functions as an on-demand substitute for advance acquisition, helping to minimize unnecessary purchase. (Johnson 2018). Inter-library loan is a technique by which one library lends materials indirectly to an individual through another library, usually for registered members. Inter-library loan services are widely utilized by scholars who regard them as an effective means of satisfying their continuous information needs. In some developed and developing countries, traditional inter-library service is still the order of the day. Lugya (2010) reports that academic research libraries in Illinois has established a well developed inter-library loan service. They made use of courier services in order to render interlibrary loan services.

In Nigeria, Anyaogu and Anunobi (2019) found that 71% of academic librarians consider inter-library loan essential for supporting research needs, although the level of automation is still limited. Inter-library records help to guide collection development decisions by highlighting gaps in a library's existing holdings. Inter-library loan remains one of the most common ways of, allowing information to flow directly in the hands of busy researchers, informing their scholarship and saving them time and expenses". It enhances collection development by providing access to materials which are not available in a library collection. Inter-

library loan enables libraries to extend access to information resources without necessarily purchasing every requested item, Hamby and Neiman (2023). This practice helps libraries satisfy user's information needs while minimizing acquisition costs. Inter-library loan services are widely utilized by scholars, it serves as an effective means of satisfying their continuous information needs. It is the art of pooling the resources of different libraries together and making same available to users of the individual libraries that are part of the consortium.

Library Consortia provides another means of library cooperation. As no library can claim to have complete full stock of its required collection, it becomes imperative for libraries of different kinds to pool their resources together for the sole purpose of meeting the information needs of their users. A consortium is a strategic alliance of cooperating libraries which can be carried on formal or informal bases. Pal (2017) says that a library consortium is any local, state regional and interstate cooperative association of libraries that provides for systematic and effective coordination of the resources of Schools, Public, Academic, Special libraries and Information centers for improving services to the clientele of such libraries.

According to Kumar and Bhanot (2023) consortium arrangements enable libraries to subscribe jointly for electronic databases, Journals and other information resources, making it possible to secure cost efficiencies that single libraries cannot achieve on their own. A library consortium is a cooperative arrangement among libraries established to share resources and services. Consortium membership enables libraries to negotiate better subscription rates for electronic resources and databases. Aina, (2022). Library consortium significantly improves access to scholarly information and enhance collection development by reducing costs and expanding resource availability.

Consortia have progressed from simple cost-sharing arrangements to transformative agreements that influence the development of collection content. Levenson and Hess (2020), found that consortium membership promotes cost effective acquisition, expands access to information resources and supports the development of collective collections. In Nigeria, the Nigerian University Libraries (NULIB) consortium has improved access to databases such as Science Direct and JSTOR, and they are directly enhancing collection scope.

Cooperative acquisition refers to collaborative purchasing arrangement designed to develop complementary collections among institutions. It is a practice in which two or more libraries combined their book budgets to obtain information resources in specific subject areas for the mutual benefit of their users. Through cooperative acquisition, libraries coordinate their purchasing decisions to avoid unnecessary duplication and ensure wider coverage of information resources, Levenson and Hess (2020). Cooperative acquisition is an arrangement where two or more libraries within the same geographical area collaborate through a central agency to procure books, Journals, Periodicals, and Electronic resources for their users, under this arrangement, each participating library is assigned specific subject area in which to acquire materials. After processing materials in its collection, each library forwards its catalogue to other participating libraries, where it is incorporated into their holdings catalogue. Users who express interest in any material are then directed to the library where the resource is available. In cooperative acquisition, there is definition on the areas to acquire materials by each participating library.

Acquisition of library materials constitute the core aspect of collection development. A library's collection development effort begins with a well thought out plan on how to acquire the needed collections that will meet the information needs of the users. It reduces duplication and ensures broader subject coverage (Evan & Saponaro, 2012). In Nigeria, successful models like the Colorado Alliance manage low-use materials collectively through shared print retention. According to Johnson (2018), successful collection development relies on three key factors: A thorough knowledge of the library's mission and users, well-defined collection policies, and a dependable systems for resource discovery and delivery. Cooperative acquisition is uncommon in Nigeria because of the absence of formal policies. Nwalo (2021) observed that librarians show interest when proper frameworks are in place.

The acquisition of library resources is a fundamental component of collection development. The collection development process in a library starts with a carefully designed strategy for obtaining relevant materials that can satisfy the information needs of users. How good the collection of a library is, depends on the efficiency of its acquisition. Acquisition is the procedure of procuring information materials for inclusion in a library's collection after the selection stage has been completed

(Ibenne, 2020). It is a means through which information resources are incorporated into the holdings of a library. Cooperative acquisition supports collection development by promoting collaborative purchasing and efficient utilization of limited financial resources, Kumar and Bhanot, (2023).

Effective collection development in academic libraries is hindered by the following factors: inadequate funding, rising cost of e- resources, limited subscription of serial materials, subscription to core databases to replace outdated one. These make libraries to cancel subscriptions which result in gaps in collection development. Breeding, (2023) confirmed that without a robust ICT, libraries cannot implement patron-driven acquisition, track usage data or participate in consortia purchasing platforms. Levenson and Hass (2020) also observed that lack of institutional commitment, poor coordination among participating libraries, copyright restrictions and technological barriers constitute major obstacles to collaboration development. Kumar and Bhanot (2023) reported that high subscription costs for electronic resources, inadequate technological infrastructure, shortage of skilled personnel negatively affect the effectiveness of library consortia and cooperative acquisition initiatives.

Other factors which affect effective collection development include, poor collection evaluation and user needs assessment. Effective collection development depends on regular assessment of collection strength, usage statistics, and user feedback Evans & Saponaro, (2012). Yet many libraries do not conduct systematic collection evaluations due to lack of tools or expertise Nwalo, (2021). Without data, librarians rely on intuition, leading to collections that are misaligned with circular and research priorities.

Empirical Review

Nwosu and Udo-Anyanwu (2015) examined collection development practices in academic libraries in Imo State. Their study showed that the libraries faced challenges such as inadequate funding, irregular weeding and limited participation of academic staff in the selection of library materials. Their study is relevant to the present study in the fact that the academic libraries investigated were involved in resource sharing. This therefore means that libraries in Imo State already recognize cooperation as one way of addressing limitations in their individual collections.

Obaro (2013) studied resource sharing among academic libraries in Federal universities in South –South Nigeria. The study found that interlibrary lending and the sharing of library facilities were among the major resource-sharing activities practiced by the libraries. However financial difficulties, poor communication and inadequate technological infrastructure affected the effectiveness of resource sharing. The study therefore suggests that resource sharing is not simply a matter of libraries agreeing to cooperate; adequate communication systems, funding and technological facilities are also necessary for such cooperation to work effectively. This observation is relevant to IMSU and FUTO because effective sharing of library resources requires the participating libraries to have functional systems for identifying, requesting and delivering materials.

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Obiano (2021) examined the impact of collection development policy on the provision of library resources in academic libraries in Imo State. The study involved academic librarians responsible for collection development in selected academic institutions. The findings emphasized the importance of having appropriate collection development policies in guiding the selection and provision of library resources. Although the study did not focus specifically on resource sharing, its findings are relevant because resource sharing can be more effective when it is supported by a clear collection development policy. A library that understands its collection strengths and weaknesses is in a better position to identify the resources it can share with other libraries and the resources it needs to obtain through cooperation.

A study on academic library consortia in Nigeria also provides useful evidence on the importance of collaborative collection development. The study examined the development of library consortia in selected academic libraries and found that consortium arrangements were not fully developed in all the institutions studied. Weaknesses were identified in areas such as electronic resource collection policies, union catalogues and inter-library networking. The study recommended stronger institution commitment, improved funding and better networking among academic libraries. These findings show that establishing a consortium alone does not automatically guarantee effective resource sharing. There must be proper planning, adequate infrastructure and willingness among participating libraries to contribute and make use of shared resources.

Kolo (2025) investigated collection development practices in academic libraries in Niger State. The study examined methods used to develop library collections, participants in collection development, problems encountered and the role of donations. Findings showed that purchasing remained a major collection-development method, while gifts and donations were also used. The study further reported inadequate use of ICT in collection development activities in the libraries studied.

The study is relevant to the present research because it shows that academic libraries still depend heavily on traditional methods of acquiring resources. This situation can make resource sharing increasingly important, especially where library budgets are inadequate. If libraries cooperate through inter-library loan, cooperative acquisition, consortia and other forms of resource sharing, they may be able to supplement resources that cannot be acquired individually. However, Kolo's study focused on academic libraries in Niger State and examine collection development. The present study therefore extends this area by examining how resource sharing practices can support collection development in Imo State University and FUTO libraries.

Although the study did not focus primarily on resource sharing, it provides useful evidence that academic libraries continue to face collection development constraints and therefore need alternative strategies for expanding and improving their collections.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprised 72 professional librarians

in Imo State University (IMSU) and Federal University of Technology, Owerri (FUTO). Total enumeration was used to cover the entire population. Sixty Eight (68) copies of the questionnaire were returned making (94.4% response rate). The instrument was a 6-item structured questionnaire on a 4-point scale: Very High Extent (VHE=4), High Extent (HE=3), Low Extent (LE=2), Very Low Extent(VLE=1). Data were analyzed using mean score.

Data Analysis:

Research Question 1

RQ1: To what extent does Inter-library loan enhance Collection Development in IMSU and FUTO Libraries?

Table 1: Distribution of the mean rating of the respondents on the interlibrary loan enhancement on collection development

S/N	Item Statement	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	$\bar{X}$	Decision
1.	Interlibrary loan improves access to unavailable material	20	15	19	10	2.54	HE
2	Interlibrary loan supports effective collection development	25	20	10	9	2.77	HE
3	Interlibrary loan reduces pressure on Library acquisition budget	20	25	15	10	2.86	HE
4	Interlibrary loan helps to identify gaps in collections	25	20	5	4	2.55	HE
5	Interlibrary loan enhances user satisfaction	25	20	4	9	2.60	HE
6	Interlibrary loan promotes resource acceptability	20	15	19	10	2.54	HE
	Grand mean **Pooled mean 15.86**					**2.64**	

Table 1: shows the mean rating scores of respondents on the enhancement of Inter-library loan on collection development. All the items on table1 relating to inter-library enhancement on collection development had a higher response rate, which indicated a positive response to the questions. This is confirmed by the Grand Mean of 2.64, which is above the criterion mean of 2.50.Therefore the respondents agree that inter-library loan enhances accessibility to information resources and contributes positively to effective collection development to high extent

Research Question 2

RQ2: To what extent does Library Consortium enhance Collection Development in IMSU and FUTO Libraries?

Table 2: Distribution of the mean rating of the respondents on the Library Consortium enhancement on collection development.

S/N	Item Statement	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	$\bar{X}$	Decision
1.	Library consortium improves access to electronic resources	25	15	10	9	2.55	HE
2	Consortium participation reduces subscription Costs	25	20	10	4	2.70	HE
3	Consortium participation promotes resource sharing	26	20	10	4	2.76	HE
4	Consortium improves Collection quality	20	30	8	5	2.80	HE
5	Consortium supports collaborative collection development	25	20	10	4	2.70	HE
6	Consortium broadens users access to scholarly materials	30	20	5	4	2.85	HE
	Grand mean **Pooled mean 16.36**					**2.72**	

Table 2: shows the mean rating scores of respondents on the enhancement of Library Consortium on Collection Development. All the items on table 2 relating to library consortium enhancement on collection development had a higher response rate, which indicated a positive response to the questions. This is confirmed by the Grand mean of 2.72, which is above the criterion mean of 2.50. Therefore, the respondents accepted that library consortium practices improve resource accessibility and strengthen collection development effort to a high extent.

Research Question 3

RQ3: To what extent does Library cooperative acquisitions enhance Collection Development in IMSU and FUTO Libraries.

Table 3: Distribution of the mean rating of the respondents on cooperative acquisition enhancement on collection development.

S/N	Item Statement	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	$\bar{X}$	Decision
1.	Cooperative Acquisition reduces duplication	20	24	10	5	2.60	HE
2	Cooperative Acquisition promotes wider Coverage	27	15	7	4	2.51	HE
3	Cooperative Acquisition helps libraries save costs	25	22	9	4	2.76	HE
4	Cooperative Acquisition improves resource availability	25	20	9	4	2.73	HE
5	Cooperative Acquisition strengthens Collaboration among libraries	20	30	8	5	2.80	HE
6	Cooperative Acquisition enhances Effective collection development	25	20	10	3	2.69	HE
	Grand mean **Pooled mean 16.09**					**2.68**	

Table 3: shows the mean rating scores of respondents on the enhancement of cooperative acquisitions on Collection Development. All the items on table 3 relating to cooperative acquisitions enhancement on collection development had a higher response rate, which indicated a positive response to the questions. This is confirmed by the Grand mean of 2.68 which is above the criterion mean of 2.50. Therefore, the respondents accepted that cooperative acquisition practices contributed significantly to effective collection development of library resources.

Research Question 4

RQ4. What are the challenges hindering collection development in IMSU and FUTO Libraries?

Table 4: Distribution of the mean rating of the respondents on the Challenges hindering collection development.

S/N	Item Statement	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	$\bar{X}$	Decision
1.	Inadequate funds affect collection Development in libraries	30	20	6	4	2.88	Agree
2	Poor ICT infrastructure Hinders collection Development in libraries	25	15	10	9	2.55	Agree
3	Lack of cooperation among libraries affects collection development in libraries	27	24	3	2	2.76	Agree
4	High cost of information resources hinders collection development	22	27	9	5	2.82	Agree
5	inadequate staff training affects collection development	15	25	19	10	2.69	Agree
6	Poor internet connectivity affects access to shared resources **Grand mean** **Pooled mean 16.3**	20	24	10	5	2.60 **2.71**	

Table 4 identified the challenges hindering collection development in university libraries. All the items on table 4 on the challenges hindering collection development had a higher response rating on agree than disagree, which indicates a positive response to the question. This is confirmed by the mean score of 2.71 which is above the criterion mean of 2.50. This therefore, shows that all the respondents in the university libraries agree that the above-mentioned challenges on Table 4 hinder collection development in University libraries.

Discussions of Findings

The result of the analysis of research question no.1, revealed that inter-library loan enhances collection development in IMSU and FUTO libraries to a high extent. The respondents agreed that inter-library loan expands access to information resources beyond the holdings of individual libraries, enabling users to obtain materials unavailable in their home libraries, supports teaching, learning and research activities. It also helps libraries to bridge the collection gaps without incurring additional acquisition costs. This finding is in line with Hamby and Neiman (2023) who posit that inter-library loan broadens access to diverse collections and strengthen collection development through resources sharing among libraries. Similarly, the findings also aligned with

Talla and Sadiq (2017) who found out that academic libraries benefit from sharing collections, expertise and information resources, thereby reducing duplications and maximizing available resources.

The result of the analysis of research question no.2, revealed that library consortium enhance collection development to a high extent. The respondents agreed that participation in library consortia enables libraries to share electronic resources, reduce acquisition costs and increase access to scholarly databases and journals, thereby enhancing the ability of academic libraries to acquire and provide access to a wider range of information resources.

This finding supports the assertion of Kumar and Bhanot (2023) who found out that participation in library consortia enhances the quality and diversity of collections while minimizing financial burdens on individual libraries. Similarly Aina, (2022) found out that library consortia significantly improves access to scholarly information and enhances collection development by reducing costs and expanding availability of resources.

The result of the analysis of research question no.3, showed that cooperative acquisition enhances collection development to a high extent. The respondents agreed that this strategy helps libraries reduce acquisition costs, while expanding the scope of their collections. The findings are in agreement with Levenson and Hess (2020) who found out that cooperative acquisition facilities cost savings, promotes resource sharing and enables associated libraries to build stronger collection effectively than they could independently. The study affirmed that cooperative acquisition remains one of the most effective approaches to collection development in academic libraries. We can conclusively say that through cooperative acquisition, libraries coordinate their purchasing decisions to avoid unnecessary duplication and ensure wider coverage of information resources.

The result of the analysis of research question no.4 revealed that inadequate funding is a major obstacle to collection development. Financial constraints limit libraries' ability to acquire resources, subscribe to databases. The observations in this study are in agreement with the findings of Breeding, (2023) who found out that effective collection development in academic libraries is hindered by inadequate funding, rising cost of e-resources and serial materials which limit subscription.

Similarly, Kumar and Bhanot (2023) also found out that high subscription costs for

electronic resources, inadequate technological infrastructure, shortage of skilled personnel negatively affect the effectiveness of library consortia and cooperative acquisition initiatives thereby hindering effective collection development.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that resource-sharing practices are important strategies for improving collection development in academic libraries. Practices such as inter-library loan, library consortium, and cooperative acquisition were found to have a significant positive relationship with collection development in the libraries of Imo State University and Federal University of Technology, Owerri. These practices help libraries make better use of their limited resources, improve users' access to information materials, reduce unnecessary duplication of collections, and respond more effectively to the growing information needs of their users.

Therefore, academic libraries should strengthen their collaborative relationships and adopt sustainable resource-sharing policies. Doing so will enable them to make better use of available resources and improve their efforts towards developing relevant, current, and user-focused collections.

Suggestions

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made to improve resource-sharing practices and enhance collection development in university libraries:

1. University libraries should strengthen their inter-library loan services by improving networking systems and adopting appropriate automation technologies to make the sharing and retrieval of library resources easier and more efficient.
2. There should be a clear and binding consortium agreement among participating libraries to facilitate wider access to both electronic and print resources.
3. Library management should encourage cooperative acquisition programmes among academic libraries as a way of reducing unnecessary duplication of resources and cutting down acquisition costs.
4. Librarians should be given regular training on modern resource-sharing technologies and collaborative collection development practices to enable them to effectively manage and

participate in resource-sharing activities.

5. Relevant national and international policies should be developed to guide and support cooperative collection development among academic libraries.
6. Government and institutional authorities should encourage national and international collaboration among libraries to promote effective resource sharing and improve access to information resources in university libraries.

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