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SUCCESSFUL RESOURCE SHARING IN ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH LIBRARIES  
IN ILLINOIS: LESSONS FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

BY

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THESIS

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Master of Science in Library and Information Science  
in the Graduate College of the  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2010

Urbana, Illinois

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## **ABSTRACT**

With diminishing finances, it is rarely possible for a library or information center to have enough resources to fulfill the needs of its clients. Libraries working under effective collaborative initiatives in developed countries have registered tremendous success compared to libraries in developing countries. There is a growing need for libraries in developing countries to redefine their resource sharing strategies so as to benefit from library collaboration that can result in a more effective means of meeting the needs of their library users.

This thesis looks at issues surrounding the factors that have led to successful resource sharing among academic and research libraries in developed countries and how to practically apply such success factors to improve collaboration among academic and research libraries in developing countries. Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois (CARLI) and Consortium of Uganda University Libraries (CUUL) are the focus in this research.

Emphasis has been placed on the establishment of consortium leadership, the sharing of responsibility and decision making processes, sources of consortium funding, the role and responsibility of participating member libraries and their contributions to and expectations from the consortium.

Consortium leadership, the perceived need for cost effectiveness, quick and efficient delivery of library materials, electronic resources brokering, reciprocal borrowing, and shared integrated library system are key factors in providing a strong consortium framework. Consortium history, culture to volunteer, building trust in members, accountability, and innovativeness are necessary steps towards a successful library consortium.

*To my late father*

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

This project would not have been possible without the support of many people. Many thanks to my adviser, Professor Terry L. Weech, who enabled me to accomplish the work presented here through his continued and tireless support and guidance. I am also indebted to Professor Linda C. Smith, the second reader of my thesis, for her worthwhile comments towards improving the content and presentation of the final thesis.

Special thanks to CARLI staff and most especially to Ms. Susan Singleton, Assistant Vice President/ CARLI Executive Director; Mr. Thomas J. Dorst, Director Planning and Administration; Ms. Kristine Hammerstrand, Director CARLI User Services; and Ms. Cindy Clennon, Director CARLI Electronic Resources for granting me permission to use CARLI as my case study, connecting me to the CARLI member library directors and providing me with all the literature that I used to understand CARLI. I also appreciate the moral support and encouragement accorded to me by Dean Dr. Rae-Anne Montague, and Mrs. Meg Edwards during the conception of this research process. Sincere thanks to my colleagues at the Undergraduate Library, notably Ms. Rachel Wightman and Ms. Anne Jumonville, for their support, encouragement and proof reading my drafts. Thanks for your support and generosity.

This work took much of my time away from my family, relatives and friends. I express my sincere gratitude to my mum, wife, children, sister, brothers and numerous friends who endured this long process with me, always offering support and love. Thanks for your support both morally and psychologically.

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the study

With diminishing finances, it is rarely possible for a library or information center to have enough resources to fulfill the needs of its clients. What is being delivered is only a portion of what their clients actually need (Ramos & Mohd Ali, 2005). Collaboration is widely recognized as the best way for libraries to cope with the ever increasing challenges: volume of information resources; nature and quality of information; user needs and expectations; information and communication technology competencies and infrastructure; inflated cost of information resources; and staffing needs. However, although these challenges have continued to prevail, libraries working under collaborative initiatives like the Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois (CARLI) have registered tremendous success.

This thesis reports the findings of a thorough study to establish the factors that have led to the success of CARLI and how such success factors can be applied in libraries of developing countries like Uganda. Emphasis is placed on the establishment of CARLI leadership, the sharing of responsibility and decision making processes as well as sources of funding for the consortium. Also central to the research study is exploration of the role and responsibility of participating member libraries and their contributions to and expectations from the consortium.

I contend that lack of funding to facilitate consortium activities is not the central factor in the failed progress of the planned consortium activities in Uganda, rather it is the lack of committed leadership and cooperation among participating libraries that is responsible for the lack of progress. In any kind of organization or cooperation like a library consortium, funding has never been enough due to ever changing technologies and continuous demands from library patrons. However, good leadership and cooperation among membership plays a bigger role in achieving a common goal. Having and working towards a common goal, under dedicated, dynamic and faithful leadership with an active and energetic membership plays a great role in the success of a consortium.

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