

# Legal Factors as Precursors of Consortium Building Readiness among University Libraries in South-West, Nigeria

**Olalekan Abiola Awujoola and  
Abiola A. Abioye,**

*Department of Library, Archival and  
Information Studies,  
Faculty of Education, University of Ibadan.  
abileks132917@gmail.com  
biolaabioye@gmail.com*

## Abstract

*The study investigated legal factors as precursors of consortium building readiness among university libraries in South-West Nigeria. In line with this, two research questions were posed: what are the prevailing legal factors for consortium building readiness among university libraries in South-West Nigeria? What is the level of consortium building readiness among university libraries in South-West Nigeria? These were the research questions, and one hypothesis: there is no significant relationship between legal factors and consortium building readiness among university libraries in South-West Nigeria. The study adopted the survey design of the correlational type. The population comprised all the 643 library staff that possessed at least diploma or degree in library and information science, in the 45 university libraries in South-West Nigeria. Total enumeration (census) technique was adopted for the study and the instruments used for data collection were the questionnaire and Interview schedule. Data collected were analysed qualitatively and quantitatively, using the descriptive and correlation and regression analysis of inferential statistics. The findings of the study revealed that*

*the most prevailing group of legal factors is dispute resolution ( $\bar{x}$ =3.21; std dev. =0.61), followed by dissolution ( $\bar{x}$ =3.14; std dev. =0.58), non-disclosure ( $\bar{x}$ =3.14; std dev. =0.58); log-in-option ( $\bar{x}$ =3.13; std dev. =0.58); cash contribution ( $\bar{x}$ =3.12; std dev. =0.62) and governing law ( $\bar{x}$ =3.09; std dev. =0.60). The finding reveals that legal factors altogether ( $r = .415$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ) has significant positive relationship with consortium building readiness (CBR) among university libraries in South-West Nigeria. The study concludes that university libraries must provide legal factors to show their readiness for consortium building.*

**Keywords:** Legal Factors, Consortium Building Readiness, University Libraries, Nigeria.

## Introduction

A library consortium is a cooperative arrangement among libraries, with non-profit making intention, hoping to create and maintain a shared online catalogue in order to provide information services for members (Abioye and Awujoola, 2019). Resource sharing has become a very effective and useful driving tool in consortium building, since it is difficult for a single library to adequately provide everything that its users want. A consortium building, is therefore, a collective approach, aimed at reaching the information goals and meeting the information needs of users, through shared electronic library resources and reciprocal borrowing, offsite storage system and other cooperation and services to members and non-member libraries alike (Abioye and Awujoola, 2023).

The need for consortium building among university libraries includes: increasing the cost benefit per subscription among cooperating libraries, promoting the rational use of funds in libraries, ensuring the continuous subscription to the periodicals subscribed to in each library, ensuring local storage of the information acquired by libraries for continuous use by present and future users. Others include: helping to develop technological capabilities of the staff in the operation and use of electronic publication databases; strategic alliance with institutions that share common interest; for a reduced information cost and improved resource sharing. The creation of consortium platforms also aids the elimination of the different problems faced by university libraries in providing different information services to users, meeting the thrust of information of diverse people due to rapid growth of population all over the globe.

Consortia among university libraries have become essential because of their aspirations to reach out to more users and provide satisfactory services to them. University libraries, especially those in Nigeria must show readiness to benefit from the advantages provided through consortium building. A factor of readiness among university libraries are legal factors. University libraries collaborating must be bound by law and must observe some legal standards of the consortium. It is also believed that libraries that will join in building a consortium, as well as the intended consortium platform, be guided by law. Business Dictionary.Com (2010) defines law as the binding rules of conduct meant to enforce justice and prescribe duty or obligation, law is derived exclusively from custom or formal enactment by a ruler or legislature. Laws are rules that mandate or prohibit certain behaviours, they are drawn from ethics, which define socially acceptable behaviours.

A cogent concern for any library considering joining a consortium arrangement is that of a binding law, that would explain the sharing of information resources, and rendering services with other libraries. It is imperative, therefore, that a legally obligatory agreement about the governing law, information sharing, non-disclosure of log-in-option, dispute resolution, cash payment and contribution as well as terms of dissolution be documented. All potential consortium members should be invited to consent to a legal agreement before the implementation of the consortium building. In certain circumstances, the

law will require the consortium building members to keep consortia matters confidential even without a written agreement in place, but this may be difficult and costly to prove in court. It is therefore best that for disclosing any kind of confidential information (particularly sensitive technical information), a “legal written confidentiality agreement” is drafted and signed by potential consortium members. This is important to safeguard the long term integrity of individual library and the platform. This approach emphasises on both the benefits and hazards of “association”. It acknowledges that while there are benefits associated with strong and successful organisations, it could also be injurious in cases where consortium members get into trouble, the consequences are also borne by other organisations in the consortium (Cabinet Office: Office of the Third sector. 2008).

It is imperative, therefore, that a legally obligatory agreement about the governing law, information sharing, non-disclosure of log-in-option, dispute resolution, cash payment and contribution as well as terms of dissolution be documented. All potential consortium building members should be invited to consent to this agreement before any serious actions regarding the implementation of the consortium.

In certain circumstances, the law will require the consortium members to keep consortia matters confidential, even without a written agreement in place, but this can be difficult and costly to prove in court. It is therefore best that for disclosing any kind of confidential information (particularly sensitive technical information), a “written confidentiality agreement which is legal” is drafted and signed by potential consortium members. It is against this background that the study investigates legal factors as precursors of consortium building readiness among university libraries in South-West Nigeria.

### **Statement of the Problem**

University libraries in many countries, especially those in less-developed countries, like Nigeria face tremendous challenges in meeting the ever growing world of knowledge and information demand of their users, due to diminishing budgets, galloping prices for subscribing to periodicals, purchasing materials and cost of ICT tools. These have warranted the

need for building consortium among university libraries as an approach to address the foregoing problems. However, some previous efforts at consortium building in Nigeria failed owing to lack of genuine readiness of university libraries to agree on legal factors to propel the consortium. The literature perused and preliminary investigation carried out by the researchers indicate absence of an established guidelines for deciding the governing laws, granting access to members, framework for settling disputes, dissolution and many more among the university libraries in South-West Nigeria. Therefore, the need to build a lasting consortium among university libraries in Nigeria has necessitated the investigation into legal factors that will improve the readiness for consortium building among them. Thus, the study investigates institutional, legal and ethical factors, as precursors of consortium building readiness among university libraries in South-West Nigeria.

### Research Questions

The following research questions were answered in the study:

1. What are the prevailing legal factors for consortium building readiness among the university libraries in South-West Nigeria?
2. What is the level of consortium building readiness among the university libraries in South-West Nigeria?

### Hypothesis

The following hypothesis was formulated for the study.

There is no significant relationship between legal factors (governing law, log-in-option, non-disclosure of log-in-option, dispute resolution, cash contribution and dissolution) and consortium building readiness among university libraries in South-West Nigeria

### Literature Review

Law is an enterprise of subjecting human conduct to the governance of rules. It regulates the conducts and interactions of human together with their activities. Therefore, collaboration among libraries

should have a guiding principle, as not much can be achieved under a loose arrangement. Nwegbu, Echezona and Obijiofo (2011) affirm that for information sharing to be successful, there should be mutual objectives, joint decision making process and continuous improvement for all participants. Collaboration is informal when there is undocumented agreement. Thus, according to Ullah (2015), effective collaboration and networking can be achieved by conforming to shared purposes, devising a framework for taking risks and ensuring ways to involve and trust partners. The governing law which is also known as consortium agreement or memorandum of understanding (MOU) must explain issues on formation, management, maintenance, communication and dissolution of the consortium which are contained under the Articles, Sections and Regulations in the agreement. Hence, as further noted by Ullah academic libraries collaborating must do such closely within a framework that will subsequently be maintained by the committee on standardisation and certification of the university commission in Nigeria. Bamgbose (2017) listed some legal issues to be considered among consortium building members, which are : governing laws, access and log-in-option, non-disclosure of log-in-options, cash and capital contribution modality, dispute settlement and cases of dissolution of consortium membership. McNair Chambers (2017) warned that a failure to choose a governing law clause can lead to uncertainty for the parties, as to which law will be applied to the contract, and can result in costly and lengthy dispute.

Access to resources is now considered more important than ownership of collections in buildings. Consequently, consortium building helps the collaborating libraries to get the benefit of wider access to electronic resources at affordable cost, and at the best terms of licenses. Bedi and Sharma (2008) argue that a consortium, with the collective strength of resources of various institutions available to it, is in a better position to resolve the problems of managing, organising and archiving the electronic resources. Biogeochemical Flux Model (BFM) Released Meeting Agenda of 2013 pointed out that access or log-in into the consortium network can be in two forms: One, is by IP-based. By this, the registration is hosted by using the Internet configuration of the host institution. This will ensure

that only those who have access to connect to the institution's network make use of this database, this mode may not work when collaborating institutions are not in close proximity. The other log-in option has provision for user name and password, wherein any user who is able to correctly put-in the details can access the database irrespective of the location of the user. However, (Bamigbose, 2017; EMIDA, ERA-NET: Guidelines for a consortium agreement, 2017; BFM Released Meeting, 2013; Ambient Assisted Living (AAL), 2006) disclosed that the only disadvantage of this option is that if not properly handled, such log-in details may get into the hands of unauthorised users and by extension, infringe on the service agreement of non-disclosure to third party

Dispute Resolution Mechanism (DRM) according to BFM Released Meeting Agenda of 2013, is equally very essential in the legal framework of consortium. Parties are to agree beforehand on how disputes are to be resolved when they arise. The agreement should state the medium to be deployed when seeking redress among members such as: use of conventional courts or through Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR). BFM Released Meeting Agenda (2013) further explained that ADR simply refers to a dispute resolution mechanism that encourages amicable resolution of dispute outside the court rooms using different options such as: arbitration, mediation, conciliation and reconciliation. Many institutions usually try to avoid going to courts by simply opting for alternative dispute resolution as it takes less of time and less formal. So, matters are dispensed with, quickly using this medium (Bamgbose, 2018; EMIDA, ERA-NET: Guidelines for a consortium agreement, 2017; BFM Released Meeting, 2013; Ambient Assisted Living (AAL), 2006).

Financial contribution and term of payment is one of the major challenges to the survival of consortium is the issue of finance. Alemna and Antwi (2002) also note that one of the main hindrances to library consortia development in Africa is the issue of finance. According to Bozimo (2011), membership in consortium truly means membership involvement, in part, payment of stipulated fees to the consortium for the purchase of e-resources and participation of the libraries in activities and services offered by the consortium. Abubakar (2011) notes that of all the different types of libraries in Nigeria, only university

libraries have a clearly defined policy of funding, because they are allocated 10% of the recurrent annual budget of their parent institutions. However, it is regrettable that such monies are not forthcoming, as most university administrators tend to flout the policy of allocating 10% of the recurrent annual budget of their parent institutions to libraries.

The library is a growing organism therefore, the consortium building is expected to run indefinitely. However, there may be need for the dissolution of consortium or the termination of consortium agreement or any members' participation in the consortium. This is why EMIDA, ERA-NET Guidelines for a consortium agreement of 2017 and BFM Released Meeting Agenda of 2013; Ambient Assisted Living (AAL), (2006) emphasised that the consortium agreement or the grant agreement should clearly specify cases in which a termination of the consortium agreement before the end of the project or an early termination of an individual project partner's participation in the consortium can take place.

## Methodology

The study adopted the survey design of the correlational type. The population were the 45 (6 federal universities, 9 state universities and 30 private universities) located in South-West Nigeria (Omosho, 2018). While the target population were 643 library personnel in these university libraries. The questionnaire and interview schedule was instruments used for data collection. The information collected through the interview with the key informants (9 university librarians or their suggested representatives on consortium initiative were reached out to (phone call) or personally) was subjected to thematic content analysis. This assisted the researchers to express responses of the interviews in line with the appropriate categories (rating scale/ 4 Likert) to compliment the quantitative results that were generated. The data was analysed qualitatively and quantitatively, using descriptive and inferential statistics, correlation and regression analysis. The study used the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 software.

## Findings and Discussion

Out of the 643 copies of the questionnaire distributed,

549 (85.4%) were returned duly completed. This high response rate was achieved due to the researcher's persistence, and effective assistance of the library personnel in the studied universities. The findings from the analysis on the data collected were discussed in line with the research questions and hypothesis raised in the study. The findings from the research questions are discussed as follows:

### The Prevailing Legal Factors for Consortium Building Readiness among the University Libraries in South-West Nigeria

The first research question set out to ascertain the

respondents' response on the prevailing legal factors for consortium building. The legal factors have been identified and grouped as governing law, log-in-option, non-disclosure of log-in-option, dispute resolution, cash contribution, dissolution. The university library personnel were instructed to show their agreement using Likert four scale of Strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly disagree (SD) with items that were developed. The results were presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Prevailing legal issues for consortium building readiness among university libraries in South-West Nigeria**

S/N	Items	SA	%	A	%	D	%	SD	%	Mean ( $\bar{x}$ )	Std. Dev
<b>Governing law</b>											
1.	My library is willing to sign full consent before operating as consortium member.	97	17.7%	344	62.7%	108	19.7%	0	0.0%	2.98	.611
2.	Governing law should make provision for issues that may not be envisaged before the consortium implementation	121	22.0%	383	69.8%	43	7.8%	2	0.4%	3.13	.544
3.	There is a legal and ethical committee for consortium monitoring in my library	113	20.6%	273	49.7%	143	26.0%	20	3.6%	2.87	.773
4.	Copies of the legal issues concerning the consortium should be printed and made available to member libraries.	146	26.6%	376	68.5%	26	4.7%	1	0.2%	3.21	.524
5.	Consortium agreement should be administered in line with the laws of Nigeria and other countries too.	168	30.6%	359	65.4%	20	3.6%	2	0.4%	3.26	.537
<b>Weighted mean=3.09; Std. dev=0.60</b>											
<b>Log-in-option</b>											
6.	Consortium libraries will confirm and comply when issues concerning access to information have legal force backing it.	159	29.0%	358	65.2%	24	4.4%	8	1.5%	3.22	.588
7.	Access should be limited to consortium libraries alone.	120	21.9%	361	65.8%	65	11.8%	3	0.5%	3.09	.593
8.	Request to access from non-member library should be made in writing and approved by all member libraries	123	22.4%	373	67.9%	53	9.7%	0	0.0%	3.13	.552
9.	Access can be granted to non-consortium member libraries if they have satisfied the conditions that such access would be used for intended purpose.	104	18.9%	399	72.7%	46	8.4%	0	0.0%	3.11	.512
10	Access right should confer some entitlement for libraries to grant sub-licenses to non-member libraries for some reasons.	136	24.8%	355	64.7%	47	8.6%	11	2.0%	3.12	.632
<b>Weighted mean =3.13; Std. dev=0.58</b>											
<b>Non-disclosure</b>											
11.	There are certain conditions where consortium confidential information can be disclosed, however, such conditions should be explained in the consortium agreement.	107	19.5%	285	51.9%	142	25.9%	15	2.7%	2.88	.742
12.	It is totally illegal for any member to disclose the activities and information of the consortium to non-member.	104	18.9%	368	67.0%	67	12.2%	10	1.8%	3.03	.620

13.	There should be penalties for misuse or unauthorised disclosure of consortium information.	153	27.9%	367	66.8%	27	4.9%	2	0.4%	3.22	.542
14.	There should be a clearly stated confidentiality clause to explain what information is considered confidential or otherwise.	148	27.0%	388	70.7%	13	2.4%	0	0.0%	3.25	.483
15.	Confidentiality clause should explain procedures to be taken before sharing confidential information to non-member libraries	194	35.3%	337	61.4%	18	3.3%	0	0.0%	3.32	.533
<b>Weighted mean =3.14; Std. dev=0.58</b>											
<b>Dispute resolution</b>											
S/N	Items	SA	%	A	%	D	%	SD	%	Mean (x̄)	Std. Dev
16.	Dispute resolution processes should be well explained in the legal document of the consortium.	192	35.0%	347	63.2%	10	1.8%	0	0.0%	3.33	.508
17.	Libraries in consortium should opt for alternative dispute resolution strategy (good faith effort) instead of approaching court.	167	30.4%	338	61.6%	42	7.7%	2	0.4%	3.22	.589
18.	Arbitrator(s) for dispute resolution committee should be from outside the consortium member libraries	181	33.0%	297	54.1%	67	12.2%	4	0.7%	3.19	.667
19.	Court is the best place for litigation on issues of partnership	130	23.7%	328	59.7%	68	12.4%	23	4.2%	3.03	.727
20.	It is good for libraries to try alternative dispute settlement first before trying the court	177	32.2%	354	64.5%	11	2.0%	7	1.3%	3.28	.563
<b>Weighted mean =3.21; Std. dev=0.61</b>											
<b>Cash contribution</b>											
21.	Cash division and quota must be explained to libraries with full written agreement.	143	26.0%	393	71.6%	12	2.2%	1	0.2%	3.23	.485
22.	Breaches of non-payment of dues and cash contributions are serious legal issues and serious legal actions should be taken against erring libraries.	147	26.8%	373	67.9%	29	5.3%	0	0.0%	3.21	.524
23.	Cash payment should be based on each library's financial strength and not be shared equally.	118	21.5%	315	57.4%	83	15.1%	33	6.0%	2.94	.777
24.	Member library without financial strength can pay in kind (products, services)	116	21.1%	329	59.9%	98	17.9%	6	1.1%	3.01	.659
25.	Libraries will naturally be unfaithful to cash contribution and terms of payment if it is not backed by law or legal actions.	176	32.1%	332	60.5%	31	5.6%	10	1.8%	3.23	.632
<b>Weighted mean =3.12; Std. dev=0.62</b>											
<b>Dissolution</b>											
26.	It is necessary that the consortium set a definite or indefinite period after the termination of the consortium / membership during which confidential information has to be kept confidential.	119	21.7%	393	71.6%	30	5.5%	7	1.3%	3.14	.552
27.	Court is the best and the most appropriate means of litigation for consortium building issues.	106	19.3%	348	63.4%	81	14.8%	14	2.6%	2.99	.666
28.	Termination of consortium membership should be upon a library's rejection or failure to keep their consortium agreement promises	145	26.4%	378	68.9%	20	3.6%	6	1.1%	3.21	.550
29.	Upon the presentation of notice, a party membership can be terminated if such requirements have been met.	89	16.2%	432	78.7%	27	4.9%	1	0.2%	3.11	.455
30.	Summary termination of consortium membership can be in cases of fraud, misinterpretation or illegal activities of libraries	164	29.9%	367	66.8%	18	3.3%	0	0.0%	3.27	.511
<b>Weighted mean =3.14; Std. dev=0.55</b>											
<b>Overall weighted mean =3.14; Std. dev= 0.59</b>											

The result of item-by-item analysis on Table 1 indicates that the respondents revealed that some of the most prevailing legal factors for consortium building readiness were that: dispute resolution processes should be well explained in the legal document of the consortium ( $\bar{x}$ =3.33; std dev. =.508); furthermore, confidentiality clause should explain procedures to be taken before sharing confidential information to non-member libraries ( $\bar{x}$ =3.32; std dev. =.533); and that it is good for libraries involved to try alternative dispute settlement first before trying the court ( $\bar{x}$ =3.28; std dev. =.563).

The least prevailing legal factors are that: there was no legal and ethical committee for consortium monitoring in my library ( $\bar{x}$ =2.87; std dev. =.773); there should be some certain conditions where consortium confidential information can be disclosed, however, such conditions should be explained in the consortium agreement ( $\bar{x}$ =2.88; std dev. =.742); and that cash payment should be based on each library's financial strength and not be shared equally ( $\bar{x}$ =2.94 std dev. =.777).

Explaining by sub-groups, dispute resolution ( $\bar{x}$ =3.21; std dev. =0.61) must be first settled by libraries intending to join consortium, issues on dissolution ( $\bar{x}$ =3.14; std dev. =0.58), non-disclosure ( $\bar{x}$ =3.14; std dev. =0.58); log-in-option ( $\bar{x}$ =3.13; std dev. =0.58); cash contribution ( $\bar{x}$ =3.12; std dev. =0.62) and governing law ( $\bar{x}$ =3.09; std dev. =0.60) must thereafter be discussed.

### The Level of Consortium Building Readiness among the University Libraries in South-West Nigeria

In order to ascertain the respondents' response on the level of consortium building readiness among university libraries, the university library personnel were asked to signify their agreement or disagreement with items that were developed as contained in the scale: Strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly disagree (SD). The results were presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Level of consortium building readiness among university libraries in South-West Nigeria**

S/N	Items	SA	%	A	%	D	%	SD	%	Mean ( $\bar{x}$ )	Std.Dev
1.	Collectively pull resources together with various institutions to better solve the challenges of managing, organising and archiving electronic resources	154	28.1%	324	59.0%	42	7.7%	29	5.3%	3.10	.748
2.	Share resources that are more important to the users in its collection	144	26.2%	354	64.5%	51	9.3%	0	0.0%	3.17	.572
3.	Grant other libraries access as access is believed to be more important than building collections	134	24.4%	357	65.0%	56	10.2%	2	0.4%	3.13	.586
4.	For reciprocal access to its Internet and wireless computing	78	14.2%	426	77.6%	43	7.8%	2	0.4%	3.06	.482
5.	Share their expertise with other libraries	166	30.2%	365	66.5%	16	2.9%	2	0.4%	3.27	.525
6.	come under a regulatory body which would support consortium development	120	21.9%	400	72.9%	26	4.7%	3	0.5%	3.16	.512
7.	Encourage cooperative efforts in training and research	204	37.2%	337	61.4%	8	1.5%	0	0.0%	3.36	.509
8.	Advance its services through innovation and opportunities provided by ICT	250	45.5%	288	52.5%	11	2.0%	0	0.0%	3.44	.535
9.	For strategic sharing and exchange of information, experience and best practices	212	38.6%	316	57.6%	21	3.8%	0	0.0%	3.35	.551
10	For profitable professional partnerships	186	33.9%	330	60.1%	33	6.0%	0	0.0%	3.28	.567
11.	Join a country-wide acquisition policy to avoid unnecessary and wasteful duplication in purchase	192	35.0%	331	60.3%	26	4.7%	0	0.0%	3.30	.553
12.	Cooperate in processing of information resources	184	33.5%	342	62.3%	22	4.0%	1	0.2%	3.29	.546
13.	For access and downloads of resources remotely by users of the participating libraries	177	32.2%	334	60.8%	37	6.7%	1	0.2%	3.25	.578
14.	Support the establishment of an electronic journal centre to serve as permanent archive for electronic journals	133	24.2%	391	71.2%	25	4.6%	0	0.0%	3.20	.500

15.	The library is ready to share integrated library systems	112	20.4%	403	73.4%	32	5.8%	2	0.4%	3.14	.508
16.	Share digital and offsite repositories	103	18.8%	418	76.1%	25	4.6%	3	0.5%	3.13	.488
17.	For collective preservation and archiving activities of print and digital materials and digitisation services	114	31.7%	340	61.9%	35	6.4%	0	0.0%	3.25	.563
18.	For reciprocal borrowing agreement among participating libraries	149	27.1%	366	66.7%	34	6.2%	0	0.0%	3.21	.539
19.	For cooperative collection development	123	22.4%	367	66.8%	58	10.6%	1	0.2%	3.11	.570
20.	For the development of a more sophisticated search engine enabling simultaneous search of multiple databases	161	29.3%	357	65.0%	29	5.3%	2	0.4%	3.23	.554
<b>Weighted mean=3.22; Std. dev=0.55</b>											

Table 2 shows the level of consortium building readiness among university libraries in South-West Nigeria. The finding reveals that university libraries in South-West Nigeria are ready: to advance their services through innovation and opportunities provided by ICT ( $\bar{x}$ =3.44; std dev. =.535); encourage cooperative efforts in training and research ( $\bar{x}$ =3.36; std dev. =.509); for strategic sharing and exchange of information, experience and best practices ( $\bar{x}$ =3.35; std dev. =.551); to join a country-wide acquisition policy to avoid unnecessary and wasteful duplication in purchase ( $\bar{x}$ =3.30; std dev. =.553); to cooperate in processing of information resources ( $\bar{x}$ =3.29; std dev. =.546); for profitable professional partnerships ( $\bar{x}$ =3.28; std dev. =.567); to share their expertise with other libraries ( $\bar{x}$ =3.27; std dev. =.525); for joint preservation and archiving activities of print and digital materials and digitisation services ( $\bar{x}$ =3.25; std dev. =.563).

In order to affirm the level of consortium building readiness among university libraries in South-

West Nigeria, a test of norm was conducted. Results showed that scale between 1 – 1.33 is low, 1.34 – 2.66 is moderate, while 2.67 – 4 is high. The overall mean for consortium building readiness among university libraries is “3.22” which falls between the scales “2.67 – 4”. It can therefore be concluded that the level of consortium building readiness among university libraries in South-West Nigeria is slightly high, which means that in a certain level university libraries in Nigeria are ready.

### Hypothesis Testing Analysis

The finding from the analysis on the data collected with respect to the hypothesis raised in the study is discussed as follows:

*Hypothesis:* There is no significant relationship between legal factors (governing law, log-in-option, non-disclosure of log-in-option, dispute resolution, cash contribution and dissolution) and consortium building readiness among university libraries in South-West Nigeria.

**Table 3: Relationship between legal factors and consortium building readiness**

Variables	N	Mean	St. Dev	Df	r	P	Sig
Consortium building readiness	549	64.43	7.150	548	.415	.000	Sig
Legal factors	549	94.22	9.194				
<b>Sub-legal factors</b>							
Governing law	549	15.46	2.221	548	.385	.000	Sig
Log-in-option	549	15.66	1.984	548	.299	.000	Sig
Non-disclosure	549	15.70	1.902	548	.178	.000	Sig
Dispute resolution	549	16.05	2.167	548	.248	.000	Sig
Cash contribution	549	15.63	1.962	548	.444	.000	Sig
Dissolution	549	15.71	1.946	548	.318	.000	Sig

*Note: hypothesis is tested at 0.05 significant level*



The findings on the relationship between legal factors (governing law, log-in-option, non-disclosure of log-in-option, dispute resolution, cash contribution and dissolution) and consortium building readiness (CBR) among university libraries in South-West Nigeria as shown in Table 3 above reveals that legal factors altogether ( $r = .415$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ) has significant positive relationship with consortium building readiness (CBR) among university libraries in South-West Nigeria. A further breakdown of the analysis to show the performance of the sub-legal factors in relation to CBR reveals that all the sub-factors are positively and significantly correlated with CBR; cash contribution is the most potent sub-factor ( $r = .444$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ), followed by governing law ( $r = .385$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ), dissolution ( $r = .318$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ), log-in-option ( $r = .299$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ) among others.

This, therefore, implies that there is positive linear association between legal factors (governing law, log-in-option, non-disclosure of log-in-option, dispute resolution, cash contribution and dissolution) and consortium building readiness (CBR) among university libraries in South-West Nigeria.

### Analysis of the Interview Responses

Interview responses were apportioned a grading scale to aid thematic analysis. Responses were grouped into four Likert scales of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) or Very Ready (VR), Ready (R), Fairly Ready (FR) and Not Ready (NR) as the case may be in line with the response format for the question asked. The responses are shown in table 4 below:

**Table 4: Interview response of university librarians or their representative**

S/N	Readiness of university libraries	Very ready	Ready	Fairly ready	Not ready
1	How ready is your library for consortium building?	2	4	3	-
	<b>Legal framework</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
1	The libraries have legal framework that could facilitate consortium building	Nil	Nil	5	4

From the above table, six of the respondents clearly indicated that consortium building is an inevitable reality in the library world, as no single university library can adequately cater and provide for all that its users want by specifying some level of readiness of their university libraries for consortium building whenever there is a move for it as they agreed that consortium has lots of benefits. All of the participants affirmed that their university libraries were already in one form of partnership or another with other libraries. Although these partnerships according to them may not actually look like the standard consortium building, that is technology-driven and with heavy subscriptions to different online information databases. These university libraries however belong to some forms of collaboration that could help them cater for their

inadequacies. These university libraries partner to share information resources (both prints and electronic), inter-library loaning, cooperate staff training among others.

On legal framework that could facilitate consortium building, none of the interviewed university library heads was sure of any written legal document for the library that explains the terms and conditions for any formal library collaboration or consortium. These heads believed that though there were written and unwritten rules that had governed their libraries activities with other university libraries in time past, however, none of these principles and rules is documented as laws. They believed that when the move for library consortium starts that each university library would be forced to have a written law.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

The most prevailing legal factors for consortium building readiness were dispute resolution processes to be well explained in the legal document of the consortium, confidentiality clause to explain procedures to be taken before sharing confidential information to non-member libraries and that it is good for libraries involved to try alternative dispute settlement first before trying the court. The least prevailing legal factors are there was no legal and ethical committee for consortium monitoring in that there should be some certain conditions where consortium confidential information can be disclosed. The finding reveals that university libraries in South-West Nigeria are ready to advance their services through innovation and opportunities provided by ICT, encourage cooperative efforts in training and research for strategic sharing and exchange of information, experience and best practices, to join a country-wide acquisition policy to avoid unnecessary and wasteful duplication in purchase, to cooperate in processing of information resources for profitable professional partnerships, to share their expertise with other libraries for joint preservation and archiving activities of print and digital materials and digitisation services.

The study concluded that there is positive linear association between legal factors (governing law, log-in-option, non-disclosure of log-in-option, dispute resolution, cash contribution and dissolution) and consortium building readiness (CBR) among university libraries in South-West Nigeria. It is concluded therefore that legal factors are predictors for consortium building readiness among university libraries in South-West Nigeria.

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

1. University library managements should as a matter of urgency formulate a written and well documented consortium building policies and laws for their libraries as the information elicited from the interviews conducted confirmed that there is no such policy in the university libraries studied. Attention however must be paid in the written laws to issues concerning dispute resolution, dissolution of membership or the consortium, non-disclosure of log-in-option as well as cash contribution.
2. It is imperative for university library managements to provide functional institutional factors, a well written legal law as well as business and professional ethical codes that will further boost the readiness level of university libraries towards consortium building. Although the study found that the level of university libraries readiness is moderately high but this can be improved upon.
3. University libraries in South-West Nigeria must be sincere in their desire to join and run a consortium, as it is the only viable means through which university libraries can adequately satisfy the information needs of their users.

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- Olalekan Abiola Awujoola** is a lecturer in the Department of Library, Archival and Information Studies (LARIS), University of Ibadan, Nigeria. He holds a PhD degree of the University of Ibadan. He is a Certified Librarian of Nigeria (CLN).



**Abiola Abioye** is Professor in the Department of Library, Archival and Information Studies, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria. He attended University of Nigeria, Nsukka where he obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree in History/Archaeology. He also attended University of Ibadan where he obtained Bachelor of Laws degree, Master in Archival Studies degree and Doctor of Philosophy degree in records management. He is a Barrister, Solicitor and Notary Public of the Supreme Court of Nigeria.

