

Consortia and Libraries in ICT Environment

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ABSTRACT

Today the main issue for librarians is how library services have to be changed to accommodate e-Books and e-Journals in to the library collections. Because IT is rapidly changing the whole world creating the new challenges and opportunities offered users a number of engaging and competitive services. No libraries are able to satisfy all the needs of its user due to various constraints. A library consortium is the best example of it. It helps to sharing resources and improving access to information. These resources are shared among libraries that have common mission, goals and users. This paper aims to explore the concept, types of consortia, need of consortia, advantages, library consortia in India and discusses them briefly.

KEYWORDS: Library Consortia, e-resources, UGC-INFONET, FORSA, N-LIST, HELINET, CeRa, INDEST-AICTE Consortium, Advantages and Disadvantages of consortia.

INTRODUCTION

The resources sharing scenario in India has changed from its sharing age of manuscript and paper based documents only to present age of knowledge society. The tremendous development in the area of knowledge and communication technologies have brought about unprecedented changed. Internet and World Wide Web have enabled seamless access to resources at present scenario.

It is not possible for one library to procure all information, even if demand by its users. There are various problems such as budget, policy of management, space available, and then what is solution? Solution is cooperation between libraries and information centers. Consortia are one of the cooperation among libraries. A library consortium is an association of two or more than two libraries with the same objective of participating in obtaining a common goal. A Library Consortium means Cooperation, Coordination and Collaboration between the libraries to share their resources. Library Consortia are formed to provide better, faster and more cost effective access to national and international e-journals, e-books and propriety information resources of libraries. Library Consortia solved many problems like information explosion, limited resources such as budget allocation, less manpower, space and increasing demands of users. According to Merriam Webster Dictionary, “*Consortium is an agreement, Combination or groups of companies, formed to undertake an enterprise beyond the resource of any one*

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member.”According to Oxford English Dictionary consortia means” Temporary cooperation of a no. of powers, companies etc. for a common purpose. It is a association of similar type of organization / institutes which are engaged for providing and servicing the common things for a specific purpose of its users.”

TYPE OF CONSORTIA

OPEN CONSORTIA

This type of consortia is open ended and provides facility for the libraries to join and leave as they please. This type of consortia are generally driven by small homogeneous group who have a need to cross share the resources in a specific subject area. For example- INDEST Consortium run by ministry of human resources department government of India.

CLOSED GROUP CONSORTIA

The closed group Consortium stays exclusive with in a defined group. This type of consortia emerges either by coalition, affiliation and collaboration among them. for example of this type of consortia, CSIRL, DAE, IIM Consortium.

CENTRALLY FUNDED CONSORTIA

In these consortia, the very existence of the consortium will solely depend on the central funding agency. The strength of this model is that the financial responsibility of running the consortium is shouldered by the parent body. For example- UGC- INFONET, INDEST, CSIR, MCIT Consortia.

SHARED BUDGET CONSORTIA

In this model the participating libraries take the lead and form the consortium. For Example- IIM and FORSA.

SPECIFIC GROUP CONSORTIA

These type of consortia deal with specific group. LISA plus consortia of university library is example of this type model.

REGIONAL CONSORTIA

These type of consortia deal with specific subject. FORSA, UGC DAE is examples of this type of model.

NEED OF LIBRARY CONSORTIA

Library consortia assist in direct purchasing from publisher. It is cooperative task to reduce the cost of purchase. As a result end users can take benefits of more resources than would be available through one library. Several reasons could be cited to justify the need for consortia.

INFORMATION EXPLOSION

Today society is suffering from information explosion, where it has become difficult to understand what is right or wrong. Information is provided many forms and formats and it is possible to acquire all the form for any individual

library. It is impossible for libraries to attain self-sufficiency. In that case it has become essential to acquire resources through library consortia.

FINANCIAL CRUNCH

Today most of the libraries are faced with economic problems and suffering from financial crises to collect all the new generated information and to satisfy the high degree of aspiration for knowledge of the users. It has to acquire all the resources in limited funds. Library consortia can solve this problem.

SELF SUFFICIENCY NO POSSIBILITY

Information demand of the user to a greater extent is beyond the control of the capacity of librarians, much of the exercise rests on the input resources and it becomes impossible to be self sufficient by the library.

DIVERSITY OF USER NEEDS

Information requirement of the user is ever growing and varies from user to user. Users have different nature and taste. The need a wide spectrum of information due to information explosion, presence of multi-discipline, specialization of subject etc. no library can meet their demands with their own resources. Library can share the resources via consortia.

PROFESSIONALIZATION OF LIBRARY SERVICES

The role of library professionals has been changed mere conservator to vacillators of knowledge. It has great challenge for libraries to remain at the frontline of the profession. Consortia provides round the clock availability of information and resource to the user.

ADVANTAGES OF CONSORTIA

1. Cost sharing for technical and training support facilities.
2. Minimum budget large collections received.
3. Consortia are very helpful in developing suitable collection and acquisition policy.
4. Library consortia promotes use and sharing of electronic resources which demand neither library space or nor tear and nor they can be stolen from the library.
5. Electronic resources at highly discounted rates of subscription.
6. Access to wider number of e-resources.
- 7 Quantitative and Quantitative resources.
8. Access to all users.
9. 24x7 Connectivity.
10. Help to save the time of user and given well services.
11. Rational utilization of fund.

DISADVANTAGES OF LIBRARY CONSORTIA

1. The user is not accepting e-journals as with print journals.
2. Need of technical skills and knowledge of information communication technology.

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3. Copyright problems.
4. Limitations of agreements
5. The problem of access right, direct access from publishers.
6. Library consortia required special skill in handling e-resources.

CONSORTIA INITIATIVES IN INDIA

UGC- INFONET

The UGC-INFONET digital library consortium was formally launched in December, 2003 by Honorable APJ Abdul Kalam, the President of India. The consortium provides current as well as archival access to more than 15000+ core and peer reviewed journals. The consortium has also launched “Associate membership program me” where in private universities and other research

Organizations are welcomed to join the consortium.

N-LIST

[National Library and information services infrastructure for scholarly content] N-LIST is jointly executed by the UGC-INFONET digital library consortium INFLIBNET centre and the INDEST Consortium, IIT Delhi. N LIST project provides access to e-resources for students, researchers and faculty from colleges.

FORSA

Based on the proposed plans made by the members of Forum, the first meeting of the Forum for Resource sharing in Astronomy and Astrophysics [FORSA] held on July 29, 1981, at Raman Research Bangalore. Emphasis was placed on obtaining detailed information related to literature in Astronomy and Astrophysics for speediest of information. FORSA has become a member of ICOLC which has over 160 participations from across the world. In 2004, this group extended its membership to physics and mathematics libraries in the country.

CeRA

Consortium for e-resources in Agriculture [CeRA] was formed in November, 2007 at the Indian Agriculture Research Institute Pusa, New Delhi. It was funded by the National Agriculture Innovation Project [NAIP]. It was set up to provide access to information in Agriculture particularly the e-resources to researchers and scientists, students, extension workers, policy planners and administrators in the National Agriculture system. Member in CeRA are provided IP authentically online access to full text article in more than 2900 Journal in Agriculture science.

HELINET

HELINET stands for Health Science Library and Information Network conceived by the university and successfully implemented which is first of its kind in the country. The consortium was started by Rajiv Gandhi University of the health science in the state of Karnataka in 15th march, 2003. HELINET goal is to deliver information to users’ desk-top, with round the- clock access. The major benefit of this consortium was expanded access to core international e-journal. HELINET has made it possible for each college to access and share the contents in more than 600 journals and international biomedical journals, from 24 leading publisher, at about one third the price of their print subscription.

CSIR E-Journal Consortium

The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research was established in 1942 and is Indian largest Research and development Organizations. The consortium started working in the year 2002 with the Elsevier Science. CSIR e-Journal consortium has been re-named as NKRC due to the change in its scope. NKRC established in year 2009, is a network of libraries and information centers of 39 CSIR laboratories and 24 Department of Science and Technology institutions. It provides access to more than 5000 e-journals, patents, standards, citations and bibliographic databases. It also provides access to large number of open access resources in science and technology.

URL [http:// journal.niscair.res.in/](http://journal.niscair.res.in/)

EMRED Consortium

Electronic Resources in Medicine consortium is an initiative taken by Director General of Health Science [DGHS] to develop nationwide electronic information resources in the field of medicine for delivering effective health care for all. Started in 2008, it has 70 state and centrally funded government institutions selected from 24 states as its members at present. EMRED is given facility to all kinds of medical professional and researcher etc.

E-SHODHSINDHU Consortia

On the basis of recommendation of an expert committee, the Ministry of Human Resource Development Government of India has established a consortium called e-shodhsindhu on 1st December, 2015. This consortium is formed by merging of three consortia these are as UGC-INFONITE Digital Library Consortia, N-LIST Consortium and INDEST-AICTE Consortium. The members of this consortium are centrally funded Technical Institutions, Central Universities, State Universities, Deemed Universities, National Law Universities and Colleges that are covered under 12[B] and 2[F] section of the UGC Act.

INDEST-AICTE CONSORTIUM

Indian National Digital Library in Engineering Science and Technology [INDEST] Consortium on the recommendation made by expert group appointed by the Ministry of Human Resource Development [MHRD] under the chairmanship of Prof. N. Balakrishnan. It was set up in 2003. The Consortium was renamed as INDEST-AICTE Consortium in December, 2005 with the AICTE planning a pivotal role in enrolling its a proud engineering college and institutions as member of consortium for selected e-resources at much lower rates of subscription. 60 aided Engineering Colleges are provided access to selected electronic resources with financial support from the AICTE and 102 Universities and Institutions have joined the consortium under its self-supported category in 2012. URL:// paniit.iit.ac.in/indest/

CONCLUSION

Libraries must change their primary operations drastically in the coming years. Conventional educational strategies are way too expensive to meet the demands of their users. With the development in publishing and implementation of new technologies gave unique opportunity to use technology not to do old things differently, but for the first time to do different joining consortia, integrating intellectual access, providing for both physical and electronic development process are all the distinct step moving towards 21st century libraries. Development in modern resource

sharing whether they are document delivery service or computing service does not alter the ethics of librarianship. Ever-increasing price of journals accompanied with the shrinking budget of libraries, management or parent bodies are forced to resort to the best alternatives like consortia. Keeping in view the old traditions and applying them the new environment will make institutions grow and provide useful service for the betterment of resource sharing through consortia. Lastly we can say that the library consortium activities in India are of recent origin and are fast evolving.

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