An Overview of the Library Consortia in India

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Abstract

Library Consortia or Consortium is now being overheard globally. It is more because of electronic or digital form of information. Consortia are all about sharing resources and improving access to information. These resources are shared among libraries that have common missions, goals and clients (users) and act on those commonalties. Before we are sharing own library resources through inter library loan, but in this Information communication technology (ICT) age it has gained momentum even in the developing countries. When library consortiums are formed, the existing environment about users' preferences and difficulties need to be studied. Initiating such studies would enable to incorporate the findings as the major input in consortium formation.

Keywords: Library Consortia, Consortia management, Networking, E-resources.

1.   Introduction

Library Consortia is the sharing of resources among the participant's libraries. A consortium may be a formal or in have enabled library consortia to expand both in formal agreement between two or more libraries based on a number and functions over their respected areas. Library-common principle. For example, a consortium library consortium development is rooted in the may be based on library type academic, Special, public etc.A history of library cooperative efforts for doing work. A regional and local consortium may be based also driven by the need to provide remote users on a geographical area. A consortium is "an agreement, common platform other goal, aiming to reduce costs per unit through or group (as of companies) formed to undertake formation of purchasing consortia. These national regional and an enterprise consortia will be the focus of member"

1.1   Definition of Consortia

A **consortia** is an association of two or more individuals, companies, organizations or   governments (or any combination of these entities) with the objective of participating in a common activity or pooling their resources for achieving a common goal. Consortium is a Latin word, meaning 'partnership, association or society' and derives from consors 'partner', itself from con- 'together' and sors 'fate', meaning owner of means or comrade.

2.   Concept of Library Consortia

Library consortia concepts came first time from academic libraries formed consortia for the primary purpose of sharing printed materials. Recently, academic libraries are having consortia to provide common access to electronic resources across the Internet, and they are forming these consortia on

a statewide basis Library This task is very difficult for a single library. However, by forming a consortium among libraries, it becomes possible to purchase information in stabilized and reasonable prices.

Historically, the common platform of library co-operation was the sharing of union catalogue, document delivery services, storage facilities, collection development and human resources at local, national and regional level. Another form of co-operation was based on inter library loan services where co-operating libraries agree to share their resources among the member libraries. This form of co-operation enabled libraries to borrow books, periodicals and other reading materials which were not available locally. The sending of requests and delivery of materials through the postal, fax and courier services. However, the real drive for co-operation was seen after when more and more libraries started getting automated and used computers for libraries all house keeping programs.

3.   Features of Library Consortia

These are the features of library consortia following below.

♦ It provides each organizations and institutions with the capacity to share their resources without sacrificing the individuality of each member library

♦ The collections of the Consortium libraries enable each member library to support scholarly research for its users.

♦ Cooperative research and development in application of information communication and technology enhances service and realizes cost effectiveness.

♦ Staff development and interaction with quality of service.

♦ It is the cooperative task to reduce the cost of purchase consortia. As a result, end users can take benefits of more resources than would be available through one library.

♦ To advance library services are provided with an emphasis on access to new E- resources including databases and services offered through the internet and www.

♦ To expanding inter library searching at less cost is possible.

♦ Uncertainties in legal issues are handled with more confidence.

4.   Advantages of Consortia

Some of the important advantages of the library consortium are as following below.

♦ Consortia-based subscription to electronic resources provides access to wider number of electronic resources at substantially lower cost;

♦ Optimum utilization of funds.

♦ Facilities to build up digital libraries

- Helpful to provide better library services like CAS and SDI

- Cost Sharing for Technical and training support

- Electronic Journals demand neither library space nor shelling costs nor can they be stolen from the library

- The consortium have been offered better terms of licenses for use, archival access and preservation of subscribed electronic resources, which would not have been possible for any single institution; and Available 24/7.

- Less economy expansion.

5.　　Disadvantages of Consortia

Some of the important disadvantages of the library consortium are as following below.

- Absence of a printed copy of Journals

- Require training of staffs in handling electronic documents etc.

- Consortia requires high initial investments in licensees and information and communication technology.

- Copyright problems

- Unreliable telecommunication links and insufficient bandwidth

- Lack of archiving and back files availability

- Internet Access id necessary

- Users are not accepting e-journals as per with the printed Journals

6.　　Consortia in India

These are library consortia in India following below.

6.1　　CSIR Library Consortia (Council for Scientific and Industrial Research)

E-journals Consortia

NISCAIR is the central organization for developing a "Consortium for CSIR Laboratories for Accessing e-journals". The activity shall range from creation to monitoring of the access facility of scientific periodicals published by leading international institutions. To start with, an agreement has been signed with, e-journal publisher, M/s Elsevier Science for a period of four years for 1200 journals. Under this scheme, CSIR scientists shall be able to access these journals and download material for their respected subject. Such access to world wide journal resources will play a very vital role and

strengthen research and development in CSIR laboratories, thus leading to knowledge generation useful for socio-economic development of the country.

The objectives are:

♦   To strengthen the pooling, sharing and electronically accessing the CSIR library resources.

♦   To provide access to world S&T literature to CSIR labs.

♦   To nucleate the culture of electronic access resulting into evolution of digital libraries.

Till date CSIR has entered into agreement with 11 publishers to access about 3316 international journals across the labs. Details of these 11 e-journal publishers are given in table below:

6.2   FORSA (Forum for Resource Sharing in Astronomy and Astrophysics)

It was established in 1980s, due to proliferation of information, library professionals working in the Institutes where astronomy was one of the main thrust areas of research felt the need to come together and to form a forum, which can act as a springboard for sharing and exchange of information. The sheer necessity brought all like minded astronomy librarians in the country together and a first meeting was held on July 29 1981 at Raman Research Institute, Bangalore and informally launched forum for resource sharing in astronomy and astrophysics FORSA with a vision and mission to share resources held in each library.

Since 1989, FORSA members meet every year, in conjunction with Annual Meeting of the Astronomical Society of India. A noteworthy feature of such meetings is that FORSA members interact with the astronomers in the Joint Session, in which developments in library and information handling activities in the field of astronomy/astrophysics are presented and comments from users are solicited to improve and expand library services.

At present, there are eleven institute members, under this consortium.

1.   Aryabhatta Research Institute for Observational Sciences (ARIES)

2.   Bose Institute (BI), Kolkata

3.   Centre for Advanced Studies in Astronomy, Osmania University (CASA-OU), Hyderabad

4.   Harish Chandra Research Institute (HCRI), Allahabad

5.   Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA), Bangalore

6.   Inter University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics (IUCAA), Pune

7.   National Centre for Radio Astrophysics (NCRA), Pune

8.   Physical Research Laboratory (PRL), Ahmedabad

9.   Raman Research Institute (RRL), Bangalore

10.   Saha Institute of Nuclear Physics (SINP), Kolkata

11.   Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR)

6.3   HELINET (Health Sciences Library & Information Network)

A Health Sciences Library & Information Network hosted by Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences, Bangalore. HELINET is the first medical library consortium launched in the country with an objective of networking the libraries affiliated to the University to promote resource sharing, especially with reference to international medical journals and databases. The health science education in India and the status of IT and Internet access infrastructure in the health science colleges. The Digital Library resources and activities at RGUHS are presented in detail. The formation and role of HELINET, the first resource sharing network and e-journal consortium in the medical education sector.

As an imperative of e-journal access, HELINET required an e-journal access gateway to act as a common search and access interface for all the e-journals that HELINET would subscribe as part of its consortia licensing and the libraries might independently subscribe for the titles not available through consortium. Further, HELINET required a mechanism to develop and maintain a common database of journal literature for all the subscribed journals of 30 medical libraries which were largely in print subscriptions. HELINET adopted an indigenously developed and locally available e-journal gateway for its need. J-Gate enables online access to all the consortia members for the e-journals subscribed by the consortia. It further enables shared access to printed journals through its customized database service.

6.4   ICICI Knowledge Park (Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India)

ICICI Knowledge Park (IKP) nestles in a 200-acre pollution free zone in Genome Valley, Hyderabad. The master plan of the Park mirrors its objective of nurturing an environment for innovation and the expected growth in life sciences and related fields. It has a mix of ready-to-use multi - tenanted modular wet laboratory blocks (Innovation Corridors) with in- built flexibility around some common, shared facilities and support services, as well as developed land for customised R&D facilities.

IKP provides a range of support services to the resident companies to create a congenial stress-free environment and ensure customer delight. The infrastructure services include electricity, telecommunication, and refuse disposal, conference facility, meeting rooms, cafeteria and gymnasium. Professional agencies take care of common services like round-the-clock utility maintenance, IT administration, surveillance and security, doctor's services, housekeeping and landscape maintenance to ensure safe, reliable and hassle-free operations. The administrative support services include

speedy customs clearance, environmental clearances, legal/ patent counseling, assistance in getting venture funding, S&T advisory services, liaisoning with government departments, secretarial services etc.

6.5   IIM's Library Consortia (The Indian Institute of Management)

IIM Library consortia is a Digital Library network system based on internet technology to provided the IIM community (faculty, students and staff) an online web enabled access to the information resources available in all the IIMs without any barriers of time and distance. It will be a simple, efficient and cost effective system. The basic operating principle of this system is decentralized acquisition, decentralized processing and centralized utilization.

These are the IIMs Library Consortia Members.

1.   The Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad (IIMA),http://www.iimahd.ernet.in

2.   Indian Institute of Management Bangalore (IIMB), http://www.iimb.ernet.in/

3.   Indian Institute of Management Calcutta (IIMCAL), http://www.iimcal.ac.in

4.   Indian Institute of Management Indore (IIMI), http://www.iimidr.ac.in

5.   Indian Institute of Management Kozhikode (IIMK), http://www.iimk.ac.in

6.   Indian Institute of Management Lucknow (IIML), http://www.iiml.ac.in

6.6   INDEST (Indian National Digital Library in Engineering Sciences and Technology)

The Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) has set-up the "Indian National Digital Library in Engineering Sciences and Technology (INDEST) Consortium" on the recommendation made by the Expert Group appointed by the ministry under the chairmanship of Prof. N. Balakrishnan. The Ministry provides funds required for subscription to electronic resources for (37) institutions including IISc, IITs, NITs, IIMs and a few other centrally-funded Government institutions through the consortium headquarters set-up at the IIT Delhi. Besides, (60) Government or Government-aided engineering colleges and technical departments in universities have joined the Consortium with financial support from the AICTE.

The INDEST-AICTE Consortium is the most ambitious initiative taken so far in the country. The benefit of consortia-based subscription to electronic resources is not confined to 38 major technological institutions in the country but is also extended to all AICTE-accredited and UGC-affiliated institutions. (161) engineering colleges and institutions have already joined the consortium on their own. Recently (462) engineering colleges and institutions joined under self support- new scheme.

The members of JCCC-INDEST are categorized as Level I members and Level II members and Level III members. They are

Level I Members

1. Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (IIMA), Ahmedabad
2. Indian Institute of Bangalore (IIMB), Bangalore
3. Indian Institute of Management Calcutta (IIMCAL), Calcutta
4. Indian Institute of Management Indore (IIMI), Indore
5. Indian Institute of Management Kozhikode (IIMK) , Kozhikode
6. Indian Institute of Management Lucknow (IIML), Lucknow
7. Indian Institute of Science Bangalore (IISc), Bangalore
8. Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (IITB), Mumbai
9. Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IITD), New Delhi
10. Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati (IITG), Guwahati
11. Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur (IITKAN), Kanpur
12. Indian Institute of Technology Khagpur (IITKGP), Khagpur
13. Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IITM), Chennai
14. Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee (IITR), Roorkee

Level II Members

1. Punjab Technical University, Jalandhar (BRANIT), Jalandhar
2. Indian Institute of Information Technology & Management, Gwalior (IIITM), Gwalior,
3. Indian Institute of Information Technology Allahabad IIIT, Allahabad
4. Indian School of Mines (ISM), Dhanbad
5. Malaviya National Institute of Technology Jaipur (MNIT), Jaipur
6. Maulana Azad National Institute of Technology (MANIT), Bhopal
7. Motilal Nehru National Institute Of Technology (MNNIT), Allahabad
8. National Institute of Technology Calicut (NITC), Calicut
9. National Institute of Technology Durgapur (NITD), Durgapur
10. National Institute of Technology Hamirpur (NITH), Hamipur
11. National Institute of Technology Jamshedpur (NITJ), Jamshedpur
12. National Institute of Technology Kurukshetra (NITKU), Kurukshetra
13. National Institute of Technology Rourkela (NITR), Rourkela
14. National Institute of Technology Silchar (NITS), Silchar
15. National Institute of Technology (NIT), Srinagar
16. National Institute of Technology (NITK), Surathkal
17. National Institute of Technology Trichy (NITT), Trichy
18. National Institute of Technology Warangal (NITW), Warangal
19. North Eastern Regional Institute of Science & Technology (NERIST), Itanagar
20. Sant Longowal Institute of Engineering and Technology (SLIET), Sangrur, District

21. Sardar Vallabhbhai National Institute of Technology (SVNIT), Surat
22. Visvesvaraya National Institute of Technology (VNIT), Nagpur

Level III Members

1. Allahabad Agricultural Institute - Deemed University (AAI), Allahabad
2. National Institute of Foundry & Forge Technology (NIFFT), Ranchi
3. R.K.College of Engineering & Technology (RKCET), Rajkot
4. The Haldia Institute of Technology, Haldia,HITK, West Bengal
5. Kalpataru Institute of Technology (KIT), Tiptur
6. Parul Arogya Seva Mandal (PASM), Vadodara
7. Shri Andal Alagar College of Engineering (SAACE), Mamandur
8. The National Institute of Technology Agartala (TEC), Tripura
9. Vardhaman College of Engineering (VCE), Shamshabad

6.7   UGC-DAE Consortium for Scientific Research

DAE Library Consortia (Department of Atomic Energy)

To promote interaction amongst the scientists working in the research centres of the Department of Atomic Energy and the faculty from the universities and other institutions of higher learning, and to enable young students to work on programmes of national importance under the joint guidance of the faculty from universities and the scientists of DAE so as to nurture an organic linkage between the university system and research centres of DAE, the University Grants Commission and Atomic Energy Commission have joined hands. Dr. Arun Nigavekar, Chairman, UGC and Dr. Anil Kakodkar, Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission has signed a revised MoU on 10th December, 2003. Earlier both the parties entered into a MoU in July 1989 with a view to make available the facilities of the Department of Atomic Energy to the students and researchers of the university system and to involve them in the design and fabrication of systems and equipment for the setting up of new research facilities. Accordingly, the University Grants Commission created an Inter-University Consortium, with its headquarters at Indore for the utilization of the facilities established by the Department of Atomic Energy. The Inter- University consortium has over the years taken several initiatives to foster the interaction between the University system and the DAE institutions.

As per the present MoU, collaboration between the Department of Atomic Energy and University Grants Commission will be expanded to cover the disciplines of physical sciences, chemical sciences, life sciences and engineering sciences. DAE will continue to make the major research facilities accessible to the researchers from the universities and institutions of higher learning through the consortium. It will also make available the infrastructural and accessorial facilities such as laboratories, library, workshop etc. necessary to carry on the research work. The UGC, through the Consortium, will continue to make suitable financial provision for the salary of the core scientific, technical and

administrative staff, and fellowship to research students, the travel and stay of the visiting faculty, and other recurring and non-recurring expenditure on the functioning of the Consortium. It will also provide adequate grant for equipment and consumables.

The DAE institutions and the Consortium will participate in each other's training, education, research and developmental programmes. Both sides will set up mechanisms to arrange discussion meetings, refresher/ orientation programmes, and ensure that there is a free flow of ideas and researchers between the University system and the DAE institutions.

6.8 **UGC-Infonet** (University Grants Commission)

UGC-Infonet E-Journals consortium initiative was undertaken by the Indian University Grants Commission (UGC) to facilitate free access to scholarly journals and databases in all fields and disciplines by the research and academic community across the country. All universities who are under the purview of UGC have been provided UGC-infonet Connectivity and access to scholarly e-Journals and Databases. More than 2,000 scholarly journals and databases were made available during 2004 and this number has increased to more than 4,500 full text e-journals since January 2005. As of May 2006, 122 universities are accessing resources from the programme. The access is based on IP range. This effort has had a noticeable impact on the research and academic community.

7. **Conclusion**

Library consortia, providing for physical and electronic delivery of materials, and integrating the collection-development process are all distinct and crucial steps in moving toward the twenty-first century library. It is the case; clearly identified landmarks represent important goals and milestones for measuring our common progress on a journey through a new and unfamiliar landscape. Consortia are tools, which will aid in exploiting the features of the e-resources as well as in effecting savings

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