
CONSORTIUM OF ENGINEERING COLLEGE LIBRARIES OF KERALA : A PROPOSAL

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Abstract

The paper proposes to form a consortium of Engineering College Libraries of Kerala. Also discusses major consortia initiatives of India, development history of engineering colleges in Kerala, proposed model of consortium and aspects to be considered while designing such a consortium.

Keywords: Library Consortia, Engineering College Libraries

1. Introduction

Today, most of the libraries are facing the problems of shrinking budget, ever-growing user requirements, escalating costs of books and subscription of journals, unprecedented technological advancement especially in the field of Information storage and retrieval etc. In this context libraries started pooling of their individual resources into larger knowledge base and began co-operation and resource sharing as viable solutions to meet the requirements of their patrons.

The concept of library cooperation and resource sharing was as old as the libraries. The concept of 'Consortia' was evolved from the concept of cooperation and coordination. The term consortia refer to an agreement or group formed to undertake an enterprise beyond the resources of any one member.

Library Consortia mean group of libraries working together for a common cause. It means collaborative or coalition effort for meeting the varied needs of users. It may be defined as any kind of formal cooperative arrangement where people agree to exchange information or resources [1]. The library Consortia mainly deal with resource sharing in digital or electronic format.

The library consortia provide an effective information infrastructure to the member libraries of the consortia. The major advantages of library consortia are:

1. Enhanced cooperation, i.e., alliance with institutions that have common interest
2. Augmentation of resource base with less money
3. Adoption of new technology for providing better services
4. Rational use of library budget.
5. Sharing of professional expertise among the member libraries
6. Provides a platform for discussing and sharing professional issues
7. Unit cost of information can be reduced drastically
8. As resource base increases user satisfaction becomes much more
9. Small libraries can derive more benefits out of their small budgets

2. Library Consortia Initiatives of India

In India, library network and co-operation started with the initiatives of NISSAT in forming CALIBNET in 1986 and DELNET in 1988. The UGC set up INFLIBNET in 1988[2]. Many libraries in India have set up consortia among themselves for resource sharing. At the national level INFLIBNET has taken initiative for a change in developing adequate infrastructure in academic libraries to be a part of networked environment. Some of the important consortia pertaining to e-resources are FORSA (Forum for Resource Sharing in Astronomy & Astrophysics), CSIR Consortium, INDEST Consortium, IIM Consortium, MCIT Library Consortium (The Ministry of Communications and Information Technology Library Consortium), UGC-INFONET E-Journals Consortium, etc.

3. Engineering College Libraries in Kerala

In Kerala, there are more than Fifteen thousand engineering seats available for undergraduate program in 76 engineering colleges[3]. Due to financial crunch being faced by the established engineering colleges coupled with the haphazard growth in number of engineering colleges, quality is ignored under the weight of sheer quantity. Quality of education offered by an institution greatly depends upon the dynamism of its information system, which supports teaching-learning process. Engineering being a professional course, teachers and students have to highly depend on their libraries or information centers for the preparation of their lectures, theses, projects, assignments, seminars, etc.

Many of the engineering colleges in Kerala are in their infancy and they do not have self-reliant information systems to assist their teaching-learning process. Only a few colleges have good information centers and resources. If we design a system to share these resources it would be mutually beneficial for all the participating institutions.

4. Development History

The first Engineering College of Kerala was established in the year 1939 and two more colleges were added in the year 1958. We had only nine colleges till 1991. All the other 67 colleges were started only after 1991. Year wise list of colleges is given below.

Year of establishment	Name of Colleges
1939	1. College of Engineering, Trivandrum
1958	1. Govt. Engineering College, Thrissur 2. T.K.M. College of Engg., Kollam
1960	1. N.S.S. College of Engg., Palakkad
1961	1. M. A. College of Engg., Kothamangalam
1985	1. Kelappaji College of Agricultural Engg. & Tech., Malappuram
1986	1. Govt. Engineering College, Kannur
1989	1. Model Engg. College, thrikkakara
1991	1. Rajiv Gandhi Inst. of Tech., Kottayam
1993	1. College of Engineering, Chengannur 2. L.B.S. College of Engg., Kasaragode 3. College of Dairy Sc. & Tech., Mannuthy
1994	1. M.E.S. College of Engg., Kuttippuram

1995	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. College of Engg., Adoor 2. S.C.T. College of Engg., Trivandrum
1996	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. University College of Engg., Thodupuzha
1999	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Govt. Engg. College, Barton Hill, Trivandrum 2. Govt. Engg. College, Palakkad 3. Govt. Engg. College, Kozhikode 4. Govt. Engg. College, Wayanad 5. College of Engg., Kalloppara, Pathanamthitta 6. Co-operative Inst. of Tech., Vadakara, Kozhikode
2000	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Govt. Engg. College, Idukki 2. College of Engg., Karunagapally 3. College of Engg., Poonjar 4. College of Engg., Kidangoor, Kottayam 5. College of engg., Thrikkariapur 6. College of Engg., Thalassery, Kannur 7. College of Engg., Perumon, Kollam 8. University College of Engg., Trivandrum 9. College of Engg., Munnar
2001	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. L.B.S. Inst. of Tech. For Womwn, Trivandrum 2. Calicut University Inst. of Engg. & Tech., Thenhipalam 3. Amal Jyothi College of Engg., Kanjirappally, Kottayam 4. A.W.H. Engg. College, Kozhikode 5. K.M.C.T. College of Engg., Kozhikode 6. Mar Baselius Christian college of Engg. & Tech., Idukki 7. Marian Engineering College, Trivandrum 8. Viswa Jyothi College of Engg. & Tech., Ernakulam
2002	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Amritha Inst. of Tech. & Sc., Kollam 2. Adi Sankara Inst. of Engg. & Tech., Ernakulam 3. Baselius Mathew II College of Engg., Sasthamkotta, Kollam 4. Caarmel Engg. College, Ranni, Pathanamthitta 5. FISAT, Angamaly, Ernakulam 6. Ilahia College of Engg. & Tech., Muvattupuzha 7. Jyothi Engg. College, Cheruthuruthy 8. KMEA Engg. College, Alwaye 9. Mar Gregorious College of Engg. & Tech., Kottayam 10. Lurdes Matha College of Sc. & Tech., Trivandrum 11. Mar Baselius College of Engg. & Tech., Trivandrum 12. Musaliar College of Engg. & Tech., Pathanamthitta 13. Mohandas College of Engg. & Tech., Trivandrum 14. MEA Engg. College, Malappuram 15. MET's School of Engg., Mala, Thrissur 16. Saintgits College of Engg., Kottayam 17. Mangalam College of Engg., Kottayam 18. Muslim Association College of Engg., Trivandrum 19. Mount Zion College of Engg., Pathanamthitta 20. Nehru College of Engg. & Research, Thrissur 21. Rajagiri School of Engg. & Tech., Cochin 22. Sahul Hameed Memorial Engg. College, Kadakkal 23. Sahrdaya College of Engg. & Tech., Thrissur

	24. St. Joseph's College of Engg. & Tech., Kottayam 25. Sree Narayana Gurukulam College of Engg., Ernakulam 26. Sree Narayana Mangalam Inst. of Mngmt. & Tech., Ernakulam 27. Trvancore Engg. College, Ayoor, Kollam 28. TKM Institute of Tech., Kollam 29. Toc H Inst. of Sc. & Tech., Ernakulam 30. Vimal Jyothi Engg. College, Kannur 31. Yonus College of Engg. & Tech., Kollam
2003.	1. Al Ameen College of Engg., Pattambi, Malappuram 2. IES College of Engg., Thrissur 3. Mary Matha College of Engg., Thrissur 4. Vidya Academy of Sc. & Tech., Thrissur

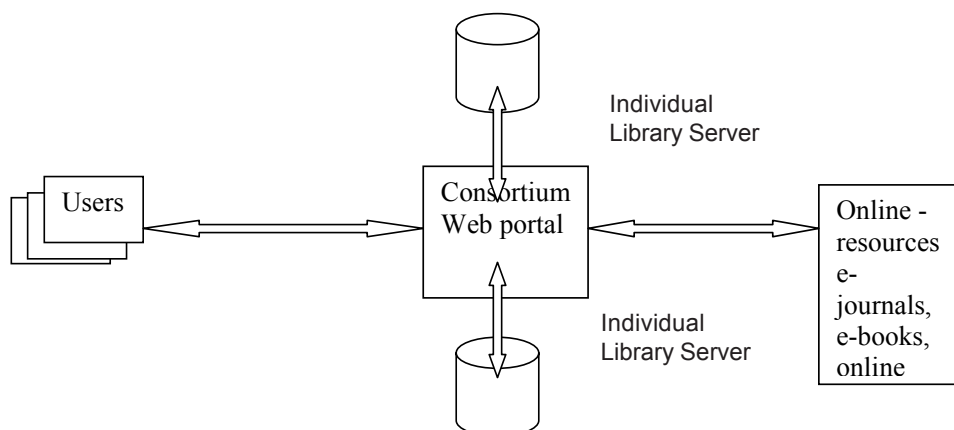
The following branches of Engineering are available in different colleges of Kerala

1. Applied Electronics & Instrumentation
2. Architecture
3. Bio Medical Engineering
4. Bio Technology
5. Chemical Engineering
6. Civil Engineering
7. Computer Science & Engineering
8. Electrical & Electronics Engineering
9. Electronics & Communication Engineering
10. Industrial Engineering
11. Information Technology
12. Instrumentation & Control Engineering
13. Mechanical Engineering
14. Polymer Engineering
15. Production Engineering

5. Proposed Model of the Consortium

It is necessary for all the participating libraries to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which clearly states that the common mission, constitution of the consortium, modus operandi, etc. There must be a Governing body comprising of all the Chief Librarians/Chief Information Officers of participating libraries. One of them shall act as a Chief Co-ordinator on rotation basis. Separate bodies shall be formed for Negotiation, Technical aspects, Publication, Training, etc.

The physical structure of the consortium shall be a distributed model with core collection on Engineering and Technology. Participating libraries may be developed as centres of excellence in a particular branch of Engineering and online resources like e-journals, e-books, online databases, etc. may be subscribed commonly.



6. Financial Control

In order to ensure financial viability the following aspects shall be decided by the Governing body.

1. Core journals must be subscribed by all participating libraries
2. Annual membership fee payable by members
3. For local collection/subscription to journals negotiation shall be done by Sub committee of Governing body on Negotiation
4. Publication, Information services, Consultancy shall be designed for generating fund for Consortium
5. Services on demand shall be started for raising the fund.

7. Some Aspects to be considered

While designing the consortium the following aspects to be considered

1. Arrangements shall be made for archival of electronic journals
2. Hardware and Software specifications are made for the Consortium
3. Mergers, Cessation and Stoppages of Publishing industry is taken care of
4. Copy right issues are considered
5. Unprecedented Technological advancement
6. Whether to share print resources among the participating libraries
7. Whether to open membership to Arts & Science Colleges
8. In case membership is open to Arts & Science Colleges, their collection on literature, history etc. can be made accessible to members of Consortium
9. It must enhance the knowledge base of individual libraries
10. Must be helpful in up holding the standards of member libraries in terms of sources and services.

8. Conclusion

It is understood that there is a national level consortium exclusively for Engineering and Technology namely Indian Digital Library in Engineering Science and Technology (INDEST). Out of the seventy six engineering colleges of Kerala only three colleges are able to afford the cost of being a member in INDEST. Of these three colleges two are funded by the AICTE. In short only one college out of seventy six is able to finance the expenditure by itself. In this context it is proposed that a regional consortium of all the Engineering colleges of Kerala is formed and this consortium can be hooked to INDEST in future if necessary. The motto of forming a consortium is that libraries can accomplish more by working together than they can individually.

9. References

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About Authors



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