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LIBRARY CONSORTIA IN INDIA

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Library Consortia in India

Kuljeet Kaur

Librarian, DMM College, Kurukshetra

Abstract – Due to the increasing number of internet resources and decreasing the finance in libraries, they are not able to procure all information resources according the demand of users. A library consortium is the only solution of that particular problem. Library consortia provide all electronic information to see their increasing cost. There are many consortia in India and they doing very well and many libraries get benefited by them. This paper deals with the concept of library consortia, its definition, benefits and challenges.

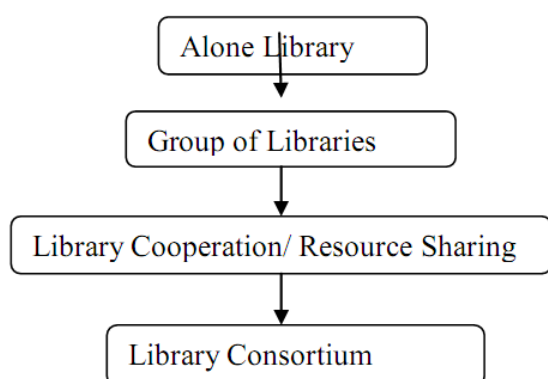
INTRODUCTION

One of the most complex issues facing Library Professionals is as how to manage change with ever growing avalanche of information and ever changing information technology. Resource Sharing is one of the largest names in the activities of library co-operation, co-ordination and collaboration between groups of libraries. A consortium is said to be a co-operative arrangement among groups or institutions or an association or society. Consortia are commonly formed to increase the purchasing capacity of the collaborating institutions.

DEFINITION

A Consortium could be described as a group of organizations who come together to fulfill a combined objective that usefully requires co-operation and the sharing of resources. And need to have a clear mutual goal in order to ensure their success. The aim should be to deliver "more than the sum of the individual parts"

LIBRARY CONSORTIA GENESIS



NEED OF LIBRARY CONSORTIA

Several factors and many reasons focus on the adoption of consortia among the libraries as: - quality of services enhanced, cost of service reduced, duplication of the stock reduced and more access to information with minimum or optimum payment ensured. Some main reasons are given below:-

Explosion of literature

Library material, which has grown in many forms and formats like books, periodical, research articles and non-book materials have made it beyond the control of library to acquire all the material which are being produced. The world's total yearly production of (Print, film, optical magnetic) content would thus require roughly 1.5 billion gigabytes of storage.

Lack of finance or limited finance

It is too hard to maintain the subscription of even for core journals due to the increasing cost of the journal subscription especially international ones by Indian universities which is even less than 300 titles, whereas the journal subscription rate of western university is much higher.

Demand of the different user's

A student may require book of educational purpose but a scientist or a researcher need some advanced literature and research article in the area of research. So no library is self-sufficient to meet all these type of requirements successfully.

Reduction of duplication of stock

It is also another reason for the consortia. By resource sharing the library can save the time, money and manpower by doing the basic activities like-accessioning, storage etc.

LIBRARY CONSORTIA IN INDIA

The Indian context consortia, formation started much later compared to many developed countries. With the beginning of the small group of libraries started coming together and made the highway to access a long amount of information. Many consortia are being run successfully by different organizations in India. Some of them are given below:-

CSIR-(Council of scientific and industrial research)

CSIR has 40 national laboratories carrying out R & D work in the area of engineering, Biological, Chemical, Physical, Environmental and information sciences. The CSIR e-journals consortium provide accessibility to 4500 electronic journals published by leading publishers and learned societies

INDEST (Indian national digital library in Engineering science and Technology)

The ministry of human resource development has set up the INDEST consortium. The ministry provides funds required for providing differential access to electronic resources subscribed for consortium to core members through the consortia headquarters set up at (IIT) Delhi. Total no of members in the consortia has now grown to 115. INDEST consortia subscribes to over 4000 electronic journals.

FORSA (The forum for resource sharing in Astronomy and Astrophysics)

FORSA come in existence in the year 1982, for sharing the resources available in astronomy libraries in the country. In 2004 this group has extended its membership to physics and maths libraries in the country who have common interests to carry forward the aim of FORSA and its activities. FORSA has 12 members.

IIM (Indian Institute of Management)

IIM consortium has been in existence since last two years. It approach the publishers of e-journals and database in area of management. "Six Indian Institutes of Management have formed a consortium and jointly approached the publishers of e-journals and databases in the area of Management, Social Behavioral Science source. They have been giving IP enabled access to e-journals. Well renowned publishers like Elsevier (247 titles), Blackwell (268 titles), Kluwer (33 titles), Wiley (3 titles) provide their resources online to the members of the IIM Consortium. Apart from 25 titles free against print subscription, 2,300 titles as a part of EBSCO databases and 800 titles as part of ABI Inform database have been made available to users of IIM libraries electronically". (Bansode, 2007)

ISRO (Indian Space Research Organization)

The resource sharing initiatives taken by ISRO libraries by avoiding duplicate subscription to bibliographic database is expected to result in saving of Rs.41 lacs per year, further the amount saved by cancellation of duplicate subscription could be used to provide access to e-journals for the benefits of all the centre's. A move is there to form formal consortium for providing access to e-journals and also J-Gate to custom contents for the consortia. (Bansode, 2004)

HELINET (Health science Library and Information network)

It is successfully implemented consortium which is first of its kind in the country. It was started to improve the quality of education and research in health science institutions of the country. Through enhanced access to high quality medical information. Its goal is to deliver information to the user in the exact time period. HELINET's goal is to deliver information to users' desk-top with round-the-clock access. The major benefit of this consortium is expanded access to core international e-journals. Before the launch of the consortium, access to foreign medical journals by each college was limited to around 100. HELINET has made it possible for each college to access and share the contents in more than 600 journals.

UGC-INFONET

Lack of funds libraries have been forced to discontinue the scholarly journals. For providing the current literature, UGC has initiated the UGC-INFONET. E-journal Consortium. Under the consortium, about 4,000 full text scholarly electronic journals from 25 publishers across the globe can be accessed. The consortium provides current as well as archival access to core and peer-reviewed journals in different disciplines. The whole programme has been implemented in different phases. It covers almost all areas of learning like Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, Physical and Chemical Sciences, Life Sciences, Computer Sciences, Mathematics and Statistics etc. and other subject areas are to be added in near future. The programme is wholly funded by the UGC and monitored by Information Library Network (INFLIBNET).

INTERNATIONAL LIBRARY CONSORTIA

- ❖ Arizona University Libraries Consortium [USA].
- ❖ Cape Library Cooperative [South Africa].
- ❖ Consortium of Academic Libraries in Manchester [United Kingdom].
- ❖ (Co-operative Action by Victorian Academic Libraries) [Australia].

- ❖ The Council of Connecticut Academic Library Directors [United States].
- ❖ Council of Prairie and Pacific University Library [Canada].
- ❖ Illinois Library Computer Systems Organization [United States].
- ❖ Missouri Research Consortium of Libraries, [United States]
- ❖ Pennsylvania Academic Library Connection Initiative [United States]
- ❖ UNILINC Limited [Australia].
- ❖ Washington Research Library Consortium [United States].

ADVANTAGES OF LIBRARY CONSORTIA

- ❖ 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.
- ❖ 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.

DISADVANTAGES OF LIBRARY CONSORTIA

- ❖ 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 is necessary

CHALLENGES OR BARRIERS FOR CONSORTIA

It has been proved that consortium is cost effective. With the help of consortia libraries can save a lot of expenditure and saved money can be redirected to enhancing other library services, with the benefits there are some challenges also which are faced by consortia. It prevent the libraries to take up such initiatives.

1. Many libraries are allowed to jump into the ban wagon of consortia without considering its automation status, with the availability of some internet connectivity libraries but their approach remain inaccessible till complete automation is done.

2. The resources of all participating libraries need to be balance to certain limit, without some form of parity of collection of each library there is some loss of one library becoming a lending library while others remain borrowing libraries.
3. Participating library should have a proper system for interlibrary lending. For example working hours of a library.
4. Without the absence of union catalogue, participating libraries would be left in dark of what is available with the other library.
5. Unavailability of web environment will stop the participating libraries from accessing online subscriptions. Marking each library resources available on line would facilitate greater access.
6. There may be its own specific problems of an institution as work culture, environmental differences. For example working hours may be limited.
7. Library leadership will begin with enabling everyone who works in library to grow knowledge, and ability. Good image of a librarian is one who knows his staff very well and motivates the staff constantly to work
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CONCLUSION

Consortia are all about to share resources and improving access to information. These resources can be shared among libraries that have common goals, mission, and common users also. Today, a library consortium is very necessary to see the increasing demand of users and decreasing the budget of library. Because in this limited budget library can't fulfill all approaches of users to see the diversity of demand of users. It is the co-operation task to reduce the cost of purchasing information. Hence Library consortia, provide physical and electronic delivery of material at anywhere and anytime.

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