Library Consortia in India At a Glance

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Abstract - The dawn of information technology in general and World Wide Web (www) in specific is becoming medium for information interchange and storage. In this situation, the most of the libraries are buying e-information for its client's requirements, because e-information retrieval is very fast and can be easily provided to clients. Consortia are very effective tools for e-information to provide authentic and specific information. This paper opens a full flash momentum of library consortia system and consortia in India. The paper also covers the historical background and rise of library consortium movement, its types, why consortia is required in libraries and desirable features of consortia in libraries.

Keywords: -Library Consortia; Consortium Movement, E-consortia, Consortium-India, Resource Sharing.

Introduction

Today's world belongs to Information Communication Technology (ICT), without specific, authentic and fast information retrieval; libraries can't satisfy its clients. A consortium is such hub of information which provides elaborated and updated electronics information to related subjects. Using consortia easy to share electronic-contents and enhance resource sharing system and also improve others additional services in libraries, like Current awareness service (CAS), Selective dissemination of information (SDI), indexing and abstracting services. Consortium helps to associated libraries for achieving specific goals and builds better communication to each-other. Consortium is Latin word which means Partnership, Cooperative Relationship between Institutions and Organizations. "Word Consortia comes from word 'Consors' which means (con- together) and (Sors - fate)". [1].

According to Collins Co-build Advanced Learning English Dictionary, (2006) "A consortium is a group of people or firms who have agreed to co-operate with each other"[2] According to Webster's Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language, (1989) "A combination of financial institutions, capitalists, etc., for carrying into effect some financial operation requiring large resources of capital" [3]

Especially in the field of Library, Consortia are very important tool and source of information to help the growing research activities in related field. Consortia have very important e-content association to help developing and create Digital Library, and provide e-services for its clients. The management and networking of library consortia based on e-content is more efficient than print material on different parameters i.e. time efficiency in access, cost-efficiency, consistency, durability, multi-user access and authorization etc.

Library Consortium

Library consortium is an information inter-change association formed by libraries for co-operatives, networks, alignment, coalition, concomitant or partnership. Consortium can be national, international, regional or inter-institutional level.

Library consortia provide a connection of common goals of libraries for the help of its client needs. In consortium, group libraries can easily exchange their resources to other group's libraries and use other library resource to help its institutions client requirements. In library consortium, library's members share different types of resources i.e. e-content (e-books, e-journals, and other e-media), catalogue, OPAC (Online Public Access Catalogue), and other library services. Library consortium covers much larger ground than a simple inter-library loan agreement. There are various definitions of library consortium as follows:

According to Harrod's librarians' glossary 10th ed. "Resource sharing organizations formed by libraries; also termed co-operatives, network, collectives, alliances, or partnership. Services covered may vary, but often comprise co-operative collection development, education and training, preservation, centralized services, systems support, consultation, and administrative support need for cataloguing, inter-library lending, union listing, retrospective conversion, and co-operative purchasing."[4]
According to ANE's encyclopedic dictionary of library and information science, "An association of independent libraries or library systems established by formal agreement usually for the purpose of resource sharing, Membership may be restricted to a specific geographic region, type of library (public, academic and special), or subject specialization."[5]

Historical Background

In the past, when a library consortium was not formed, even at that time libraries also shared their documents through some types of methods like resource sharing, library co-operation, and inter library loan. All libraries, according to this methodology share catalogue, storage facilities, collection developments, and human resources at local, national and regional level. But today's world is of information and now a day's information is available in e-form, and it's explosion in very high percentages, so libraries can't share their e-content easily through in this old method, So libraries needed to update these old methods. Consortia are one of the best alternative comes from updated of all these old methods for sharing e-content in today's information age.

Rise of library Consortium Movement

Consortia is an updated version of inter library loan service and resource sharing. Some main factors emerged in library consortia world-wide is given below:

- Emerging new civilization: The information civilization
- Growth of technology
- Time problem
- Increase research ability
- Give home library facilities
- Limited finance
- Client demand
- Limited resources sharing area of inter library loan

Types of consortia
        Many types of Consortia in world-wide such as:

National Consortia:

National consortia provide service at national level, examples include:
- N-LIST in India (National Library and Information Services Infrastructure for Scholarly Content)
- INDEST (Indian National Digital Library in Engineering Sciences & Technology)

Regional Consortia:
- A regional consortium is providing particular regional level services, examples include:
- ISPOR-Asia consortium (International society for Pharmacoeconomics and Outcomes Research)
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International Consortia:
- An international consortium is providing international level services, examples include:
- INFOSEC Consortium
- TIMC (The Indian Mathematics Consortium)
- ICICI knowledge park (IKP- Innovation Knowledge Progress)

Subject based Consortia:
        Subject base consortia provide particular subject related information resources, examples include:
- CeRA (Consortium e-resource in Agriculture)
- HELINET (Health Sciences Library & Information Networks)
- FORSA (Forum for Resource Sharing in Astronomy and Astrophysics)
- NML-ERMED Consortium (electronic information resources in the field of medicine for delivering effective health.

Why consortia is required in libraries

Avoids duplication of work in field and reduces man power in libraries:
A consortium is such hub of information which provides elaborated and updated knowledge which helps any researcher to avoid duplicacy in research work or any type of repetition. And also its renders information systematically that requirement of extra manpower for resource management goes down as well as it is time-efficient system.

Information explosion:

From the last decade, the burst of information is posing a serious challenge to a common client while searching for relevant information in his related subject, so library science moved towards the need of a system which can help them while providing relevant & updated information to its clients, and " Consortia" is a system which appropriately fulfils the need of time, because its ordered & well-placed information helps clients to find his related education matter efficiently in a time manner.

Demand of electronic resources:

Information technology has highly effected the traditional library system, this impact can be seen generally these days readers not satisfy only print media to improve their knowledge but also demand for electronic content. The impact of information technology is so much service (intense) on library so it is very challenging to find right & relevant piece of information on any matter on internet whereas in consortia based library system, it is very easy.

Different types of client's need :

Different types of reader access the resources of library as per their individual requirement and library must cater the need of each client so that they may complete their research work in a timely manner efficiently and at this point, the traditional library system its working lags so the need of time inculcate a new system to full fill the requirement of every client and thus consortia comes into the picture.

Consortia help to improve impossibility of self-sufficiency and solve budget issue:

A consortium makes the library self-dependent because traditional library system cannot go to an extent to, manage & record every type of information in hard-copy manner. consortia is such type of system which keeps the resources of different libraries in collected format which improve the robustness and self-dependency in any library system. And in the some organization, library may be an Non-Profit Organisation (NPO) or Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) sub-group so it may have limited budget to fund its resources and requirement as per need of clients so there was a requirement of such system which may play a crucial role in terms of monetary matter while working more efficiently & better than the old (previous)

system and thus consortia is only answer which provides information properly irrespective of budget-constraints.

Client Satisfaction:

The right objective of any library is not only providing information but providing proper and ordered information in time-bound fashion as well as up dated too, because updation in this age of Information Technology is unpredictable so, these was need of such a system which can caters all this issue positively and consortia is that tool.
Help achieve institutes goals and information retrieval:

The research and development is crucial element in any organization development and here consortia help researcher fraternity a lot to improve their research work in a systemic way. Consortia provide the updated information too which is the biggest requirement for any researchers.

Other few important factors why consortia is required in libraries

- Creation of a union catalogue.
- Find quick access of information by providing 24/7 library access facility.
- Increase standard of research.
- For saving the time of clients.

Desirable features of consortia

Remote accessible with providing 24/7 hours :
A library consortium plays an important role while providing remote accessibility with help of user's credentials, this also a time-efficient technique for content search and it may be stored in time-stamped manner. This functionality gives the consortia a cutting edge over traditional library and also implements library science's fourth law "save the time of user", as well as library consortium provides 24/7 hours resources accessibility service to library's users through internet at personal desktop by using IP Address/ Password based security System.

Solved storage problem:
Storage issue stands on top of list, problems and challenges faced by the traditional libraries and this issue of content storage was fully solved by consortia system with help of "Client-Server based Architecture." In better way of external storage, some other secondary storage media devices i.e. USB drive, CD-ROM, etc. were also supported by consortia making it robust and scalable.

OPAC service:

Content based specific searching is a big hurdle for researcher and here this issue is solved very efficiently by OPAC Service which is an important constituent of library

system. Consortia acts in similar way for finding the content using numerous methodologies such as "Search, title, Subject search, Boolean operator search etc.

Saves the time of clients by simple search through internet:

Libraries provide information to its clients in an effective manner by organizing print information in different way. In similar way it stores the e-content in a systematic manner to provide e-information to its clients. Consortia provide effective information in same way by utilizing different search function which ultimately saves time & resources.

Building better communication among different libraries:

In a rough sense consortium seems as an updated system which function on collective partnership of Inter-Library loaning. This facilitate the working of several libraries contributing together with help of different tools collectively to provide right content to their clients on a collective agreement based system, by this way a better and meaningful communication is achieved to bring the goal faster

Help makes digital library:

The development in ICT is brining betterment in traditional library system too and libraries are moving towards digital system (Libraries) and libraries are trying best to render their best services to readers in a digitally supported system, and to achieve this goal, an information hub is required which is systematically based on electronic forms. Library consortia is a such a system which provides e-information in ordered manner and by this way it plays an important role in process of conversion of traditional library to digital library
.
Some other important desirable features of consortia:
- Avoid duplication in the field.
- Solved maintenance issue:
- Utilization of funds properly:
- To help give better library services.
- Enhance Library Services like like Current awareness service (CAS), Selective dissemination of information (SDI), indexing and abstracting services. etc.
- Cost sharing for technical and training Support and Cost reduction through group purchasing.
- Consortium provides more professional services to its client for develop research activity in related fields.
- Marketing of Library Resources.

Consortia in India

Consortia is in high demand by utmost libraries of many organization in India these days, because network based handling & management of e-content is easier than print-

media along with facility of remote-access & content sharing. Considering all these points' consortia is a full phased package of systematic information. Budget friendly and continuous update is also considered major parameters to decide the priority of consortia over other library systems in libraries to provide better e-information for its clients. Many consortia are being run successfully by different organizations in India listed in Table 8.

Table 8.1: Consortia in India

Consortia's Name and URL	Year of establishment &Developer	Name of organization providing fund	Members University/ College /institute	Head-office
CeRA (Consortium e-Resource in Agriculture) http://cera.iari.res.in/index.php/en/	2007 ICAR	Dept. of Agricultural Research and Education	200+ Agriculture/Animal Science University/ 15 Publisher	Indian Council of Agricultural Research, Krishi Anusandhan Bhawan-I, Pusa Campus, New Delhi
CSIR's The National Knowledge Resource (NKRC) http://nkrc.niscair.res.in/indexpage.php	2009 NISCAIR	DSIR-Dept. of Scientific and Industrial Research	CSIR & DST institutes 28 publishers	NISCAIR 14, Satsang Vihar Marg New Delhi
DAE-UGC Consortium for Scientific Research http://www.csr.res.in/	1991 UGC	UGC-INFONET/ Dept. of Atomic Energy	DAE-UGC 325 Pub.	Indore Centre University Campus, Khandwa Road, Indore
DeLCON DBT-E-Library http://delcon.gov.in/	2009 DBT	Ministry of Science and Technology, Govt. of India	DBT Institutions including ICGEB, 1171 Pub.	Dept. of Biotechnology NBRC, NH-8, Gurgaon, Haryana.
DRDO http://ejournal.drdo.org.in/ejournals/	2009 Ministry of Defence	Ministry of Defence, Govt. of India	611 Publication	DESIDOC, Metcalfe House, Delhi
ERMED http://www.ermed.in/default.aspx	National Medical Library	Direct.General of Health Services. Ministry of Health & Family Welfare	Medical Colleges/Institutions including ICMR 243 Publication	National Medical Library Ansari Nagar, Ring Road, New Delhi
FORSA (Forum for Resource Sharing in Astronomy and Astrophysics) http://www.rri.res.in/htmls/library/forsa.html	1981 Raman Research Institute	Astronomical Society of India	11 Members E-Books 13 Pub. Databases: 2	C. V. Raman Avenue, Sadashivanagar, Bangalore
HELNET RGUHS (Health Science Library and Information Network) http://www.rguhs.ac.in/helinethostconsortium/homehelinethost.htm	2002 Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Science (RGUHS)	*Ministry of Health & Family Welfare-Government of India.*	660+ Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Science 2000+ Pub	Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Science 4th 'T' Block, Jayangar, Bangalore
ICICI Knowledge Park Now IKP http://www.ikpknowledgepark.com/	ICICI and Govt .of A.P.	ICICI and Government of Andhra Pradesh	IKP Knowledge Park has. 65 members	IKP Knowledge Park Genome Valley. Hyderabad
IIM-Consortium (Indian Institution Management) http://www.iimk.ac.in/libportal/iimconsortium.php	2000 All Indian Institutions of Management	MHRD & IIM Community	14 members IIM 1499 Publication	Vikram Sarabhai Library, IIM Ahmedabad, Vastrapur, Gujarat
INDEST-AICTE (Consortium Indian National Digital Library In Engineering Science & Technology) http://paniit.iitd.ac.in/indest/	2003 INDEST AICTE	MHRD	INDEST-AICTE 5529 Publication & 23 E-resources	INDEST-AICTE Consortium Central Library , New Delhi

MCIT Library Consortium (Ministry of Communications and Information Technology) http://mcitconsortium.nic.in/	2005 MCIT	MCIT	9 Members E-Resources'	MCIT Deity, 6 CGO Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi
N-LIST Consortium (National Library and Information Services Infrastructure for Scholarly Content) http://nlist.inflibnet.ac.in/about.php	2014 UGC INFLIBNET	MHRD & UGC	251643 Members (UGC 6000+ e-journals 300000+ e-books	INFLIBNET Centre, Infocity, Gandhinagar, Gujarat
e-ShodhSindhu: Consortium for Higher Education Electronic Resources http://www.inflibnet.ac.in/ess/index.php	UGC-INFONET	UGC & INFLIBNET MHRD	4317 members 15000+ e-journals 3135000+ e-book	INFLIBNET Centre, Infocity, Gandhinagar, Gujarat
UGC-INFONET Digital Library Consortium, http://www.inflibnet.ac.in/econ/ It has been merged into e-Shodh Sindhu Consortium	2003 UGC and INFLIBNET	UGC & INFLIBNET	433 members 7500+ journals	UGC-INFONET INFLIBNET Centre, Infocity, Gandhinagar, Gujarat
UDL Consortia Universal Digital Library- Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIIT), Allahabad, https://udl.iiita.ac.in/about%20udl.htm	2003 IIIT Allahabad	Govt. of India & IIT Carnegie Melon Univ. (USA)	*32 members*	Indian Institute of Information Technology Deoghat, Jhalwa, Allahabad
VTU Consortium (Visvesvaraya Technological University Consortium) http://vtuconsortium.in/	2013 Visvesvaraya Technological University	Visvesvaraya Technological University & State Govt. of Karnataka	211 members 8 publisher 8611+ Journals 6514 Conf. Proc." 3043 Standards	VTU Consortium, V T Univ. "JnanaSangama", Belagavi Karnataka State

Conclusion

Consortium provides physical and electronic delivery of library study materials. Consortium covers much larger ground than the simple Inter Library Loan (ILL) agreement. Consortium is important source for libraries and really helping the specific research activities by providing relevant information with fast retrieval services for clients as well as save the time under limited budget. Consortium is effective tools of to access latest information and archival backup or perpetual access to e-resources. After review different library consortium system activities and digital library tools following characteristic are desired in standard consortium e.g. that should be time efficient, budget friendly, ability of remote accessibility, and simple search based strategy systems.

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