LIBRARY CONSORTIA IN INDIA

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Abstract :-

Library consortia is now being overhead globally. It is more because of electronic or digital form of information. Consortia are all about sharing and improving access to information. A library consortium is a group of two or more libraries that have agreed to cooperate with each other in order to fulfill certain similar needs, usually resource sharing. The increasing price of published electronic journals, indexing and abstracting databases along with the traditional published print subscriptions has forced library community to explore alternating means of subscription. This paper briefly discusses the concept, need and major consortia initiatives in India.

Keywords:-*Library consortia, Networking, E-resources, E-journals, consortia management.*

Introduction:-

It is not possible for one library or information centre's to hold the full stock of information resources or to procure all information, which may be in demand by its users. To solve this problem library cooperation started long ago such as interlibrary loan, document

delivery, library network. At present the more accepted system of resource sharing is called library consortia. Consortia approach is one of the ways of maintaining cooperation and coordination among the libraries and infact; it has emerged as the 'state of the art' in library cooperation in recent years. Consortia are commonly formed to increase the purchasing power of collaborating institutions to expand the resource availability and offer automated services. The idea of consortium is not new. There were instances of several libraries coming voluntarily for the mutual benefit of respective users, just like cooperative, it was the earliest stage of library cooperation. In the second stage computerized networks come into vogue for the sharing of resources. With the advent of e-resources the concept of consortia has been mooted mainly for the acquisition of e-journals.

Consortia may be formed at local, regional, national or international level, on a functional or formal basis, or on subject basis. Majority of the libraries particularly in developing countries are thinking today about the cooperative purchasing for any group of libraries.

Features of Library Consortia

These are the features of library consortia following below-

1. It provides each organization and institutions with the capacity to share their resources without sacrificing the individuality of each member library.

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

3. Staff development and interaction with quality of service.

4. 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.

5. To expand interlibrary searching at less cost is possible.

6. Uncertainties in legal issues are handled with more confidence.

Need of Library Consortia

Several factors call for the adoption of consortium among libraries. Some of the major factors are :-

1. **Literature explosion:-**The voluminous growth of literature have made it possible for a library to attain self-sufficiency. Library materials , which have grown exponentially in many forms and formats like books, periodicals research papers and non-book

materials have made it beyond the control of a library to acquire all the material, which are being produced.

2. **Limited finance: -** Crunching funds is another factor that leads libraries to go for consortia development activities. Libraries are finding it hard to maintain the subscription to even for core journals due to ever increasing cost of the journal subscription especially the international journals.

3. **User demand: -** Access to information differs from user to user. No library is self sufficient to meet all the need of the users/ scientists. The demand of the users is changing and ever increasing with newer revolutions and developments.

4. **Professionalization: -** The professionalization of library service has the most important influence on consortia. The changing role of librarian from gatekeeper of information to manage gateways to information has enhanced the value of library consortia.

Types of Library Consortia

Open Consortia

This type of consortia is open ended and they provide the facility for the participating libraries to join the leave according to their interests. This type of consortia is generally motivated by small homogeneous groups who have a need to cross-share the resources in a specific subject area.

Example: - INDEST it is run by ministry of HRD,GOC

Closed Group Consortia

The membership stays closed within the defined group. This type of Consortia emerge either by affiliation or by a strong bond of homogeneity.

Example :- CSIR, IIMs, DAE Consortia.

Centrally Funded Model

This type of consortia solely depends on the central funding agency. The financial responsibility of running the consortium is shouldered by the parent's body.

Example:- UGC INFONET,CSIR,ICMR consortia

Shared Budget Model

This is only alternative where central funding is not coming.

Example:- IIM,FORSA.

National Consortium

National consortium is similar to CALIS in china. National level licensing of information products could be achieved towards this end.

Example:- UGC INFONET,INDEST.

Consortia in India

INDEST Consortium (Indian National Digital Library of Engineering, Science and Technology):-

INDEST is a consortium set up and funded by the ministry of MHRD in India. The ministry provides funds required for providing differential access to electronic resources subscribed to the members science, IIT's,IIM's,NIT's and a few other centrally funded govt. institutions. The access to the resources is being provided directly from the publisher websites. Electronic resources subscribed by INDEST consortium are full text e-resources like(ASCE) American society of civil engineers, ACM digital library, EBSCO databases, Elseviers science, Emerald full-text and bibliographical databases like INSPEC, J-gate, MathsciNET, Web of science, Scifinder scholar.

CSIR (Council of Scientific and Industrial Research):-

CSIR has also formed a consortium for which National institute of science communication and information resources (NISCAIR), a constituent establishment of CSIR with the merger of INSDOC and NISCOM, has identified as nodal agency. 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, 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 subject.

FORSA (Forum for Resource Sharing in Astronomy and Astrophysics)

It was established in 1980's due to proliferation of information, library professionals working in the institutes where astronomy was one of the main thrust area of research felt the need to come together to form a forum , which helps in sharing and exchange of information. This consortium provides access to 25 e-journals from Kluwer to their users with the payment of 12.5% over and above the print subscription. This consortium has successfully negotiated with publishers of NATURE to provide access to its e-version at a price almost 1/3 of the list price.

IIM CONSORTIA (Indian Institute of Management):-

Six Indian Institute 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 Blackwell, Elsevier, Kluwer, Wiley provides their resources online to the

members of the IIM consortium. Apart from 25 titles free against print subscription, 2300 titles as a part of EBSCO databases and 800 titles as part of ABI form database have been made available to users of IIM libraries electronically.

UGC-INFONET:-

The university grants commission, India has launched a consortium of e-journals for its member universities to provide access to journals through its nationwide communication network UGC-INFONET. On behalf of UGC, the INFLIBNET is executing the UGC-INFONET project in collaboration with the ERNET. This consortium aims to provide the use of electronic database and full text access to journals by the research and academic community of the country.

All the universities who are under the preview of UGC have been provided UGC-INFONET connectivity and access to scholarly e-journals and databases. This consortium subscribes to journals published by American chemical society, American institute of physics, Annual reviews, Cambridge university press, project MUSE, Royal society of chemistry. UGC-INFONET is a boon to the higher education system in the country. It covers almost all areas of learning like Arts, Humanities, social sciences, mathematics and statistics etc and other subject areas are added to the near future. The programme is wholly funded by the UGC and monitored by INFLIBNET.

HELNET (Health Science Library and Information Network):-

A HELINET is hosted by Rajiv Gandhi University of health sciences, Banglore. 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. HELINET's goal is to deliver information to users desktop with round-the –clock access. The major benefit of this consortium is expanded access to core international e- journals.

ICICI KNOWLEDGE PARK:-

The knowledge park at Hyderabad has signed an agreement with Informatics India Ltd. Provide access to J-gate custom contents for consortia service to four Hydrabad based and one Pune based R&D Institutions. Initially this service is free for the members with the objective of making it self-sustaining in the large stage.

UGC-DAE Consortium for Scientific Research

DAE library consortia (Department of atomic energy)

To promote interaction amongst the scientists working in the research centers of the dept. of atomic energy and the faculty from the universities and other institutions of higher learning and enable young students to work on programmes of national importance under the joint guidance of the faculty from the universities and the scientists of DAE, so as to provide an organic linkage between the university system and research center of DAE, the UGC and atomic energy commission have joined together. DAE will continue to make the major research facilities accessible to the researchers from the universities and institutions of higher learning through the consortium. The DAE and the consortium will participate in each others training, education, research and development programmes. Both sides will set up a mechanisms to arrange discussion meetings refreshers/ orientation programmes and ensure that there is a free flow of ideas and researches between the university system and the DAE institutions.

ICMR (Indian Council of Medical Research):-

As part of modernization the Indian Council of Medical Research has undertaken many new initiatives like subscribing to JCC @ICMR and full text electronic databases i.e proquest. The ICMR has identified five core bio-medical journals and subscribes for e-version in consortia mode to all ICMR institutes. These include Lancet, Science, BJM, NEJM and Nature. These e-journal consortia will be beneficial for cross sharing of information among the ICMR institutes.

Conclusion:-

The advent of e-publishing has brought a revolution in journal publication, subscription as well as access to the scholarly literature. India should also take initiatives to establish national archival centers like United States. The mission of the national archival centre could be build archival collection of important scholarly journal literature. Library consortia are really helping the researchers, faculties and the students to retrieve the information and save their time. It benefits the libraries to procure more electronic resources in the library with limited library budget. Consortia are tools, which will aid in exploiting the features of the e-resources as well as in effective saving. It serves not only to effect economy in terms of time and money but also ensures much better services to the users.

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