

# **Library Consortia: New Way of Resource Sharing in Network**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*The advancement of technology on one side and its application in libraries to other side, leads to the changes in libraries from single platform to network based system of libraries such as library consortia. The present paper highlights to the concept and meaning of the library consortium. Why the library consortium is needed, features of library consortium. The attempt has also been made to discuss some models of consortium, and prerequisites for formation of library consortium.*

**KEYWORDS:** Library Consortia, ICT, Open Consortia, Consortia formation, Model of Consortia.

## **INTRODUCTION**

During the last few decades, tremendous information revolution and proliferation have brought about drastic changes to the function and services in all type of libraries. Information exchange or sharing of information takes new mode of cooperation. With the infusion of Information Communication Technology, the cooperation mode has gone under a transformation from print based environment to digital environment and which results in the formation of new term library consortium. Library consortium is not a new phenomenon. Previously it was known as library cooperation or library resource sharing. Primary purpose of establishing a library consortium is to share physical resources.

## **CONCEPT OF LIBRARY CONSORTIA**

A library consortium is a group of two or more libraries that have agreed together to cooperate with each other in order to fulfill certain similar needs usually resource sharing. It is not about sharing the resources but also improving access of information.

## **DEFINITIONS OF LIBRARY CONSORTIA**

Hirsh on (1999) explained that “Library Consortia is a generic term to indicate any group of libraries that are working together towards a common goal whether to expand cooperation on traditional library services such as collection development or electronic information services”

## **WHY NEED FOR LIBRARY CONSORTIUM**

### **Information Explosion**

Now a day's information is exploiting in various forms and it is impossible for any individual library to acquire information in all the form. In that case it has become essential to acquire resources through Library consortia.

### **Professionalism**

Role of Library professionals has been changed from mere conservator to facilitator or knowledge and its due to changes has taken place in all the areas.

### **Technological Revolution**

The rapid progress of information technology through research and development activities all over the world, now tries to satisfy the information need of human being in diverse manner.

## **FEATURES OF LIBRARY CONSORTIA**

- ✓ Library consortia provide 24x7 availability of information and resources to the users.
- ✓ Library consortia promotes e-publishing of information variously.
- ✓ Library consortia assist in direct purchasing from publisher which helps to reduce the cost of purchase. It also promotes rational use of funds.
- ✓ Library consortia prove very helpful and supporting in providing back volume of information.
- ✓ It avoids space problem as using library consortia one don't need to purchase or acquire every resource in the library.
- ✓ Library consortia help in development of ICT environment which make possibility of obtaining best reading for the largest number per institution.

## **MODELS OF CONSORTIA**

### **Open consortia**

This type of consortia is open ended and participating libraries have the freedom to join or leave from consortium at any time. INDEST consortium is an example of open consortia for the model of consortium.

### **Closed group consortia**

In the type of consortia formed by the same type of member and has a common need to cross the resources in specific area. Example: CSIR, DAE, IIM etc..

### **Centrally funded model**

This type of consortium depends on the central funding agency and parent body shoulders the financial responsibility of running the consortia. Example: INDEST, UGC – INFONET, CSIR, ICMR etc.

### **Share budget model**

The information of such type of consortia is with the appropriate sharing of funds with of participation member and management of fund is individually handled. Example: IIM and FORSA model.

### **Publishers initiatives**

In this type of consortia publisher offered a deep discount consortium price the participating libraries. Example: SCIENCE DIRECT, EMERAD INSIGHT.

### **Subject based consortia**

These types of consortia deal with specific subject. FORSA, UGC, DAE are examples of this type of mode.

### **E-Journal consortia**

INDEST, JIM Consortia, ICAR consortia are examples of E-Journal Consortia.

## **PREREQUISITE FOR CONSORTIA FORMATION**

Formation of consortia needs most important four prerequisites which are below:

### **Hardware**

It must necessarily be a Pentium PC/Server which would support modular enhancements likes CD writer, document Scanner, CD Net and other network elements.

### **Software**

It composed of different components like operating system which could be either commonly used windows or UNIX, LINUX etc. and any library software which would enhance handling in house resources in an information centre.

### **Netware**

One of the major elements for successful library consortia is a good network infrastructure in addition to Local Area Network. The campus internet connectivity with a decent bandwidth has to be provided. This could be made possible only with dedicated telephone line and must also be supplemented by fax facility.

### **Human ware**

Library personnel need to be trained in using latest gadgets with which relevant information is stored, analyzed and disseminated to potential users. Training must also be given to library staff to create databases of library documents.

## **LIBRARY CONSORTIUM: ISSUES**

- Identification of resources is the major issue in Library Consortium
- Pricing issues
- Issue related to the access.
- The problem of access rights, direct access form publishers and through nodal agency by mounting the database on them.
- Licensing and copyright issues.

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- Lack of technological infrastructure.
- Archival issues at the end of year the publishers should supply access to that issue permanently or supply a copy of that issue in CD or other form.
- Lack of training for users and staff. Library consortia required special skills in handling electronic resources.
- Lack of coordination. Library consortia are lacking for co-ordination of present activities and preparation of new ones.

## **CONCLUSION**

In the light of above discussion establishment of better Consortium integrating intellectual access are all the distinct steps moving towards the 21st century libraries. There must be accessibility to the variety of information reserves particularly in an environment of proliferating electronic information resources in order to education, research and lifelong learning. It would therefore be best to consult with the established consortia to achieve this goal. There is no doubt that library consortia will be able to share the resources for more effectively and efficiently than individual Libraries.

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