

LIBRARY CONSORTIUM: A COLLABORATING APPROACH TOWARDS PROMOTION AND PROVISION OF E-RESOURCES FOR MODERN ACADEMIC PURSUITS ON SINGLE PLATFORM

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Abstract

Libraries are meant to keep the relevant reading material for its users whether the material is in print or non-print form. A well-equipped and managed library can offer the better library services to its users which lead to recognize the existence of libraries in the present academic pursuit. Even, ultra-modern facilities and services of the libraries have become the key stone of the modern academic structure. To understand the relevance of libraries for educational system, first, the scholar communities have to understand the changing orientation of the educational system and approaches of the generation 'Z' users towards libraries. Emerging technologies can enforce to change the inner and outer structure of the libraries and its services. Library consortium has put forth so many challenges in front of the libraries, thereby libraries have undergone with many remarkable changes which are responsible to genesis the new concepts of the library viz. Hybrid Library, Digital Library, Electronic Library, Virtual Library and Mobile Library etc. In this series, many studies have been conducted and their results were amazing that library consortium strengthen the libraries to sustain in the twenty first century academic environment.

Key-words: Library, Print, Non-print, Library Consortium and Academic Community.

Introduction

State-of-the-art library services are required in the twenty first century academic pursuit and its scholars. It has been realized by the eminent scholars of the world that the result of the researches which have been conducting different parts of the world, must be available to every researcher; thereby duplicate work in the research may be avoided and controlled up to

fair level. In the olden days, the libraries had been spent lot of amount of their budget on the collection development, although libraries got success to procure the rarest of rare documents in their collection but their services could not reach or available to every user and after a span of time, it has been realized that how the services of the libraries may be extended even may be available round the clock. Thereafter, the eminent scholars had put emphasized to incorporate the applications of information and communication technology with the libraries and information & resource centers so that the collection of the library may be available for the use of the present and coming generation without any limitations. Further, libraries have been upgraded with the latest technologies and reached at the threshold of the end user. Even, the whole collection of the library is available on the desktop, laptop, tablet, mobile-app and finger tips of the patron. Ultimately, the libraries and information centers got empowered in the presence and emergence of the technologies and able to provide the relevant information to the patrons as per their syllabi and desired which may be accessible from any corner of the world with single click (without wasting a single minute). Libraries are intensive in use for students in general and for research scholars and faculty members in particular. Emerged technologies have increased the periphery of library services which make available library services 24*7*365 days. User(s) may retrieve the required information through remote accessing or social media sites on a single platform as libraries have been using the blog facility to explore the collection and for frequently asked question(s). However, after advent the new technologies, many new challenges tragically appeared in front of the libraries and information resource centers as to manage and to ensure the effective use of the e-resources is the biggest challenge and need to be addressed without wasting a single minute. Considering the same, the government of India has taken initiatives to address these issues, explore, groom and enhance the usability of the e-resources through Library Consortium among the academic pursuit. Though, issues have been addressed up to the fair degree but could not reach in the range of the common user. Even, the concept of library consortium is closed to maturity but so far could not cover the whole library system and users. This is also the biggest challenges in front of the government and consortium agencies yet.

Library Consortium: A Collaborative Approach

Library Consortium explains itself that it is a collaborating approach as “an agreement, combination or group (as of companies) formed to undertake an enterprise beyond the resources of any one member” (Merriam Webster Dictionary). Library Consortium(s) is varying in their type, goals structure and membership and may be formal and informal licensed based for to achieve a common objective or goal. Consortium is totally based on library collection e.g. academic, medical, engineering, and public. But the objective of all types consortium is common (to enhance the usability of resources with minimum possible time and on affordable cost).

Library consortium is a hive term which leads to Inter Library Loan, Library Networks, e-library, Virtual Library, Web Based Services, Library Services in minimum time, and Better Searching Tools on single platform etc. With increasing the demand of the modern users the library consortium is the single solution to fulfill their demands through single platform as consortium gives the freedom of unlimited searching while consulting the databases. A

library having low budget may be taken the e-resources package according to their needs even through pick and choose and perpetual access of their need resources on nominal price. It has been a growing concern that the size of the library doesn't matter, but the thing which matters is the finance capabilities and quality services offered to its users.

Literature Review

Bisen ^[1] in his study pointed out e-journals aggregators. E-journals have become a major resource in scholarly research. The article is defining aggregation and the benefits from aggregation. The features of full Text Database and CSIR Electronic Journals Consortium are also discussed in the study.

Bosch ^[2] in his study describes that electronic publishing is changing the business of serial publication. Yet despite in the growth in the volume of electronic resources and publishing, traditional print publishing has not disappeared. Some believe that electronic is the end of serial vendors or subscription agents: others are not so ready to mark their passing.

Chandhok and Babbar ^[3] in their paper present the economics of online journals Vs print journals. Access to online research database and fulfill text e-journals is a core element of academic library web sites.

Cole ^[4] in his study states the evolution of E-journals from the fledging examples in the 1980s. The article also looks at both popular and academic influences on the developments of digital content, and probable future developments are discussed.

Dhingra and Mahajan ^[5] describe in their study the strategic methods for promotion of electronic journals. This paper discusses the promotional issues in the context of e-journals usage in the academic libraries with special reference to Panjab University, Chandigarh.

Emery ^[6] in his paper states libraries have found that trying to force the print journal workflow model onto the electronic journal world is unsuccessful. The author attempts to reflect the point of view end users, publishers, and librarians as they laid out their view of the current environment and offered suggestions for managing electronic journals in the future.

Fritsch, Geller and Chester ^[7] in the study describe the covered issues dealing with outsourced licensing of electronic journals for libraries. The study discussed the need or desire for outsourced licensing, and possibilities and future of outsourced licensing.

Objectives of Library Consortium

The word consortium speaks itself that a group which leads to coordinate activities, share resources and combine activities. The following are the prime and considerable objectives of the Library Consortium.

- Resourcing Sharing is the prime objective of the Consortium.

- Maximum and Rational utilization of allocated funds.
- To strengthen the Academic communities, thereby, they can be sustained amongst the generation 'Z' users.
- Ensure maximum e- contents and their access through single platform.
- Provide e-journals on subsidized price or nominal price so that maximum institutes may be benefitted under the policy.
- Ensure connectivity round the clock without interruption.
- To avoid duplication of resources among libraries of interest.
- Reduce the cost of the information
- Ensure the availability and accessibility of the e-contents amongst academic societies.

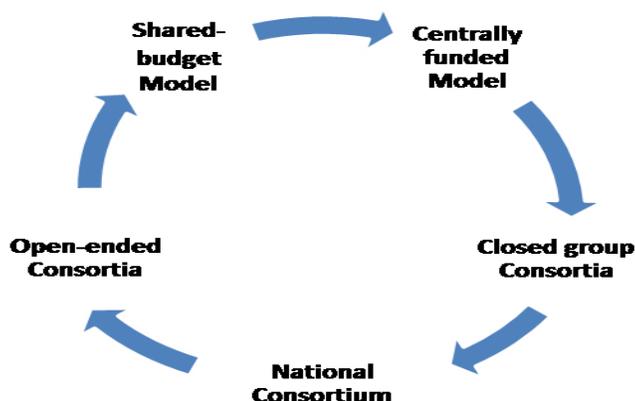
Need of the Library Consortium in Modern Academic Pursuit

India is the second most colonized country in the world according to statistics of 2014-15 with the population of 1.28 billion people. Out of this, more than 50% of current population is below the age of 25 and over 65% below the age of 35. Thus, India with its population above 1.28 billion is rich in potential human capital but many studies reveal that it is essential to convert human capital into productive work by skill development approach. Education is among the most important drivers of human development helping a person to become more responsible citizen. The need of the time is to recognize the significant importance of education as a main aspect of human security and a means to empowerment. Higher Education in India has a long history stretching back to the ancient urban centers of learning at Takshila and Nalanda. Education sector has witnessed a tremendous increase in the number of universities/universities level institutions and colleges since independence. Even India has one of the largest educational systems in the world with 25.9 million students enrolled in roughly 45000 degree and diploma institutions in the country. There has been a high growth, particularly in the last decade, with an increase in enrolment of student to 10.8% from 9%. Though the education sector is booming in India, but the quality of education is continuing to be a nagging concern. In the era of globalization, schools, colleges, institute universities, universities level institutes are undergone a holistic transformation. In these endeavors, the Ministry of Human Resources Development, India has taken steps for accumulating the e-resources on single platform in the form of package and make them available to academic pursuit with subsidized price. The MHRD, India has formed two consortium viz. INDEST-AICTE Consortium for Engineering Science and Technology and the second one is dedicated to Basic/Physical Sciences and Humanities viz. INFLIBNET-UGC. Noticeable results of both are visible which may further offer drastic changes in the reading habits of the modern users and also enhanced their potential research activities. Consortium provides the platform to research scholars where the researchers can find the solution of their academic problems. Library consortium is the outcome of meticulous efforts done by the renowned scholars for the present generation and the generations yet to come because library in itself is an unbroken link between the past generation to present generation. In the age of information and communication technology, the information explosion is being happened in every corner of the world and to satisfy the needs of the modern users through manual system is not possible, a single Library, however big may it be, is able to satisfy whole needs of its users due to various constraints. Due to such problems the

concept of library consortium has come into existence. Consortium is known for sharing of resources all over the world unhindered and in time.

Models of Library Consortium

The consortium objective is to connect all the libraries and information resource centers with each other for resource sharing. However, the budget allocation is different of every library and information resource centers. To overcome this problem, the following various models of library consortium have pondered by the academic stakeholders and designed to cater to the needs of the individual as well as the academic society.



{Fig-1: Models of Library Consortium}

Role of Library Consortium in Education

Consortium may be defined as access of e-resources to member institutes/libraries with the help of electronic means. Applications of ICTs facilitate to bring the efficiency, speed, accessibility, accuracy, contents review and transparent processes for disseminating information amongst the research communities, libraries, information centers and other agencies. Consortium enables the member libraries and their users to enter into the rapid changing world where things have been changed with the jet speed. The prime objective of the consortium is resource sharing and to provide access of e-resources package on nominal price and improve the quality of the education. The following benefits have been noticed in modern educational system after incorporating the concept of consortium with libraries.

- i) Process and maintenance of large flow of information has become easier as digital contents have been increasing day by day and become double after one or two months which leads the problem of organizing and managing according to the demand of academic industry and scholars.
- ii) Consortium improves the efficiency of the libraries and is responsible to change the orientation of the library and its services.
- iii) Accessibility of e-resources is made possible 24*7*365 days on centralized platform.

- iv) E-books may be consulted with no beginning and no ending concept as numbers of key-words are available to access the information from different databases on single platform.
- v) Consortium package gives the liberty to pick and choose the titles of the journals and conference proceedings as per the requirement of interest libraries so that the low budget libraries can also participate in the world of digital contents or web.
- vi) Online indexing and abstracting services help in retrieving the authentic source of information for preparing the references and bibliographies.
- vii) Consortium allows the administrator to prepare the statistics of the usages of any title from subscribed e-resources, In fact, gives alarming on low usage of any title. Therefore, this facility may help in choosing the titles according to the requirements. Likewise, libraries may be benefitted and can save the cost to avoid the unwanted titles from their e-resources package.
- viii) Consortium helps in maintaining the databases of required titles only on minimal price.
- ix) Consortium helps the new researchers in selecting their research topics and provides opportunity to explore and understand the titles as unlimited international standard data is available.

Consortium is about bringing about a change in the collection and services set up of the libraries and shift from print to non-print along with manual to automation. E-libraries can transform user services, provide access to information to empower users, enable them to participate into modern academic research world so that better research may be conducted and duplicacy of the research work may be avoided.

Consortium Benefits to Whole Educational System

- i) Provide opportunity to play and familiar with authentic e-contents.
- ii) Increase the involvement of students.
- iii) Inquisitive learning tools.
- iv) Less paper work
- v) Provide better searching options.

Consortium Benefits to Colleges/Institutions/Universities

- i) Data available on subsidized price
- ii) Concise and compact information is available.
- iii) Access 24*7*365 from any corner of the world or Campus Wide Network.
- iv) Saving hidden operational cost.
- v) Provide option to generate the current and instant statistical report.
- vi) Helpful in NAAC accreditation as it gives the strength.
- vii) Easy access tools are available as the database is user friendly.
- viii) Low price databases are available for the low budgeted colleges/institutes/universities.
- ix) Categorization and classification amongst the packages of e-resources and their contents may be happened easily.

- x) Research databases are in public domain which will help to control the repetition of the research work and improve the research quality.
- xi) Long term impact on organizational goals as helps in improving the educational system continuously and empowerment of the students, research scholars and faculty members and encouragement of their participation in the digital world.

Inferential Observations

The present generation is totally different from the earlier generation (when computer either did not exist were in use at nascent stage). Before advent the e-contents, the print sources were available to fulfil the need of the user in respect to information and knowledge. But these sources were available for limited period of time and for limited users even their accessibility was not so easy due to manual retrieval and disseminating system. Further, after passing the time, new technologies have introduced and emerged and everything has undergone a holistic change and appeared with new perspectives. Information explosion has happened in the information world and many communication ways have been introduced, thereby information has become the most powerful tool of the twenty first century and plays the vital role in any comprehensive decision making. Though the emerged technologies have proved milestone in the history of the academic but the free availability and accessibility of data, information, knowledge, and sources is not an easy task. Thus government of India took remedial steps and emerged the concept of Consortium. It has given the new direction to information industry and stakeholders also. The concept information for all has possible for privileged, un-privileged and underprivileged learners. In the present scenario, the world of higher education is seeing a sea change, thanks to new technologies which have the enormous potential to bring about changes. This will also generate a never ending hope in the direction of highly individualized, independent learning for all by opening new vistas in the form of Library Consortium where any user can access relevant study material from anywhere at any time indiscriminately in a highly personalized manner as per his/her own needs and requirements which will in turn ensure specific and specialized development for the overall grooming of human personality by offering positive behavioral and academic intervention in a very effective and researched manner. Generations will reap the befitting advantageous crop of this initiative which will yield a futuristic knowledge society. The age of the Library Consortium is the threshold to prove that the libraries have been playing tremendous role at local, block, district, state, national and international level.

Suggestions

After going through the studies which have been conducted in the area of consortia, the following suggestions may be identified.

- Users' orientation programs are required during the session beginning and Awareness campaign is also required especially in the institutions which are available in the rural areas.
- Library staff training is required as libraries have the e-resources packages but the staff is not aware how to mobilize them according to the need of the individual user.

- Those learners who are deprived from very basic right of a civilized society viz. Right to education, the spreading awareness will lead to the dream actualization and helps these learners in free and independent learning.
- Library Consortium agencies have to identified the area where the more opportunities are available for more and more use of the library consortium.
- The eminent scholars has to be contributed voluntarily for has to become the part of consortium policies so that low budgeted institution and libraries may be benefitted as every expectation cannot be left at the mercy of concerned government.
- Considering the ever increasing demand of research in academia, industries and corporate houses private group of colleges, institutes, research organizations and universities should come forward to design and conceptualize the consortia.
- Consortia should take some remedial steps for those institutes who are newly opened because they don't have sufficient funds for subscriptions of e-resources and generally they avoid the same.

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