

EMERGENCE OF LIBRARY CONSORTIA IN PRESENT INDIAN SCENARIO; A BRIEF VIEW ON J-GATE CONSORTIUM

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ABSTRACT

The study aims at discussing the importance of library consortia in India in the emerging context of digital resources. Now the libraries have in the transition state and experienced many transformations over the years. Due to the development of Internet and telecommunications technologies, the present situation has changed even further. Information searching pattern, gathering habits and seeking behavior of the users has increasingly complex to the growing knowledge in print as well as electronic forms, and not a single library is self-sufficient to access all books/e-books, journals/e-journals, and other library documents because of their library financial constraints. Moreover, users have diversified demands of the information requirements; it is very difficult to fulfill the demands of the users of the library with the existing library resources and services. To overcome this problem, Library Consortium is the only solutions in the present context. However, for the price of resources, the vendor-conquered market, the lack of competition, and other reasons, we need the consortium's approach. The many experiences of accessing e-journals through this method, is there a viable alternative to journal price increases or not. In this paper an attempt has been made to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the consortia, the needs of the consortia in the current Indian context, and the advantages and disadvantages of consortia-based subscription, consortia initiatives in India, and the brief view on J-Gate e-Journal Consortium, merits & demerits of J-Gate consortium have been discussed.

KEYWORDS: LIBRARY CONSORTIUM, E-RESOURCES, INFONET, CSIR, INDEST, HELINET, J-GATE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The exponential growth of information and its ever-growing demand have made the user community access to information in a variety of ways. Subscription of e-resources through the Coalition Method is one of the most popular methods of selecting current information in the field of science and technology. Developments in scientific publishing and publisher pricing policies present new challenges and opportunities for academic libraries; with the right strategy we can take advantage of new developments and this will help to solve the ongoing crisis. Consortiums are seen as an effective strategy to increase the purchasing power of individual libraries in the short term and increase opportunities for collaborative procurement and resource allocation in the long run.

In a present digital context, with the help of Data and Communication Technologies (ICTs) the “Collection building” concept has been converted into a ‘Connection building’ to access e-resources. Therefore, subscription amounts are shared among participating libraries. So, significant discounts are achieved through consortium, and individual libraries within the consortium gain access to the database and e-resources. This article describes meaning of e-resources, library consortium, need of consortia, and some of the Indian consortia’s role in the present situation, merits & demerits of J-Gate consortium, etc.

2.0 E- RESOURCES

It can be defined as materials that have been conceived and created digitally or by converting analog materials to a digital format; these are available in different forms like text, audio, video, and image, etc. Digital library provide an unparalleled capacity to access and manage large amount of information. E-resources are materials consisting of

data and /or computer program(s) encoded for reading and manipulation by a computer or by using a peripheral device directly connected to the computer or CD_ROM drive, or remotely via internet.

3.0 LIBRARY CONSORTIUM

“A library consortium is cooperative of group of arrangement of group with a policy of sharing resources among members library. It is a strategic alliance of institutors having common interest for their mutual benefit of their users.”

According to the oxford English dictionary consortia means- “a temporary cooperation of a number of powers companies etc, for a common purpose. It is an association of similar type’s organization/ institutions who are engaged for producing and serving common things for providing their services for the specific purpose of its users.”

According to J-Gate, ‘Library Consortium’ can be defined as “a cooperative arrangement among group or institutions”

4.0 NEEDS OF LIBRARY CONSORTIA

Pricing models of publishers, electronic publishing of scholarly journals for consortia give new opportunities to libraries to supply immediate access to information. Some of the important reasons for the need for the library consortia are listed below:

➤ INFORMATION EXPLOSION

With the exponential growth of the knowledge population, it is becoming more and more impossible to force all the information into the document's personal library.

The result is that libraries have become more and more enthusiastic for inter-lending to meet of their users needs.

➤ **SHRINKING BUDGET**

The advances in scientific publishing and publisher pricing policies have posed new challenges and opportunities for academic libraries to purchase and manage resources in their constrained budget. Therefore, consortium is very much needed to share resources in libraries in order to unravel an ongoing chain of crises.

➤ **DIVERSITY OF USER NEEDS**

The massive application of the latest technologies, new methods of information retrieval/dissemination has led to a rapid increase in user expectations, as users expect library information to be delivered faster because of other information needed.

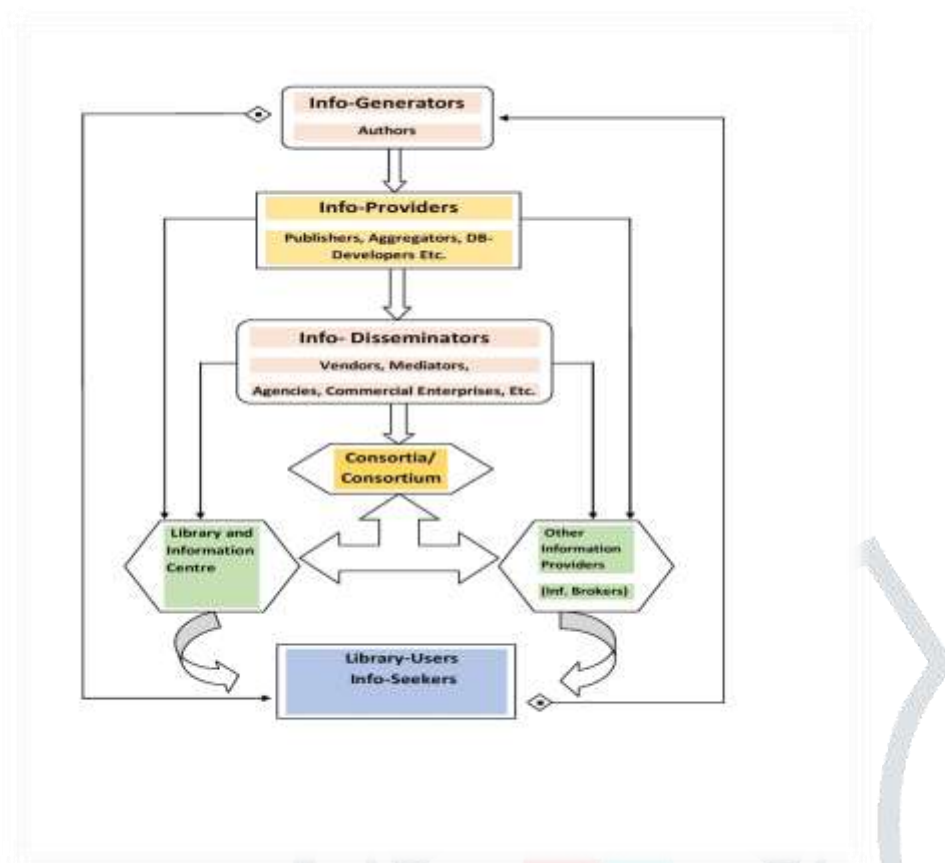
➤ **PROFESSIONALIZATION OF LIBRARY SERVICES**

The role of library professionals has changed from mere conservator to navigator of data. It's great challenge for libraries to stay at the battlefield of the profession. The changed role of librarian has enhanced the worth of library consortia.

➤ **QUICK ACCESS:**

Today researchers hope that they ought to have access to their journal articles within the electronic form because e-resources are cheaper than print source. So they reach the concerned users through this.

5.0 INFORMATION FLOW-CHART



6.0 ADVANTAGES & DISADVANTAGES OF CONSORTIA

Some of the important advantages & disadvantages of the library consortium are as follows:

ADVANTAGES OF CONSORTIA

- ❖ Available round the clock instant online access (24X7 days)
- ❖ Search bibliography / full text of article.
- ❖ Journal is available much earlier than print.
- ❖ Keep away from duplication of resources.
- ❖ Provides access to wider range of electronic resources at lower cost.
- ❖ Facilitates to develop regular resources database.
- ❖ Best possible exploitation of funds.
- ❖ Services to build up digital libraries.
- ❖ Dissemination of e-literature is faster, more economical and more efficient.

- ❖ Facilitate better management of information resources in e-environment

DISADVANTAGES OF CONSORTIA

- ❖ May face copyright problems and misuse of research material.
- ❖ Nonappearance of printed copies of journals.
- ❖ Internet access is compulsory.
- ❖ Combination of essential and non-essential journals.
- ❖ Requires high initial investment in license and information and communication technology

7.0 EMERGENCE OF CONSORTIA BASED SUBSCRIPTION

The 'Libraries Consortium' is considered an important step in library cooperation in the sharing of electronic resources to meet the needs of their users in the library budget. Considerable discounts are achieved through consortium based subscription, and individual libraries within the consortium gain access to the database and access to e-resources. Consortium pricing models, new developments in e-resources licensing have revolutionized the field of library and information science. In this regard we can see below some of the major consortia's in the current Indian context.

MAJOR LIBRARY CONSORTIA IN INDIA

- *UGC – INFONET*

The UGC-INFONET Digital library Consortium provides current as well as archival access to more than 8,000+ core and peer-reviewed journals and 11 bibliographic databases from 28 publishers including commercial publishers, scholarly societies, university presses and aggregators in different disciplines. So far 204 institutions including Central and State Universities, Deemed Universities, National law schools/ IUCs of the

UGC that come under the purview of UGC, are being provided differential access to subscribed e-resources.

- ***INDEST-AICTE CONSORTIUM***

The INDEST-AICTE consortium is the most ambitious initiative ever taken within the country. It is the most important consortium in terms of the number of member organizations in Asia. The consortium attracts as many pricing and contract terms as possible from publishers on the idea of the strength of its current and prospective member firms. The Consortium subscribes to more than 12,000 electronic journals from various publishers and collectors.

- ***RGUHS-HELINET CONSORTIUM***

Health Science Library Information Networks Consortium, the primary medical library consortium launched in the country on March 15, 2003. The objective is to link a network of university libraries affiliated to Rajiv Gandhi Health Sciences University in Karnataka to market resources. Allocation and digitization of library resources. Under the HELINET project, members can access 600 scholarly, international biomedical journals abroad from 24 major publishers.

- ***FORSA CONSORTIUM***

FORSA stands for Resource sharing in Astronomy and Astrophysics which was established in July 29, 1981 at Raman Research Institute (RRI) Bengaluru. Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA), Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), and Inter University Center for Astronomy and Astrophysics (NCRA), and Physical Lab (PRL) are members of the consortium. At the time of the consortium, the subscription will be paid by

both the print and electronic format. Each member operates its own print subscription, and other libraries can access subscribed journals electronically by paying a further 12 percent of print subscriptions. The consortium has successfully negotiated with Nature's publisher to supply access to its e-version at one-third of the asking price.

- ***ERMED CONSORTIUM***

National Medical Library's Electronic Resources in Medicine (ERMED) Consortium is an initiative taken by DGHS & MOHFW started in year 2008. The consortium has 70 state and centrally funded Government Institutions. The consortium presently subscribed 242 high quality online e-journals from 5 leading publishers.

- ***IIM LIBRARY CONSORTIUM***

The concept of IIM Libraries consortium was initiated in year 2000 and the Consortium has successfully completed 20 years and is going strong with many new initiatives. The IIM Libraries consortium has four major resources in its domain and they include Wiley, Springer, Taylor & Francis and Sage. The main benefits of the IIM Libraries Consortium are to increase the access to e-resources with minimum cost increase, standardization of prices of various products, collective representation of the interest of all member libraries, etc.

- ***DELCON CONSORTIUM***

DBT e-library consortium (DELCON) has been started in year 2009. Presently it includes 16 DBT institutions along with ICGEB, NER institutions, BIRAC etc. This consortium has 1171 journals and a database named SCOPUS.

- **CERA (CONSORTIUM FOR E-RESOURCES IN AGRICULTURE)**

It is an ambitious initiative of IARI (Indian Institute of Agricultural Research) which aims to provide scholarly information across a broad spectrum of Agricultural sciences to advance academic quality research at its institutions and other Agricultural universities.

8.0 J-Gate

J-Gate is an electronic gateway to global e-journal literature. Launched in 2001 by Informatics India Limited, J-Gate provides seamless access to many online journal articles available online by 12,670 publishers. It currently has a huge database of journal literature, indexed by 59,006 e-journals with links to full text on publisher sites. It has comprehensive searchable database with 72,774,069 articles added to 10,000+ articles per day. This portal has 6 different high-level topics, namely biomedical sciences, engineering and technology, social and management sciences, agriculture and biological sciences, arts and humanities, and basic sciences.

Open J-Gate is a free database of open access journals, launched in February 2006 and hosted by Informatics Limited of India. It claims to collect metadata from 4,000 open access journals published in English worldwide. It indexes articles from e-journals available in the open access domain from scholarly and popular domains. It refers to peer-reviewed and peer-reviewed professional journals as trade and industry journals.

CURRENT SCENARIO OF J-GATE CONSORTIUM (JCCC)

“The J-Gate Consortium for Custom Content (JCCC) can be a virtual library of journal literature, which is the gateway and database solution for customized e-journals. It serves as a one-point access to the 7900+ journals currently subscribed to under e-Shod and

indexed to open admission papers, as well as university libraries designated as inter-library lending (ILL) centers. INFLIBNET has identified 22 potential universities in the country as ILL centers to meet the ILL request from affiliated users to Universities under the UGC-INFONET Digital Library Consortium. It provides the power to trigger e-mail requests for articles to the Inter Library Loan Centers at the INFLIBNET Center”

“The JCC captures and indexes and manages links to a large number of 28,952 free-access e-journals. Provides links to more than 18,958,228 open access articles. As an e-journal portal, J-Gate currently hosts content from 59,006 e-journals.” Due to the lack awareness about J gate, many people do not know about J-Gate. Efforts should be done to train and educate the users about the importance and use of J Gate.

9.0 CONCLUSION

Based on the above discussion, the consortia are doing great job to meet their user expectations. With information and communication technology and the Internet available, it is an easy task to access e-resources in the present context. Increased collaboration and document delivery services in uniform libraries can help achieve greater user satisfaction. The Open Access initiative has been getting more and more incentive in recent times to meet the needs of users at minimum cost.

However, researchers and librarians must work together to trim the library budget to meet the needs of researchers and other users. It is very easy to meet the needs of the user by gaining membership in the relevant consortia. Despite some disadvantages in the present case, Indian- consortia are playing an important role to provide useful resources as expected of their users.

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