CHAPTER 5

E-JOURNAL CONSORTIA IN TECHNICAL COLLEGE LIBRARIES
Chapter-5

E-Journal Consortia in Technical College libraries

These were commercially available products that often featured full-text electronic versions of scholarly journals. The only way that libraries could afford to offer these resources to their users was through cooperative efforts in the form of consortia. Libraries across the globe now consider membership in a consortium to be a way of life because of the proven benefits to users and the improvements in service to users and libraries.

It can be said that the most important development in recent times for academic libraries has been “the move from organizational self sufficiency to a collaborative survival mode as personified by the growth of library consortia.” Consortia are basically a means for libraries to reduce costs and to publicly demonstrate efforts to increase services to users, as well as to the broader community. The Internet, the World Wide Web, and other distributed information systems have enabled resource sharing among libraries in ways that were not possible in the past. This “rapid emergence and development of electronic information technologies” makes it possible to imagine “different ways of organizing collections and service that libraries have traditionally provided. Through consortia, libraries have been able to effect many positive changes in their environment nut there are also some negative aspects that bear examination.”

Cost reduction, more specifically the “unit cost of providing core services,” is a primary benefit gained from consortial membership. The continual erosion or stagnation of library funding coupled with an exponential increase in material and information costs have given libraries a strong interest in reducing their operating costs. Resource sharing, a common consortial activity, is one way that libraries attempt to reduce expenditures. Sharing resources, especially electronic resources, has become a necessity due to libraries’ decreasing ability to develop “independent collections of excellence.” As libraries in consortia have discovered, the group has “a combined set of resources that is greater than the resources of a single member.” Because of high material costs, especially for periodical subscriptions, libraries are interested in getting more bang for the buck out of their budgetary expenditures.
Membership in a consortium allows a group of libraries to “pool their financial resources to leverage greater control over their market places”\(^3\)

A second benefit for libraries that join consortia is the ability to improve the quality of services offered to their patrons by enhancing collections and by increasing access to information. There is a general feeling within the profession that no one library can be large enough to house all of the needed resources, anymore.

 Consortia use the ability of the group to purchase costly information products, enabling member libraries to increase patron access to information by enhancing and increasing resources that would otherwise be unavailable to their users.

Historically, libraries, have joined or formed consortia because of geographic proximity, in order to create and share union catalogs, for reciprocal borrowing privileges between member libraries, and sometime for cooperative collection development programs. As libraries were introduced to various technologies, such as expensive audiovisual equipment and computers, they joined groups to help make sense of how to incorporate these resources in library operations.

### 5.1 HISTORY OF COOPERATION AND CONSORTIA

Libraries cooperated with one another long before the practice was documented. The concept of the word “consortium” as ‘association or partnership’ has long been a tenet of librarianship, generally encompassed in the terms ‘cooperation’, ‘coordination’, and ‘collaboration’. The newly formed American Library Association created a Committee on Cooperation in Indexing and Cataloguing College Libraries in 1876. The ALA, for example, started publishing “analytic cards as part of a shared indexing/cataloging program” in 1898. Library of Congress subject headings appeared in the early 1900s as the first nationwide subject classification system, and the Library of Congress also “began to provide cataloging for participating libraries” during this period.\(^2\) By the turn of the twentieth century, interlibrary lending “emerged as a focal point of library cooperation.”

Cooperative efforts continued to grow during the pre-World War II years. The 1930s witnessed some of the first instances of cooperative practices that in later decades became commonplace. Union card catalog production greatly increased in
libraries across the nation. The other cooperative efforts involved collection development, cataloging, and the first regional consortial arrangements.

The post-World War II era, with the expansion of higher education and the explosion of scientific research, provided fertile ground for new ways of cooperation to emerge. The cooperative efforts that developed during this somewhat heady time became more format, extensive, and expensive than previous efforts. The Universal Serial and Book Exchange (USBE), the Center for Research Libraries (CRL), the Farmington Plan for “cooperative foreign acquisitions,” However, the coming onset of the information age, which arguably had its roots in postwar America, would soon begin to monumentally affect libraries across the country.

By the 1960s, the Department of Defense and industry giants such as IBM were utilizing supercomputers and networks (ARPA Net) for research and data management. The first efforts toward library automation began in this decade, as libraries realized the effectiveness of using computers to manage data. Computers soon were put to use in libraries as tools for bibliographic processing and database searching. The reasons for joining consortia in the previous decades continued to remain relevant, and the number of consortium was an attractive solution to many institutions addressing a number of longstanding.

In 1970, the United States Office of Education commissioned a landmark study of academic consortia. The study was conducted in response to a lack of available information about library consortia, in recognition of the increasing significance of consortia to everyday library operations. Out of the study came two reference sources, The Directory of Academic Library Cooperation: Development of Academic Library Consortia in the 1970s adopted a network model, utilizing the computer networks that had multiplied in the previous decade. The development of online, networked union catalogs frequently served as the catalyst for the formation of consortia in this period. Early networks were usually geographically based, served multiple states and types of libraries, and brokered bibliographic services for their member libraries.

The most important factor that influenced library cooperation in the 1970s was the development of “mega consortia”, also known as bibliographic utilizes, such as
the Ohio College Library Center (OCLC), the Research Libraries Group (RLG), and the Washington Library Network (WLN). Mega consortia were really “outgrowths of those the early 1970s,” and they featured cataloging and interlibrary loan components. As libraries began implementation locally integrated systems, participation in one of these utilities became “mission critical”- not just from catalog card production and interlibrary load activities, but increasingly as the source for machine readable records to be loaded into local systems.” 42 With this intense focus on internal changes, interest in cooperating and sharing with other libraries decreased somewhat.5

The pace of consortial activity quick ended when libraries “were forced to confront an unprecedented array of challenges, including rising user demands, an escalating number of publications, hyperinflation in the prices of many scholarly journals, and rapid technological change.” 45 The 1990s proved to be a pivotal decade in the development of consortia, with the “proliferation of network-based electronic resources, including indexing and abstracting databases and full-text electronic journals.”

The main aspect of contemporary consortia that make them different from their predecessors is the rapid growth of the World Wide Web and the development of Web based information resources that are not only expensive but also very desirable. These new alliances often base themselves on “identifying and addressing common needs arising from developments in information technology.” Due to more sophistication in networking, modern consortia have begun to “meet specialized needs of specific types of libraries” and are sometimes geographically limited to one state or may be located in multiple states with a focused membership and community of interest.

5.2.1 CONSORTIA: WHAT WORKS

In regard to cost, this is usually a win-win situation for both the consortia and the publisher. By offering publishers the opportunity to administrative costs. The publishers are also able to include more specialized titles by packaging them with higher-demand journals. This means that individual libraries, in turn, not only get a lower price for journal but may also gain access to previously unaffordable titles.
A large part of the consortium’s buying power is derived from its ability to negotiate license agreements. This negotiating power is especially important in regard to electronic journals. It is not only the access to these journals that the consortia manages but also the support services that the consortia negotiates. Consortia need easy-to-mount Web-based publications. And consortia need publishers and vendors who can give them lots of help. Consortia want to refer staff at member libraries to readily available technical and reference help.

For a consortium, cost and discount may be the starting criterion but are often not the determining factor in the negotiating process.

Another positive aspect of consortial agreement for electronic journals is increased access. Better access means greater use and better circulation of information, which in an academic setting is crucial. The ability of the library user to research and read remotely from a home computer, office, or laboratory is an extremely effective service that meets the challenges of academia’s new found technological speed and demand of efficiency. In addition, this greatly empowers the growing nontraditional student population in our universities and technical colleges who usually are holding full-time jobs and are more likely to be distance education students.

It is this ease of access to resources through technology that the consortia can, if properly empowered, best mediate. The rapidly changing landscape of technology, and particularly the nature of information itself, makes the formation of library consortia more attractive. Electronic journals, a large part of this evolving structure of information, demand new, large-scale solutions that censorial policy and licensing may be able to ameliorate.

The intellectual property rights issue lies behind many of these problems, including journal pricing, database pricing, bundling of print and electronic versions, access, and licensing. Perhaps the most far-reaching impact is the disenfranchisement of scholarly authors and the users of their research.

5.2.2 CONSORTIA: E-JOURNAL PROBLEMS
The positive aspects of membership in consortia, including access to digital information, resource sharing, shared virtual catalogs, and automation, are all tangible benefits.

Some of the difficulties stem from the consensus-building process for making decisions about resources, the greater the chance that there will be conflicting priorities and agendas. The shared agenda that a consortium develops should be “sensitive and responsive to a wide variety of perceived needs.” All parties must be in agreement, with a “consistent, collective commitment” each year, or the economy of the group license could be endangered. Necessary group commitments require individual libraries to give up a certain portion of their budgets for the common good. Through institutions recognize the value of cooperation, the autonomy of the individual library can be hard to overcome.

Since a portion of a library’s budget is set aside for consortial expenditures, libraries often find that there are fewer “discretionary funds to spend at the local level.” To cover the costs of consortial resources, monograph funds may need to be reallocated and/or periodical titles canceled. Local resources that are deemed to be of greater value than resources provided through consortia may have to be eliminated when there is less money in the budget for local spending. In this situation, selectors have less control over how funds are spent at their institution. The effect in libraries with smaller budgets is proportionally multiplied.

Digital collections, being overwhelmingly commercial in nature, consists mainly of “representative and core materials.” These collections tend not to include journal titles that are important in a field, but instead feature titles that are not widely held or known. With fewer local funds with which to purchase a balanced variety of materials, consortial journal collections can lead to a form of homogeneity in making selections.

The practice of journal binding, when a publisher offers a consortium access to all of its titles for an incremental price over current subscriptions, groups the strongest journals from the publisher with the weakest, the “essential with the non-essential.” Bunding doesn’t have much added value for a library that already has developed a strong collection. When libraries agree to accept a bundled journal
package, publishers have little incentive to maintain the quality of their selections. The relative sales of less important but still expensive titles decrease the funds available for more prudent selections.

Within databases purchased by consortia, there is not necessarily any consistency in the depth, breadth, or extent of full-text coverage that the titles provide. Fullness of coverage changes, depending upon the provider. Aggregators often drop and add titles, seemingly at random, in their databases, resulting in partial title runs; some publishers will only provide to the aggregator “significant articles, not the full journal.” In addition, aggregators have different types of products that vary in coverage and search ability. Users, and sometimes purchasers, may not understand that all full-text databases are not created equal.

Users have the general belief that electronic journals are or at least should be, accessible from anywhere at anytime. Librarians, in the desire to accommodate users as much as possible, want to believe in the concept of universal accessibility of information, yet authentication and access technologies have not caught to this vision. Electronic journals are accessed via passwords, IP filtering, or through credential verification. Password protection allows authenticated users to access electronic journals from any location. When publishers offer libraries passwords for user access, the burden of authentication is shifted to the vendor, but libraries have to determine how to distribute the passwords to users. These distribution methods tend to require patrons to go through multiple steps to acquire the passwords, which may lead to some frustration on the part of the user. In addition, some publishers restrict passwords by allowing only librarians to have them.\textsuperscript{9}

Off-campus access is often accomplished using a proxy server, which masks remote users with a registered IP address to allow access to the desired resource. If the proxy server don’t necessarily do a good job of recognizing specific subnets and IP addresses that publishers may require, and there are some publishers that explicitly do not allow access to their electronic journals through proxy servers.\textsuperscript{104}

5.2.3 THE FUTURE OF CONSORTIAL ARRANGEMENTS
It is difficult to make predictions about the future of consortia and consortial arrangements concerning electronic journals, but then, peering into the future is always a difficult task. Change is happening at a faster rate than libraries or library suppliers are accustomed, though non question the benefits of this advancing technology, which brings a wealth of information to an ever-widening audience.¹ One issue that perhaps clouds the future vision of electronic journal publication is the wide variety of roles all those involved can play.

Libraries are consumers of electronic publication, but they can also be the creators of content, publishers, and mirror sites for publishers and publisher partners. Vendors can be publishers, aggregators, or both. Libraries are becoming publishers, publishers are becoming jobbers, and so on.¹ Thus, forecasting can be difficult, but despite this confusion there are a few certainties.

Vendors will offer more desirable products; this is an economic necessity for any company. In addition, it is likely that agreements will become more customizable between consortia and vendors. As the Web grows and the ability to control what access is turned “on” or “off” develops, the individual library may get more say in what it does and does not want.

It is a little less certain whether there will be more competition among vendors, aggregators, and publishers. As quickly as publishers are created, they are also being bought and sold. It would seem that as technology becomes increasingly widespread, and as new journals are established, that new competitors would appear. Yet this hasn’t always been a case, particularly in the past few years.

Indian Scene:

In India consortia use is still in infancy. There is a need to study various models and establish guidelines and methodologies. The consortia can work smoothly among similar organizations having similar situations, i.e. sufficient funds available for the consortia member libraries and above all the interest and dedicated efforts of the library administrators. In reality the idea of the library consortia is not a dream fulfilled as many university libraries have not yet experience the of inform importance of information technology applications.
In a country like India is the right time to develop models for consortia so that at the time of applications information technology applications in university libraries, consortia can be subscribed like other which libraries practicing consortia.

**5.2.4 ACCESS TO E-JOURNALS IN COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES**

Access to information and knowledge is a critical effort and a way of success of a nation for developing countries like India. Moreover, it is a challenge to access the new information and communication technologies in the environment where a lack of basic infrastructure and other facilities. University grants commission in India made a survey in the year 2001 about university libraries whether equipped with computers and internet facilities, and interlinked within the INFLIBNET. But found that the libraries having internet access facilities do not all necessarily subscribe to electronic journals due to paucity of funds.

It is in practice that the yearly budget is utilized mainly to subscribe to the printed journals and to sustain the subscriptions without deleting the essential journals. Many university libraries feel it a burden to subscribe transformed electronic format for them even if many journals are considered to be a necessity. Probably, a consortium model, which facilitates the sharing of resources without requiring additional fees to access the electronic journals, will be an ideal solution.

**5.2.4.1 FORSA and its contribution**

Few handful of librarians made efforts to develop the Indian Astrophysics Consortium specializing in astronomy and astrophysics in India. This consortium, known as FORSA, It consists of five members and has identified a subscription agent as a supplier of journals. Subscriptions for both paper and electronic format are paid through this supplier. The agreement is meant for only astronomy journals published by a particular publisher.

The entire negotiation was based on the number of the print journals and hence the sales volume will dictate the price paid for the titles. As the number of titles increases, the price paid per title decreases by a few percentage points. This supplier has agreed to be a negotiator between the members and the publisher to
provide access to the licensed materials. It is a win-win situation for both the members and the publisher in terms of the decreased cost for electronic access to members and an increased volume of sales for the publisher.

(1) The Salient features of FORSA Consortium:

- The journals titles of the subject for which the consortium license is negotiated.
- The publishers generally negotiate with the members through the agent.
- The model is worked out for cross-e-access to the print journals subscribed to by the members of the consortium and hence gives access for all the members.
- There is no additional requirement of budget for a new print journal for the members in terms of subscription is required since the currently subscribed titles will be maintained.
- Members are not burdened with subscribing to peripheral and less important journals, which is a standard feature of ‘bundling-together’ by publishers.

Since the FORSA consortium concept is still new in India, there are neither defined guidelines nor established models to help the librarians establish a formal consortium where the members are legally bound and their decisions protected.

Secondly, the combined subscription to the print and electronic format through the same agent has created some confusion among the members since at least one member was subscribing to the printed journal through another agent. This member could not join the consortium in time to process the combined payment through the agent who is the negotiator.

(2) Common title subscription

The same FORSA consortium has concluded a consortium deal recently, to access the journal Nature. The boundaries of the FORSA group have opened up in this case in order to include a few other libraries with mutual interests and, at the same time, not to increase the size of the consortium beyond a certain number. At
present there are six members who have formally committed to share the license fee to access Nature electronically.

A few interesting observations about this negotiation are:

- There is no predetermined condition of the print subscription by the members.
- Independent invoicing to the members of the consortium will come directly from the publisher.
- The consortium negotiation is based on the total number of users.
- The calculation of the base price for the electronic access and the per site access fee is a standard offer made by the publisher worldwide in all the consortia negotiations.
- The more members in the consortium deal, the less the individual members will pay for the electronic access.

5.3.5 INDIAN ACADEMIC LIBRARY CONSORTIA (IALC)

Networking system of library and Information have come into existence more than two decade ago in India. The term “Inter library loan or Exchange” has been in focus for so many years in the parlance of library management. This form ILL has been extended from its limited basis to its fully grown Consortia of various kinds. Since India is a developing country, college libraries are constantly working towards improving their infrastructure and technology to meet the demands of the scientists and researchers.

College libraries in India should cooperatively establish library consortia for offering and sharing electronic resources. By utilizing the support of the regional and national networks libraries, especially research libraries in India, have their own network existing within their own locations. These networks can be expanded in the form of consortia to enhance the access to the information resources through collaborative partnerships.

In modern era Consortium’s has been used for sharing of resources and sharing of expertise between libraries. It also enable the libraries to explore the need to make the most effective use of their funds. A attempt has been made to form a
national level consortium of Indian academic libraries (IALC) and delineate its benefits.

Library cooperation has been a new phenomenon in India, but consortia are still in infant stage and growing significantly during recent years. With the emergence of ICT and technological innovation, the libraries renewed interest in Consortia development in all library sectors. A library consortium is platform of a group of libraries who agree to pull their resources by allowing the users to access to the resources of all the other institutions. It may be through interlibrary loan or borrowing privileges.

5.4 Resource Sharing

There have been continuous efforts to share the electronic resources through networking. The National Information System for Science and Technology (NISSAT), Dept of Scientific and Industrial research (DSIR) took up initiatives for the design and development of library networks in India with the aim to share the resources available in the libraries, located in various parts of the country. At present there are many networks working on national label namely INFLIBNET, ERNET, DELNET etc. besides each metro city in India have their own Metropolitan City network.

5.4.1 INFLIBNET- There was a great need of exploring the resource sharing among university libraries. The first step or the initiative taken recently by launching Electronic Document Delivery Service. Six University libraries launched this service in the month of July 2000, (now more than 35 universities) These universities serve as Document Delivery Center at National level in subject specific libraries such as National Science Library, National Medical Library, etc. at Delhi maintaining computerized database and working as information provider of specific subject area.

Majority of Indian libraries are using library software to create and maintain in-house database and designed in SQL, MS-Access, Oracle (or any other RDMBS, and using web based modules (front end) through which end users can access resources via a communication network. DELNET (Developing library network), Indian Institute of Technology (IITs), Indian Institute of Science, CSIR library, INFLIBNET-Information and library networks, National Aerospace research library
etc. are the Indian web libraries using distributed information system and client can access these via Internet or communication network.

The following must be ensured of resource sharing before preparing the plan for linkages between Academic libraries.

1. Institution should given measures commitment of acceptance.
2. Funds and support for resource sharing solution.
3. Library staff attitude to undertake additional responsibility in resource sharing environment.
4. Proper training of library staff to understand and work in changed situation.

Therefore it is obvious that the success of a library consortium depends on the good working relationship among members and the consortium.

5.4.2 Problems and Benefits

All academic institution libraries and their expect that their libraries should acquire electronic resources while simultaneously maintaining or growing traditional print collections until unless the electronic resources are fully acquired. It is also expected to maintain the resources without additional funding.

Consortia has many benefit like collaborative buying power, collective technical expertise, resource sharing, staff development, consolidation of services and collections, risk sharing. Consortia can also develop negative characteristics that threaten to overwhelm the reasons for their existence. On the other hand consortia may encourage bureaucracy, loss of local control, expense, political intrigue, if not managed and regularized.

5.4.3 COLLECTION BUILDING THROUGH E-JOURNAL CONSORTIA

E-journals have electronic equivalence with print counter parts possessing many added features. E-journals offer numerous advantages to libraries and end-users. Some of these advantages are simultaneous access to multiple users of the same issue, remote access, in-built searching facilities, and multi-media capabilities
and reduced storage space. The libraries also buy licenses under agreement for an increasing number of E-Journals from different publishers and providers. At present time the library budgets are decreasing and the librarians are forced to work coherently for alternate strategies towards collection enrichment and sharing of resources.

Consortium based library subscriptions to E-journals and electronic databases are in trend in Indian libraries. In recent years more than 10 national level Consortia have been introduce and started playing around the country. The names of some of consortia’s are CSIR Consortium, INDEST, IIM Consortium, FORSA, IBFLIBNET’s Infonet, etc. Though the consortia have successfully serve the users but at the same time these library consortia have many problems.

Recently E-Journals have become the largest and fastest growing digital collections in many of technical college libraries. Few years ago the quantity of titles of e-journals was just few hundred in numbers, now these titles are many thousands and the rate of growth is phenomenal and amazing. The advancements in digital technologies and the recent proliferation of E-Publishing across the world have brought in a revolution in journal publication, subscription, access and delivery mechanism.

The e-journals possess numerous additional features. E-Journals often referred interchangeably as “Electronic Serials”, “Online Journals” and “Electronic Periodicals”. E-Journals are the journals created for the electronic medium and available only electronically. Electronic serials may be defined very broadly containing journal, magazine or newsletter which is available over the Internet.

5.4.4 Features of E-journals

The demand of E-journals is on the rise both as a means of rapid desktop access to current research materials and as a way to view past volumes.

5.4.6 Technology Paradigm

Librarians realized the importance and potential of Web technologies for the effective use of resource sharing. The Internet has been used as the carrier network
by member libraries of a resource-sharing network. A good internet connectivity will increase reliability of resource and dependability of end users.

The common user interface provided by the Web browsers enables integration of access to shared resources and also to local library collections and services. Integration of messaging and file transfer protocols in the Web enable easy support for inter-library loadn and cataloguing efforts. Since Internet offers platform independent protocols and public domain tools, development of new applications and services and value addition to existing services becomes quite easy.

5.4.7 Some problems

The library consortium involves a quite complex process, which needs a fair support and sincere efforts from the librarians, management and the publishers. The librarians, management and the publishers form an important trinity for the collection and compilation of scholarly information. There are several issues relating to consortia. Some of them are zeroing in and identifying the resources, uninterrupted online access, perpetual access to back issues, subscription payment, licensing, pricing, copyright and archival solutions etc. Planning and implementing the IT infrastructure in right way is another important issue.

- **Resources Identification:** It is really difficult to identify the right and useful product which will be agreed by all the members of the consortium. Most importantly each and every member will have their own choice of list of information and services. In-spite of all there is possibility of overlap between the requirements but this is possible in the case of an ideal homogeneous group.

- **Technology Infrastructure:** The technological infrastructures have some basic prerequisites such as future planning and arranging the suitable Information technology and Communication infrastructure for proper delivery of information resources.

- **Pricing Issues:** The majority of publishers do not follow any regulatory standard practices for deciding prices of scholarly literature. Hence this is the gray area where new ideas can be implemented to regularize the prices of literature. The Cost of journals are sky high and out of the
reach of low and medium budget libraries. The consortia approach could help to provide some meaningful solution. The pricing of consortia should be negotiated to the best of low level. There are several methods available for price negotiation but the final price is offered by the publisher. The final price should be economical appropriate for participating libraries. It should also ensure uninterrupted and regular access to e-resources.

- **Access related issues:** The publisher offered several method of to access their e-resources. These methods of access vary case to case. The popular methods of user access authentication include ID/Password or IP based methods. Economical, uninterrupted and trouble free access to the scholarly literature are some of the objective of the consortium.

- **Licensing and Copyright issues:** The subscriptions and access of e-journals provides licensing of selected scholarly content / products for a limited period of time with several restrictions and bindings on the licensee. There are numerous licensing and copyright related issues which need to be solved between end-user’s librarians and publishers.

- **Archival Issues:** This is an over sighted area which need fare attention by consortia in India. Long term preservation information being accumulated by the consortium is information to be archived and need to be preserved for posterity. As the information technology is fast progressing and also getting obsolete almost at the same pace. The costly information resources should be archived and preserved on longer duration.

In last two decades there has been a tremendous growth of published documents. A sharp increase in the cost of information resources, technological advancements offers newer methods of information processing retrieval and dissemination. The increased cost of information resources is one of the factors which have made partnership necessary and led to the formation of e-journal consortium. The development of the consortium is the outcome of the desire or resource sharing.
The explosion of recent information forced the libraries to adopt new philosophies and technologies for resource collection and reduce their costs. The enormous advantage of advanced system is easing the delivery of information around the world and playing the central role in global economy. This means that information technology will shape the dynamics of the new millennium.

The proliferation of electronic resources and cover changing information technology has become a challenging task for the library professionals. Since last few decades, there has been tremendous change in the area of resource sharing as it has become the hallmark of libraries for cooperation, coordination and collaboration.

5.5 LIBRARY NETWORK

The national commission of libraries and information science (NCLIS) in its national program documents defines a library network as “two or more libraries/or other organization engaged in a common pauper of some functional purpose. A network usually consists of a forma; arrangement whereby organizations are available to all potential users. Libraries may be in different jurisdictions put agree to serve one another on the same basis. As each serves its own constituents. Computers and telecommunications may be among the tools used for facilitating communication among them”.

There are some key problems associated in the establishment of library networks in India:

• Enforcing the standards in data conversion among the libraries that create their databases independently.
• Unequal utilization of the database since members of the network way in their size.
• Inadequate library training program to create the expertise in database development.
• Exorbitant cost involved in creating and maintaining the databases in terms of software and hardware for joining the network.
• Non supportive attitude from the management of the Universities to support the network activity.
5.5.1 CONSORTIA AND NETWORK:

The term consortium has been defined as “Cooperative arrangement among groups or Universities.”

According to oxford English dictionary, Consortium mean temporary co-operation of a number of power, companies etc. for a particular purpose. In other words it is an association of similar type of organizations/institutions who are engaged for producing and servicing the common things for providing services for a specific purpose of its users. In the context of library, consortium is a community (co-operate) or a group of two or more information agencies that have formally agreed to coordinate, cooperate or consolidates certain functions to achieve mutual objectives. It is joint venture of any group of libraries to fulfill the common goal. Consortia may be formed on a local, regional, national international basis; on a functional or format basis; or on a subject basis. Majority of the libraries particularly in developing countries are thinking today about the cooperative purchasing for any group of libraries, consortia should be formed and are often useful for establishing a formal structure regarding resource sharing with formal agreement for each participant library. In this method of cooperative collection development of each and every participant library can easily access to specific collections.

Reasons for Consortia Approach

- Urgent need of international cooperator.
- Proliferation of e-information sources/sharing existing sources:
- Developing new technology tools and network associated with electronic delivery.
- Varied Electronic journals of web based facilities providing access to wide range of other databases.
- New information products and services;
- Increase in user’s skill in search of information;
- Economic competition and information access and delivery.

Consortia Models
Consortia models are not well defined and vary depending upon types of libraries participating, parent organization they belong to subject areas they cover, purpose of coming together and so on. Consortia could be a club of highly decentralized or highly centralized organizations. The characteristics of consortia model are also influenced by other players like publishers and vendors. Highly decentralized model suffer due to non availability of common agenda, no external funds, central sponsor and central staff. On the other hand, highly centralized models overcome these lacunae and also get maximum discounts.

E-JOURNALS PRICING MODELS IN OPERATION

Unfortunately, as of now there are no universally acceptable pricing and licensing models for e-journals. Current pricing models for e-information, which are developing during a period of experimentation, are not sustainable. Although it cannot be generalized the learned society publishers are increasingly prepares to make all their non subscribed journals available on the open access websites.

FACTORS MOTIVATING CONSORTIA LICENSING

Most of the electronic information is delivered via remote access and prefers to license uses rights which control disadvantages of tangible medium. Publishers are interested to lease costly e-resources to library consortia under single negotiated agreement. For access to electronic resources one needs licensing for

- Users need quick on the computer screens, locations and time dependent;
- There is proliferation of electronic resources and electronic versions of the traditional print materials; there is need to license databases;
- Funding agencies provided additional budget to support access to researchers, to improve information access.
- Negotiate for multi sites can save publishers and information providers’ time and money.
- Consortia contracts bring many users eyeballs to a resource all at once.
**BENEFIT OF CONSORTIUM**

Library consortia cope with the different problems of libraries through proper coordination and cooperation between publishers and librarians. The duplication can be checked as the situation calls for optimum use of resources by rational use of funds. The benefits of a consortium include:

- Service quality is enhanced.
- Service cost is reduced.
- Duplication of stock is minimized.
- More information is available with less payment.

**E-RESOURCES PURCHASING**

Cooperative subscription to electronic resources is the principal task of a consortium with focus on providing consortium-wide access to electronic resources to support education and research in core subject areas of its members. The Librarians is responsible for negotiations and finalizing better deals with publishers and aggregators of electronic resources. The librarian has to handle orders and payments for all subscriptions on behalf of its institution. The terms of licenses and agreements are negotiates between librarian ad publisher. Convincing and coordinating with funding agencies in another task that a consortium has to perform. Consortia based subscription to electronic resources has following considerations:

- Cheap and Lowest rates of subscription for all consortium members.
- Archival backup of perpetual access to e-resources.
- An increase annually in rates of subscription.
- License agreement terms.
- Provision of a single interface for access to the titles includes consortium.
- Continuous Research into the use of new technologies.

**Financial control**
The consortium is formed to manage financial crises in libraries and to provide better services to the users. Management committee considers and discusses the financial points like:

(a) Whether a consortium fund be created to subscribe the core journals in different subjects in multiple copies at a discount rate;

(b) Manage the fund of a consortium and how much money is to be collected from each member library as a contribution.

(c) Whether the responsibility of negotiations are vested in participating by the managing committee, to send remittance to the publishers for multiple copies from its own fund and adjust fund subsequently among the participating libraries;

(d) Accounting standard to maintain to avoid any pilferage?

Evaluation

The functioning of a consortium should be evaluated at predetermined intervals on the basis of set objectives. The obstacle between smooth functioning and set objectives should be managed by taking correcting measures. If any change is needed in the way of action, it should be changed immediately to achieve the objectives of a consortium.

PRESENT SYSTEM OF CONSORTIA IN UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES IN INDIA

In India there are several library consortia’s some of them are, the INDEST (The Indian National Digital Library in Engineering and Science and Technology) of the Indian Institute of technologies (IIT), UGC Infonet of the university grant Commission and similar institutions. Consortium the council of scientific and industrial research (CSIR) etc. several other organizations such as Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICDR), Defense Research and Development Organization (DRDO), State Agricultural Universities, Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO)
and some other individual groups institutions have started working to form different consortia, like Delhi, vision.

CONSORTIA CONSTRAINTS TO INDIAN LIBRARIES

- Lack of awareness about consortia benefits.
- Slow race to accept e-information by the users.
- Barriers in changing the mind setup of librarians.
- Maintenance and balancing both physical and digital library.
- Lack of finance funds.
- Single point payment.
- Rigid rules of administrative, finance and auditing.
- Problems of defining asset against payment.
- Pay-per-view not yet acceptable.
- Uncertainty about the persistence of digital resources.
- Inadequate of infrastructure for accessing electronic sources.
- Unreliable telecommunication links and insufficient bandwidth.
- Insufficient bibliographic tools.
- Lack of trained personnel for handling new technologies.
- Absence of strong professional association.

References


