

Consortium for Libraries in Puducherry: A Proposed Model

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Abstract

Library Consortia or Consortium is now being overheard globally; it is more because of e-publishing. Consortia are all about sharing resources and improving access to information. These resources are shared among libraries that have common missions, goals and clients (users) and act on those commonalities. Before we are sharing own library resources through inter library loan, but in this Information communication technology (ICT) age it has gained momentum even in the developing countries. In this paper authors proposed a prototype consortia model for libraries in Puducherry region and discussed the ICT infrastructure required for consortia participation.

Keywords: Library consortium; NKN; NMEICT; Puducherry.

Introduction

Libraries today are facing increasing demands for services while struggling with the challenges such as the rise in the information resources, high cost of library materials, high expectations from users, budget cuts and much more. Library consortia are created to help libraries obtain better prices by buying joint access for a greater number of users, expanding access to print and electronic collections and developing new services to meet their customers' needs. This paper attempts to address a short historic view of library consortia, the advantages and disadvantages of consortia for libraries, consortia activities generally in developing countries in and particularly in India. The purpose is to give a picture of current trends regarding consortia in developing countries. "Library consortia" refers to the co-operation,

co-ordination and collaboration between and among libraries for the purpose of sharing information resources.

Library Consortia is the sharing of resources among the participant's libraries. A consortium may be a formal or in have enabled library consortia to expand both in formal agreement between two or more libraries based on a number and functions over their respected areas. For example, a consortium library consortium development is rooted in the may be based on library type academic, Special, public etc. A regional and local consortium may be based also driven by the need to provide remote users on a geographical area. A consortium is "an agreement, common platform aiming to reduce costs per unit through or group (as of companies) formed to undertake formation of purchasing consortia. Members will focus on these national ,regional and an enterprise consortia."

Library Consortium Initiatives in India

The following are some examples of consortia fully operational at present in the country. India is a vast country with a total of 400 universities and institutes of national importance and about 18,600 colleges that provide higher education in all disciplines. The number of teachers is 3.1 million, and 7.8 million students are enrolled in higher

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education. Academic libraries in India are also facing problems such as increasing demands and high expectations from users, budget cuts, high costs of library materials especially electronic journals, and a rise in the amount of information resources in general.

There are a few consortia in India being operated by different organizations. Some of the institutions are as given below;

- UGC-INFONET [<http://www.inflibnet.ac.in>]
- NIST programme for College Libraries [<http://www.inflibnet.ac.in>]
- INDEST (Indian National Digital Library in Science and Technology) Consortia [<http://paniit.iitd.ac.in/indest/>]
- NKRC (National Knowledge Resource Centre) /
- CSIR e-Journal Consortia, [<http://nkrc.niscair.res.in/>]
- FORSA (Forum for Resource Sharing in Astronomy) [<http://www.iiap.res.in/library/forsa.html>]
- IIM Library Consortia, [<http://www.iimb.ernet.in/>]
- ICICI Knowledge Park, [<http://www.iciknowledgepark.com>]
- DAE Library Consortium, [<http://www.tifr.res.in/~libws/>]
- ICMR Library Consortia, [<http://www.jccc-icmr.informindia.co.in/about/about.asp>]
- HELINET (Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences, Karnataka) [<http://www.rguhs.ac.in/>]
- DRDO (Defence Research and Development Organization) [<http://dsl.drdo.gov.in/ejournals/index.htm>]
- DeLCON (DBT's Electronic Library Consortium) [<http://delcon.gov.in>]
- National Knowledge Network (www.nkn.in and NKN/NMEICT)

Objectives of the paper

The objective of the paper is to study the quantum of Institutions in PUT, to study the e-resources of Pondicherry University. The attitudes of librarians towards development and participation of consortia approach in Puducherry and providing access to e-contents among the participating institutions. Finally the paper suggests a consortia model for libraries of Puducherry UT.

Review of Related Literature

A number of studies have been carried out in this area at national and international levels. Out of which, a few related studies have been highlighted as below:

A model consortium approach for the engineering educational institutions in Tamil Nadu was developed by Ramesh Babu, Vinayagamoorthy and Gopalakrishnan. The authors surveyed the engineering educational institutions in Tamil Nadu which are opting for consortia approach. Based on the survey, a prototype design model known as Library Consortium for Engineering Educational Institutions in Tamil Nadu (LCEEITN) has been designed with the aim to share periodical resources among the libraries. SeemaVasishta identified Library consortia or buying clubs development is rooted in the history of library cooperative efforts and is now also driven by the need to provide remote users with licensed access to electronic resources that too very economically by sharing subscription cost. Consortia are formed with an objective to enhance the purchasing power of the participating libraries in the present scenario of major financial crunch and escalating cost of the resources in electronic form. The purpose of this paper by Golnessa Galyani Moghaddam and V.G. Talawar outlines the advantages and disadvantages of consortia. The literature review reveals that libraries in developing countries have been working on consortia at national, regional and

international level. However, some barriers such as poor technological and communication infrastructure, inadequate finances, culture and context, attitudes toward consortia and multiple efforts are reported to be limitations of consortia activities in developing countries. Bibhuti B. Sahoo and Gopal P. Agarwal discussed the consortia operating in India, the inception of INDEST-AICTE Consortium, objectives, administrative structure, membership, services, and activities of INDEST-AICTE Consortium. It also discusses the selection of e-resources, review of e-resources, license agreement with publishers, fair use, usage analysis of various e-resources, economics of expenditure, research output of core members, archival access of e-resources for the core as well as other member of the consortium and future plan for the consortium.

Educational Institutions in Pondicherry Union Territory: A Brief Profile

Puducherry (formerly Pondicherry) become Union Territory officially as an integral part of India only in 1963 after the French left. Puducherry is the Union Territory of Government of India and it has four regions namely, Puducherry, Karaikal in Tamil Nadu, Mahe in Kerala and Yanam in Andhra Pradesh. This Union Territory has a literacy rate of 82% which is comparatively higher than the average literacy rate of India. In all the four regions there are around 87 educational institutions affiliated to Pondicherry University which is the Central University.

Table 1 depicts the total number (87) of

Table 1: Educational Institutions in PUT

S. No	Discipline-wise Educational Institutions	Nos.
1	Arts and Science	19
2	Engineering Technology	16
3	B.Ed. Colleges	31
4	Medical Colleges	05
5	Nursing / Para medical	08
6	Dental	02
7	Veterinary College	01
8	Law College	01
9	Research Institutions	04
	Total	87

higher educational institutions imparting various level of education in Puducherry UT and all institutions and colleges are affiliated to Pondicherry University (as on 15/3/2013).

About Pondicherry University Library

Pondicherry University is a central university in Pondicherry, India. Founded in 1985 by the Government of India, the university has emerged as India's fastest growing and it is a collegiate university with a jurisdiction spread over the Union Territories of Pondicherry, Lakshadweep and Andaman and Nicobar Islands. It has 35000 students in its 87 affiliated colleges including 27,000 students in the distance education mode. The current strength of students studying on-campus stands at 6500. It is credited with being a pioneering distance-learning institution in India with innovations like Choice-based Credit System and on-line admission for postgraduate studies.

About Ananda Rangapillai Library

The University Library is named as Ananda Rangapillai Library (ARL). The mission of ARL is to enhance learning and facilitating research in the campus. In tune with its mission, it is expanded in its infrastructure and various information services.

Infrastructure of ARL

An independent Library building with a beautiful inspiring ambience of greenery around is focused in developing with technology. The spaces have been revamped and modernized with modular furniture, large number of computers to access e-resources with high speed bandwidth facility, comparable to any world class library. An additional new Building with 50,000 sq. ft. is under construction to offer 24 hour reading facility, a special section for the visually challenged, a children's library etc. Bookshop cum Stationery and Souvenir shop was established as a student support service to cater the requirements of the Students and

also to Faculty and other Staff. Five School libraries as Reference Libraries manned by qualified library professionals were established in 2011 to cater to the immediate reference needs of the departments of each respective school of different disciplines. Latest accomplishment is commissioning of the surveillance system with Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) and Radio Frequency and Identification (RFID) making the University Library the third in the country to have such functional surveillance systems.

E-resources in ARL

The University Library collection is hybrid with its traditional information resources being gradually supplemented by the electronic resources. Books (Print) - 1,94,140, Theses - 705, Dissertations - 4,748, Journal archives - 11,292, Current journals (Print) - 364, E-Resources (e-books, e-database, e-journals) - 34,786 and Video talks - 1,500. Exclusive Collection for competitive examinations is popularly sought after.

UGC INFONET Consortium Participation

Pondicherry University Library is member of the UGC INFONET Digital Library Consortium and has access to about 7953+ e-journals and 9 e-databases. Access being IP based, e-resources are accessible in the University network. Pondicherry University Library is identified as one of the 22 Document Delivery university libraries in India under the UGC INFONET Digital Library Consortium

to cater to the journal article requests of all the universities in the country.

Participation of Consortia in Educational Institutions in Puducherry UT

All the libraries of educational institutions are willing to participate consortium and to share the electronic resources. Most of the Librarians were aware the Library Network /Consortia. Since the major thrust of this research is to develop Consortia for libraries in Puducherry UT, the librarians were asked to state their willingness to join co-operation through Questionnaire oral interview. In the recent year's library consortia very popular among the libraries, some of the consortium has functioning in India such as INDEST and UGC INFONET and CSIR - Consortium, FORSA Consortium. In this survey, in order to ascertain how many libraries are the members of such consortia, the librarians were asked to state their membership in those library consortia. Some of the Institutions have already participated consortia like UGC and INDEST.

ICT Infrastructure and Consortia Participation

The Libraries of educational institutions had ICT infrastructure viz. Connectivity to internet and other supporting systems for accessing the e resources to the Pondicherry University. The librarians of affiliated institutions do aware of the existence of library networks and the investigator to enquire their willingness to joint network/library consortia (Table 2).

Table 2: Reasons for Joining Network Vs Types of Institutions

S. No	Reasons for Joining Consortia	Type of Institution				Percentage	Rank
		University	Government	Government	Self-Financing		
1	Participating Inter Library Loan	2 (4.17%)	7 (14.58%)	1 (2.08%)	19 (39.58%)	29 (60.42%)	2
2	Saving in the Cost of Journals	2 (4.17%)	10 (22.91%)	1 (2.08%)	21 (48.83%)	34 (70.83%)	1
3	Sharing of Expertise	2 (4.17%)	7 (14.58%)	1 (2.08%)	20 (41.67%)	30 (62.5%)	3
4	Co-operative Catalogue	2 (4.17%)	5 (10.41%)	1 (2.08%)	13 (24.08)	20 (41.67%)	5
5	Co-operative Collection Development	2 (4.17%)	6 (12.5%)	1 (2.08%)	17 (35.42%)	26 (54.17%)	4

Proposed Library Consortia Model for Puducherry Libraries

The proposed library consortia model is focused on the development of a new platform for accessing the library resources through National Knowledge Network and NME/ICT Network.

National Knowledge Network

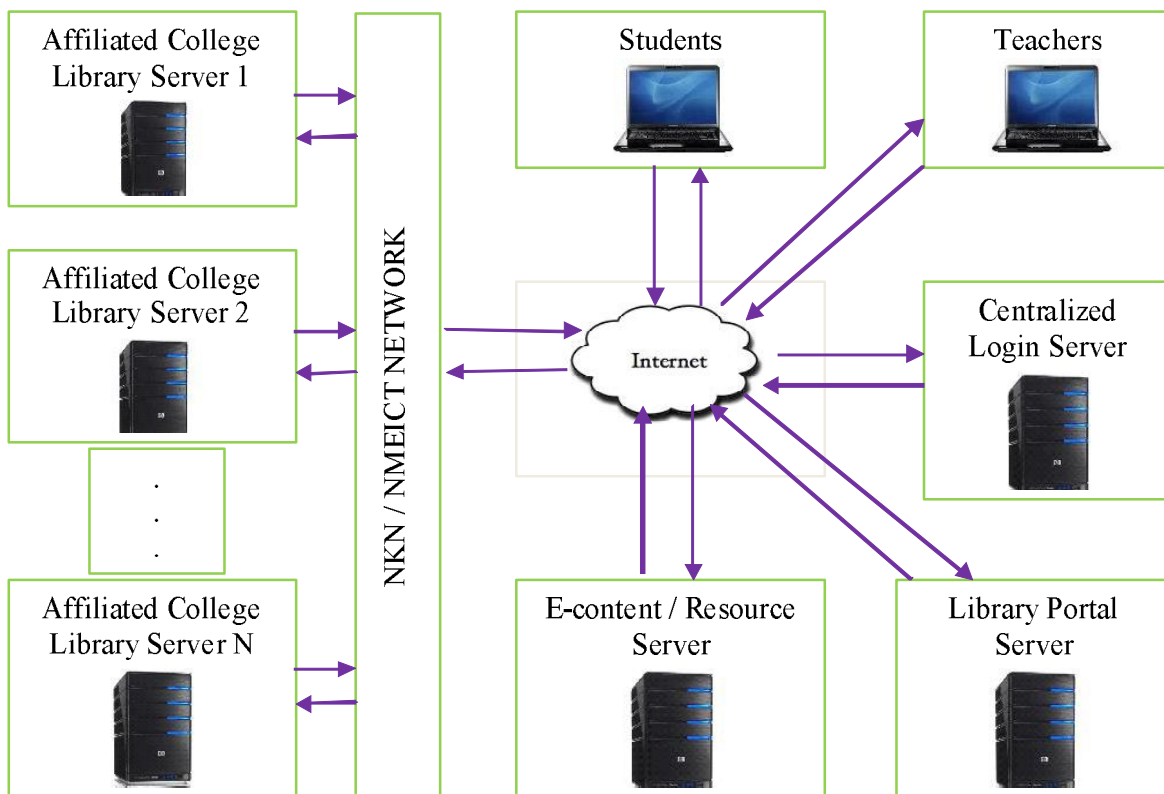
National Knowledge Network (NKN) is a state-of-the-art multi-gigabit pan-India network for providing a unified high speed network backbone for all knowledge related institutions in the country. The purpose of such a knowledge network goes to the very core of the country's quest for building quality institutions with requisite research facilities and creating a pool of highly trained professionals. The NKN will enable scientists, researchers and students from different backgrounds and diverse geographies to work closely for advancing human development in critical and emerging areas.

NMEICT

The National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology (NMEICT) has been envisaged as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme to leverage the potential of ICT, in teaching and learning process for the benefit of all the learners in Higher Education Institutions in any time anywhere mode. This is expected to be a major intervention in enhancing the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in Higher Education by 5 percentage points during the XIth Five Year Plan period. The main objectives of the National Mission on Education through ICT shall be building connectivity and knowledge network among and within institutions of higher learning in the country with a view of achieving critical mass of researchers in any given field.

This presents the proposed model for Puducherry Libraries using login ID and password. Library consortia model is focused on the development of a new platform for

Fig 1: Proposed Consortia Model



accessing the library resources through National Knowledge Network and NME/ICT Network. This has been designed for the benefit of the participating libraries. The proposed consortia work model is as follows:

- User id and password will be given to all the participating institutions.
- The user can login into the central portal server.
- The security checks the user whether authorized or not. The authorized user sends a query in any language to the central server.
- The central Portal server translates the query to the requested languages. Portal server passes query to the searching service.
- The Searching checked with indexing services. The Searching do the ranking on the outcome of the indexing service. Searching services passes the response to the central server.
- The Portal server reformulates the ranked response according to the format expected by primary servers.
- Various application servers execute query provided by the central server and return results.
- The central Portal server returned results to user after translation, summarization, filtering etc. of the content as required or the link to the content.

The Consortia work model is given below:

Paybacks of Participating Libraries

Some of the important advantages of the library consortium are as following below.

- Consortia-based subscription to electronic resources provides access to wider number of electronic resources at substantially lower cost;
- Optimum utilization of funds.
- Facilities to build up digital libraries
- Helpful to provide better library services

like CAS and SDI.

- Cost Sharing for Technical and training support
- Electronic Journals demand neither library space nor shelling costs nor can they be stolen from the library.
- The consortium have been offered better terms of licenses for use, archival access and preservation of subscribed electronic resources, which would not have been possible for any single institution; and Available 24 hours.
- Less economy expansion.

Conclusion

Library consortia are really helping the researchers, faculties and the students to retrieve the information and save their time. Library consortia, providing for physical and electronic delivery of materials, and integrating the collection-development processes are all distinct and crucial steps in moving toward the twenty-first century library. It is the case; clearly identified landmarks represent important goals and milestones for measuring our common progress on a journey through a new and unfamiliar landscape. Consortia are tools, which will aid in exploiting the features of the e-resources as well as in effecting savings. The participating institutions of library consortia in Puducherry would be benefited by way of sharing of more electronic resources at minimized cost.

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