

MEDICAL LIBRARY CONSORTIUM AND ITS IMPORTANCE IN PRESENT TIME: A STUDY

Hira Kalita

Librarian

Jorhat Medical College

Jorhat, Assam, India.

Abstract:

This paper is discussed about the consortia and how it is providing a great effect on the medical libraries and its particular users. Scientific journals and other E-journals are though producing at high speed still for the insufficient budget a library cannot be able to procure their demanded resources. With the help of consortia it is able to disseminate the maximum information to the library users. The consortium has grown up due to budget insufficiency, demanding variety of information needs, better and effective utilization of resources.

Keywords: *Consortia, Medical Library, E-journal.*

Introduction: The concept of library consortium come first time from academic libraries formed consortia for the primary purpose of sharing printed materials. A consortium is described as a group or organizations who come together to fulfill their common

objectives. For library consortium it requires mutual co-operation for sharing their resources and services. The aim of consortium is to achieve the goal what the members or individual person cannot achieve independently. Library consortium has the ability to share their resource, manpower, services etc. without sacrificing the individuality of each member library.

(Hirshon, 1999) defines library consortia ‘a generic term to indicate any group of libraries that are working together towards a common goal, whether to expand cooperation on traditional library services (such as collection development) or electronic information services. It is now used perhaps too broadly, and encompasses everything from formal legal entities to information groups that come together solely to achieve better pricing for purchasing electronic information’.

Evolution of Consortia:

Library Cooperation-----Interlibrary Loan-----Document Delivery System-----

Library Networks----- Library Consortia

Need of Consortia:

1. Increasing of information at very high speed.
2. Financial crunch.
3. Introduction of new ICT in library services/resources.
4. Proliferation of subjects in various fields.
5. Scattering of information in different formats.
6. Various information needs for the clients.

Impact of ICT in Consortium:

The medical library is assist with the MBBS/PG students, clinical and non-clinical doctors, physicians, laboratory technicians, nurses and administrative staff. The explosive growth of ICT and the wide spread of computer networks has carried a revolution in the field of electronic information resources/services at great extent. The value of ICT based resources and services are easily shared, disseminated, retrieved and manipulated at any time without going to the library. Medical library users always need of most up-to-date and latest information like patient care related, invention of new disease, treatment of disease, surgical and operation technique, medical science research topics etc. For such type of information access the printed materials not only sufficient to the users. So fulfill the needs medical librarian as well as other professional and non-professional staff must aware about the new tools and

techniques. Medical librarian must go ahead to provide the electronic resources like E-journals/books, full text database, bibliographic database, image database, CD/DVD database, numeric database, web based resources. Now a day's online resources and services are becoming a demandable for every users of the library. With the help of E-books/E-journals the users can retrieve the latest required information. ICT has highly significant in medical education and research. The application of ICT has resulted into considerable reduction in time, in access to information but relevance and precision is lacking because of inadequacy of techniques to develop search engines and other retrieval mechanisms.

Consortia Model

1. **Open consortia:** An open ended consortium provides the facility to a minimum no of libraries at a specific rate per product. This type of consortium basically exists in small or same group of libraries. The resources of the open consortia should be on specific subject fields. For example INDEST consortia are open consortia which are run by Ministry of HRD, Govt. of India.

2. **Closed group consortia:** This type of consortia exists in a definite group.

This type of consortia shares the resources through an affiliation, rules and

guidelines among the groups. For example CSIR laboratories, IIM, DAE consortium under this group.

3. **Centrally funded consortia:** In this type of consortium the groups are centrally funded by their parent body. For example INDEST, UGC-INFONET, CSIR, ICMR, MCIT etc. under this type of consortia.
4. **Shared-Budget:** In this type of consortium the libraries participate to form a group of consortium. They manage their funds individually to share their resources among the participating libraries. For example FORSA is this type of consortium.
5. **Publishers Initiative:** Now days it is seen that publishers initiated consortia are too popular. Here the publisher offered a high discounted consortium price to the participating library on a national level. For example Emerald pub. group, EBSCO pub. Etc.
6. **National consortium:** The national consortium achieved their license nationally and it disseminated their resources through nationally. For example UGC-INFONET an initiative by MHRD under NME-ICT now funded by UGC, National Digital Library Consortium, and INDEST-AICTE consortium is under the national level consortium.

Consortium for Health Sciences Libraries:

1. **HELINET:** HELINET is Health Science Library and Information Network.

It is the first health science consortium which was developed by Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Health Sciences, Karnataka (RGUHS) in 2001 for promoting the health science related E-journal access and resource sharing.

2. **National Digital Medical Library Consortium:** National Digital Medical

Library Consortium known as ERMED also. This is initiated by Director General of Health Services(DGHS), MOHFW under Govt. of India to develop nationally e-resources in medical science field. 39 centrally funded Government institutions including 10 DGHS+ 28 ICMR libraries and AIIMS library are selected at the initial stage as its core members. It provides access to over 2000 journals from 9 major publishers.

3. **medIND:** medIND was developed by Indian Council of Medical Research

(ICMR) & National Informatics Centre(NIC) in 1986. It contains the biomedical journals along with back volume archives. The journals includes from NML, Science, NEJM, Lancet, Nature etc.

4. **NTRMEDNET:** NTRMEDNET consortium was started in July, 2008 with a group of teaching institutions affiliated to Dr. NTR University of Health Sciences, Vijayawada and Andhra Pradesh. This consortium provides the E-journals and reference books from different publishers under its affiliated colleges.
5. **MUHS Digital Library Consortia:** Maharashtra University of Health Sciences, Nashik launched MUHS digital library consortium on 14th Nov. 2005 to provide full text e-resources to all the institutions affiliated to the university. This consortium consists of over 1600 medical journals, magazines, newsletters, bulletins etc. The university intends to run this project on “No profit- No loss” basis.
6. **HINARI:** HINARI was launched by World Health Organization (WHO) in January 2002, started with some 1500 journals from 6 major publishers such as Blackwell, Elsevier Science, the Harcourt Worldwide STM Group, Wolters Kluwer International Health & Science, Springer Verlog and John Wiley, accessible for low income countries only. But now more than 150 publishers are offering information resources among the various countries.
7. **UGC INFONET Digital Library Consortium:** This consortium was launched in 2003 by former Honorable President Dr. A P J Abdul Kalam. This consortium is basically for academic libraries initiated by UGC. It

provides the e-resources including full text and bibliographic databases in all subjects especially for academic libraries. But now it also includes the medical related subject like nursing, biomedical engineering, neuropsychology, gerontology, pharmacy.

8. **DELNET:** DELNET was initiated by NISSAT under the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, GOI. It was also supported by NIC, MCIT and Ministry of Culture, GOI. It includes the selected E-journals under the medical science by which the member libraries can access the online journals, bibliographic databases and abstracts.
9. **ICMR e-Consortia:** This consortium has been subscribing the E-journals like Science, NEJM, Lancet, Nature and BMJ to the all ICMR institutions. It has also subscribing to JCC@ICMR and full text e-databases i.e. ProQuest.

10.

Importance of Medical Library Consortium:

Medical Libraries are basically exists in medical colleges/schools, hospitals and health associations etc. At first a typical health or medical library has accessed to MEDLINE, a range of electronic resources, print and digital journal collections and print reference books. In late 1971, an online version called MEDLINE ("MEDLARS

Online") became available as a way to do online searching of MEDLARS from remote medical libraries. PubMed is a free search engine accessing primarily the MEDLINE database of references and abstracts on life sciences and biomedical topics.

Medical related databases are increasingly available in electronic form, particularly on the World Wide Web. It offers the global knowledge at our fingertips. Library consortia have turned the library from self-sufficiency to “Collaborative Survival Mode” among libraries for sharing its existing resources/services among the member libraries for its maximum usage and savings. The library consortium promotes the collaboration in different library activities. The exponential growth of population, document as made more impossible for the individual library to purchase all the relevant information. The journal has played a major role in the creation and transmission of knowledge. The developments in scientific publishing and price policies of publishers posed new challenges and it has brought the opportunities in purchasing the journals among their restricted budget. Consortia based subscription to E-resources provides access to wider number of E-resources at substantially lower cost. The research productivity of all institutions is expected to improve with increased access to international databases and full text resources. The consortia have been offered better terms of licenses for use, archival access and preservation of subscribed E-resources, which would not have been possible for any single institution.

The impact of ICT has providing enhanced library services with an emphasis on access to new electronic resources including databases and services offered through the Internet and the www. Consortia based purchased was widely seen to reduce the serial crisis among the libraries. It encourages for discussion, collective thinking and leadership quality among the professionals of member libraries. It reduces the cost of collection development among the libraries and facilitates the change management. Integrated Library System (ILS) is also run by consortia and ILS support is one of the more reasons for creation of library consortia which help in resource sharing systems. Consortia can become an excellent way in the process of collection, digitizing, organizing and making accessible the electronic resources. The E-publishing has brought a revolution in journals publication, subscription, and access and delivery mechanism.

Drawbacks of Library Consortia:

Consortium is one of the major collective agents for the dissemination and distribution of electronic information to the user community. But some drawbacks are seen from library consortia.

1. The electronic products are saved through digitization in various forms. Digital information is very fragile and for that it can be lost due to technical problems and frequent upgrading.

2. Consortia require high initial investments in licenses. Problems of budget allocating and finance.
3. Sometimes users also not accepting the E-journals as per with printed journals. In some articles or journals the highlighted hyper links do not have provision for accessing the related information and for that user cannot retrieve their needed information.
4. There is also lack of archiving facility of back issues of E-journals for unreliable telecommunication networks.
5. To run the library consortium there is need of sufficient knowledge about the ICT based technology for its participating libraries but most of the library professionals and users are not aware about the advanced technology. So training/awareness program is very necessary.
6. There is also problem of copyright from the publisher. Sometimes the publishers have provided the unwanted or irrelevant journals in their packages so it creates a puzzle.
7. Absence of printed copy of journals is one of the major drawbacks in consortia facility.

Conclusion:

Medical libraries need a drastic change and with the advancement of new technology of 21st centuries. It is also changing the old concept of libraries. A single library cannot success to provide the all kind of library resources and for that resource sharing among the libraries is essential. The consortium has providing a fruitful service to the users by disseminating their required information with the help of various scientific E-journals. The consortia should provide a safety umbrella for all the online journals and databases which they subscribe to its participating libraries.

Resource sharing through consortia has fulfilling the gaps of required information to those libraries which are not able to procure their resources for insufficient budget. The concept of consortia has carried the challenges by sharing the resources among the user community like the utilization of better and maximum resources among the libraries, use of new e-resources and technologies and minimizes the financial crisis. The consortium has promoted the unity, harmony and collaboration among the libraries.

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