



A Model of Consortium for Medical College Libraries of Rajasthan

KEYWORDS

Library Consortia, E-Journal, e-journals consortia, RAJMEDCON, Resourcing Sharing, Content Consortium, library model etc.

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ABSTRACT

Emerging of the growth and development field of the Internet, particularly the World Wide Web, library and information science has become a new medium of information storage and delivery in the 21st century. The phenomenon of consortia or group of libraries buying e-information together is emerging as an important area in the last few years. The explosion of information and inadequate library urged the libraries to adopt new philosophies and technologies for collection development and reduce the costs information. Library Consortium is an Association of a group of libraries to achieve mutually the common objective. It is being felt that the concept of E-Journals consortia can work well the libraries without requiring additional fees to access the e-journal. his paper briefly discusses the concept, need, factors, of library consortia and a new model of consortium for medical college libraries of Rajasthan.

Introduction

Cooperative purchasing of E-Resources is one of the key activities of a library consortium. It facilitates the libraries to get the benefit of wider access to electronic resources at affordable cost and on best terms of licenses. A consortium with the collective strength of resources of various institutions available to it, is in a better position to address and resolve the problems of Managing and achieving the electronic resources. Accessibility to full-text resources and on-line bibliographic databases to the students, researchers, faculty and professionals improves their research productivity in ferns of research papers. Consortium is a complicated organization. It is an association, in the sense that is not commonly understood; i.e, a consortium is not a 'library association', although some associations of libraries are engaged in consortial activities.

Since the 'present situation' is far from satisfactory for the following reasons prevailing in Rajasthan Medical College Libraries: lack of strategy, un-cooperation, lack of IT infrastructure, lack of resources, lack of expertise, inequality and above all budgetary constraints. It is desired that a strategy of medical college libraries should be formulated to get the maximum access to information, to create infra-structural facilities and by arranging sufficient financial support, ample resources may be available and ultimately risk may be shared by all the member libraries by forming a consortium.

The model of consortium

The 'model' invites the 'Medical College Libraries of Rajasthan' towards forming a 'Consortium' to consolidate the E-Journals for on-line access and to develop library services for exploiting those resources. We all are aware that to sustain the pressure of rising cost of E-Journals, sharing library budgets, ever-increasing demands of information seekers and complex technological requirements in libraries, consortia based subscription of electronic journals is the best feasible solution of the problems. In the present day situation, no library can claim its self sufficiency and no library can exist all alone. The collective strength of the Medical College Libraries of Rajasthan will facilitate to get the benefit of wider access to electronic resources at affordable cost and at best possible terms.

The proposed initiative will be recognized as 'Consortium' of E-Journal in Medical College Libraries of Rajasthan RAJMEDCOM and will be implemented by following two major projects:

- Project I. Development of Information Infrastructure
- Project II. Formation of Consortium

The initiative should bring the attention of the Medical Colleges, participating in the venture towards the, 'Consortium'. It will be an 'Open-ended Consortium' means it will remain open to other research institutions of the same field. The 'Coalition' should be the member of international consortia like International Coalition of Library Consortia

(ICOLC), India consortia in medical field like National Medical Library's Electronic resources in Medical (ERMED), Indian council of Medical Research J-Gate Custom Content Consortium (JCCC@ICMR) etc. in this way it will enable better access to Information resources to its users.

There should be a Headquarter of this Consortium. It would be the coordinating center and resource center and shall be funded centrally having centrally staffed. Organizing Committee should explore the location and institution for establishing its Headquarter.

A steering Committee with Board of Members should be formed. It will be policy making body to take decision on policy direction, membership, generating the funds, consolidation of resources, and implantation of project, cost estimation, cost realization of subscriptions, license negotiations etc.

Review of Literature

The consortia of e-journals are a recent concept is scientific and technical librarianship. Even then quite a good number of studies have been conducted in India. A brief review it being presented below of some of the selected studies, Allen, Charles (1996) published a paper entitled 'Consortia and the National Electronic Library' it was published in National Electronic Library: a guide to the future for library managers, ed. by Gary M. pircia west port:Greenwood,1996. Kopp, J.A. (1988) published an article en title 'Library Consortia and Information Technology: the past, the promise'.

Peters (2001) Published two articles-1 Consortia speaking, 2. Consortia thinking.

Wade (2007) suggested a model of a modern library consortium.

As mentioned above some studies have been undertaken in India also about consortium of E- Journals. Selected ones are being summarized below:

Arora and Agrawal, made a study of INDEST consortium. They have mentioned in this article that INDEST Consortium set up by the Ministry of Human Resources Development (MHRD) of Government of India has commenced its oper-

ation since Dec.2002 through its headquarters at IIT, New Delhi.

Arora and others (2004) presented a paper entitled ' Library consortia and resource sharing initiatives in India.

Cholin (2003) presented a paper during Ranganathan's Day Celebration on 'Consortia for libraries and information centers'.

Balakrishnan (2002) submitted 'final report of the Committee of Experts on Consortia based Subscription to Electronic Resources for Education System in India' to MHRD, Govt. of India.

Sathyanarayanan (2004) and others presented a white paper entitled 'Library consortia and resource sharing initiatives in India' to Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences.

Basic Objectives

The fundamental objective of this Consortium would be the maximum use and enhancement of the resources and minimizing the expenditure. The other objectives may be reflected through 'Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)' between the members of the consortium. Some characteristics of good objectives are being listed below for the discussion:

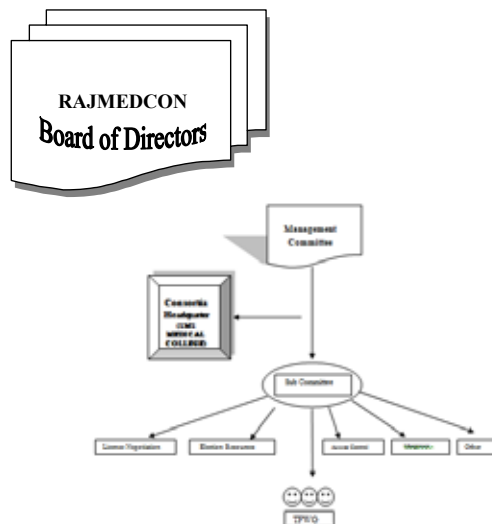
1. Activity oriented: what, why, and how, etc.
2. Function oriented: specificity, perfection, etc.
3. Operation oriented: authority, execution, etc.
4. Achievement oriented: where from and where to go.
5. Resources oriented: Information Technology and Intelligence, human monetary.
6. Output oriented: quality and quantity.
7. Assessment oriented: cost, service, efficiency, etc.
8. Priority oriented: unbiased, preferred relations, etc.
9. Etc, etc.

Model Structure of Consortium

The 'Consortium' may be called as 'Rajasthan Medical Consortium' (RAJ-MEDCON). It will be a simple, efficient and highly cost-effective system. It will have a separate source of funding agency (state/central authority or others) to advocate for external funds. Part of these funds will be utilized for operating the consortium. Through it the members can get better pricing benefits in their consortium based subscriptions.

The operating principle of the Consortium will be the 'decentralized acquisition', 'decentralized processing' but 'central access /utilization'. This model structure will help not only to provide access to on-line electronic resources available in the 'consortium' but will also facilitate individual libraries to get access to other library resources by sharing of library resources amongst participating institutions.

RAJMEDCON ORGANIZATIONAL SETUP:



Governance & Maintenance of the Consortium (RAJ-MEDCON)

There shall be a Board of Directors at the apex. A Management Committee will be constituted to manage the affairs of the Consortium under the direction of the Board of Directors having Sub-Committees, Task Forces and Working Group for monitoring, coordination and for taking decision on policy matters.

Board of Directors:

The Board will consist of three Directors. The Principal/Dean of the SMS Medical College, Jaipur will act as the ex-officio Chief Executive and sole authority of the Consortium.

Sub-Committees:

They will be appointed by the Management Committee and will function under its direction. They will follow up the action and should promote the mission of the Consortium with the help of Task Forces and Working Groups.

Task Forces and Working Groups:

They will identify and create users demands. They will function together to satisfy the potential need of the users and forward the consortia related interests and needs to the Management Committee through Sub-Committees. They will participate in training, workshop, symposium etc. organized by the Consortium.

Headquarter of the Consortium:

SMS Medical College, Jaipur shall be the Headquarter of Consortium as Jaipur is the capital of the State and is convenient place with better communication and infrastructure facilities.

Membership of the Consortium

At present the membership of the Consortium will be limited to Allopathic Medical College of Rajasthan. After successful implementation, other medical colleges i.e. Ayurvedic, Homeopathic etc. and Hospitals, Medical Research Centers and Health Libraries with common interest and needs may also be admitted.

Membership applications will be reviewed by the Management Committee and approved by the Board upon the recommendations of Management Committee. The same authority will have the right to reconsider or terminate the membership.

Criteria for the Consideration of Membership of the Consortium

1. It must be a publicly funded Academic/Research Institution, Learned Society involved in academic/research activities or accredited by Medical Council of India or approval by a learned body, as the case may be.
2. It must be located within the geographical area of Rajasthan.
3. It must provide library services such as lending, reference, inter-library loan and must be equipped with appropriate qualified staff.]
4. It must have annual funding for collection development and must be actively engaged in its development to satisfy the needs of its users. It must have a collection development policy.
5. It must be willing to share resources and provide inter-library loan services to other members according to standards and procedure of the Consortium.
6. The Head of the Institution or its Librarian or his Representative must participate in the governance of the consortium by attending the meetings of Committees, sub-Committees and Working Groups etc. They should contribute to the work of the Consortium.
7. It must abide consortium rules, policies and procedures and must pay assessed membership fee.

Consortium Expenditure

The consortium participation cannot 'free'. A 'fee' is required to participate. The participation cost will have two parts:

'Membership fee' (i.e. platform fee- a fixed amount) based on types of members and 'Subscription fee' (i.e. content fee) with 50-70% discount based on electronic subscription required to a particular member.

'Membership fee' will be spent on training, consulting individual library problems, to organize general meeting etc. 'Subscription fee' will be spent to subscribe E-Journals required by the members.

They should be 'External Funds' whose major part will be funded by the state Government. It will be utilized for other costs necessary for the Consortium such as web-site maintenance, consortium member services, resources up gradation, communications etc.

It may be pointed out here that the participation cost will not be much. It will be rational in comparison to the consortium benefits and will be quite affordable to members.

Source of External Fund and Realization of Project Cost

The major cost of this 'Consortium' will be borne by the State Government. The libraries participating in this venture should spend at least 10% of their total library budget in order to ensure the availability of funds for the enhancement of 'Rajasthan Medical College Libraries Consortium'. The Consortium cost will be constantly available over the years. Since the payment of the major costs of this venture will be made available constantly from the budget of the participating libraries, then the consortia preparation cost of the member libraries will be ...

License Agreement for Consortium

License agreements are to be signed between the information provider (publisher and vendors) and information purchasers (libraries or their consortium). The task of negotiating licenses becoming more complication with diverse nature in delivery modes, access possibilities and spiraling pricing practices (concessions) to electronic resources by the information providers. Hence the type of agreement between 'Information Provider and Library Consortium' and between 'Library Consortium and Consortium Members' may have notable effect on the effectiveness of the consortium.

The consortium would provide union strength to its members to negotiate with information providers for the best possible price and terms. Haavisto has mentioned the minimum contents of a Library Consortium Agreement (between the consortium and its members) as: partners, purpose, acquired resources, usages rights, share costs, legal practices, responsibilities, unexpected satiations, terms and termination etc. Agreements should be made to provide access to the licensed resources either directly through publishers, site or through the mirror site created by the consortium, depending on the cost, communications, geographical locations, connection speed and number of constituent members etc.

The Board of Directors and Management Committee should take care of the following issues: pricing protection, payment methods (part/full) subscription period, licenses materials (format, delivery, interfaces, updates etc.), usage statistics and ultimately the reputation of the information provider.

Implementation of the RAJ-MEDCON

For the Consortium know as Rajasthan Medical Consortium RAJ-MEDCON, a pilot study must be made to attain the goal. The following framework can be helpful at the implementation level:

Project 1. Development of Information Infrastructure

1. Identification and evaluation of existing infrastructure within Rajasthan Medical College Libraries.
2. Assessment of extra requirements of the participating libraries.
3. Installation of hardware and software.
4. Establishment of network.
5. Establishment of human resources.
6. System analysis and design.
7. Creation of database.
8. Data conversion.
9. Customization, if necessary.
10. Routing maintenance.
11. Promotional activities.
12. Other relevant activities.

Formulation of consortium

1. Requirements of infrastructure should be identified and evaluated.
2. Electronic Journals should be identified and evaluated for subscription.
3. Information resources should be identified and evaluated for digitization.
4. Digitization tools (standard, format, process etc.) should be identified and evaluated.
5. Retrospective collections (as per requirement) may be digitized.
6. Consolidation of electronic journals for on-line access.
7. Cost effectiveness (independent v/s consortia, distributed v/s centralized).
8. Copyright issues and rights management.
9. Services and benefits to be offered.
10. Participation and membership.
11. Licensing strategies and terms of access.
12. Access control and delivery.
13. Licensing negotiations and subscription.
14. Quality improvement.
15. Training and workshop.

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