

## LIBRARY CONSORTIA, NETWORKING AND RESOURCE SHARING AMONG PUBLIC LIBRARIES OF GOA: A REVIEW

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**ABSTRACT:** *This paper focuses on library consortia, its meaning, types, functions, benefits, need, threats and challenges. Some major library consortia are described in brief highlighting their special feature. It also explains the library networks. Main coverage in the paper is about the existing Public Library Network in the state of Goa. Goa Public Library network consist of Krishnadas Shama Goa State Central Library (KSGSCL) which is the apex public library in the state, Dr. Francisco Luis Gomes District Library (DFLGDL) and seven taluka libraries at various places in Goa. Sharing of resources is done through different services using library software 'LibSys'. Brief description of various functions performed by existing network is highlighted. Paper also observes ample scope for Goa State Central Library to emerge as knowledge resource centre with its existing rare and valuable collection, electronic resources, digitization program, use of information technologies etc. Paper reviews prevailing conditions conducive for this library to go ahead with idea of knowledge resource centre and challenges are also noted.*

**KEY WORDS** – Library Consortia, Resource Sharing, Public Library, Library Network.

### 1. INTRODUCTION:

Entry of internet and World Wide Web revolutionized the information world witnessed information explosion, electronic publishing, and provided open access to information to all. The most challenging task before the libraries is to

monitor and provide access to the huge information that is produced. It is impossible for a single library to do so. To overcome these challenges collectively concept of Library consortia came forward that resulted in broadening the scope, role and objectives of

library collection and services. With application of ICT in library functioning, new opportunities opened up where instant and easy exchange of electronic documents is made possible. This has created favorable condition for resource sharing activities. It should be noted that the concept of sharing of resources was started with Inter Library Loan (ILL), Document Delivery system (DDS), Library Networking (via, LAN, WAN), etc. At present the more accepted system of resource sharing is Library consortia.

Consortia: Consortium is a Latin word, which means 'partnership', 'association' or 'society'. Webster's 19<sup>th</sup> new collegiate dictionary defines, "Consortium is an agreement or group formed to undertake an enterprise beyond the resources of any one member". In simple words consortia means together with common aim and objective for accessing information. It is mutual agreement between where people agree to share/exchange their resources or information to achieve specific purpose/goal. A Consortium could be described as a group of organizations who come together to fulfill a combined objective that requires co-operation and the sharing of resources and needs to have a clear mutually beneficial goal to ensure its success.

**2. LIBRARY CONSORTIA:** Online dictionary of library and information science defines the Consortia as "An association of independent libraries and/or library systems established by formal agreement, usually for the purpose of

resource sharing." Here member libraries cooperate with each other to enjoy some common benefits to all which are beyond the reach of an individual library. These benefits are in terms of accessibility and extension of services among member libraries at lesser cost. Consortia can be said as an addition of sum of the resources of all member libraries and distributing it to all on demand as per the agreed terms. The strength of the individual library grows with regards to its capacity to serve the users. Library can offer more than the sum of its individual capacity. One's own resources remains with them plus other library's resources can be used as and when necessary. Off course, member libraries has to prepare themselves for this good cause by updating resources, software issues and other technical infrastructure, training etc. required for the consortia. In India consortia concept received practical implementation much later as compared to other countries.

### **3. NEED FOR LIBRARY CONSORTIUM:**

Consortia is the collective efforts by the group of libraries to give improved services to its users through resource sharing with the help of information technology. Its need arises in view of the following scenario.

- Information explosion
- Emergence of new forms of information
- Technological developments favoring sharing of resources efficiently

- Rise in cost of resources especially journals and databases
- Inadequate library budget
- Self-sufficiency is only a dream!
- Optimum usage of resources through extended access
- Greater bargaining power with the publishers
- To bare pressure of updating the fast developing technology
- Diversity of user needs
- Survival of the library against the access to information on the www and internet.
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#### 4. FUNCTIONS INVOLVED IN LIBRARY CONSORTIA:

- Cataloguing
- Consulting
- Continuing education
- Cooperative collection development
- Cooperative purchasing
- Digitization
- Integrated library system
- Physical delivery
- Preservation of resources subscribed and procured
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#### 5. TYPES OF CONSORTIA:

**5.1 Central funded consortia:** This type of consortia exists with funds given by central funding agency. It is solely depend on parent body for funds. e.g. INDEST-AICTE

consortium, CSIR E-Journals consortium, UGC INFONET Digital Library consortium

**5.2 Open Consortia:** This type of consortia is very flexible. Member libraries can join or can back out any time they please. e.g. INDEST-AICTE

**5.3 Closed group Consortia:** It stays within the definite group. This type of consortia emerges by affiliation and collaboration among the member institutions. e.g. CSIR, DRDO, IIM consortium

**5.4 Shared Budget consortia:** In this model, the participating libraries take the lead and form the consortium. e.g. FORSA, IIM consortium

**5.5 National consortium:** The end of this model is national level licensing of products, like INDEST, UGC- INFONET.

**5.6 Publisher Initiative consortia:** The Emerald Full-Text Library published by the Emerald Publishing Group (formerly MCB University Press) is recent example. Here, consortium members will get deep discount price to the participating libraries.

**5.7 International consortia:** In this consortium, libraries belonging to different countries participate. This may be formed either by individual libraries, such as OCLC, or by bringing different national consortia under one umbrella. Such federation of consortia is known as Meta consortia, such as International coalition of library consortia,

which comprises nearly 150 library consortia from around the world.

**6. BENEFITS OF CONSORTIA:** To obtain maximum benefits of consortia the agreement should clearly speak the objectives, role of participating libraries, infrastructure, management, purchases and access to resources.

Benefits are many.

- Subscriptions of e-resources are available at the cheaper rate.
- Better terms of licenses for use, access to archives and preservation of these resources
- Sharing cost on purchases
- Sharing of work and skills
- Wide range of resources available
- 24x7 accesses
- Improved quality of services and user satisfaction
- judicious use of funds
- Image of the library
- Creation of Digital library is facilitated
- Strengthens existing services
- Beneficial to all participating libraries irrespective of their size, collection, budget or organizational set up.
- Retaining individual identity of each participating library
- Additional resources and services to the users
- Framing of effective collection development policy

- Scope for introduction of new services
- New product can be created for users
- Shared integrated library systems, technology solutions
- Shared training and professional development
- Increase in individual capacity of the member library to serve its users.

#### **7. THREATS:**

- It is a complex process and needs whole hearted support from the management and the librarians of the member libraries.
- Mutual understanding among the libraries is necessary
- Due consideration to demands of all members in terms of subscription and procurement of resources.
- Huge initial investment on ICT, infrastructure, licenses, manpower, management, administration of access and training to start up consortia.
- Compatibility with new technological advancement is a costly job
- Total dependency on telecommunication, internet, bandwidth etc. still haunts the techno savvies.
- No possession of print copy
- Inter dependency among the libraries
- Requires common or compatible technology among consortia members for sharing resources and services

- Fear or doubts about practical success of plan or Pressure of coping with terms of consortia
- Sustaining of consortia

## 8. SOME MAJOR CONSORTIA INITIATIVES IN INDIA:

**8.1 FORSA Consortium:** Forum for Resource Sharing in Astronomy and Astrophysics was established in 1981 with its headquarter at Hyderabad. It is homogeneous group of eleven institutions in astronomy and astrophysics in India with common area of interest. At present, there are eleven institute members. It offers various services like union catalogue of books, union catalogue of journals, electronic journals, electronic resources and e-journal consortium. Important objectives are digitization of archival materials and to develop institutional repositories accessible to all.

**8.2 The National Knowledge Resource Consortium (NKRC):** It was established in year 2009. It is a network of libraries and information centers of 39 CSIR and 24 DST institutes. NKRC's origin goes back to the year 2001, when the CSIR set up the Electronic Journals Consortium to provide access to 1200 odd journals of Elsevier Science to all its users. Today, NKRC facilitates access to 5,000+ e-journals of all major publishers, patents, standards, citation and bibliographic databases. Apart from licensed resources, NKRC is also a

single point entity that provides its users with access to a multitude of open access resources

**8.3 INDEST-AICTE Consortium:** “Indian National Digital Library in Engineering Sciences and Technology (INDEST) Consortium” was set up in 2003 by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) with a mission to improve productivity and quality of research, promote advance teaching and learning and moving towards a National Consortium. The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi is the Consortium Headquarters to coordinate its activities. The Consortium was re-named as INDEST-AICTE Consortium in December 2005. The Consortium enrolls engineering and technological institutions as its members and subscribe to over 12,000 electronic resources for them at discounted rates of subscription and favorable terms and conditions. This consortium is one of the contributors to National Library and Information Services Infrastructure for Scholarly Content (N-LIST) program with Information & Library Network centre (INFLIBNET).

**8.4 IIM Consortium:** Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Libraries Consortium was initiated in 2000 by the librarians of IIMs to share CD-ROM/Digital databases that were subscribed by IIM Libraries. Later cooperative acquisition, cooperative processing and distributed utilization were considered by the consortium. It subscribes about 1499 e-journal resources from four major publishers in the domain viz. Sage, Springer, Taylor and Francis and Wiley. Some of the salient

features of consortium are sharing of information on library processes and policies across IIMs, sharing of resources like books, journals, papers, CDs, etc. on Inter Library Loan, guidance to new IIMs, and facilitating students and faculty of each IIM to access the libraries of other IIMs.

**8.5 HELINET Consortium:** Health Science Library and Information Network (HELINET) launched on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2003 was initiated by Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Science (RGUHS) Karnataka, for libraries of its affiliated colleges. It provides access and shares the contents of around 600 + scholarly journals, 2000+ e-books, 1500+ videos and databases to all the respective affiliated colleges under RGUHS. The vision is to improve the quality of education and research in the Health Science institutions of the state through enhanced access to high quality medical information. Its mission is to network all the Health Science libraries for minimizing the cost of acquisition and maintenance of learning resources and maximizing their utilization in the health science colleges and institutions.

**8.6 e-ShodhSindhu Consortium:** This consortium for higher education e-resources is formed recently by Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) merging three consortia initiatives, namely UGC-INFONET Digital Library Consortium, NLIST and INDEST-AICTE Consortium. The e-ShodhSindhu provides current as well as archival access to more than 15,000 core and peer-reviewed journals and a number of

bibliographic, citation and factual databases in different disciplines from a large number of publishers and aggregators to its member institutions including centrally-funded technical institutions, universities and colleges that are covered under 12(B) and 2(f) Sections of the UGC Act. Other objectives are developing a formidable collection of e-journals, e-journal archives and e-books on perpetual access basis, access to scholarly content available in open access through subject portals and subject gateways, developing a National Electronic Library with electronic journals and electronic books, start new collaborative activities etc.

**9. NETWORKING:** The 'National commission on Libraries and Information Science' an agency in the United States Government in its National Program Document (1975) defines a Network as "Two or more libraries or other organizations engaged in a common pattern of information exchange through communication for some functional purpose. A network usually consists of a formal arrangement whereby materials, information and services provided by a variety of libraries and other organizations are available to all potential users. Libraries may be different jurisdictions but must agree to serve one another on the same basis as each serves its own constituents. Computers and telecommunication may be among tools for facilitating communication among them." The purpose of library network is to promote resource sharing

among member libraries by coordinate efforts for suitable collection development and reduce unnecessary duplication wherever possible. . Library automation and database creation of the existing resources are the pre requisite for participating in any kind of network. Of course finance and skilled manpower are other big challenges. Library network provide network based services to Users, document Delivery Services, bibliographic Information Services, and human Resource Development. It encourages implementation of standards in library operations which in turn increases efficiency of housekeeping operations. Through network new services are given momentum for sharing the resources. Networks can coordinate with other similar networks for exchange of information and documents.

**9.1 Public Library Network in Goa:** In Goa Krishnadas Shama Goa State Central Library (KSGSCL) is an apex public library established in 1832. It is named after an eminent Goan writer of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The library is well known for its archival documents, back volumes and rare books in history in English, Latin and Portuguese language. It is an ISO 9001: 2008 Certified Library. Other public libraries are ‘Dr. Francisco Luis Gomes District Library’ at Navelim, South Goa and seven Taluka libraries situated in various parts of Goa. Besides these, there are 42 village Panchayat libraries and 80 libraries run by NGOs which covers rural part of the state. Goa stands for

highest literacy rate among the few states of India. It is mandatory for students of VIII standard to have membership of public library. These two encouraging factors contribute to increase in the use of libraries in the state. The Public libraries in Goa are under administrative control of Directorate of Art & Culture, Government of Goa. There is a network of public libraries among KSGSCL, District library and seven taluka libraries since 2009.

## **9.2 Functions/services provided by Public library network in Goa:**

9.2.1. Web based union catalogue: The libraries are well connected with union catalogue on web based enabled technology. The library collection is grouped under different databases like books, reports, CDs, manuscripts, microfilms, photographs and articles database for convenient and speedy search.

(<http://scl.goa.gov.in/opac/html/SearchForm>)

9.2.2. Online catalogue of individual library: Online catalogue of individual library can be accessed separately from main web page. (<http://scl.goa.gov.in/opac/html/memberlogin?site=s=1&firsttime=Y>)

9.2.3. Client server architecture: LibSys software provides for client server architecture. Data entry/cataloguing are done by the respective library as and when resources are added and union catalogue gets updated automatically at State Data Centre at Porvorim-Goa.

9.2.4. Books on Inter Library Loan: Request for any book is provided through inter - library loan

service from any location within stipulated time. Library member can visit any of these libraries and borrow books and other material on a membership basis.

9.2.5. Book return: Reader can return books to any of these libraries irrespective of the library from which it is borrowed. Library within reach is experienced with convenience, speed, and time saving at all levels of library operation.

9.2.6. Recommendations: User can recommend any book online, and can log in to his/her individual account from any place for 24x7 days.

9.2.7. Paper clipping and photographs: KSGSCL has archival collection of newspapers published from 1900 to till date and magazines since 1861. Photo image of required newspaper clipping or photographs is also posted via e-mail on demand.

**9.3 Perspective of KSGSCL as a knowledge resource centre:** KSGSCL is already taken initiatives in network based services with selective public libraries in Goa with extended services to its member libraries. This library has great potential to get it developed as a knowledge resource Centre with its own rich resources and the infrastructure. Library has taken up initiative of digitization of rare books and documents by establishing Data Imaging Centre and more than 2, 00,000 pages are digitized. Library subscribes online databases and e-journals and the facility is extended to all member libraries which includes DELNET databases. The recent of addition to e-sources is the subscription of world eBook Library (<http://community.ebooklibrary.org>)

having access to more than 90, 00,000 books. Library is fully automated with RFID technology enabled services. Member libraries can share their resources with KSGSCL via library network.

#### 9.4 Future prospects/ scenario:

- Building and creating ICT infrastructure and environment at all public libraries
- Connecting all public libraries with the network.
- Library should subscribe to more databases and e-resources
- Digitized collection of rare books and other documents of archival value to be included in this cooperative drive.
- Special training programs for the library staff

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