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## Consortia Approach in Collection Development: An Economy Sharing

**Dr. Rajneesh Kumar\***

Asst. Librarian

Government Degree College Kmand,

Tehri Grahwal, Uttarakhand

[rajneeshbhan@gmail.com](mailto:rajneeshbhan@gmail.com)

ORCID ID: 0000-0002-4448-9456

**Mrs. Rajni Bhanot\*\***

Professional Assistent

Maitreyi College

Delhi University, New Delhi

[rbbhanot@gmail.com](mailto:rbbhanot@gmail.com)

**Abstract:** The article discusses the impact of technology on libraries and the advantages of digital resources and consortia in library collection development. It emphasizes how libraries are leveraging technology to upgrade their services and divide libraries into categories such as hybrid libraries, electronic libraries, digital libraries, and virtual libraries. The concept of digital resources is explained, referring to information sources in digital format such as databases, books, journals, newspapers, and more.

The advantages of digital resources are highlighted, including the ability to access information from anywhere at any time, multiple simultaneous accesses, structured content, easy information retrieval, preservation without degradation, space efficiency, and cost considerations. The Article also mentions the factors that influence collection development, such as increasing user demand, rising document costs, and limited library budgets. To overcome these challenges, libraries can form consortia, which involve groups of libraries coming together to share resources and achieve common goals.

The concept of consortia is defined as a partnership or association of libraries to participate in resource sharing. It is explained that consortia have long been used to improve access and service through methods like interlibrary loan, document delivery, and institutional membership. Consortia can be formed at various levels and may focus on specific functions or subjects. The advantages of consortia-based collection development include wider access to electronic resources at lower costs, optimum fund utilization, support for building digital libraries, enhanced library services, cost sharing for technical support, better license terms, and continuous availability of resources.

Overall, the article provides an overview of how technology and digital resources are transforming libraries and the role of consortia in facilitating resource sharing and cost-effective collection development.

**Key Words:** Consortia, Collection Development, Resource Sharing, Digital Libraries.

## Introduction

As technology is advancing the same way all the areas of society are also advancing with the help of new technology, The Libraries are also not lagging behind by using different technology to upgrade their services and to offer new services. The new technology is helping libraries in three ways

- It is allowing the library to do that work that a human can do but with the help of technology, it can be done in a more efficient, economical, and faster way.
- It is allowing the library to do that work also which a human cannot do.
- It is changing the way libraries have been used

The impact of technology can be seen in the development of libraries, it is the impact of the technology that we can now divide the libraries based on technological use also. i.e. Hybrid libraries, Electronic Libraries, Digital Libraries, and Virtual Libraries.

In general, we have hybrid libraries, and as the name suggests these libraries use both the medium (print and digital) to serve their users, but interestingly the use of digital documents is increasing day by day and it is not only the libraries that are going from print to digital, even the publishers are also going to digital due to inherent advantages of digital documents.

## Digital Resources

As the name suggests digital resources mean, information sources that are in digital format can be said as Digital Resources. A digital resource is a file in the same way that a Word document is a file. It could be a video file or an audio file or even a text file such as a pdf or a powerpoint. Common digital video file types are AVI, FLV, MOV, MP4, SWF, or WMV and common digital audio file types are AIFF, MP3, MPEG, or WAV.

Online Dictionary ([igi-global.com/dictionary/](http://igi-global.com/dictionary/)) defines digital resources as:

1. Databases, books, journals, newspapers, magazines, archives, theses, conference papers, government papers, research reports, scripts, and monographs in a digital format.
2. Information available in electronic format.

Digital information resources deal with both born digital and digitized materials which can be either accessible from library's in house database or from the world-wide-web, the born digital materials includes; e-books, e-journal, e-news paper, e-magazine, thesis, dissertations, reports, website, www-resources and other related materials which can be considered necessary by the user, researcher, informational professional or even by the library management itself; on the other hand digitized materials means converting the materials from other format into digital format; in that case materials must have preserve the copy right law, for both the born digital and digitized format, some resources will be permissible to furnish information in full text and others will be limited to metadata and some resources will be freely accessible for anyone from anywhere in the world and others will have limited accessibility due to the library's policy and for cost related issues and also for the authentication.

([http://www.academia.edu/260084/Definition\\_of\\_Digital\\_Information\\_Resources](http://www.academia.edu/260084/Definition_of_Digital_Information_Resources))

## Advantages of Digital Resources:

- **No physical boundary:** To use the Digital resources one is not required to come to the library, the resources if available on the server can be accessed from the office, hostel, canteen, or even outside of the campus. The user of digital resources need not go to the library physically, people from all over the world could gain access to the same information, as long as an Internet connection is available.
- **Round-the-clock availability:** Digital resources can be accessed at any time, 24 hours a day and 365 days a year if these are available on the server of the Library and which is running round the clock.
- **Multiple accesses:** The same resources can be used at the same time by many users.
- **Structured approach:** Digital resources provide access to much richer content in a more structured manner i.e. we can easily move from the catalog to a particular book then to a particular chapter and so on.
- **Information retrieval:** The user can use any search term bellowing to the word or phrase of the entire collection. Digital resources will provide very user-friendly interfaces, giving clickable access to its resources.
- **Preservation and conservation:** An exact copy of the original can be made any number of times without any degradation in quality.
- **Space:** Whereas traditional libraries are limited by storage space, digital resources have the potential to store much more information, simply because digital information requires very little physical space to contain them.
- **Cost:** The cost is a tricky part of the digital resources, and it looks costly in comparison to the print collection but when compared to the number of copies a library purchases the resources won't look costly.

## Collection Development:

When it comes to the collection development the Libraries do think about the cost with the other factors, the three main factors which influence the collection building process are the

1. Ever-increasing demand from users
2. Increasing the cost of the documents
3. Shirking library budget (in comparison to the cost of the documents)

These hurdles can be overcome to some extent through the consortia approach.

## What is Consortia?

In general terms, we can say that a Library Consortia means when a group of libraries come forward to form a group to share resources and mutual benefits then a consortium can be formed. A consortium may be formal

or in have enabled library consortia to expand both in a formal agreement between two or more libraries based on a number and functions over their respective areas.

A Consortia is an association of two or more individuals, companies, organizations, or governments (or any combination of these entities) to participate in a common activity or pool their resources for achieving a common goal. The consortium is a Latin word, meaning ‘partnership, association or society’ and derives from consors ‘partner’, itself from con- ‘together’ and sors ‘fate’, meaning owner of means or comrade.

The basic purpose of consortia is resource sharing and it is not a new concept to the libraries. It has long been used to improve access and service through borrowing and lending from other libraries. Cooperation and sharing have been transformed by information technology and the move from a print to a digital environment. There has been a proliferation of web-based, full-text resources. Nearly all publishers have moved to web-based delivery platforms, and libraries and information centers are benefitting. The high cost of electronic information products has put pressure on libraries, which have committed larger portions of their budgets to these resources (Young, 1983).

Ameen (2008) says that “the Alexandria library shared its collection with the Pergamum library in 200 B.C.” Malviya and Kumar (2007) trace the history of consortia and cooperation beginning in the 19th century. Major methods of resource sharing in the print era are:

- Interlibrary loan
- Document delivery
- Institutional membership

### Consortia

Consortia are formed at the local, regional, or international level, and may be grouped around function or subject. In India, there are two open-ended national consortia: INDEST (for the information needs of technical education) and UGC-INFONET (for the information needs of university education). Now these consortia are merged into the E-ShodhSindhu consortia.

Laxman Rao (2006) describes the need for consortia, which, “deal collectively with the problems of purchasing online products, to benefit from the best possible volume pricing, and to secure the best terms of agreement from online publishers.”

Collaboration in library collection development is indispensable for meeting the needs of users, and:

- Increase the library's access base
- Avoid unnecessary duplication of materials
- Multiply library materials within a limited budget
- Facilitate accountability to external agencies
- To develop a specialization in the collection

- Enhance the image and prestige of the library
- Provide desktop access for users
- Emphasize access over ownership
- Help solve space problems

Increase the use of books and information and cut costs nationally (**Malviya and Kumar 2007**)

The access rights, including a number of simultaneous users and perpetual access options

### **Advantages of Consortia base collection development:**

- Consortia-based subscription to electronic resources provides access to a wider number of electronic resources at a substantially lower cost;
- Optimum utilization of funds.
- Facilities to build 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 has 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 24/7.
- Less economic expansion.

### **Finding Suggestion and Conclusion**

The impact of technology on libraries has been significant, leading to the emergence of various types of libraries such as hybrid, electronic, digital, and virtual libraries. Digital resources have become a crucial part of library collections, encompassing databases, books, journals, newspapers, archives, and more in digital formats. The advantages of digital resources are numerous, including their accessibility from anywhere, at any time, and by multiple users simultaneously. They also offer a more structured approach to information retrieval, preservation and conservation benefits, and cost-effectiveness in the long run.

When it comes to collection development, libraries face challenges such as increasing demand, rising costs of documents, and limited budgets. To overcome these obstacles, libraries often turn to consortia, which involve a group of libraries joining forces to share resources and achieve common goals. Consortia have a long history in library cooperation and resource sharing, and in the digital age, they have become even more crucial. Consortia enable libraries to negotiate better pricing and licensing terms for electronic resources, increase access to a wider range of materials, optimize fund utilization, and provide enhanced services to users.

Overall, the integration of technology and the utilization of consortia in library operations have revolutionized the way information is accessed, shared, and preserved. Libraries are adapting to the digital era and leveraging technological advancements to enhance their services, meet the evolving needs of users, and ensure the

efficient management of their collections. By embracing digital resources and collaborative efforts through consortia, libraries can continue to evolve and thrive in the modern information landscape.

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