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Knowledge, access and effective use of UGC-Infonet E-Journals by faculty members and research scholars of University of Kerala, Kerala– A case study

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ABSTRACT

Today, ICT playing a pivotal role in every field, especially in academic libraries. The main purpose of this study is to examine the awareness and effective utilization of UGC-Infonet e-Journals Digital Library Consortium by faculty members and research scholars of University of Kerala, Kerala. The data were collected using a structured questionnaire. The study found that a large majority 67.% of the respondents belongs to male, 89.4% of respondents are aware of UGC-Infonet e-Journals Digital Consortium, 52.8% used UGC-Infonet e-Journals on an everyday, 33.3% percent of respondents access the e-resources from their respective departments, about 30.9% of respondents access from university libraries, 48% of respondents use Infonet e-Journals for research purpose, followed by 36.6% of respondents use to update their for subject knowledge, 69.9% percent of respondents are fully satisfied with the existing availability of e-journals. Finally, in the end, constructive suggestions were made for effective use of UGC-Infonet e-journals by the users of University of Kerala, Kerala.

Keywords— Academic libraries, Infilbnet, University Grants Commission (UGC), UGC-Infonet E-Journals, Digital library consortium, E-Journals, University of Kerala, Effective use of E-Journals

1. INTRODUCTION

Electronic resources are very essential for the research and development of a nation. With the emergence of a new mode of faster and easy availability of global resources, libraries felt much pressure to subscribe to larger web-based resources with limited budgets. This resulted in the creation of Consortia-based subscription. In this new information environment, the University Grants Commission (UGC) initiated an ambitious programme to bridge the digital divide in the university sector in India by providing access to scholarly electronic resources irrespective of its geographic location. The initiative, called the “UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium provides access to selected scholarly electronic journals and databases in different disciplines. The Infilbnet is responsible for execution and monitoring of both these initiatives.

2. THE UGC-INFONET DIGITAL LIBRARY CONSORTIUM: A LOOK BACK

This consortium is more useful, needful to the academic fraternity, and more useful to research scholars for research. The UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium was launched by Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, the then President of India in December 2003. The UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium offered access to current as well as archival access to more than 10,000+, core and peer-reviewed journals, 31,35,000 e-books and 11 bibliographic databases from 28 publishers including commercial publishers, scholarly societies, university presses and aggregators in different disciplines.

By 2018 August, 217 Universities, 108 technical institutes and 91 CFITs member institutions including 14 National Law Schools and IUCs of the UGC, were being provided differential access to subscribed e-resources. These e-resources cover almost all subject disciplines including arts, humanities, social sciences, physical sciences, chemical sciences, life sciences, computer sciences, mathematics, and statistics, etc. The programme is wholly funded by the UGC and executed by the INFLIBNET Centre.

E-ShodhSindhu (2016): Based on the recommendation of an Expert Committee, the MHRD has formed e-ShodhSindhu merging three consortia initiatives, namely UGC-INFONET Digital Library Consortium, NLIST, and INDEST-AICTE Consortium. The e-ShodhSindhu will continue to provide 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.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The review of literature is very much essential for any kind of research. Based on the past research only, the present research will be conducted, then only the fruitful results will be achieved. The following are some of the most related reviews were consulted by the researcher.

1. Anjaiah, M. (2014), in his article found that the UGC-Infonet e-Journals are using more by the faculty, research scholars and students of Kakathiya University, Warangal. Life Science discipline users are using more than the social science users. He also explained there is a need for training programmes more to the research scholars and students than the faculty members. Finally, the author suggested that the UGC-Infonet E-Journals more should be included in the Digital Consortium.
2. Manjunath, Angadi (2017) carried out a study on Use Pattern of UGC-Infonet Consortium by research scholars of UPE universities of Karnataka state and found that majority of the respondents aware of UGC-INFONET consortium, Majority of respondents used UGC-Infonet Library Consortium twice a week. Most of the respondents use the UGC-Infonet Library Consortium for research work. This study suggested that more e-resources should be included and to take some steps immediately to avoid downloading problems.
3. Loksha, M. and Bhandi, M, K, (2017) were conducted a study on the Use of UGC-Infonet e-journals. This study revealed that an enormous platform to the researcher and intellectuals to retrieve a huge number of articles by UGC-Infonet has been used exponentially by researchers for academic excellence. Moreover, the initial stage every researcher need to know the previous studies, therefore, all the research scholar goes through the UGC-Infonet databases by accessing a vast number of articles for their research work.
4. Vishwas, Jeet Rajbanshi & Sharad, Kumar, Sonkar (2016) were found in their study that majority of the scholars are aware of UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium. It reveals that library professionals initiate UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium to maximum scholars.
5. Sathi. M. C and Krishna Swamy, N. (2016) their study results have indicated that almost all users were accessing the e-journals and databases through UGC INFONET Consortia, respondents were satisfied with the e-journals with the bibliographical databases accessible through the consortia.
6. Akhther, M. (2015) Portrayed Usage of UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium by the research scholars of Punjab University, Chandigarh. The results revealed that most of the research scholars use the UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium. Occasionally, most of the respondents come to know about UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium from co-research scholars. Majority of the research scholars use the consortium for their research purpose. Majority of the respondents faced slow internet speed problem while using the UGC-Infonet Consortium.
7. Kumar, Harish. (2014) has carried out a study finding showed that most of the respondents use consortium for their research purpose followed by for writing research articles. The respondents require more journals in UGC-Infonet in addition to the present journals. The most common problem faced by the respondents was the restricted access followed by time consuming while accessing e-journals.
8. Baskaran and Kishore, Kumar (2013) were conducted a study reveals various patterns of use by the Professors, Associate Professors, and Assistant Professors use the resources for the academic purpose. The faculty members also get to acquire the guidance and experience for accessing the scholarly journals from the library staff and from the senior faculty members. It is however found that lack of training for accessing is an obstacle in proper and fully utilization of them.
9. Anjaiah.M. (2014) article reveals that majority of faculty members and research scholars have been using the internet to obtain the e-information for teaching and research. Most of the respondents are fully satisfied with the usage of UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium. He has given ranks to the publishers which are in UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium.
10. Nagesh Laxman Londhe and Neela J. Deshpande (2013) The paper focuses on the study of the usage of e-resources available through UGC-INFONET Digital Library Consortium by University of Pune users. The objective is to find trends in the usage of e-resources and which e-resources are used to the maximum. More users are getting awareness of e-resources and using e-databases. Some databases contain very fewer titles, but the usage of these databases is very high. Subject specific databases are highly used than multi-subject databases.
11. Ravindra K Maharana; Ashok Kumar Das; SubratPat (2013) here explains the usage of UGC-Infonet among the academic community of the odissa state. Most of the respondents have knowledge about ICT. Faculty members are like to use UGC-Infonet Digital Library Services in their department. UGC-Infonet Consortium is very useful for publishing the paper, importing education & teaching and for seminar and conference.
12. S Thanuskodi(2012)made a study an on faculty members of Social and Social science Departments, Science faculty members are more aware of UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium. In his study, he stated that most respondents use the UGC-Infonet resources for the purpose of research work.
13. SohailMd, Imran Ahmed Md (2011) in their study the majority of the respondents need regular training programme to effective usage of UGC-Infonet Consortium. Most of the respondents recommended print journals in addition to e-journals, also UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium need to add more e-journals.
14. Somashekara.Y.L (2014) in his research paper he stated the importance of UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium and usage statistics of universities in Karnataka. He found the draw backs like request article did not work properly and some university library did not respond properly. Humanities and Arts journals were very less.

The above majority studies found that the UGC-Infonet e-Journals are more useful in the study, teaching, and research. But, they were facing some kind of problems that the slow internet speed, journals downloading problems and also need some more e-journals to add to the present digital library consortium. These studies are also highlighted that there is a need for training to the assistant professors and research scholars of the study.

Hence, the present research study has been undertaken by the investigators to provide some of the best suggestions for improvement and development of the UGC-Infonet e-journals digital library consortium, now, which is called as E-ShodhSindhu Consortium.

Profile of the University of Kerala

One of the first 16 Universities in India, the University of Kerala was founded as the University of Travancore in the erstwhile princely state of Travancore (now southern part of Kerala) in 1937. Since then, the University of Kerala has transformed itself in many ways.

3. MAIN LIBRARY

The Kerala University Library (KUL), established in 1942, is the oldest and biggest university library in Kerala. It has a very rich collection of documents consisting of books, back volumes of periodicals, Ph.D.theses, CD-ROMs, and Microfilms etc. The Collection of back volumes of social science periodicals is considered to be one of the best in South India. The Kerala University Library is complemented with a number of specialized Departmental Libraries and also Campus Library at Karyavattom and Study Centre Libraries at Alappuzha, Kollam, and Pandalam.

The University Institute of Technology (UITs), University Teacher Education Centers (UTECS), and University College of Engineering (UCE) also have specialized libraries were in the campus. Campus Library is situated at Kariavattom campus. It was started in 1976 mainly to extend the library facilities and services to its users of the campus community. It continues to be a reference library and was put in charge of controlling the campus LAN. In addition to the reference facility, the library provides reprographic, internet and UGC-Infonet E-Journal services. It has a modest collection of over 7000 books and subscribes to over 60 periodicals.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE PRESENT STUDY

- To know the access, awareness, and use of the UGC- Infonet Digital e-Journals by faculty members and research scholars of Kerala University, Kerala.
- To know the frequency of use of the UGC- Infonet e-journals Library Digital Consortium
- To identify the place where the faculty members and research scholars were accessing the consortium e-resources.
- To know the purpose of using UGC- Infonet e-journals Digital Consortium
- To know the satisfaction levels of faculty and research scholars of the study.
- To identify the problems faced by the faculty and research scholars while accessing the UGC- Infonet e-Journals
- To provide better suggestions for effective usage of UGC-Infonet e-journals.

5. HYPOTHESES

- The UGC-Infonet E-Journals are more useful to the academic fraternity in academic as well as research purpose.
- There is a significant difference between faculty members and research scholars in using the UGC-Infonet e-Journals.
- There is need training programmes for faculty as well as research scholars to use UGC- Infonet e-journals more effectively.

6. METHODOLOGY

For the present study, the investigators were selected the simple random sampling method to collect the needed data from the respondents through structured questionnaires. They distributed 200 questionnaires to the faculty members and research scholars and received 123 filled-in questioners. Out of 123 samples selected for the study, 105 (85.4) of them were faculty members and remaining only 18 (14.6) were research scholars. The response rate is 61.5%. It is a good sign in the social sciences.

The collected data is presented in the following tables. It has analyzed by using a simple method of calculation.

7. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

For the study, some research questions asked of the faculty members and research scholars and their responses were analyzed in the form of tables.

Table 1: Distribution of questionnaires

Questionnaires Distributed	Questionnaires Received	Questionnaire received from faculty members	Questionnaire received from research scholars
200	123 (61.5%)	105 (85.4%)	18 (14.6%)

The above table 1 shows that 200 questionnaires were distributed to the faculty members and research scholars and 123 filled-in questionnaires received from the respondents with the response rate of 61.5%. Out of 123 respondents, 105 (85.4) were faculty members and 18 (14.6) were research scholars.

Table 2: Gender-wise distribution of respondents

S. no.	Respondents	Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
1	Faculty Members	70 (84.3)	35 (87.5)	105 (85.4)
2	Research Scholars	13 (15.7)	5 (12.5)	18 (14.6)
	Total	83 (67.5)	40 (32.5)	123 (100)

Table 2 shows the gender-wise distribution of the respondents. It is found that a majority 83 (67.5) of the respondents belongs to a male, followed by a female, 40 (32.5). Out of 105 (85.4) faculty members, 70 (84.3) are male and 35 (87.5) are female and among research scholars, male 13 (15.7) and 5 (12.5) are female.

Table 3: Awareness on UGC- Infonet e-Journals Digital Consortium

S. no.	Respondents	Awareness	No Awareness	Total
1	Faculty Members	95 (86.4)	10 (76.9)	105 (85.4)
2	Research Scholars	15 (13.6)	3 (23.1)	18 (14.6)
Total		110 (89.4)	13 (10.6)	123 (100)

Table 3 demonstrates that 110 (89.4) of respondents are aware of the UGC- Infonet Digital Consortium and 13 (10.6) are not aware of this. This result shows a positive sign regarding. Awareness and use of UGC-Infonet Digital consortium.

Table 4: Frequency of Use of the UGC- Infonet E-journals

S. no.	Frequency	Respondents		Total
		Faculty Members	Research Scholars	
1	Every Day	56 (53.3)	9 (50.0)	65 (52.8)
2	Once in Two Days	19 (18.1)	6 (33.3)	25 (20.3)
3	Once in a week	25 (23.8)	2 (11.1)	27 (22.0)
4	Every 15 Days	3 (2.9)	1 (5.6)	4 (3.3)
5	Once in a Month	2 (1.9)	0 (0.0)	2 (1.6)
Total		105 (85.4)	18 (14.6)	123 (100)

Table 3 depicts the frequency of using the UGC -Infonet Digital Library Consortium. Out of 123 respondents, 65 (52.8) used it on an everyday basis, 27 (22.0) used it once in a week, 25 (20.3) used it once in two days, 4 (3.3) used it every 15 days, and only 2 (1.6) used it once in a month. It is a good sign that the majority of the respondents use the UGC- Infonet Digital Library Consortium every day.

Table 5: Location of access to UGC- Infonet Digital Consortium e-resources

S. no.	Location of Accessing the E-Journals	Respondents		Total
		Faculty Members	Research Scholars	
1	From University Library	26 (24.8)	12 (66.7)	38 (30.9)
2	From the Department	39 (37.1)	2 (11.1)	41 (33.3)
3	From the University Computer Centre	14 (13.3)	2 (11.1)	16 (13.0)
4	From Home	15 (14.3)	0 (0.0)	15 (12.2)
5	From Hostels [on campus]	11 (10.5)	2 (10.5)	13 (10.6)
Total		105 (85.4)	18 (14.6)	123 (100)

Table 7 depicts place from where faculty members & research scholars access the UGC- Infonet Digital Consortium e-resources. The majority 41 (33.3) of respondents access the UGC- Infonet Digital Consortium e-resources from their Department, about 38 (30.9) respondents access from University Library, 16 (13.0) respondents access from University Computer Centre, 15 (12.2) respondents from their desk and 13 (10.6) from Residence [on campus]. Among the majority of the respondents, faculty members 39 (37.1) accessing the e-resources from departments and research scholars 12 (66.7) from the university library. The analysis of the above data indicates that majority of the faculty members & Research scholars access the UGC- Infonet Digital Consortium e-resources from their department.

Table 6: Purpose of using UGC- Infonet E-Journals

S. no.	Purpose	Respondents		Total
		Faculty Members	Research Scholars	
1	For Subject Knowledge	41 (39.0)	4 (22.2)	45 (36.6)
2	For Research	47 (44.8)	12 (66.7)	59 (48.0)
3	For Teaching	4 (3.8)	1 (5.6)	5 (4.1)
4	Professional Development	3 (2.9)	1 (5.6)	4 (3.3)
5	Writing Articles/Books	10 (9.5)	0 (0.0)	10 (8.1)
Total		105 (85.4)	18 (14.6)	123 (100)

Table 5 shows the purpose of using UGC- Infonet Digital Library Consortium. Majority of the respondents 59 (48.0) use UGC- Infonet Digital Library Consortium for their research purpose, followed by 45 (36.6) respondents use to update theirs for subject knowledge, 10 (8.1) respondents use for publishing articles, 5 (4.1) use for their teaching, and 4 (3.3) use for their professional development. The analysis of the above data indicates that most important purpose of the UGC- Infonet Digital Library Consortium used to access for study and research work.

Table 7: Satisfaction of UGC- Infonet e-Journals

S. no.	Respondents	Fully Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Partially Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Total
1	Faculty Members	72(83.7)	23(88.5)	4(100)	6(85.7)	105(85.4)
2	Research Scholars	14(16.3)	3(11.5)	0	1(14.3)	18(14.6)
Total		86(69.9)	26(21.1)	4(3.3)	7(5.7)	123(100)

Table 7 shows the user satisfaction of e-resources available in UGC- Infonet Digital Consortium. Majority of respondents 86(69.9) are fully satisfied with the existing usage of the e-journals and a majority 26(21.1) of the faculty members and research scholars are somewhat satisfied with the availability of existing UGC-Infonet e-journals, followed by 7(5.7) respondents are not satisfied with the existing usage of the e-journals and 4(3.3) of the faculty members and research scholars are Partially Satisfied.

Table 8: Problems in using the UGC- Infonet Digital Consortium

S. no.	Purpose	Respondents		Total
		Faculty Members	Research Scholars	
1	Internet Connectivity Failure	28 (26.7)	6 (33.3)	34 (27.6)
2	University Website Failure	18 (17.1)	14 (77.8)	32 (26.0)
3	Slow Bandwidth	36 (34.3)	13 (72.2)	49 (39.8)
4	Inconvenient Timings	35 (33.3)	11 (61.1)	46 (37.4)
5	Software Problems	17 (16.2)	10 (55.6)	27 (22.0)
6	Insufficient Terminals	42 (40.0)	8 (44.4)	50 (40.7)
7	Downloading Problems	48 (45.7)	9 (50.0)	57 (46.3)
8	Frequent Power off	2 (1.9)	3 (16.7)	5 (4.1)
9	Others	5 (4.8)	0 (0.0)	5 (4.1)

Table 9 explains the problems in using the UGC- Infonet Digital Consortium. The analysis reveals that, out of 123 respondents, 57 (46.3) respondents find out downloading problem, 50 (40.7) respondents opined that the insufficient terminals, 49 (39.8) respondents expressed their views on slow bandwidth, followed by 46 (37.4) of the respondents stated that the Inconvenient Timings, 34 (27.6) were replied Internet Connectivity Failure, 32 (26.0) stated that University website failure 27 (22.0) respondents replied Software Problems, 5 (4.1) respondents expressed frequent power cut and 5 (4.1) respondents stated other problems. It is evident that the e-journals are not very much utilized by the respondents due to many problems

Table 9: Need for training programme for better use of UGC-Infonet E-Journals

S. no.	Training Programmes	Respondents	
		No. of respondents	Percentage
1	Need Training	96	78.0
2	No Needed Training	27	22.0
Total		123	100

From the results given in the table, 9, It is evidently perceived that a great majority of faculty members and research scholars 96 (78.0) require training for accessing e-resources through consortium e-resources.

8. MAJOR FINDINGS

Based on the present study, the following major findings were given:

- A large majority of the respondents 83 (67.5) belongs to a male, followed by female 40 (32.5).
- A great majority of respondents are aware of the UGC- Infonet Digital Consortium 110 (89.4) followed by Not aware UGC- Infonet Digital Consortium 13 (10.6).
- A majority of the respondents use of the UGC- Infonet Digital Consortium 65 (52.8) on everyday basis followed by 27 (22.0) once in a week, 25 (20.3) once in two days, 4 (3.3) in every 15 days, and only 2 (1.6) used it once in a month.
- The majority 41 (33.3) of respondents access the UGC- Infonet Digital Consortium e-resources from their Department, among the majority of the respondents, faculty members 39 (37.1) accessing the e-resources from departments and research scholars 12 (66.7) from the university library.
- Majority of the respondents 59 (48.0) use UGC- Infonet Digital Library Consortium for their research purpose, followed by 45 (36.6) respondents use to update theirs for Subject Knowledge.
- Majority of respondents 86 (69.9) are fully satisfied with the existing usage of the e-journals, 7(5.7) respondents are not satisfied with the existing usage of the e-journals.
- A large majority 57 (46.3) respondents faced downloading problem while accessing e-Journals, 50 (40.7) respondents faced insufficient terminals, 49 (39.8) respondents faced slow bandwidth, followed by 46 (37.4) of the respondents faced Inconvenient Timings, 34 (27.6) faced Internet Connectivity Failure.
- The great majority of the respondents 96 (78.0) require training for accessing e-resources through consortium e-resources.

9. CONCLUSION

The aim of the present study to investigate the effective usage of UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium by faculty members and research scholars of the University of Kerala. The study reveals that Majority of the respondents use UGC- Infonet Digital Library Consortium and they are using it for relevant information access. The establishment of UGC-Infonet e-Journals Digital Library Consortium is a landmark in the history of scholarly communication and it is a boon to the faculty member and research scholars in Indian Universities. This consortium is a vast treasury e-resource which highly useful to the academic community. The finding of this study throws an insight into several unknown aspects. Further an in-depth study to be conducted regularly to know the changing user preferences and their interest pattern. In order to maximize the usage of the consortium, the university library should conduct regular user education, awareness programs to maximize the use of e-resources.

10. SUGGESTIONS

On the basis of analysis of the data and the opinions given by the respondents, some of the important suggestions have been made, which will help the effective use of the UGC Infonet consortium.

- The UGC and INFLIBNET should be given sufficient budget for the establishment of digital libraries at their respective universities to provide efficient facilities to the user community.
- Authorities of the university should take a keen interest in providing better infrastructure facilities for the improvement of internet speed so that users can access/browse e-journals speedily at their desktops;
- Majority of the respondents have suggested that UGC-Infonet should provide PDF files of most of the important journal publishers;
- The library should start bulletin board services to inform the users about new additions of e-journals databases and consortium.
- Information Literacy programmes should be given for the proper exploration of e-journals and finally;
- A number of journals available through consortia should be increased to access more e-journals in their respective fields. Many studies were also strongly suggested.

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