Problems in Accessing UGC INFONET E-Journals Consortium among the Research Scholars: A Survey of Sri Venkateswara University Library, Tirupati, A.P

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Abstract

This article highlights the problems encountered in accessing the UGC-Infonet e-journals consortium by the research scholars from the Sri Venkateswara University Library. This paper also shows about the how this consortium information influences the research productivity, purpose in using the consortium, search techniques used to find the articles from the databases etc. Since, it is a survey based research article a well-structured questionnaire was designed and is distributed among 125 the research scholars visiting library. Based on the analysis of the data it is concluded that user awareness programme is essential and facilitate attractive services in order to improve and attract more number of users to access UGC-Infonet e-journal consortium.

Keywords

E-Journals; UGC INFONET; Consortium; Sri Venkateswara University Library

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INTRODUCTION

With the outburst of information in an abundant manner, libraries are facing more difficulties in storing, organising and disseminating the information. However, with the advancement in the new philosophies and technologies for the collection development and reduction the costs for information, libraries have recommended to use this advancement to facilitate better services to its users. Library Consortium is an Association of a group of libraries to achieve mutually the common objective. It is i felt that the concept of E-Journals consortia could work well the libraries without requiring additional fees to access the e-journal. The consortium, with its collective strength of participating institutions, has attracted highly discounted rates of subscription with most favourable terms of agreement. Consortia are tools, which will aid in exploiting the features of the e-journals as well as in effecting savings.

1.1 Brief Note on Sri Venkateswara University

Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati, A.P. was established in 1954, in the world famous temple town of Tirupati on the sprawling campus of 1000 acres with a panoramic and pleasant hill view. This University stands as a testimony to the wisdom and foresight of great visionaries Late Sri Tanguturi Prakasam Pantulu, the then Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh and Late Sri Neelam Sanjeeva Reddy, to cater to the educational needs and aspirations of the people of Rayalaseema area. With a great wisdom, the founder of this University have rightly coined the motto Wisdom lies in proper perspective for it.

The University has grown excellently from strength to strength over the past fifty-two years, as a premier institute of higher learning under the able and committed leaderships of successive Vice-Chancellors starting from Prof. S. Govindarajulu to the present Vice-Chancellor Prof. W.Rajendra. It has gone through greater strides in the transformation of the University with acquiring necessary and modern sophisticated instrumentation to catch up with the world competition in academic and research programmes. Right from its inception, the University has been laying more emphasis on teaching, research and extension activities in different subjects. The range of subject departments, courses and research programmes undertaken and promoted during the last (52) fifty-two years reflect the Sri Venkateswara Universitys commitment in promoting socially relevant and inter-disciplinary programmes. The

University was started with six departments of Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics, Botany, Zoology, Economics and Philosophy. The University has eight constituent colleges concerning various conventional and advanced subject, in order to provide good academic and smooth administrative service to one and all. Besides these colleges, it has a PG centre at Kavali. The University has 58 departments, wherein 71 different PG courses and several Diploma and Certificate courses are being run with a total academic faculty strength of 400 and 1500 non-teaching and a student strength of 5000, including research scholars. The University has been moving forwards in achieving academic excellence with a strong commitment and dedicated approach, by clearly setting up of a vision of its own.

1.2 S.V. University Central Library:

Sri Venkateswara University Library which was started in the year 1955 to serve the needs of the students, researchers and teachers of the University Colleges, has a total membership of 8,800. Housed in a spacious building with a seating capacity for about 400 readers, the library has 16 professionals and 38 administrative and supporting staff. It has a total collection of 3,43,061 volumes which includes 34,166 bounds volumes of journals and nearly 2,970 theses and dissertations. It currently subscribes to 300 current periodicals at an annual cost of 3.25 lakhs of rupees. The library provides services such as Book Lending service, Reader's Advisory Service, Reference Service, Reprography Service and Inter-Library Loan facility and searching of E-Journals. Working hours in the Library 8.00 am to 8.00 pm (on all working days) 10.00 am to 5 pm (during public Holidays).

The Special Features of the Library are:

- Library building – aesthetic look, functional utility and excellent design for good lighting and ventilation
- Competitive examinations cell
- User friendly digital library
- ETD (Electronic Theses and Dissertations) containing 1,201 records
- Insurance of Library building and equipment In order to achieve functional efficiency the Library is organized into 12 different sections. We offer the traditional library services like - Book Lending Services, Advisory Services, Reference Service, Reprographic service and Inter-Library Loan facility. We also offer the following web based information services.
- Digital Library: includes Theses and Dissertations submitted to SVU and SVU Faculty publications.
- HDD: Harvester of Digital Documents, through this service you can access full text of publication available in world wide Open Access digital repositories of Chemistry.
- OAIster: Using OAIster website you can access full-text publication on every conceivable subject
- On-line Journals: You can access Free Internet journals on various subjects. In addition, if you are on SVU LAN (Local Area Network), you can access UGC-INFONET Journals.

1. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The major objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To find out the awareness and the utility of UGC-INFONET Consortium among the research scholars;
2. To identify the place where the research scholars prefer to access the consortium;
3. To find out the purpose in the utilization of UGC-INFONET by the research scholars;
4. To assess the level of satisfaction and the way of influence among the research scholars;
5. To reveal the factors that promoted or slowed down the use of UGC-INFONET consortia;
6. To suggest curative measures in the improvement of UGC-INFONET Consortia usage effectively and efficiently.

2. METHODOLOGY

This present study used survey method to conduct the research. A well-structured questionnaire covering the entire component was distributed to collect data from the respondents. Beside questionnaire, the investigators used observation and interviewed tool to collect the data from the respondents.

3. SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

The present study is confined and was carried out by distributing the questionnaire randomly among **125** research scholars of Sri Venkateswara University

campus in the year 2013. Of the distributed questionnaire 110 duly filled questionnaire were returned back with a response rate of 91.66%. The remaining questionnaires i.e. 08.34% were rejected due to incomplete responses.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

The study is related to the research implies reading, locating and evaluating research projects. At this stage is appropriate to undertake a detailed review of the literature with a view to identifying the research gap, need and importance for the proposed study. The survey of literature is a critical phase for planning of the research body. Therefore, the researchers have reviewed some of the studies that are related to the similar studies.Zaidi and Bharati, (2008) It was revealed that majority of the users are aware about the availability of online journals. And majority of respondent indicated that they make use of online journals for their research work. It was also found that users faced problems while using online journals. A need was also felt by some research scholars regarding inclusion of some more e- journals in UGC-Infonet Consortium. Satyabati T. and Murthy T. A. V. (2005) "Issues in UGC-INFONET E-Journal Consortium" have indicated the utility levels of the information through UGC-INFONET consortia have been increased over the period. It also shows that at beginning stage, the users have probably not yet fully absorbed in what is the E-Journals consortium and what it can do for their studies and the efforts of the INFLIBNET have not stopped in reaching the users and provinding necessary guidance time to time to improve the access base.

Gupta and Rawtani (2008) the users faced problem while accessing e-consortium and lack of awareness of e-journals available. It was suggested that a training programme should be conducted regularly to mprove the usage of e-journal consortium.

Sinha M., Singha G. and Sinha B. (2011) in this study an attempt is made to show the usage of internet and electronic so (M. & B.)urces by the users of Assam University Central Library. This study further indicates that the electronic resources are much preferred by the younger generation. This also shows the information seeking behaviour of users towards the use of internet and online access of e-journals and helps to improve the facilities and services related to online access to e-journals.

Mukherjee B. and Prashant Kumar (2010) "Use of UGC-Infonet e-journals by research scholars of the Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi: A case study" reveals that the university users fulfil their needs and requirements of electronic journals through UGC-Infonet e-journals consortium in particularly. In this study a questionnaire based survey was conduted amongst the research scholars and faculty members of various departments concluding that a comprehensive training and usability would be of great help to the users. Veenapani, Singh and Devi, (2008) there is a need of conducting regular orientation/training programme for the UGC Infonet programme; more number of e-journals to be included in the UGC Infonet consortium. Chauhan S. K. and Chand P. (2007) in their study have shown that UGC-Infonet e-journal consortium is right initiative at the right time.

5. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

After data collection through questionnaire, the data collected was organised and tabulated in the form of tables by using MS Excel. The tables presented in an easiest way to understand our study. Number of Participants and Questionnaire Responses Sri Venkateswara University had the most responses, 91.66%.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents:

Gender	No. of respondents	%
Male	**76**	**69.09**
Female	**34**	**30.91**
Total	**110**	**100**

From the Table - 1, 69.09% respondents are male members and 30.91% respondents are female.

Table 2: Discipline wise distribution of the respondents:

Discipline	No. of respondents	%
Science	**55**	**50.00**
Social Science	**30**	**27.27**
Humanities	**25**	**22.73**
Total	**110**	**100**

Table - 2 shows the distribution of respondents according to their disciplines. It is found from the table that majority of the respondents are from science discipline i.e. 50% whereas 27.27% of the respondents are from Social Science and only 22.71% are from humanities disciplines.

Table 3: Awareness of internet

Responses	No of Respondents	%
Yes	**107**	**97.27**
No	**03**	**02.73**
Total	**110**	**100**

Table - 3 indicates the awareness and usage of internet by the research scholars. It is clear from the table almost all the respondents are aware of internet how to use it i.e. 97.27%.

Table 4: Place preferred for accessing internet/e-journals:

Place	No. of Respondents	%
Department	**34**	**30.91**
Student's welfare	**23**	**20.91**
Library	**50**	**45.46**
Other	**03**	**02.72**
Total	**110**	**100**

Table - 4 indicates that most of the participants use their departments and libraries to access the Internet/e-journals. It is seen that most of the respondents prefer library to access e-journals i.e. 45.46%, 30.91% use their department and 02.72% prefer to use from other places.

Table 5: Sources, which gave information about the e- resources:

Source	No. of Respondents	%
Library Professionals	**38**	**34.54**
Teachers	**25**	**22.72**
Internet	**11**	**10.00**
Colleagues/Friends	**30**	**27.28**
Conferences/Seminars	**06**	**05.46**
Total	**110**	**100**

Table - 5 provides the sources from where the research scholars got information about the electronic resources/consortium. The table shows that of the sources library professionals are the major sources from where the researchers are guided to search their subject related information i.e. 34.54% of the respondents got information from the library professionals, followed by 27.28% from colleagues/friends, 22.72% from teachers and 10.00% from the internet while the others got information from conferences/seminars.

Table 6: Strategic for finding e – resources

Strategy	No. of Respondents	%
Use internet search engines	**78**	**70.90**
Use subject gateways	**15**	**13.64**
Browsing websites	**13**	**11.82**
Locate by personal communication	**4**	**03.64**
Total	**110**	**100**

Table - 6 indicates about the search strategy in finding e-journals. Out of the total respondents 70.90% of the respondents use internet search engines, followed by 13.64% use subject gateways, 11.82% browse websites and 03.64% the strategic for finding e-journals.

Table 7: Purpose of using e-journals:

In the questionnaire, it was asked about the purpose of using the e-journals. Though the purposes are many, the major purpose and the response of the research scholars are given below.

Purpose	No. of Respondents	%
Research work	**106**	**96.36**
Book & Article publication	**103**	**93.63**
Academic interest	**41**	**37.27**
Lecture notes preparation	**95**	**86.36**
Building concept theory	**53**	**48.18**
Up-to-date with new subject	**98**	**89.09**
Project	**69**	**62.72**

(Multiple answers permitted)

Table - 7 shows that the majority of the respondents i.e. 96.36% using e-journals for 'research work'. Good share of student's i.e. 93.63% using e-journals 'publishing articles and books', 89.09% are using e-journals to keep 'up-to date with new subjects', 86.36% using e-journals for 'preparation of lecture notes', 62.72% use of e-journals for writing 'project report', 48.18% use for 'building new concept' and least i.e. 37.27% use it for 'academic purpose'.

Table 8: Use of Search Techniques

Different search techniques are used in the databases to search the relevant articles in their particular disciplines. Among the search techniques commonly used techniques are Boolean Operators, Truncation, Phrases search and wild card search.

Search Techniques	No. of Respondents	%
General search/Randomly search	**60**	**54.55**

Field Search technique	**07**	**06.36**
Using phrases	**13**	**11.82**
Using Boolean operators	**08**	**07.27**
Truncation	**13**	**11.82**
Wild Card	**09**	**08.18**
Total	**110**	**100**

Table - 8 indicates that most of Research Scholars 54.55% are using general search/randomly search technique, followed by 11.82% using phrases and term truncation, 08.18% using Wild Card and 07.27% uses Boolean Operators as a search techniques. Only 06.36% resounded that they use Field search as search techniques.

Table 9: Preferred sources of information formats:

Format	No. of Respondents	%
HTML	**16**	**14.55**
PDF	**27**	**24.55**
Print copy	**67**	**60.90**
Total	**110**	**100**

Table - 9 indicates the most preferred formats to seek information for their research and learning activities. Even in today's environment where the information is at the fingertips the conventional sources, i.e. print formats are most preferred sources to develop once knowledge i.e. 60.90% of the respondents prefer print materials to seek information, followed by 24.55% of the respondents prefer Portable Document Format (PDF) and 14.55% of the respondents opt Hyper Text Markup Language (HTML) format.

Table 10: Awareness of UGC-INFONET consortium

The utilization of the scholarly literature/information from the consortium becomes very easy only when everyone is aware about it. Hence, all faculty, research scholars, students, and library professionals had to be made aware of the benefits of this programme. Therefore, Research Scholars were asked whether they know about UGC-Infonet Consortia.

Awareness	No. of Respondents	%
Yes	**83**	**75.46**
No	**27**	**24.54**
Total	**110**	**100**

Table - 10 indicates that 75.46% of respondents were aware about UGC-Infonet Consortia and only 24.54% of respondents were not aware of UGC-Infonet Consortia. Hence, it was found that majority of the research scholars were aware about UGC-Infonet Consortia.

Table 11: Sources of Knowledge of UGC-Infonet Consortia

Different sources are known to the research scholars through which the get knowledge about the e journal UGC-INFONET consortium such as guidance of the library professionals and teachers, advertisements or through web searching.

Awareness	No. of Respondents	%
Through Library Professionals	**40**	**36.36**
Teachers and Research Supervisors	**35**	**31.82**
Co-Research Scholars	**12**	**10.90**
University Website	**07**	**06.36**
Searching the Web	**06**	**05.46**
Advertisements	**06**	**05.46**
Other Sources	**04**	**03.64**
Total	**110**	**100**

It is interesting to note from the Table - 11 that 36.36% of the research scholars said that they know the UGC-Infonet Consortia 'through Library professionals'. Followed by 31.82% Research scholars know the same by 'Teachers and Research supervisors', 10.9% know the consortium by 'Co-Research scholars', 06.06% know the UGC-Infonet consortia by 'University website', 05.46% know the consortium by 'searching the web', 05.46% know the consortium through 'advertisements' and only 03.64% responded that they know the consortium through 'other mode of sources'.

Table 12: Frequency use of UGC-Infonet E-journals

Here an effort has been made to reveal the frequency use of E-journals.

Frequency of Use	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Daily	**63**	**57.28**
Weekly	**14**	**12.73**
Forth Nightly	**10**	**09.09**
Monthly	**13**	**11.81**
Occasionally	**10**	**09.09**
Total	**110**	**100**

Table - 12 shows that most of the respondents read articles daily or weekly. A majority of the respondents i.e. 57.28% read articles daily, while 12.73% read an article each week and 09.09% of the respondents reading them occasionally. Current information is essential for students, teachers, and researchers. The UGC-Infonet Consortium, subscription will helps to provide e-journals and to improve the reading habits of academics.

Table 13: Influence of the UGC-Infonet E-Journals on Research Efficiency:

Research Scholars were asked about "how the UGC-Infonet E-journal Consortium have an impact on their research productivity?" Even though the Consortium influenced in many ways as shown in the table below.

Formats	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Expedited research process	**70**	**64.54**
Facilitate easier to access the information	**55**	**50.00**
Facilitate to access the up-to-date information	**46**	**41.81**
Improve professional competence	**40**	**36.36**
Facilitate faster to access the information	**60**	**54.54**
Influence access to wider range of information	**60**	**54.54**

(Multiple answers were permitted)

The Table - 13 shows that majority 64.54% of Research Scholars experiences that the e-journals helps to expedited research process, 54.54% responded that it facilitate faster to access the information and influence access to wider range of information and 36.36% responded that it to improve professional competence.

Table 14: Problem encountered while accessing or e-journals

Users of the university library are facing lot of problems while accessing e-journals. To analyse the system facility a questions ware designed according their set of attitude. Questions raised in three forms to get exact feedback of the facilities given by the University Library. The following question indicates the picture of the library facilities and in what extent the research scholars are making use them for their research.

a. Technical Problems:

Problems	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Bandwidth	**65**	**59.09**
Hardware/Software	**57**	**51.81**
Frequently power failure	**12**	**10.90**
Lack of adequate no of computers	**80**	**72.72**
Lack of print machines	**15**	**13.64**

(Multiple answers were permitted)

b. Personal problems:

Problems	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Cause irritates to eyes	**31**	**28.18**
Difficult in finding relevant information	**55**	**50.00**
Problem over searching	**31**	**28.18**
Problem on downloading article	**27**	**24.54**

(Multiple answers were permitted)

c. Institutional problem

Problems	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Lack of training	**72**	**65.45**
Availability	**53**	**48.18**
Non availability of required format	**55**	**50.00**
Lack of supportive staff	**60**	**54.54**
No proper orientation	**70**	**63.63**
Non availability of particular language information	**45**	**40.90**
Limited working hours	**46**	**41.81**
Lack of	**66**	**60.00**

infrastructure facility		
Frequently power failure	**12**	**10.90**
Access Charging	**46**	**41.81**

(Multiple answers were permitted)

Table - 14 (a) indicates about the technical problems faced by the respondents. It shows that 72.72% of the Research Scholars indicated that 'lack of adequate number of computers' are available in accessing was the major problem, followed by 59.09% of Research Scholars faced difficulty in the 'bandwidth or the slow speed of the internet'. However, 51.81% of the Research Scholars indicated 'hardware/software' compatibility problem, 13.64% of Research Scholars responded that 'lack of print machines' is the problem, and 10.90% responded that they face difficulty 'frequently failure of power' is problem.

Table - 14 (b) indicates the personal problems faced in accessing UGC-Infonet consortium by the research scholar. Majority of the respondents i.e. 50.00% responded that they 'difficult in finding relevant information', 28.18% respondents indicated that they 'cause irritation to eyes' and 'problem over searching'. A few i.e. 24.54% indicated that the downloading article is the problem.

Table - 14 (c) shows some of the institutional problems as faced by the research scholars. In this section and majority of respondents i.e. 65.45%, face 'lack of training programme' about the UGC-Infonet consortium is the major problem, and the minor problem faced is the 'non availability of particular language information.

6. SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

After analysis and interpretation of the data and looking into the opinion of the respondents as given in the questionnaire, here are some of the suggestions that have been drawn and recommended to solve the problems as faced by the research scholars of Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati.

- The University Library should conduct orientation and training programs especially for the research scholars for creating the awareness and better usage of the UGC-Infonet e-journal consortium.
- The major problems faced by the research scholars in the technical problem section are adequate number of the computers in the library i.e. **72.72%** and the speed of the internet (bandwidth) which is about **59.09%** of the respondents. Hence, more number of better-configured computers has to be facilitated with increasing the bandwidth of the internet in the campus.
- A well-trained staff in providing the consortium problems has to be present to solve the personal problems faced by the research scholars in accessing the full text and relevant information.

7. CONCLUSION

The present study exposes about the increased acceptance of electronic journals by the research scholars in the present environment in which the UGC-INFONET has to play a meaningful role to assist academic and research community. Major problems encountered by the users toward access to e-consortium are lack of training and no proper orientation. Proper response as well as orientation programmes should be conducted from time to time by the university so that the problems encountered must be resolved according to users' requirements. The infrastructure facilities should be enhanced for the better utilization of UGC-INFONET E-Journals.

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