

Utilization Of UGC-INFONET E - Journal Access By Research Scholars Of Bharathidasan University In Trichurappalli: A Case Study

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Abstract:

Scholarly journals provide basic theoretical background as well as an input for the research at the higher education level. Because of the ICT and consortia approach for resource sharing, today majority of the research articles are available online. These online electronic journals are bargained, negotiated and acquired from the publishers and other database vendors and access for the same is enabled by the UGC-INFONET consortia on 7 X 24 hour basis at the desk top of the academician. This article focuses on the utilization of UGC-INFONET e-journal access by research scholar of Bharathidasan University. The main aim is to identify the needs and requirements of users in general and to know the use of ugc-Infonet e-journal access in the Bharathidasan University by research scholars. A survey was conducted through a questionnaire circulated among 90 research scholars study in the Bharathidasan University during 2012-2013.

Introduction

In the emerging information society, the availability and use of information contributes towards development of individuals and nations. Information is the most crucial resource for development and it has been aptly remarked that “the future of each nation as well as that of mankind is based on now more than ever, information or knowledge gained rather than any other material or resources. Information leads to knowledge and in turn innovation and development. One needs advanced and scholarly literature to improve the quality of education and research work”.

We are sliding into an electronic age. More and more scholarly journals are available in electronic form. The immense growth of literature on one side and shrinking of budget on the other, continuous increasing cost of print information and time lag put the academic and

research community on their back fact library consortium is one of the emerging tool kits for libraries to survive in the present circumstances. Of the 171 universities selected for the consortia 150 universities started the UGC INFONET journals consortia in a phased manner. In the first phase 50 universities have been identified in the year 2004, in 2005 in the second phase INFLIBNET has been identified another 50 universities for the consortia and in the year 2006 another 50 universities have been identified by the INFLIBNET.

Bharathidasan University is also member of UGC – INFONET consortium under II Phase and provides access to e-journals to the users. The present study attempted to find the use of UGC-Infonet E-resources access by the research scholars of Bharathidasan University, Trichy.

Objectives of the study

The following were selected as the specific objectives of the study:

1. To identify the information needs of research scholars in to Bharathidasan University.
2. To ascertain the preferred e-journals to the Researchers.
3. To be aware of the working of the UGC-Infonet consortium and disseminate information.
4. To assess the accessibility of the e-consortium to users scholars.
5. To know the extent of the use of UGC-Infonet e-journals.
6. To know frequency of access to the consortium.
7. To ascertain preferences in search techniques.
8. To ascertain the need for user orientation programme in accessing e-journal.
9. To know its significance of e-journals over print journals.
10. To know its satisfaction derived by Research Scholars while using e-journals.
11. To identify the problems faced by the research scholars in accessing e-journals.
12. To suggest the ways and means for effective use of the UGC-Infonet e-journals consortium.

Methodology

In order to accomplish the above set of research objectives, a survey is conducted through a questionnaire circulated as many as 90 Research Scholars studying in various

department of Bharathidasan University Trichy during the academic year 2012-2013. The response rate was 77 percent. Personal interactions with the research scholars has revealed many important hand facts and enabled the investigator in making some important suggestions for its overall improvement of the UGC-Infonet e-journals consortium. Selection of respondents for this study is based on the research works. The collected data is presented in the form of tables and figures and analyzed by using a simple method of calculation.

DATA ANALYSIS

Characteristics of Study

The study population comprised Research Scholars of all age groups, sex, different qualifications and subject streams as can be seen from Table

Sex- wise Distribution

Table-1: Sex-wise Distribution of Research Scholars (N=70)

Gender	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Male	45	64%
Female	25	36%
Total	70	100%

Table-1 reveals that 64% of populations studied were male and only 36% of total were female who access UGC-Infonet consortium e-journals for different purposes.

Qualification wise Distribution

Table-2: Qualification wise Distribution of Research Scholars (N=70)

Qualification	No. of Respondents	%
M.Phil	22	31%
Ph.D	48	69%
Total	70	100%

Table-2 shows that 69% of the respondents were Ph.D scholars and 31% respondents were M. Phil scholars.

Subject wise Distribution

Table - 3: Subject Wise Distribution of Research Scholars (N=70)

Department	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Chemistry	18	25.7 %
Physics	10	14.3 %
Bio-Technology	8	11.4 %
Environmental Bio-Technology	5	7 %
Plant Science	9	12.9 %
Animal Science	3	4.3 %
Bio-Medical Science	1	1.5 %
Mathematics	4	5.7 %
Microbiology	6	8.6 %
Bio-Informatics	3	4.3 %
Bio-Chemistry	3	4.3 %
Total	70	100 %

Above table shows that 26 % of Research Scholars surveyed are belonged to Chemistry department, 14.3 % were from physics department, 12.9 % were from plant science department.

Knowledge about UGC –Infonet Consortium

UGC-Infonet e-journals Consortium is the one amongst the foremost Programmes launched by UGC, India for the free flow of Scholarly information between the Indian Universities. It is a new phase for the higher educational System of the country in which peer-reviewed literature from all across the world is being given to the academic and research Community. A question was asked to the research scholars about whether they know aware about the UGC-Infonet Consortium. Table-4 shows that 100 percent (70) of the respondents to the survey, responded that they know aware the consortium. It is evident that sent percent of the respondents access e-journals through UGC-Infonet over University wide area network.

Table - 4: Knowledge about UGC –Infonet Consortium

Particular	Respondents	%
Know about UGC-Infonet consortium	70	100 %
Do not know about UGC-Infonet consortium	-	-

Frequency of Visit to UGC-Infonet

This is the most important and basic aspect related to the appraisal of the usefulness of the UGC-Infonet Consortium. The findings of this study that most of the respondents used in UGC-Infonet e-journals more frequently. It has been found that from 56 percent (39) of the respondents make use of the Daily, 31 percent (22) 2-3 times in a week, 7.2 percent (5) of the respondents make use of the once a week and 5.8 percent (4) 2-3 times a month .

Table-5 : Frequency of Visit to UGC-Infonet

Visit to UGC-Infonet	No .of Respondents	Percentage
Daily	39	56 %
2 to 3 times a week	22	31 %
Once a week	05	7.2 %
2 to 3 times a month	04	5.8 %

Time spent on UGC-INFONET

It is evident from Table -6 that the (24%) of Research scholars time spent on the UGC-INFONET, 2-4 hours per week to meet their searching of information , 23% of scholars spent 7-9 hours per week in accessing UGC-INFONET While 24 percent of scholars spent more than 10 hours per week in using e-resources. This is encouraging trend.

Table-6: Time spent on UGC-INFONET

Time spent on UGC-Infonet perweek	No .of responded	Percentage
Less than 1 hour a week	11	16 %
2 to 4 hours	17	24 %
5 to 6 hours	09	13 %
7 to 9 hours	16	23 %
10 to 20 hours	07	10 %
More than 20 hours a week	10	14 %
Total	70	100

Purpose of using UGC –Infonet e-resources

Table –7 indicate that 66 percent of the respondents use UGC-Infonet e-resources for research purpose (Thesis / Dissertations / project work), 24 percent for publish articles , 20 percent for finding relevant information in the area of specialization 17 percent for keeping up-to date subject information and 6 Percent for completion of assignment and seminars presentation of the department .

Table-7: Purpose of using UGC –Infonet e-resources

Purpose	Responded	Percentage
Research Purpose (Thesis/Dissertation)	46	66 %
Publishing article	17	24 %
Keeping up-to-date information	12	17 %
Relevant information in the area specialization	14	20 %
Completion of assignment and seminar presentation of the department	4	6 %

Preferred Information in UGC –Infonet consortium

It is noted that there are different type of information are preferred in UGC-Infonet consortium such as e-journals , Bibliographical database and document Delivery systems . The response of the research scholars about prefer those type of information is stated in Table .8.

Table-8: Preferred Type of Information

Type of information	Respondent	Percentage
e-journals	53	76 %
Bibliographical database	10	14 %
Document Delivery systems	8	11 %
Others, if any specify	1	1 %

It is observed from the above table-8 that 76% of the research scholars refer e-journals followed by 14% researcher refer bibliographical database, 11% research scholars refer Document Delivery systems.

Search strategy

The most important and often the most difficult aspect of an electronic search is its advance search strategy. The choice provided by the questionnaire is tabulated.

For most of the respondents the advance search techniques was field searching with 51 percent, (36) of the respondents preferring this technique. The second most favorable often was searching by Boolean search (AND, OR, NOT) 29% followed by wild card (14 percent, and Truncation (6 percent).

Table-9: Search Technique

Search techniques	No. of Respondent	Percentage
AND,OR ,NOT	20	29 %
Truncation	4	6 %
Field searching	36	51 %
Wild card	10	14 %

An open –ended question asked to elaborate the reason revealed that the respondents lacked knowledge of advance search strategy and familiarity with advanced search techniques. The study shows that research scholars must learn that searching by keyword rather than by subject will increase these amount of relevant Information obtained; and using keyword alone will not produce the correct level of specificity.

Searching full-text databases

Most of the electronic journals are available in UGC-Infonet Consortium published by Emerald, Ebsco, Elsevier and Springer and Kluwer publishers, etc. The number of research scholars who search the full-text journals published by these publishers is presented in Table-10

It is noted that the Springer is the leading publisher as 92 per cent research scholars and students who responded in the study said that they search electronic journals published by the Springer, “the same fact attested by the recent study conducted by Khaiser and

Pramodini (2007, p. 20)", followed by American Chemical Society 69 per cent (48), Royal Society of Chemistry 56 per cent (39) and 56 per cent (39) Blackwell publishing research scholars search the full-text journals.

Table-10: Searching full-text databases

Publishers	Respondents	%
American chemical Society	48	68.5
American Institute of Physics	37	52.8
American Physical Society	37	52.8
Annual Reviews	37	52.8
Biological Abstract	33	47
Blackwell Publishing	39	55.7
Cambridge University Press	30	44.28
Institute of Physics	31	44.29
ISID	29	41.43
JCCC	30	44.28
Oxford University Press	34	48.57
Project Muse	27	38.57
Royal Society of Chemistry	39	55.7
SIAM	29	41.43
Springer Link	64	91.43
Taylor & Francis	37	52.8

Need for other services

The consortium provides many data bases and full text articles to the users. In addition to this service, there are many other services such as current article alert service, Electronic document supply through mail etc., the need for such services is started in the following table

Table-11: Need for other services

Services	Respondents	Percentage
Current Article Alert service	38	54.3%
Electronic Document supply	17	24.3%
Other service please mention	15	21.4%

From the above table –11 it is clear that the research scholars covered under the study, 54.3percent are in need of current article service 24.3 percent started that they need Electronic document supply and 21.4 percent (15) responded that they need other kind of

services, such as: proactive email based contents of selected journal, open access e-journals directory, pre print etc.,

Influence of UGC Infonet e-journals on research efficiency

E-journals collections have also provided a way for research scholars to locate more articles, which they are reading and citing in the work. Table- 12 shows the influence of UGC info net e-journals on the research efficiency of the research scholars the information available in the e-journals has provide to be a great asset to many of the respondents. They have been able to keep themselves abreast of the access to current information (24 percent) have expedited the research process (24 percent) have access to a wide range of information and expected research process 21 percent, have improved professional competence (13 percent), easier access (11 percent) and faster access to information (10 percent).

Table-12:Influence of UGC Infonet e-journals on research efficiency

Influence	Respondents	Percentage
Expected the research process	15	21%
Improved professional competence	19	13%
Access to current/ up-to- date information	17	24%
Access to wider range of infonet	14	20%
Easier access	8	11%
Faster access	7	10%

Problems faced while accessing the UGC-Infonet e-Journals

Table-13 shows the problem faced by the respondents in using UGC-Infonet e-journals. The most common problem faced by the users is that of retrieved problem (66 percent) .Sixty nine percent of the respondents are of the opinion that it has only core journals which are limited , 77 percent faced with slow internet connectivity , 71 percent find it difficulty in system speed, 71 percent admit that they can not access full-text , 66 percent report that due to insufficient time and training , they cannot make use of e-journals, 67 percent find it different to get the relevant information , and 60 percent faced that they face problem owing to reading from computer monitor and poorly designed websites , which makes it difficult to select the relevant information .

Table-13:Problems faced while accessing the UGC-INFONET e-journals

Problem	Respondent	Percentage
Lack of system speed	50	71.4
Limited access to terminals	53	75.7
Slow internet connectivity	54	77.14
Insufficient time and training	46	66
Difficulty in accessing full-text	53	71.4
Difficulty in finding the relevant information	47	67.14
Retrieval problem (including downloads)	46	66
Poorly designed websites	42	60
Core journals are limited	48	69
Difficult to read from computer	42	60

Opinion about UGC-INFONET Programme

It shows that the research scholars opinion about the UGC-INFONET .The simple question was raised the research scholars about opinion of UGC-INFONET programme. The data presented in table-14.The data reveals that 74% of the respondents are very useful e-journals, 34% of the respondents are quite useful to bibliographical database, 30% of the respondent very useful to article alert services and 39% of the respondents are very useful to library sites.

Table-14:Opinion about UGC-INFONET Programme

UGC-INFONET usefulness	Level of usefulness					Total
	Very useful	Quite useful	Occasionally use	Useless	No opinion	
E-Journals	52(74)	5(7)	5(7)	-	2(3.1)	64
Bibliographical databases	12(17.1)	24(34)	7(10)	1(1.1)	9(13)	53
Portal services	11(16)	11(16)	12(17)	2(3)	11(16)	47
Article Alert Services	21(30)	11(16)	5(7)	4(6)	9(13)	50
Library sites	27(39)	13(19)	4(6)	2(3)	5(7)	51

Satisfaction of UGC –Infonet Consortium

There is a need to evaluate the UGC-Infonet Consortium by searching information the Research on by can decide the usefulness and satisfaction of the services .The response

of research scholars on the usefulness and satisfaction are stated as under. Table –15 satisfaction of UGC-Infonet Consortium.

Table-15: Satisfaction of UGC –Infonet Consortium

Grade	Respondents	Percentage
Very excellent	11	16%
Excellent	16	23%
Good	29	41%
Satisfaction	14	20%
Poor	-	-

The above table –15 revealed that 41 percent (29) of the research scholars Covered under the study stated that the Consortium is good , followed by 23% (16) research scholars rated that it is excellent ,20 percent (14) are stated that it is satisfaction and the remaining 16% (11) research scholars that its Consortium is very excellent.

Findings

Research Scholars should be motivated to use the UGC-Infonet E-Resources for academic and research purposes. For instance, they should be made more aware of the many resources on the UGC-Infonet Consortium, which can benefit them academically.

1. Major portion (58.6%) of the research scholars is from the age group of 24-26 years.
2. In comparison to respondents, male respondents are more interested in accessing UGC- Infonet e-resources.
3. Out of the seventy five research scholars 69% of the respondent's belong to Ph.D and remaining are M. Phil Scholars.
4. Seventy one percent use the UGC-Infonet e-journals through the sources i.e guidance of the friends while only 29 percent of respondent started use through library.
5. Sixty Six percent of the respondents use e-journals for research work followed by 24 percent for publishing articles and for study.
6. A majority of the respondents (56 percent) use the UGC-Infonet e-journals daily followed by 31 percent 2to3 times a week.
7. Field searching 51 percent is most favored search techniques followed by Boolean search (29 percent), wild card (14percent)and 6 percent with truncation.

8. Sixty three percent of research scholars are more concerned about reading full-text journals work help of print out on the paper, followed by on the computers 37 percent.
9. 80 percent respondents think that they read printed journals in addition to e-journals.
10. Fifty four percent of the respondents feel that the use the UGC-Infonet e-journals has created high dependency value on their research work and they need current article alert service and electronic document supply service.
11. 24 percent respondents stated that they are accessing UGC-Infonet e-journals for current and up-to-date information.
12. The most common problems faced by the majority of the respondents are slow internet connectivity(77%) and limited access to terminal(75%),Seventy one percent admit that they cannot access full-text.

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