

Use Pattern of UGC-Infonet Consortium by research scholars of UPE universities of Karnataka state: A study

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***Abstract** -The advanced developments in Information Communication Technology (ICT) have drastically changed library scenario. Electronic Information Recourses are becoming more essential source for research community. The UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium is major initiative of University Grants Commission (UGC) to bring qualitative change in academic libraries in India. This study focuses on the awareness and use of UGC-Infonet consortium by the research scholars of science and technology (S&T) discipline of “University with Potential for Excellence” (UPE) awarded Universities of Karnataka state i.e. Karnatak University, Dharwad (KUD) and University of Mysore, Mysore (UMM).*

Keywords: UGC-Infonet, Library consortium, E-resources, E-journals, INFLIBNET, consortia

1. Introduction

In the present Information age an ever increasing amount of knowledge is being generated by more and more number of scholars around the world. As a result, there has been an exponential growth in number of journals being published both in print and electronic format. This tremendous information revolution and explosion have brought about radical changes to the function and service of academic libraries in India. Meanwhile, academic libraries in India are facing challenges due to budget cuts, reduced staff, devaluation of rupee, steep hike in conversion of foreign currencies, and escalation in cost of publication (Vishala and Bhandi, 2008). Because of these factors many academic libraries are finding it difficult to subscribe to scholarly journals and databases. Realizing the need for scholarly electronic journal information in teaching, learning and research, the University Grants Commission (UGC) has launched two ambitious and revolutionary programmes for academic community in higher education institutes under its purview. The first initiative namely “UGC-INFONET connectivity Programme” aims at networking university campuses with state-of-the-art campus wide networks and Internet bandwidth and the second initiative is known as “ UGC-INFONET Digital Library Consortium” which provides access to selected core and peer reviewed electronic journals and databases in various disciplines. The Information and Library Network (INFLIBNET) is the executing and monitoring body of both the programmes. In this paper authors have tried to depict important aspects of UGC-INFONET Digital Library Consortium (Komrelli, 2014).

2. UGC Infonet Library Consortium

The UGC INFONET Digital Library Consortium is major initiative of University Grants Commission (UGC) to bring qualitative change in academic libraries in India. It was officially launched in December, 2003 by Honorable Dr. A.P.J Abdul Kalam, the President of India soon after providing the Internet connectivity to the universities in the year 2003 under

the UGC-Infonet programme. UGC INFONET Digital Library Consortium is a national initiative for providing access to scholarly electronic resources including full-text and bibliographic databases in all subject disciplines to academic community in India. It facilitates access to high quality e-resources to academia in the country to improve teaching, learning and research (Ram & Karn, 2014). The Consortium provides current as well as archival access to more than 7000+ core and peer-reviewed journals and 10 bibliographic databases from 26 publishers and aggregators in different disciplines. The programme has been implemented in phased manner. In the first phase that began in 2004, access to e-resources was provided to 50 universities who had Internet connectivity under the UGC-Infonet Connectivity programme of the UGC. In the second phase, 50 more universities were added to the programme in the year 2005. So far 277 Universities come under the purview of UGC, have been provided differential access to sub-scribed e-resources. These e-resources covers 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 (Information and Library Network) Centre, Ahmadabad.

3. Aims and Objectives of UGC Infonet Library Consortium

The main objective of the UGC INFONET Digital Library Consortium is to provide access to qualitative electronic resources including full-text and bibliographic databases to academic institutions at a lower rates of subscription. The major aims and objectives of the UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium are as follows:

- To provide access to a high-quality and scholarly electronic resources to a large number of academic institutions including universities and colleges at substantially lower rates of subscription and at most favorable terms and conditions.
- To promote rapid and efficient access to scholarly content to the users and to create and promote use of ICT in teaching and learning in universities in India.
- To extend the benefit of Consortium to its associate members including private universities and colleges.
- To impart training to the users, librarians, research scholars and faculty members of the institutions in use of electronic resources with an aim to optimize their usage.
- To promote use of e-e-resources with gradual decrease in print subscription.
- To promote interaction and inter-library cooperation amongst the participating universities.
- To evaluate the usage of the subscribed resources and to identify new resources that are required to be subscribed under the programme.
- To bring qualitative change in teaching, learning and research with an aim to meet the ever growing challenges of globalization of higher education.
- To increase the research productivity of the institutions both in terms of quality and quantity of publications.

4. Review of Related Literature

Gulati (2004) discusses the status of information and communication technologies usage in libraries with special reference to special libraries in India. The study emphasizes the consortia efforts in India like INDEST Consortium, CSIR E-journal Consortia, JCCC Consortium and UGC Infonet. The author opines that the Library and Information Science professionals of the libraries should be made aware of current developments in Information Technology. **Nikam** and **Pramodini** (2007) conduct a study on use of e-Journals and

databases by the academic community of University of Mysore. The result reveals that only 4% of the users are fully aware of UGC-INFONET, whereas 61.5% are somewhat aware and 16.5% users are not aware. **Madhusudhan** (2008) made an attempt to find out Use of UGC-Infonet e-journals by research scholars and students of the University of Delhi, Delhi. The study shows that e-journals perform an increasingly important role in research at Department of Library & Information Science. Even though, 87% of the respondents use the UGC-Infonet e-journals through the guidance of the faculty members, research scholars and students should be motivated to use the UGC-Infonet e-resources for academic purposes. 73% of the respondents feel that the use of the UGC-Infonet e-journals has created high dependency value on their research work. **Majumder** et al. (2008) conduct a survey on Access of Electronic resources by the users of LNB Library with special reference to UGC-INFONET. The findings of the study reveal that 70.00% of the respondents are aware about the UGC –INFONET programme. 86.67% of the respondents felt that they are in need of regular training programme to make effective use of UGC-INFONET programme. Almost all the respondents who are aware of UGC-INFONET expect more number of electronic journals. 84.44% of users access UGC-INFONET consortia through e-databases. **Kumbar** and **Hadagali** (2009) examine the Use of UGC-Infonet E-journals Consortium by Faculty Members and Research Scholars of Karnatak University, Dharwad. The result reveals that 92.85% of the faculty members and 95.00% of research scholars are aware of consortium. 47.61% of the faculty members and 61.66% of research scholars opined that the content is better than in print version. Furthermore, 88.09% of the faculty members and 93.33% research scholars opined that more number of e-journals should be include to the consortium. **Thanuskodi** (2012) describes the awareness & usage of UGC-Infonet digital library consortium among faculty members of state universities in Tamil Nadu. The result shows that 94.40% of the respondents from the science, 86.99% of social science faculty members are aware about the availability of UGC-Infonet digital library consortium. 75.35% of the respondents use resources for the purpose of research work. 64.08% for writing research papers, 37.32% use for teaching and 30.28% of respondents use for guiding research students. **Somashekara** (2014) conducts a study on usage of UGC-INFONET E-Resource in Karnataka Universities. The study reveals that Mysore University there is highest usage or download of documents from UGC-Infoent. Mysore University is placed 15th and 1st position in usage report in India and in Karnataka respectively.

5. Objectives of Study

- To know the extent of awareness and use of the UGC-Infonet Library Consortium by research scholars of UPE Universities of Karnataka state.
- To find out the frequency of access to UGC-Infonet Library Consortium.
- To know the purpose of using UGC-Infonet Library Consortium.
- To find out the respondents' satisfaction with the UGC-Infonet Consortium service
- To know problems face while accessing and using the UGC-Infonet Consortium.

6. Scope, Limitations and Methodology of the study

This study focuses on the awareness and use of UGC-Infonet consortium by the research scholars of science and technology (S&T) discipline of “University with Potential for Excellence” awarded Universities of Karnataka state i.e. Karnatak University, Dharwad (KUD) and University of Mysore, Mysore (UMM). The main focus of this study is to identify the information needs and requirements of users in general and to know the awareness and use of UGC-Infonet consortia service particularly in university library. A

questionnaire survey was conducted to collect the information regarding the use and impact of UGC-Infonet consortia. The simple random sampling technique was used in this study. A total of 220 questionnaires were distributed to collect the primary data, out of which 203 questionnaires were returned. On examination of the returned questionnaire 197 were found usable for analysis. The data was analysed using simple percentage. The results are presented in the following sections.

7. Data Analysis and Interpretation

The data collected by the questionnaires were analysed and interpreted and are presented here in tables and figures.

7.1 Distribution of Respondents

Table-1: Distribution of Respondents

University	Questionnaires Distributed	Questionnaires Received	Rate of Percentage
KUD	100	89	89%
UMM	120	108	90%
Total	220	197	89.54%

The study of data in table -1 reveals university wise distribution of questionnaire. A total of 220 questionnaires were distributed among research scholars of UPE university libraries and 197 dully filled questionnaires were received back, thus resulting into response rate of 89.54%. The highest response has come from University of Mysore, Mysore with 90% followed by Karnatak University, Dharwad with 89%.

7.2 Gender wise distribution of respondents

Table-2: Gender wise distribution of respondents

Gender	KUD	UMM	Total
Male	67 (75.28%)	79 (73.14%)	146 (74.11%)
Female	22 (24.71%)	29 (26.85%)	51 (25.88%)
Total	89	108	197

Table -2 shows that gender-wise distribution of respondents. In this study, 74.11 % of the respondents belong to the category of male, where as 25.88 % of the respondents belong to the category of female. It can be inferred from the data presented in the table that the male respondents dominated over female.

7.3 Internet skills

Table-3: Internet skills

Internet skills	KUD	UMM	Total
Very Good	62 (69.66%)	74 (68.52%)	136 (69.04%)
Fair	21 (23.60%)	22 (20.37%)	43 (21.83%)
Uncertain	06 (6.74%)	12 (11.11%)	18 (9.14%)
Poor	--	--	--
Very Poor	--	--	--
TOTAL	89	108	197

The respondents were asked to indicate their level of awareness about Internet skill. The results of the table -3 reveals that, 136 (69.04%) of respondents have very good knowledge about Internet, about 43 (21.83%) indicated that they have fair knowledge of Internet. However only 18 (9.14%) of respondents indicated uncertainty regarding the Internet skills.

7.4 Awareness of Electronic Information Resources

Table-4: Awareness of EIRs by the research scholars

	KUD	UMM	Total
Yes	87 (97.75%)	103 (95.37%)	190(96.44%)
No	02(2.24%)	05(4.62%)	7(3.55%)
TOTAL	89	108	197

The Table-4 shows about the awareness of EIRs by the research scholars. Out of total 197 respondents, 190 (96.44%) respondents are aware of EIRs available in their respective libraries. Whereas, only 7 (3.55%) respondents are not aware of EIRs.

7.5 Aware of UGC-Infonet Library Consortium

Table-5: Aware of UGC-Infonet Library Consortium

	KUD	UMM	Total
Yes	76 (87.36%)	93 (90.29%)	169 (88.95%)
No	11(12.64%)	10(9.71%)	21(11.05%)
TOTAL	87	103	190

Table-5 demonstrates that 169 (88.95%) of respondents are aware of UGC-INFONET consortium and 21 (11.05%) are not aware of this. This result shows a positive sign regarding awareness and use of UGC-INFONET consortium.

7.6 Frequency of use of UGC-Infonet Library Consortium by Research Scholars

Table-6: Frequency of use of UGC-Infonet Library Consortium by Research Scholars

Library visit	KUD	UMM	Total
Daily	24 (27.59%)	35 (33.98%)	59 (31.05%)
Twice a week	38 (43.68%)	54 (52.43%)	92 (48.42%)
Once a week	19 (21.84%)	11 (10.68%)	30 (15.79%)
Once a fortnight	06 (6.90%)	03 (2.91%)	09 (4.74%)
Once a month	--	--	--
Occasionally	--	--	--
Not at all			
TOTAL	87	103	190

The table-6 reveals that the majority of the respondents use UGC-Infonet Library Consortium twice a week (48.42%), followed by daily (31.05%) and once a week (15.79%). Only few respondents i.e. 4.47% used e-resources once a fortnight.

7.7 Search Preference of the respondents

Table -7: Search Preference of the respondents

Respondents	Search Preference					
	Author	Title	Subject	Keyword	Publisher	Other
KUD	43 (49.42%)	51 (58.62%)	19 (21.83%)	08 (9.19%)	04 (4.59%)	03 (3.44%)
UMM	59 (57.28%)	63 (61.16%)	26 (25.24%)	15 (14.56%)	03 (2.91%)	03 (2.91%)
Total (N=190)	102 (53.68%)	114 (60.00%)	45 (23.68%)	23 (12.10%)	07 (3.68%)	06 (3.15%)

Table-7 represents the search preference used by the research scholars to retrieve information from EIRs. The study reveals that about 114 (60.60%) of respondents prefer title wise search to retrieve information, followed by 102 (53.68%) respondents prefer author wise search, 45 (23.68%) respondents prefer to search information by subject wise approach only 7 (3.68%) respondents prefer publisher to search information.

7.8 Purpose of using UGC-Infonet Library Consortium

Table-8: Purpose of using UGC-Infonet Library Consortium

Purpose	KUD N=87	UMM N=103	Total N=190
To keep abreast with the latest developments	48 (55.17%)	63 (61.17%)	111 (58.42%)
For Research work	76 (87.36%)	86 (83.50%)	162 (85.26%)
For Prepare Research Article	73 (83.91%)	83 (80.58%)	156 (82.11%)
For Seminar/Workshop, Presentation	59 (67.82%)	74 (71.84%)	133 (70.00%)

From the table-8, it is clear that most of the respondents, i.e.85.26% use UGC-Infonet Library Consortium for research work. 82.11% of respondents use for preparing research article, 70.00% respondents use UGC-Infonet for Seminar/Workshop, Presentation and 58.42% of respondents use for to keep abreast with the latest developments

7.9 Number of e-journals making use through UGC- Infonet consortia

Table-9: Number of e-journals making use through UGC- Infonet consortia

Information content	KUD	UMM	Total
Less than 10	09 (11.84%)	12 (12.90%)	21 (12.43%)
Between 10 to 20	13 (17.11%)	26 (27.96%)	39 (23.08%)
Between 20 to 40	18 (23.68%)	23 (24.73%)	41 (24.26%)
More than 40	36 (47.37%)	32 (34.41%)	68 (40.24%)
TOTAL	76 (100.00%)	93 (100.00%)	169 (100.00%)

Respondents were asked how many of e-journals they are making use through UGC-Infonet consortia. From the table-9, it is clear that the majority of the respondents, i.e. 40.24% use more than 40 e-journals, followed by, 24.26% between 20 to 40, about 23.08% of the respondents use 10-20 and 12.43% of the respondents use less than 10 e-journals in UGC-Infonet consortia. It is clear that majority of the research scholars are making use of UGC-Infonet consortium effectively.

7.10 Problems faced in using UGC-Infonet Consortium

Table-10: Problems faced in using UGC-Infonet Consortium

Problems faced	KUD	UMM	Total
Lack of knowledge to use	7 (9.21%)	10 (10.75%)	17 (10.06%)
Lack of sufficient Internet nodes in University Library	32 (42.11%)	36 (38.71%)	68 (40.24%)
Lack of accessibility to UGC-Infonet E-Journal Consortium at Department Chamber	28 (36.84%)	38 (40.86%)	66 (39.05%)
Slow Internet bandwidth	30 (39.47%)	41 (44.09%)	71 (42.01%)
Technical Problems	41 (53.95%)	52 (55.91%)	93 (55.03%)
Lack of relevant information sources	24 (31.58%)	28 (30.11%)	52 (30.77%)
Lack of assistance by library staff	26 (34.21%)	32 (34.41%)	58 (34.32%)

The table shows a picture of problems faced by the research scholars while accessing and using UGC-INFONET consortium. It clearly indicates that majority of respondents i.e. 93 (55.03%) say technical problem is the major problem with using UGC-INFONET consortium. For about 71 (42.01%) respondents slow Internet is the major problem. 68 (40.24%) respondents indicate that they face problem due to lack of sufficient Internet nodes in University library, 66 (39.05%) respondents find problem due to lack of accessibility to UGC-INFONET e-journals consortium at department chambers, 58 (34.32%) respondents indicate that they face problem due to lack of assistance by library staff and finally, only 17 (10.06%) respondents find problem due to lack of knowledge to use.

7.11 Opinion towards UGC-Infonet Library Consortium Services

Table-11: Opinion towards UGC-Infonet Library Consortium Services

Opinion	KUD	UMM	Total
Excellent	21 (27.63%)	18 (19.35%)	39 (23.07%)
Very Good	33 (43.42%)	39 (41.93%)	72 (42.60%)
Good	16 (21.05%)	32 (34.40%)	48 (28.40%)
Poor	06 (7.89%)	04 (4.30%)	10 (5.91%)
Very Poor	00	00	00
TOTAL	76 (100.00%)	93 (100.00%)	169 (100.00%)

Table-11 presents data on the respondents' views on UGC-Infonet Library Consortium services. It could be noted that majority of the respondents, that is 72 (42.60%) observe that UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium services are 'very good'. 48 (28.40%) of the research scholars opine as 'good' and 10 (5.91%) of respondents have poor opinion about UGC-Infonet Library Consortium services of the UPE universities in Karnataka.

8. Major Findings of the study

1. Majority of the respondents, i.e. 136 (69.04%) have very good knowledge about Internet.
2. About 169 (88.95%) of respondents were aware of UGC-INFONET consortium and 21 (11.05%) were not aware of this,

3. Majority of respondents used UGC-Infonet Library Consortium twice a week (48.42%),
4. About 114 (60.60%) of respondents prefer title wise search to retrieve information, followed by 102 (53.68%) respondents prefer author wise search,
5. Most of the respondents, i.e.85.26% use UGC-Infonet Library Consortium for research work.
6. Majority of the respondents, i.e. 40.24% use more than 40 e-journals, followed by, 24.26% between 20 to 40,
7. It was found that majority of respondents i.e. 93 (55.03%) technical problem is the major problem with using UGC-INFONET consortium. About 71 (42.01%) respondents find problem due to slow Internet,
8. Majority of the respondents, that is 72 (42.60%) observe that UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium services are 'very good'.

9. Conclusion

The advent of electronic publishing has brought a revolution in journals publication, subscription as well as access to the scholarly literature. The UGC INFONET Digital Library Consortium is to provide access to qualitative electronic resources including full-text and bibliographic databases to academic institutions at lower rates of subscription. The present study reveals that though there is increased acceptance of electronic journals by the research scholars of the UPE Universities in Karnataka, there is need for effective user education, to develop awareness and knowledge of the UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium. Further, there is need to include more number of Journals in the Consortium.

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