

Awareness and Use of UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium E-Resources in Universities of Gujarat State: A Sample Survey

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Abstract

This survey finds that 57.20 percent of the users are aware and use the UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium E- resources, whereas 31.16 percent are aware, but do not use and 11.62 percent are not at all aware of the availability of the consortium resources. The majority of non-users belong to social sciences and humanities and those who have not undergone any type formal computer training. Comparatively the users from science stream uses the consortium resources more frequently than those belonging to social science and humanities. Lack of knowledge to use, slow internet bandwidth, lack of time to visit university library and can not access this consortium on ID/Passwords are found to be the major problem faced. Providing training and giving access to ID/Password to its users will make maximum use of the consortium.

Keywords: UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium, E-Resources, Universities - Gujarat

1. Introduction

Among the library services, Resource sharing and Inter Library Loan play an important role in providing effective services by reducing costs. It is also known as library cooperation. Library Cooperation may be defined as the combined efforts of two or more libraries to share their resources for providing better services to their user community. Today no single library can think of organizing library services entirely based on its own collection.

Owing to the emergence of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) applications to the library, use of digital Information is developed. The resource sharing among the libraries started with the help of consortia. A Consortium is a group of organizations whose purpose is to collectively facilitate and support the work of a service program in ways that add material and human resources be-

yond those available to each organization individually.

In Library Science, a consortium is a group of libraries or other such like organizations that form a partnership to achieve a goal, such as shared cataloguing or resource sharing, which cannot be achieved by the individual alone. A consortium is helpful in getting cooperation from various libraries in acquiring electronic databases, communication of information and interlibrary loan. Nowadays, many of the special and university libraries form a group for getting online journals. In India, UGC-Infonet is the biggest consortium of University and research Libraries. It also extends to the colleges under N-List program.

2. UGC-INFONET Consortium

The UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium was launched in December, 2003 by Honorable Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, the President of India soon after providing the Internet connectivity to the universities



in the year 2003 under the UGC-Infonet program. The Consortium proved to be a boon to university libraries which have been discontinued subscription of scholarly journals because of “Serials Crisis”. The term “serials crisis” refers to exponential and continuing increase in subscription cost of scholarly journals. The crisis is a result of increase in the cost of journals much faster than the rate of inflation, increase in number of journals and the paucity of funds available to the libraries

The Consortium provides current as well as archival access to more than 7500+ core and peer-reviewed journals and 10 bibliographic databases from 26 publishers and aggregators in different disciplines. The program has been implemented in phased manner. In the first phase that began in 2004, access to e-resources were provided to 50 universities who had Internet connectivity under the UGC-Infonet Connectivity program of the UGC. In the second phase, 50 more universities were added to the program in the year 2005. So far 209 Universities, including 14 National Law schools and central universities that come under the purview of UGC, have been provided differential access to subscribed 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 program is wholly funded by the UGC and executed by the INFLIBNET (Information and Library Network) Centre, Gandhinagar.

The benefit of subscription to e-resources would also be extended to the colleges, to begin with the College for Potential with Excellence (CPE) and autonomous colleges. The Consortium has also launched its “Associate Membership Program “ wherein private universities and other research or-

ganizations are welcomed to join the Consortium for selected e-resources.

3. Objective Of the study

To know the extent awareness and use of the UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium by users of Universities in Gujarat.

The main objective of the study is below,

1. To know the infrastructure facilities available in universities, libraries and departments for accessing UGC Infonet E-Resources.
2. To know the purpose of using UGC Infonet E-resources by user.
3. To understand and measure the Frequency of access to UGCInfonet E-Resources.
4. To find out the hurdles and problems faced by the user to access UGC Infonet e-resources.
5. To find out the pitfall of UGC Infonet Consortium and actual information need (e-journals) of users.
6. To ascertain the need for user orientation program in accessing e-journals.
7. To suggest better solutions for utilization of UGC Infonet E Resources.

4. Methodology

Survey method has been adopted and a questionnaire, designed keeping in view the objective of the study, has been used a data collection tool. The 500 questionnaires were personally distributed among the PG Students, Research Scholars and Faculty members of the different department of Saurashtra University, Rajkot. The feedback collected and tabu-

lated and analyzed. Approx Five thousand (5000) population of Faculty members, Research scholar and PG Students in Saurashtra University, Rajkot. Sample selected by random sampling method. Questionnaire distributed to 100 Faculty Member, 150 Research scholar and 250 PG Students.

5. Scope and Limitations

This research survey was restricted to the awareness and use of UGC-Infonet E-resources by PG students, Research scholars and Faculty members from Saurashtra University, Rajkot. 500 questionnaires distributed to different departments of Saurashtra university. 430 questionnaires received back.

In Gujarat 8 State Universities were selected for the consortium. List of Universities is given below. Sample survey was done to know about extent awareness and use Of UGC-Infonet Digital Library

Consortium. Saurashtra University, Rajkot has been selected for the sample survey.

Sr.No	Name of the Univesrity	Coverage
1	Sardar Patel University, Vallabh Vidyanagar, Gujarat	Phase I
2	Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara, Gujarat	Phase I
3	Bhavnagar University, Bhavnagar, Gujarat	Phase II
4	Gujarat University, Ahmedabad, Gujarat	Phase II
5	Hemchandraacharya North Gujarat University, Patan, Gujarat	Phase II
6	Saurashtra University, Rajkot, Gujarat	Phase II
7	Veer Narmad South Gujarat University, Surat, Gujarat	Phase II
8	Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad, Gujarat	Phase III

6. Data Analysis

Table-1 Designation wise response

Sr. No	Particulars	Faculty Members	Research Scholar	PG Students	Total
1	Questionnaires Distributed	100	150	250	500
2	Questionnaire Received	87	123	234	430
3	Percentage	87%	82%	93.60%	86%

500 questionnaires were distributed among the sample population of which 430 (86 percent) have responded (Table-1)

Table -2 Characteristics of respondents

N=430

Sr.No	Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Gender		
	Male	310	72.09
	Female	120	27.9
2	Faculty		
	Social Science	135	31.39
	Science	210	48.83
	Humanities	95	22.09

As per (table-2), In respondents 310 (72.09 percent) were male and 120 (27.09 percent) were female. In respondent 135 (31.39percent) were from social science subjects, 210 (48.83%) were Science and 95 (22.09 percent) were from Humanities.

Table -3 Awareness and use of UGC-Infonet consortium

Sr. No.	Particulars of respondents	Aware and using		Aware but not using		Not aware		Total	
		No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
1	Gender	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
	Male (N-310)	170	54.83	102	32.90	38	12.25	310	100
	Female (N-120)	76	63.33	32	26.66	12	10.00	120	100
2	Subject Discipline	No	Percent	No	Percent	No	Percent	No	Percent
	Social Science (N-135)	28	20.74	93	68.88	14	10.37	135	100
	Science (N-210)	138	65.71	38	18.09	34	16.19	210	100
	Humanities (N-85)	2	3.15	2	23.15	71	74.73	85	100

Out of 430 users, 246 (57.20 percent) are aware and use the UGC –Infonet resources where as 134 (31.16 percent) are not using though they are aware of the resources and 50 (11.62 percent) are not at all aware of the resources. Further, the data have been analyzed by gender and subject discipline of the users presents in Table-3.

Female faculty members are slightly ahead of their male counterparts among those who are aware and use the UGC-infonetresources. Subject-wise analysis brings home the fact that the users belonging to scientific discipline are far ahead of their social sci-

ence and humanities counterparts. . Designation-wise analysis discloses that the readers are far ahead of those who have not undergone such training

About 22.25 percent of the persons are the non-users of the consortium. The Non –users are more among users belonging to social science and humanities. People who have not undergone any formal computer training are also non-users.

Table-4 First learn about the UGC-Infonet Consortium

N=380

Sr. No	Particulars	Number	Percentage
1	Institute's website/ Announcements / Newsletters/Posters/Circulars/Leaflets	100	26.31
2	From Teacher /Guide	40	10.52
3	Colleague's Reference	33	8.68
4	Fellow/Students	31	8.15
5	Internet/Intranet Sources	30	7.89
6	News Papers/Television/Social Media / Professional Forums	0	0
7	User Orientation/Education/Awareness programs by the Library	40	10.52
8	INFLIBNET's Website/Brochure/Calendar/Leaflets	106	27.89
9	Total	380	100

The question asked about that how they come to know about this consortium. Out of 430 people, 380 are aware about this consortium. Maximum people

say that they come to know about UGC-Infonet consortium by INFLIBNET website and Institute's website, announcements, newsletters, posters, circulars and leaflets. Data presented in Table-4

Table -5 Reason for aware, but not using the Consortium

(N-134)

Sr. No	Particulars	Number	Percentage
1	Lack of computer knowledge to Use	10	7.46
2	Lack of sufficient Internet nodes in University Library	36	26.86
3	Lack of sufficient Internet nodes in University Department	40	29.85
4	Cannot access this consortium on ID/Password	126	94.02
5	Slow Internet Bandwidth	90	67.16
6	Technical Problems	27	20.14
7	Frequent Power cut	7	5.22
8	Lack of relevant information sources	14	10.44
9	Lack of assistance from library staff	34	25.37
10	Lack of time to visit university library	85	63.43
11	Language barrier	12	8.95

Users who do not use, though they are aware of the UGC-Infonet e-resources were asked to indicate the reasons. The data received in this regard has been presented in Table-5

94.02 percent users gave reasons that they can not access this consortium on user ID/Password, 67.16 percent do not use because of slow internet bandwidth, 63.43 percent do not use due to lack of time to visit university library, 29.85 percent do not use due to lack of sufficient Internet nodes in their department, 26.86 percent do not use due to lack of sufficient node in university library, 25.37 percent do not use due to lack of assistance of library staff, 20.14 percent do not use due to slow internet bandwidth, 10.44 do not use due to lack of relevant information sources, 8.95 percent have language barrier, 7.46 percent do not have computer knowledge to use and 5.22 percent facing problem of frequent power cut.

Table-6 Demand of services for using UGC-Infonet Consortium (N-380)

Sr. No	Particulars	Number	Percentage
1	Email Alerts on Research topic	147	38.68
2	On Demand Article Printing	83	21.84
3	User access to ID/Password	117	30.78
4	On Request Article Delivery Service by E- Mail or Post	107	28.15

In reply of what kind of service users wants, maximum users, 38.68 percent want E-mail Alerts on a research topic, 30.78 percent want easier access to ID/Passwords, 28.15 percent want on request article delivery service by E-mail or post and 21.84 percent want on demand article printing service. (Table-6)

Table 7: Frequency of using UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium (N-246)

Sr. No	Particulars	Number	Percentage
1	Daily	93	37.08
2	Once in two days	33	13.41
3	Twice in a week	26	10.56
4	Once in a week	25	10.16
5	Once in two weeks	25	10.16
6	Once in a month	24	9.75
7	Occasionally	20	8.13

Of 246 faculty members who are aware of and use the UGC-Infonet E-resources, 93 (37.08 percent) respondents use it daily, 33 (31.41 percent) use it once in two days, 26 (10.56 percent) use it in twice a week, 25 (10.16 percent) use one in a week and once in two weeks, 24 (9.75 percent) use once in a month and 20 (8.13 percent) use the consortium occasionally (Table-7)

Table-8 purpose for using UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium E-Resources (N-246)

Sr. No	Particulars	Number	Percentage
1	To keep abreast with the latest developments	71	28.86
2	For teaching	74	30.08
3	For Research	100	40.65
4	For writing research articles	79	32.11
5	For writing books	63	25.6
6	For Guiding Research Students	76	30.89
7	Others	-	-

Data Presented in Table-8 reveals that 100 (40.65 percent) user uses the UGC-infonet resources for

their research followed 79 (32.11 percent) use for writing research papers, 76 (30.89) for guiding their research students, 74 (30.08) use for their teaching purpose and 63 (25.60 percent) use for their writing purpose.

From the analysis of the data it is clear that the majority of the users, integrates the benefits that they have gained through UGC-Infonet resources for their own research and as well as their publication of research articles. However, the majority of the faculty members are not channelizing the benefits to guide research students or to keep abreast of the developments or even to prepare for teaching.

Table-10: User satisfied with the present resources (N-340)

Sr. No	Particulars	Number	Percentage No.
1	Yes	280	82.35
2	No	65	19.11

Table-10 represents user satisfaction towards UGC-Infonet resources or not. Out of 340, 280 (82.35 percent) are satisfied and 65 (19.11 percent) are not satisfied with the present resources.

6.1 User Education

Saurashtra University Library under the study have conducted a user education program through lectures, audio-visual presentations, demonstration, training programs, etc., To create awareness about the UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium. Users were asked about their awareness and participation in the user education programs conducted by their university library. The data received in this regard is presented In Table-1

Table -11 Awareness and participation in user education programs (N-430)

Sr. No.	Particulars	No.	Percentage
1	Aware and Participated	170	39.53
2	Aware but not participated	155	36.04
3	Not aware	105	24.41

Data Represented in Table-11 reveals that 39.53 percent of users were aware of and participated in the user awareness program conducted by their university library, whereas 36.04 percent did not participate, though aware of the user education programs and 24.41 percent were not aware of the user education programs to all.

Table-12 Adequacy of user education Programs (N-170)

Sr. No.	Particulars	No.	Percentage
1	Adequate	13	7.64
2	Not Adequate	155	91.39
3	Not Respondent	2	1.17

Of 170 members who were aware of and participated in user education programs, as many as 91.39 percent found them inadequate whereas only 7.64 percent found them adequate (Table-12)

Table-13 Problem faced by the faculty members during user education programs (N-170)

Sr. No.	Particulars	No.	Percentage
1	User education program was lecture-oriented and not practical oriented	113	66.47
2	The period was too short	56	32.94
3	Too many participants	36	21.17
4	Participants were from different subject background	23	13.52
5	Others	10	5.88
6	Not Responded	9	5.29

Out 170, 113 (66.47 percent) of the respondents have indicated that user education programs that they participated were lecture oriented not practical oriented. 56 (32.94 percent) of the participants opined that the duration of his program was too short. Nearly 36 (21.17 percent) of the participants belonging to different subject disciplines was another problem indicated by 13.52 percent of the users. And a result of the user education programs was lacking a certain focus (Table-13)

Table-14 Reason for having not attended in the user education programs (N-155)

Sr. No.	Particulars	No.	Percentage
1	Lack of Information	45	29.03
2	Not required	40	14.49
3	Lack of time	56	20.28
4	It was not for all	45	16.3
5	Others	0	0
6	Not Responded	40	14.49

The respondents, who did not participate, though aware of the user education programs were asked to indicate the reasons. The data received in this regard have been presented in Table 15.

Of 155 users, 29.03 percent users have said that they cannot attend because of lacking of information, 20.28 percent for lacking of time, 16.30 said it was not for all and 14.49 said that they do not required education program.

7. Suggestions

1. University libraries should take a principal role to create awareness among users about the UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium by conducting training programs, workshops, audio-visual presentations, demonstrations, etc., On a regular basis. The universities should support the libraries in every possible way.
2. University library should convert non-user to users into actual users by educating them about the potentiality of the UGC-Infonet resources for their academic activities.
3. User education should be conducted in a small group of users belonging to a particular subject discipline such as mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, sociology, economics, etc.,. At a time, so that the resources accessible under the consortium in a particular subject can be made known to the concerned users and is highly focused.
4. The library should use media like newspaper, television, radio, social websites, blogs, etc.,. For publicity of E-resources which are freely available.

5. Selective dissemination services should be given by the university library. UGC-Infonet E-resources access should be given on ID/Password who cannot visit a University library or department regularly. Email alert on Reserchtopic, On demand article printing service, On request Article delivery Service by E-Mail or Post.
6. Some mechanisms have to accept by a university or university library that every new enroll students can know about the consortium. They should give information when they fill the form of library membership. It can be by pamphlet, brochures, calendars, diary, etc.,.
7. University's department head and faculty members can play a supportive role for this beneficiary consortium. They should be conscious and make their students aware to use it.
8. University authority and university library have to focus on slow Internet bandwidth and ICT Infrastructure.
9. E-resources access should be given to every department of the university even though they are not in the same campus. Somemechanisam should be adopted.

8. Conclusion

Indian Univerisities are privileged to have access to large number of scholarly publications under the UGC-InfonetDigital Library Consortium without any financial burden on them,because UGC make them available through INFLIBNET, without any cost.But by this study found that resources can not reached to their beneficiaries for various reason.57.20 per-

cent users of Saurashtra University are aware and using UGC-Infonet online resources and 42.79 percent are not using at all.Measurity no- user who are aware but not use the consortium demand that it should be available on ID/Password for who can not visit University Library Regularly.University Library should make every attempt to convert the non-users into actual users of UGC-Infonet digital resources in order to bring them to the mainstream with an aim to achieve academic excellence.The University Library need to rise to the occasion by equipping themselves with cutiing edge and powerful ICT infrastructure to provide a sustainable ambience for students,Research Scholars and faculty members in the competitive word.

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