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**USE OF UGC-INFONET CONSORTIUM BY THE FACULTY  
MEMBERS AND RESEARCH SCHOLARS OF  
DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY,  
KARNATAK UNIVERSITY, DHARWAD: A STUDY**

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**Abstract**

*The E-Journal programme is corner stone of the UGC-Infonet effort which aims at addressing the teaching, learning and research collectively and governance requirements of the universities. It would facilitate free access to scholarly journals and databases in all areas of learning to the research and academic community. The article deals with the usage of UGC-Infonet E-Journal consortium by the faculty members and research scholars of the Department of Chemistry, Karntak University, Dharwad.*

**Keywords:** User Survey, E Resources, UGC-Infonet Consortium, Information seeking behaviour, Chemists.

**1. Introduction**

The ever increasing subscription cost of journals, decreasing value of Indian rupee against major foreign currencies and the stagnant library budgets reduce the collection of journals to a very minimum level. Thus, it has affected the academic and research community in our country. Access of information to remote user has always been a challenge and delivery of information service is not a new concept as it has before printing media was invented. It changes with the advancement of technology like oral communication, print and electronic. Due to information explosion it is difficult to manage the information manually but the newer technologies have helped to overcome these obstacles.

In a changed environment INFLIBNET has moved to the digital environment in the delivery of information services to the academic community across the country. To achieve this INFLIBNET has initiated the UGC-INFONET programme. So that the existing resources can be used very efficiently and effectively by the university libraries in India. The UGC-INFONET programme will be a boon to higher education systems in several ways. It is a vehicle for distance learning to facilitate spread of quality education all over the country. It is a major source for research scholars for tapping the most up-to-date information. It is a medium for collaboration among teachers and students. The E-journal programme is corner stone of the UGC-INFONET effort which aims at addressing the teaching, learning, and research collectively and governance requirements of the Universities. It would facilitate free access to scholarly journals and databases in all areas of learning to the research and academic community.

UGC has sanctioned the amount required for the development of infrastructure to most of the universities. Currently, many Universities having better infrastructure and Internet Protocol addresses started accessing these resources. The usage is limited to various reasons. Though the infrastructure facility exists on the campus but the potential use of the INFONET programme is very meager. Karnatak University has established its own infrastructure which is pre requisite for INFONET programme. So the Karnatak University is one among the fifty, first set of Universities identified for providing electronic access to resources by the UGC-INFONET programme.

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## **2. Objectives of the study**

The objectives of the present study are

1. To identify the use, acceptance and impact of UGC-INFONET e-resources.
2. To know the significance of e-journals over print journals.
3. To know the satisfaction derived by chemists while using e-journals.
4. To know the problems faced by chemists in accessing electronic information.
5. To ascertain the need for user orientation programme in accessing E-Journals.
6. To suggest the ways and means for effective use of the UGC-INFONET programme.

## **3. Methodology**

Questionnaire method is followed to collect the relevant data from the chemists by distributing the suitably designed questionnaire. Personal interaction with the chemists has revealed many important hard facts and enabled the investigators in making some important suggestions for the overall improvement of the UGC-INFONET programme.

In this paper, an attempt has been made to analyse and interpret the data collected on the use of UGC-INFONET consortium by chemists of Karnatak University, Dharwad. For this, a structured questionnaire was prepared and distributed to 45 users. Out of 45 users, 40 users have responded positively. Total response from the users is 88.89%. The collected data is presented in the form of tables and analysed by using a simple method of calculation.

## **4. Scope and Limitations of the study**

The present study focuses on the use of UGC-INFONET by chemists in Karnatak University, Dharwad. Attempts have been made to know the information requirements of the faculty members and research scholars. The main focus of this study is to identify the needs and requirements of users in general and to know the use of UGC-INFONET resources in Karnatak University by the chemists in particular. The study is confined to faculty and research scholars of the department of Chemistry, Karnatak University, Dharwad.

## **5. Analysis and Interpretation of Data.**

### **5.1 Awareness of UGC-INFONET Consortium**

The University Grants Commission (UGC) has initiated a programme to provide electronic access to scholarly literature in all areas of learning to the University Sector in India over Internet. Table-1 gives the picture about the awareness of UGC-INFONET programme. The study has been identified that out of 40 respondents, 87.5% chemists are aware of UGC-INFONET consortium and remaining 12.5% of them are not aware of this programme.

**Table - 1. Awareness of UGC-INFONET Consortium**

| Factors                   | Response | Percentage |
|---------------------------|----------|------------|
| Aware about UGC-INFONET   | 35       | 87.5       |
| Unaware about UGC-INFONET | 5        | 12.5       |

It is evident that majority of the users access e-resources through UGC-INFONET over campus LAN. Only few of them are not aware of this Consortium.

### 5.2. Source through which Consortium known

A question was asked to know, through which source they came to know about UGC-INFONET consortium. Among 40 respondents, 55% of users are known from Library Professionals, followed by 37.5% respondents from co-researcher/friends, 35.5% from teacher or guide, and 22.5% through advertisement.

**Table - 2. Source through which UGC-INFONET known**

| Sl. No. | Source                | Respondents | Percentage |
|---------|-----------------------|-------------|------------|
| 1       | Library Professionals | 22          | 55.0       |
| 2       | Teacher/Guide         | 14          | 35.0       |
| 3       | Advertisement         | 9           | 22.50      |
| 4       | From co-researcher    | 15          | 37.5       |

### 5.3 Importance of Bibliographic Databases and Portal Services

From Table-3 it is clear that majority of the respondents (90%) have opined that Royal Society of Chemistry is the essential bibliographic database service. Followed by Chemical Abstract (87.5%) and in portal services INGENTA (35%) is the most essential database service followed by J-Gate (27.5%).

**Table – 3. Importance of Bibliographic Databases and Portal Services**

| Type of database        | Database                   | Essential | Less essential |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|-----------|----------------|
| Bibliographic Databases | Chemical Abstract          | 35 (87.5) | 3 (7.5)        |
|                         | Royal Society of Chemistry | 36 (90)   | 3 (7.5)        |
| Portal services         | J-Gate                     | 11 (27.5) | 5 (12.5)       |
|                         | INGENTA                    | 14 (35)   | 3 (7.5)        |

*Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage*

### 5.4 Importance of the Full Text Electronic Journals.

Table - 4 indicates that the majority of the respondents (90%) opined that American Chemical Society is most essential full-text electronic journal followed by 62.5% of respondents are of the opinion that Academic Press, Springer and Kluwer Online Journals are also essential publishers databases with 57.5 %.

**Table – 4. Importance of the Full Text Electronic Journals.**

| Type of database    | Database publishers       | Essential | Less essential |
|---------------------|---------------------------|-----------|----------------|
| Electronic Journals | Academic Press            | 25 (62.5) | 3 (7.5)        |
| Electronic Journals | American Chemical Society | 36 (90)   | 3 (7.5)        |
| Electronic Journals | Kluwer                    | 23 (57.5) | 4 (10)         |
| Electronic Journals | Springer                  | 25 (62.5) | 4 (10)         |
| Electronic Journals | Other                     | 1 (2.5)   | -              |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage

### 5.5 Need for Orientation/Training programme

Since this programme was introduced recently by the UGC and many are not well versed in the use of e-resources. In view of this the question was raised to chemists that is orientation/training is required or not. The responses are presented in Table-5. It reveals that out of 40 respondents, 82.5% have expressed they are in need of orientation programme to use e-resources. However, remaining 17.5% chemists stated that the training programme is not required. The reason behind this probably they are familiar with the skills and techniques of searching information on the Internet.

**Table - 5. Need for Orientation/Training Programme**

| Factors                                    | Response | Percentage |
|--|----------|------------|
| Need for Orientation/Training Programmes   | 33       | 82.5       |
| No need for Orientation/Training Programme | 7        | 17.5       |

### 5.6. Requirement of print journals in addition to e-journals.

A question was asked to know whether print journals are required in addition to e-journals. The data is presented in Table-6. It examined that the total respondents 95% of them are shown keen interest in print journals in addition to e-journals but remaining 5% respondents felt they are not required. It clearly shows that chemists are equally interested in making use of print journals in addition to e-journals.

**Table - 6. Requirement of print journals in addition to e-journals**

| Sources   | Response | Percentage |
|---|----------|------------|
| Need of print journals in addition to e-journals    | 38       | 95         |
| No Need of print Journals in addition to e-journals | 2        | 5          |

### 5.7. Expectation for more number of e-journals to be included in the UGC-INFONET programme.

The UGC has introduced this programme very recently. At the beginning good number of e-journals have been covered especially in the field of S & T. To know the curiosity of the chemists in use of e-journals as well as to know, whether they are happy with the available journals or expecting many more journals, the simple question was raised. The opinion of the chemists is presented in Table-7. It is very interesting to note that, 100% of chemists are not happy with existing number of e-journals available on the net. At the same time they are expecting many more useful e-journals in the UGC-INFONET consortium.

**Table - 7. Expectation for more number of e-journals to be included in the**

| Sources   | Response | Percentage |
|---|----------|------------|
| Expectation for more number of e-journals to be included in the UGC-INFONET programme | 40       | 100        |

### 5.8 Requirement of other services

In addition to UGC-INFONET resources, Chemists required other information services such as article alert service, preprint etc. Table No.8 gives the picture about the requirement of different services by the chemists such as, article alert service, Preprints and other such services. 85% of the respondents are required Preprints. 80% of them required Article alert service and 22.5% of them indicate other services.

**Table - 8. Requirement of other services**

| Services              | Respondents | Percentage |
|-----------------------|-------------|------------|
| Article alert service | 32          | 80         |
| Browsing              | 34          | 85         |
| Others                | 9           | 22.5       |

Analysis of the above data clearly indicates that Library should go for memorandum of understanding with leading institutes for exchanging information among chemists.

### 5.9 Satisfaction with existing Internet facility

Table 9 shows that the satisfaction of users with the existing Internet facility. Among the respondents 75% of them are satisfied with existing Internet facility that is available in the department laboratory. But remaining 25% of them are not satisfied with the present speed of the Internet.

**Table - 9. Satisfaction with existing Internet facility**

| Factors                             | Respondents | Percentage |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|------------|
| Satisfied over Internet facility    | 30          | 75         |
| Un-satisfied over Internet facility | 10          | 25         |

### 5.10 Opinion about UGC-INFONET Programme

Lastly the simple question was raised to chemists about usefulness of UGC-INFONET programme. The data presented in Table – 10. The data reveals that 65% of the respondents are satisfied and gave positive opinion about the UGC-INFONET programme and 12.5% of them indicated that it is excellent and quite satisfactory.

**Table - 10. Opinion about UGC-INFONET programme**

| Opinion        | Respondents | Percentage |
|----------------|-------------|------------|
| Excellent      | 5           | 12.5       |
| Good           | 26          | 65         |
| Satisfactory   | 5           | 12.5       |
| Unsatisfactory | 4           | 10         |

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## 6. Findings

The study arrived at the following findings based on the results from the analysis of the data gathered:

1. Maximum number of chemists (87.5%) have got awareness about the UGC-INFONET programme.
2. The study clearly indicates that e-journals are the most widely used electronic resources over Internet (85%) by the chemists.
3. All the chemists (100%) expect more number of e-journals to be included in the UGC-INFONET programme.
4. 95% of the chemists are recommended print journals in addition to e-journals.
5. Majority of the chemists (82.5%) felt that they are in need of regular training programme to make effective use of INFONET programme.
6. Maximum number of chemists (95%) have recommended for high speed computers to access information over Internet.
7. 65% of the chemists are opined that the present UGC-INFONET consortium programme is a good resource for research.
8. The data reveals that the majority of the chemists i.e 47.5% have enough knowledge in using the web, including searching of different Databases.

## 7. Suggestions

On the basis of the response and opinion given by the respondents some of the important suggestions have been made, which will help the effective use of the UGC-INFONET consortium.

1. UGC-INFONET consortium should make arrangement for supplying CD's on all archival access of electronic journals.
2. Majority of the chemists felt that the number of e-journals covered at present are not sufficient. In view of this it has been suggested that the UGC-INFONET programme should cover/include more number of e-journals especially in the field of Chemistry.
3. The authorities of the university should take keen interest for providing better infrastructure facilities for the improvement of Internet speed, so that users can feel more comfortable in browsing e-journals.
4. The university library should make necessary arrangement for continuing subscription for the print journals along with e-journals. Since more than 95% of chemists are interested in making use of print journals.
5. The university library should conduct orientation/training programmes regularly to assist the users of UGC/Infonet programme.
6. Majority of the chemists have suggested that UGC-Infonet should provide PDF files of Science-Direct, Wiley-InterScience and all other Scientific Journals.

## 8. Conclusion

One of the major developments in libraries and information systems in the past 15 years is the advent and spread of electronic information resources, services and networks mainly as a result of developments in information and communication technologies. The change is basically of physical form where information content is increasingly being captured, processed, stored and disseminated in electronic form.

The unique features of the information needs of users in electronic environments relate to the physical form in which information content is made available in electronic information environments. Users normally desire the content to be made available within the constraints of their skills and technological capabilities so that it is possible to access and use the required information content to resolve the felt gap in knowledge.

The present survey has clearly indicated that, the electronic resources are highly useful for the research and academic community in the present environment. In which the UGC-INFONET has to play a significant role to assist the academic community in the provision of this unique service to the academic and research community. To assist the academic community the authorities of the university library must conduct the user awareness programs to train the research and academic community in the maximum utilization of these electronic resources more effectively and efficiently.

## 9. References

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