

## Present Status of Browsing E-Journals by Science Scholars: A Case Study of Visva-Bharati University

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### Abstract

This study attempts to find out the familiarity, popularity and utility of E-journals to the science scholars of Visva-Bharati, a central University. In view of this the paper tries to highlight the present position of Visva-Bharati University Library, UGC-Infonet E-journals consortium approach on the one side and on the other side the thinking and satisfaction of the science scholars about the using e-journals to their respective research area. Finally, on the basis of the findings follows the data analysis and interpretation which are collected through the questionnaire cum interview method, the paper provide some suggestion for the uplift of the present e-journal status of the library of this University as a whole.

**Keywords:** E-journals, UGC-Infonet, Users Study, E-Consortium, University Website

### 1. Introduction

The progress of any country depends upon the contributions of creative people. Such contributions come from original thinkers, scientist, artists and persons who think of innovative ways and procedures of doing things or solving problems. Research is the gateway to the development of theoretical knowledge, practical skills and technical know-how in any discipline. The results of research – new innovations and inventions – are the stepping-stones by which society climbs to the more abundant and comfortable life. Thus the progress and prosperity of a society largely depends on its capacity to produce scientific and technical knowledge and use of such knowledge in a productive way.

Research is an important activity for the development of scientific and technical knowledge. It is the gateway to the development of theoretical knowledge, practical skills and technical know how in any discipline. Universities are the centers of higher education and research. The university libraries have to deal with the needs of the researchers in various disciplines preferably in science disciplines. It is the responsibility of the university libraries to provide the information requirements of the researchers from time to time.

### 2. Research and Libraries

Libraries are the direct incentives to the development of educational, social and cultural activities of a nation. They transfer the knowledge and culture from one generation to other. They contribute a lot to the awakening of public in day-to-day life. In the words of Ranganathan, libraries are not merely the storehouses: they are rich springs from which knowledge flows out to irrigate the field of education and culture. So, libraries are integral part of the academic mission of a university. A university library, therefore, inevitably becomes an intellectual arena, and a place for the bounds of knowledge is being perceptually extended. It acts as a meeting place of enquiring minds- those of

authors and readers. Therefore, the library can enhance a university's reputation by providing access to world-class information resources and services and can help to stimulate research by promoting collections and services widely. Library is an integral part of the research culture of a university.

### **2.1. The Changed Situation**

After the advent of Internet, E-journals have flourished in an explosive way and large numbers of E-journals were available through Internet. The launch of UGC- InfoNet E-Journal Consortium in 2004 has changed the entire situation and enriched the resource base of Indian university libraries. University libraries in India have access to large number of scholarly journals from major foreign publishers for the last three years. The INFLIBNET, through UGC-Infonet E-Journals programme, has been facilitating E-Journals access to more than hundred universities covering all corners of the country ranging from remote locations of Northeast and Jammu & Kashmir to universities located at major's cities. Thus this ambitious programme has bridged the digital divide and introduced e-journals, free of cost in universities.

### **3. Visva-Bharati Library Scenario**

Visva-Bharati Central Library is now an active member of UGC-Infonet E-journal Consortium under INFLIBNET programme. Presently library is getting almost 4000 + e-journals through "UGC Infonet: E-Journal Consortium". Some on line e-journals are also available on subscription basis.

It is one of the Universities having valuable historical background as Gurudeva Rabindranath Tagore, a Nobelauriate, propounds it. At the beginning of its establishment it has given knowledge to their students who are coming from any parts of the world. So many research works in different disciplines done in this university. The Central Library and all the Sectional Library of the Visva-bharati University plays a very vital role behind these research works.

#### **3.1. Present status of Visva-Bharati Library**

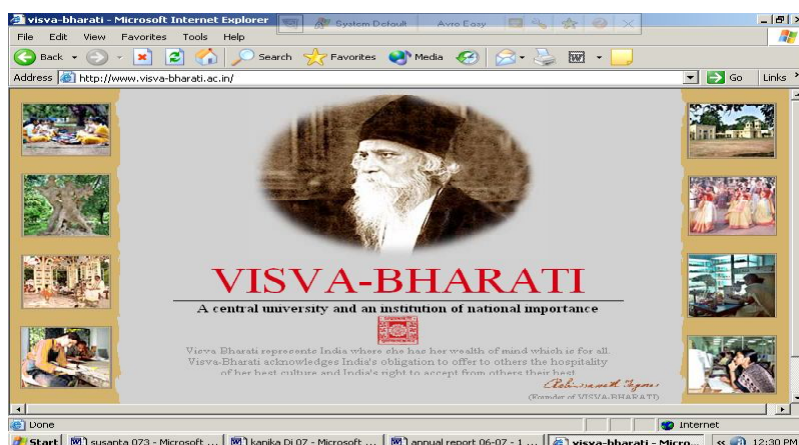
According to Tagore, "The worth of a librarian I would gauge by his power of attracting and looking after such circles, of acting as the intermediary for an intimacy of relationship between the reader and the library. That is to say, on him is cast the burden not only of the books. But of their readers as well, and in the maintaining of both is the test of his efficiency, of the proper discharge of his trust."

Initially Visva-Bharati library took birth and stepped forward under the direct supervision of Tagore. The tagore's biographer sri Pravat Kumar Mukhopadhyay also played a capital role for its growth and development. With the advancement of time Visva-Bharati library getting decentralized for catering better library services to its target users and for the sake of the library administration. At present it consists Central Library having 12 Sectional Libraries and 25 seminar/ departmental libraries.

#### **3.2. Creation of University Website**

To cater its information in wide range the university has introduced its institutional web site viz. <http://www.visva-bharati.c.in>. From the contents of this website one can get an overview of searching

particular information easily and quickly. The home page is as below:



#### 4. Siksha-Bhavana (Institute of Science): The Core Area of Present Study

Siksha-Bhavana (Institute of Science), consistent of seven departments and three centres, viz. Department of Chemistry, Mathematics, Physics, Zoology, Botany, Statistics and Computer and system Sciences, and centres for Biotechnology, Environmental Studies and Mathematics education runs both teaching and research programmes; has been awarding B.Sc. (Hons.), M.Sc. and Ph.D. degrees, for roughly three decades. Over this relatively short period of time, this Bhavana has made remarkable strides in both teaching and research, and has generated scientific awareness among the surroundings populace in consonance with the ideas of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore, through its extension programmes. Department Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics, Zoology and Botany have already received the recognition from the Department of Science and Technology, Govt. of India in the form of FIST grants. The Department of mathematics has been awarded SAP from UGC.

##### Courses offered by the Siksha-Bhavana

Bhavana/Institute	Subject/Dept./ Language	Courses offered		
		Ph.D	PG	UG
Siksha-Bhavana	Chemistry	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Mathematics	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Physics	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Statistics	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Computer Science	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Botany	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Zoology	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Biotechnology	Yes	Yes	-
	Environmental Science	Yes	Yes	-
MCA	Yes	Yes	-	

## **5. Central Library Automation**

In January 1996, the University awarded a Rs. 96.5 lacks contract to C-DAC, Pune, to implement a campus-wide 10 mbps fiber-optic network to link the Bhabana libraries with the central Library with a library automation system comprising a SUN SPARC-based server; 3 Pentium/ 75 multimedia PCs and 10 multilingual VT100/GIST terminals under the UGC-funded INFLIBNET project.

The Central Library and all Sectional Libraries have been connected with the Gitanjali Net, the University Campus wide network. All libraries have Internet, On-line searching, e-mail facilities, etc. Creation of library databases is going on in the Central Library and almost all sectional libraries by using internal manpower resources. Retrospective conversion of existing manual catalogue is also going on by deploying internal manpower. Library software LIBSYS-Unicode compliant is being used for the purposes of Acquisition of library documents, Cataloguing, Serial control, Membership registration, etc. Library OPAC is available in the Internet. About 80,000 titles of documents (bearing 1,35,000 individual accession numbers) have already been entered in library databases. About 40,000 bound volumes of journals have been added into journal database as retrospective conversion. 650 theses are included into Theses databases.

Presently library is getting almost 4000+ e-journals through "UGC Infonet: E-Journal Consortium". Some on line e-journals are also available on subscription basis. These E-Journals are access through IP address of Visva-Bharati.

### **5.1. Library Digitization**

Any digitization projects around the world have to follow some common activities or processes in relation to converting to information, collection or material to be digitized. These common and step by step activities or processes have been identified by Research Libraries Group (RLG): a) Material selection, b) Document preparation, c) Benchmarking, d) Metadata creation, e) Imaging, f) Text conversion (OCR, etc.), g) Encoding (SGML, XML, etc.), i) Post-processing (quality control), j) Project management, and k) System support.

The Visva-Bharati authority has taken drive for digitization of its treasures of documents along with library documents and for that following components have been incorporated as new branches/ units of the university: 1) Establishment of University Computer Centre, 2) Acceptance of the INFLIBNET Project, 3) Completion of Gitanjali net (University LAN), 4) Establishment of Multimedia Unit, 5) Internet Connection (through BSNL), 6) CD-Rom Publication, 8) E-commerce for Print publication, 9) Creation of University Website, 10) Completion of LAN, and 11) Budget provision.

### **5.2. Mega Digital Library project**

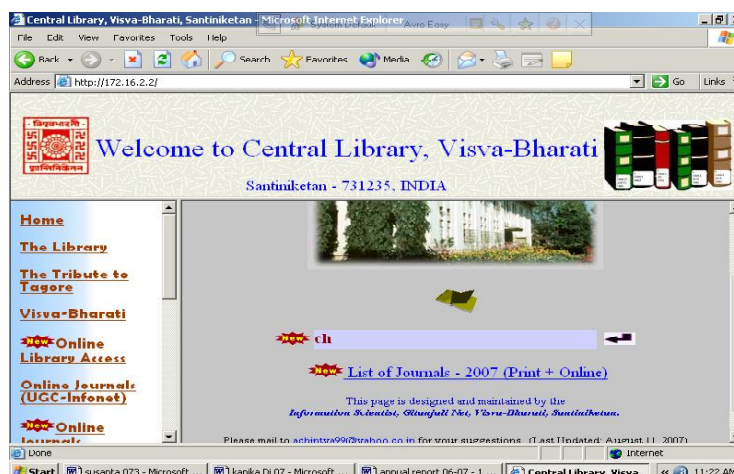
Visva-Bharati Library has been selected as a part of "Mega Digital Library Project of India". the MOU has been signed between CDAC and Visva-Bharati on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2005. The work of the above

project is going on which has started by the on June 16, 2005 and documents containing different languages are being scanned well. Metadata of those books/ documents have also been prepared. All these digitized materials are stored now locally and be given to Web for browsing. From 16<sup>th</sup> June 2005 to 30<sup>th</sup> November 2007 the total scanning work completed for 6325 books or 2588535 pages and up to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2007 we have received 102 DVD consisting of 5150+ books or 2050380+ pages from CDAC Kolkata.

### 5.3. Creation of Central Library Website

Central Library Website containing the following options:

Home page, The Library, The Tribute to Tagore, Visva-Bharati, Online Library Access, Online Journal (UGC Infonet), Online Journal (Subscribed), DELNET Membership, Free Journal (Online), Free E-Books (Online), open Archives, Administration, Announcements, Other Institutional Libraries, some important Links, Contacts. The address of the web site is 172.16.2.2:8080. The home page is as below;



## 6. E-services provided by the Visva-Bharati Library

Teachers, Staff, Library professionals, Scholars and Students are equipping and enriching their study and other day-to-day work by using Internet search in the following ways:

- ◆ Users can search any Website as per choice.
- ◆ BNB may be search for processing.
- ◆ OCLC search may done
- ◆ ISBN & Ulrich Periodical Directory may by search
- ◆ Publishers web site may be search
- ◆ Facilities for browsing E-Journals.
- ◆ Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC) by using Libsys Software.

- ◆ Solution of Reference Queries by browsing Internet.
- ◆ Use of Library Software (Libsys) for Library house keeping
- ◆ Registration of Borrowers by using library software (Libsys)
- ◆ Lending (Issue / Return) of Book by using Library software (Libsys) at Circulation Section
- ◆ Automated acquisition by using Library software (Libsys)

## **7. E-journals, UGC-Infonet and Status of Visva-Bharati Library**

Presently E-Journals have become the largest and fastest growing areas of the digital collections for most of our libraries. For instance, the E-Journals a few years ago numbered just few hundreds of titles, are now running in many thousands and the rate of growth is phenomenal as well as amazing. The advancements in digital technologies and the recent proliferation of E-Publishing across the world have brought in a revolution in journal publication, subscription, and access delivery mechanism. E-journals are the electronic equivalents of their print counter parts possessing numerous additional features. E-Journals often referred to interchangeably as "Electronic Serials", "Online Journals" and "Electronic Periodicals". Lancaster (1995) defines E-Journal as "a journal created for the electronic medium and available only in this medium". Electronic serials may be defined very broadly as any journal, magazine or newsletter which is available over the internet.

### **7.1. Salient Features**

E-journals are becoming increasingly in demand both as a means of rapid desktop access to current research materials and as a way to view past volumes. E-journals offer a range of potential advantages to libraries and end-users:

- ◆ Allows remote access
- ◆ Can be used simultaneously by more than one user
- ◆ Provide timely Access and at a 24 X 7 X 365 formula
- ◆ Supports different searching capabilities
- ◆ Accommodate unique features (e.g. Links to related items, reference linking)
- ◆ Save physical storage space
- ◆ Can support multimedia information

### **7.2. Consortia approach to E-Journal Subscriptions**

A library consortium is a collective activity of a group of libraries towards a common goal of sharing resources. With the availability of the state-of-the art information technology solutions and the web revolution, libraries are now better off in terms of easy access to more information through meaningful co-operation among themselves.

The consortium approach is a win-win situation for all its stakeholders – users, publishers, and libraries – all alike. Users are the ultimate end beneficiaries of such initiatives.

For libraries (involved in the consortia), consortia offer several benefits including the Following:

- ◆ Access to otherwise un-subscribed materials;
  - ◆ Scope for electronic archives;
  - ◆ Availability and monitoring of usage statistics;
  - ◆ Getting deep discounts through joint pricing negotiations – hence lower unit cost of information;
  - ◆ Reduced storage costs;
  - ◆ Developing common resources databases;
  - ◆ Effective document delivery systems;
  - ◆ A single interface and access point;
  - ◆ Enhanced search facilities;
- Better scope for developing a union catalogue among participating libraries, etc.

### 8. Available Subjects under UGC E-Consortium

As per the Science subject teaches at Siksha Bhavana, i.e. Visva-Bharati the following numbers of journal are available through the UGC-Infonet e-journals consortium;

S.No	Subjects	Number
1.	Biotechnology	15
2.	Botany	39
3.	Chemistry	167
4.	Computer Science	133
5.	Environmental Studies	93
6.	Mathematics	192
7.	Physics	178
8.	Statistics	36
9.	Zoology	16

### 9.1. Objectives

The objectives of the present study are to find out the attitudes of the science research scholars in using the E-Journals and library usage in the Visva-Bharati University, a Central University.

The main objectives of the study are:

- ◆ To assess the preference of E-journals by the science research scholars.
- ◆ To identify the scholars opinion regarding the E-resource collection in the library.
- ◆ To identify the Scholars opinion regarding the infrastructure of browsing e-journals.
- ◆ To identify the use of the UGC INFONET E-journal consortium by the Science Research Scholar.
- ◆ To identify the suggestion by the scholars regarding the betterment and development of the e-library services.

- ◆ To identify the users opinion relating to the e-journals subscription.
- ◆ To identify the users opinion regarding the necessity of E-awareness program.

## 9.2. Methodology

For conducting the users study I select the users of Science Scholars of Visva-Bharati University those are belongs to the Siksha-Bhavana (Institute of Science) out of the whole users community of Visva-Bharati. Again considering the whole Science scholars of Siksha-Bhvana as population I need to stratify it on the basis of seven departments and three centres, viz. Department of Chemistry, Mathematics, Physics, Zoology, Botany, Statistics and Computer & system Sciences and Centres for Biotechnology, Environmental Studies and Mathematics education. Among seven department and three centres, there are no scholars in the department of statistics and centres for Biotechnology at present.

At present there are an approximately 125-registered scholars at Siksha-Bhavana. I have distributed 100 questionnaires among the all scholars. Out of that 70 questionnaires are returned back among the scholars and the analysis of data has been made on the basis of the 70 questionnaires of 70 respondents.

## 10. Analysis and Interpretation of Data

We want to represent and analysis the data collected through the questionnaire. For presenting data we like to use table, bar diagram and pie chart to visualize the data at a glance. As well as this presentation help me to make the proper interpretation of the data. For this at first we like to tabulate the required data from the questionnaire including its interpretation and respective figure wherever and whenever necessary.

**Table 1: Nature of the respondents, subject wise**

<b>Subject</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>
Physics	13
Chemistry	16
Mathematics	06
Botany	09
Zoology	20
Environmental Studies	05
Computer Science	01
Total	70

From the table it is seen that out of 70 respondents 20 scholars are of Zoology, 16 scholars are of Chemistry, 13 scholars are of Physics. The scholar of other subject is below 10 (Mathematics is 06).



**Table 2: Sources of information about Current Literature**

Current Literature	No. of Respondents
Publisher's Alert Service	07
Library Website	05
Internet	61

From the table above it is seen that the most (61 out of 70) of the scholars are getting their current information from Internet, while the 7 out of 70 from Publisher alert service and a very few i.e. only 5 out of 70 scholar from Library website.

**Table 3: Use habit of E-Resource collection**

Response	Yes	No	Total
No. of Respondents	55	15	70

From the table above it is seen that that maximum (55 out of 70) scholars of the university are used the E-resource collection of Central Library. Only a few (15 out of 70) of them are not used the same.

**Table 4: E-Resource collection of CL**

	Outstanding	Good	Average	Inadequate	Out of topic
CL	-	06	08	12	01

From the table above it is seen that the Scholars are not so satisfied with the E-resource collection of the Central Library. 12 scholars out of 70 opined that the collection is 'inadequate' while 8 and 6 scholars opined that the collection is 'average' and 'good' respectively.

**Table 5: Duration of E-journal Browsing**

< 1hr	1 hr	2 hrs	3 hrs	More
07	23	16	09	15

From the above table it is seen that a large number (23 out of 70) scholars are using Inter Net 'one hour' at a time while 16 scholars are using Inter Net 'two hours' and 15 scholars are using Inter Net 'three hours'.

**Table 6: Infrastructure of browsing e-journals**

	Outstanding	Good	Average	Inadequate
Own Dept	09	12	27	22
SBL	-	12	20	40
CL	-	12	20	38
Comp. Centre	01	25	30	14

From the table above it is seen that the response regarding infrastructure of browsing internet is not so satisfactory in case of Central Library and Siksha Bhavana Library. The response for the same in case of respective department and computer center is moderate to some extent.

**Table 7: Copies of article which is not available in the library**

Interlibrary loan	Directly from other library	DELNET	Any other way
-	06	06	58

From the above table it is seen that most (58 out of 70) of the scholars are collecting their required articles relating to research work which is not locally available from any other ways while a few i.e. 6 each of them are collecting the same with the help of the DELNET service and directly from the other libraries respectively. To make the fact more clear the following pie chart may be taken in to consideration.

**Table 8: Use of UGC E-Consortium**

UGC Infonet E-Journal Consortium	No. of Respondents
Yes	26
No	44
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>

From the above table it is seen that most (44 out of 70) of the scholars are not using E-Journal, which is freely available from the UGC INFONET and some of them, are not familiar with the terminology.

**Table 9: Scholars opinion regarding Infrastructure and e-journals subscription**

Response for	Outstanding	Good	Average	Inadequate
Infrastructure of browsing E-journal	05	11	24	30
E-Journal subscription	—	09	15	46

From the table above it is seen that regarding the infrastructure of browsing e-journals the response is mixed which reflects the existing infrastructure is not so enough as per the requirement. Again, as there is no e-journals subscription provision in the university so, scholars opinion reflect the reality of the fact and at the same time they opined that they prefers to have more e-journal collection in their individual subjects. With the help of the following diagram the fact may be represent

## 11. Findings

1. Library website is not so popular to the scholars. Most of them prefer to go through Internet searching for their current information.
2. The usage rate of the Visva-Bharati library is moderate in all respect while the usage rate of other than Visva-Bharati library is truly least.
3. The usage rate of Central Library is comparatively less than the Seminar Library and Siksha Bhavana Library.

4. The collection development of the visva-bharati library as a whole is not so up to the mark or related with the modern development of the concerned subject area.
5. Most of the scholars are not familiar with the OPAC searching for the search of the available resource of the library.
6. Most of the scholars are using the available E-resource of the library.
7. Scholar's opinion regarding e-resource collection is not so positive in case of central library as well as visva-bharati library in general.
8. Library does not subscribe any e-journals rather it only stored the free and accompanied e-journals for disseminating to the users.
9. At a stretch Internet use habit of the scholars is moderate with respect to times.
10. Regarding the infrastructure of browsing Internet in the central library is truly inadequate rather say there is no separate unit for the users so that they can browse Internet as per their requirement.
11. The document delivery service as offered by DELNET through Visva-Bharati is not so popular to the scholars.
12. Most of the scholars are unfamiliar with the accessibility of free e-journal of UGC INFONET.

## **12. Suggestions**

There are number of problems of any library in its proper operation. There is no exception for using the e-journals facilities among the research scholars in this university library. It is true that no one can satisfy whole population at a time. Again it is also true that if any one has mental and physical preparation to satisfy other, then he/she get success. In conducting this work we come to introduce ourselves some practical problems and opinion from the science research scholars of the university. On the basis of their opinion and also from our practical observation we like to furnish here some suggestions.

1. For the betterment of their research work it is very much essential to take necessary encouraging initiatives so that they can able to use / open an E-mail ID.
2. Proper measurement is taken to enhance the usage of Library website.
3. In course of E-resource selection the scholar's requirement and opinion should be taken in to consideration on priority basis.
4. Enough provision of fund for the development & maintenance and sound policy be adopt by the authority for the creation of separate Internet Browsing unit for the researcher and users in general.
5. The research scholars should prefer more electronic journals for getting latest information.
6. The research scholars try to avoid printed version of books because they may out dated.
7. The university library authority should conduct an orientation / Training programme to research scholars how to search information under UGC-Infonet.
8. The research scholars should refer electronic journals which were published by Academic press, Kluver, Springer, etc.

9. There is need to evaluate the UGC-Infonet Consortium and include more number of journals in the consortium.
10. Increased availability of computer systems may increase the use of Electronic journals.
11. An adequate number of research scholars suggested that necessary arrangements should be made to access the full text of more electronic journals.
12. Month-wise usage reports for e-journals could be measured using log on file system by the Central library besides requesting the publishers related to support future electronic journals building.
13. Information professionals have to create more awareness functions to market their new e-journal services being provided in the library.
14. Meeting with thought leaders, influential persons in other departments and engaging them to spread the awareness about the e-journals services may be considered.
15. Need of more trained and skilled staff, which are well aware of the functioning of both software and hardware, which can help the users in areas like accessing, downloading, and printing of e-journals.
16. Without delayed E-journals is to be subscribe covering all the subjects of Siksha Bhavana and proper action is to be taken for fund provision.
17. E-awareness program as well as E-demo program is to be conduct periodically.

As it is the institution that propounded by Gurudev Rabindra Nath Tagore, proper action is always taken so that the services of this library will be exceptional instances to the nation to follow for their individual library activities.

### **13. Conclusion**

In the changing information environment, e-journals are claiming its importance in the research activities. To make the best use of the resources of the UGC Infonet E-Journal Consortium it is necessary to upgrade the bandwidth of the universities. In XIth plan, INFLIBNET has made ambitious proposal to UGC to extent this service entire academic community including colleges. UGC Infonet Consortium is much helpful in fulfilling Scholar's Information needs. Majority of the research scholars are interested to get various training programme related to access and use of e-journals for their research. The use of e-journal can be improved by providing proper training programmes to the researchers in science discipline. There is need to improved Internet facilities. The study also brings out some major suggestions for improving the use of e-journals. This study will help the information professionals in developing e-journal services to their users.

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