

# Role of INFLIBNET and DELNET in Strengthening the Availability of Reading Resources for Libraries : A Comparative Study

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## Abstract

*In the present paper a comparative study of INFLIBNET and DELNET significant activities and services have been made. A new parameter on the basis of published conference papers in CALIBER and NACLIN has been devised for making the assessment of the services and activities organized by INFLIBNET and DELNET. Assessment has also been made on the effectiveness of these organizations contributing in making available the reading resources to their member libraries. Further suggestions have been given for improvement of services.*

**Keywords:** INFLIBNET, DELNET, UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium, E-journals, NACLIN, CALIBER

## 1. Genesis of Networks in INDIA

The literature deluge and paucity of funds in libraries worldwide gave birth to the concept of library cooperation for promoting the exchange of their resources for mutual benefit of libraries. This concept further developed and new dimensions were added with the invention of new technology, specially computer technology, which paved the way for computer networks. With the result computer networks started to develop in India. If we look back into the history it is found that the first efforts in this direction was made in Calcutta and CALIBNET (Calcutta Libraries Network) was developed. Later on DELNET in Delhi and BONET in Bombay came into being. In 1991 INFLIBNET was established which has flourished continuously but during last five years it has made multi-dimensional development as far as its programmes and services are concerned. It has opened new vistas for academic libraries specially libraries of higher educational institutions. With the passage of time other networks in India

could not much develop and at present the INFLIBNET and DELNET are two leading networks in India.

## 2. Scope of Present Study

In the present study only two networks of India have been included :

### 2.1 INFLIBNET and DELNET

Eric J Hunter and K G B Bakewell<sup>1</sup> described the purpose of networks as 'a group of libraries and/or information service points connected together for the purpose of satisfying specified requirements', these two networks are organizing their activities and services in this direction and connecting to the libraries to meet out their requirements. In present study the key services and activities of INFLIBNET and DELNET have been identified which are related with the activities of making availability of all type of reading resources to the member libraries and their users.

2.1.1 Database creation, development and its online accessibility to the member libraries;



- 2.1.2 Software development and technical support for member libraries;
- 2.1.3 Human resource development for member libraries;
- 2.1.4 Mode of delivery of documents;
- 2.1.5 Availability of current reading resources such as books and journals through consortia

### 3. Data Source and Methodology

Data has been collected from published print documents and from the relevant websites of these two networks.

For assessment of effectiveness of services and use by member libraries and users of these networks, new parameter and indicator have been evolved on the basis of relevant papers published in last five conference proceedings of CALIBER OF INFLIBNET and NACLIN of DELNET. The paper have been sorted and analyzed in appendix 1 (INFLIBNET CALIBER)<sup>2</sup> and appendix 2 (DELNET NACLIN)<sup>3</sup>.

These papers are indicators about the services as these reflect the opinion of users and member libraries and also it can be asessed as what users feel about the services and activities and what are their experiences and acceptations. Thus the collective opinion formed on the basis of studies made in these relevant papers can serve as an indicator and parameter for assessment of services and activities of DELNET and INFLIBNET.

### 4. Organization of INFLIBNET and its Activities and Services

A dream project of University Grants Commission of India and the then UGC Chairman Prof. Yashpal

INFLIBNET (Information and Library Network) was initiated in 1991. Primarily the INFLIBNET was established with the object to act as computer communication network of libraries and information centres of universities and other research and development institutions of national repute. The basic object of INFLIBNET was to facilitate the enhancing capabilities regarding information handling and resource sharing among the libraries of institutions of higher education, specially university libraries in India. Before the establishment of INFLIBNET the university libraries were lagging behind in library automation activities. INFLIBNET took the challenge for this difficult task and paved the way for promotion of automation activities in university libraries. Presently INFLIBNET is located at Ahmedabad. In 1996 INFLIBNET got status of independent autonomous Inter University Centre under UGC and after that its activities were accelerated and efforts in the area of automation activities of university libraries were multidimensional.

### 5. Present Significant Services And Activities Of INFLIBNET in Brief

#### 5.1 Databases of INFLIBNET<sup>4</sup>

- i. Books: It is bibliographical database of holdings of member libraries at present number of records are : 1, 28, 36, 579 (As on 20-7-14)
- ii Thesis: 2, 65, 799 records of doctoral thesis submitted to universities
- iii Serials : 33184 Currently subscribed journals by the universities

#### 5.2 Software Development

INFLIBNET has developed SOUL (Software for University Libraries). It is available for member libraries

for use on price fixed by the INFLIBNET. Many university and college libraries are using this software. Technical support is provided to libraries for software and data base creation. Moreover library staff are trained in using SOUL.

### **5.3 Human Resource Development for Member Libraries**

INFLIBNET organizes training programmes regularly for library staff. The unique feature of INFLIBNET training programmes is that these programmes are designed on different aspects of automation techniques and software including ICT techniques. Every year a series of such training programmes are organized for library professionals and information that is displayed on the website of INFLIBNET. Letters are also circulated to member libraries.

### **5.4 Mode of Delivery of Document on Inter Library Loan among the Libraries**

INFLIBNET has created IndCat for Books and Theses available in member libraries. The document can be searched online and directly requested to the library where it is available. The responsibility of delivering the document is given to library holding the document.

### **5.5 Availability of Current Reading Resources Such as Journals And Books Full Text**

INFLIBNET has a programme named as UGC-INFONET DIGITAL LIBRARY CONSORTIUM. Under this programme the member university libraries have been provided online access of full text e-journals and databases of various foreign publishers. The contents of previous years / back volumes are also available for online access. In 2014 online access of about 10,000 journals and databases has been made available to the member libraries.

### **5.5.1 JCCC/J-GATE SERVICE**

INFLIBNET is using this service for facilitating document delivery service from a comprehensive collection of subscribed journals of member libraries. This service is popularly known as UGC - INFONET J-Gate Custom Content for Consortium. The users of member libraries can directly request for document from other member libraries of INFLIBNET and the concerned library delivers the document to library from where user has requested for document.

## **6. Other Significant Services of INFLIBNET**

### **6.1 N-LIST Programme for College Libraries**

Online access of selected e-journals and e-books is provided to college libraries. Earlier the online access was provided through INFLIBNET portal but from 2014 the member college libraries can directly access the e-journals and e-books through website of concerned publishers.

### **6.2 OJAS (Open Journal Access System)**

It is an open source software solution developed by PKP (Public Knowledge Project) which facilitates to provide online access of journals published by departments and organization.

### **6.3 SHODHGANGA**

Full text data of thesis are made available.

### **6.4 SHODHGANGOTRI**

The synopses approved for research in universities are provided for online access. All these services of INFLIBNET are facilitating the availability of resources for libraries and the users of the library.

## 7. Organization of DELNET and its Services

DELNET was started in January 1988 at the India International Centre Library and later on it is registered as a society in 1992. In the beginning of its establishment DELNET (DELHI LIBRARY NETWORK) was confined only to libraries of DELHI. But in 2000 it has changed its name and now it is known as DEVELOPING LIBRARY NETWORK. It has its member libraries in India as well as in some foreign countries.

Presently DELNET is actively engaged in creation and development of various Union Catalogues. The services of DELNET are online and are accessible through the World Wide Web to its member libraries. It is organizing its services and activities for member libraries.

## 8 Present Services And Activities of DELNET In Brief

### 8.1 Online Databases Of DELNET<sup>5</sup>

Books:	1,81,51,784 ( As on 20-7-2014 )
Serials Holding	202 35
Current Serials	36940
CDROM Databases	22234
Database of periodical articles	9,22,042
Thesis and Dissertation	70,293

### 8.2 Software Development

DEL-PLUS software has been developed and it is provided to the member libraries. However it is not much useful for big libraries. Only small and medium size libraries can make use of this software.

### 8.3 Human Resource Development for Member Libraries

It provides training for member library staff. Generally

the training is arranged at New Delhi at DELNET campus. However regional training / orientation programmes workshops are also arranged in different cities.

### 8.4 Mode of Delivery of Document on Inter Library

Documents are delivered by DELNET. Besides photo copy and postal charges are charged from the libraries that made request for the document.

### 8.5 Availability of Current Reading Resources Such as Journals And Books Full Text<sup>6</sup>

DELNET has started to provide online access of some selected e-books. Online access to few e-journals on consortia basis has also been started for member libraries. It covers very few subjects such medical science, engineering and management.

Thus on the basis of above information it may be said that both INFLIBNET and DELNET are organizing their services for their member libraries. However to get better results and conclusion a sort of parameter and indicator as described in foregoing para 3 has been evolved and the papers relating to activities and services of INFLIBNET and DELNET published in Conference Volumes of INFLIBNET (CALIBER) and DELNET (NACLIN) of last five conferences / conventions have been analyzed .The number of papers presented by various authors and issues involved have been considered to make the assessment of services and activities. Appendix-1 (Shows INFLIBNET related papers) Appendix 2 (Shows DELNET related papers). The analysis of relevant papers is shown in table below.

Table below shows comparative information about the papers relating to INFLIBNET and DELNET ser-

vices, activities appeared in CALIBER Conference volumes of INFLIBNET and NACLIN Conference volumes of DELNET for the last five conferences / conventions.

**Table: Showing the comparative information about the relevant papers**

INFLIBNET CALIBER	No. of Relevant Papers Published	DELNET NACLIN	No. of relevant papers published
2013	2	2013	1
2011	5	2012	1
2009	6	2011	3
2008	15	2010	1
2007	5	2009	1

### 9. Comparative Analysis

After analysis of data as shown in table<sup>7</sup> it is found that library and users are much aware about the INFLIBNET services and activities specially the E-resources and E- journals provided by the UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium.

Analysis of papers related to the service aspect and activities of INFLIBNET, it is found that library users are making effective use of E-journals and depend upon the infrastructure and online data access facilities, such as availability of computers etc. in the concerned libraries. At some places difficulty of network connectivity and speed has been pointed out. In short the use can be described as depending upon the facilities available for library users in concerned libraries.

It has also been found that users need the services of UGC-Infonet Digital library consortium. However, users feel necessity of some more user orientation programmes and better facilities.

It has also been revealed that the E-journal Consortium has been helpful in saving the budget amount which libraries earlier were spending on subscription of foreign journals.

Some efforts may be made by libraries and INFLIBNET so that other services of INFLIBNET may be utilized by libraries and their users effectively.

The copy cataloguing service started by INFLIBNET is also significant and it may save time and money of the libraries if implemented seriously.

Use of online databases especially of books and thesis requires some more efforts for effective use by the users of member libraries. Use of e-journals is encouraging in libraries.

The representation of papers in DELNET NACLIN, conferences shows that the services of DELNET have not been reviewed by the authors or library staff of member libraries as papers reviewing DELNET services is not available in good number. The papers are open source which represent the views of library staff and their users. It can help in assessment of services and activities of organization.

Regarding software development INFLIBNET has developed its own software SOUL and many libraries are making use of SOUL software in India.

DELNET has also developed DEL-Plus software which is useful for small and medium size libraries.

For document delivery DELNET is charging photocopy charges and postal charges while in case of INFLIBNET postal charges of document delivery service are borne by libraries.

As far as availability of current journal articles is concerned INFLIBNET is providing it through J-Gate and large number of articles are available for access to member libraries while this scope is limited in DELNET however, DELNET has the database of articles.

### Suggestions and Conclusion

After analysing the available information and data it is found that the services and activities of INFLIBNET are much popular in comparison to DELNET.

However, the INFLIBNET has the membership of libraries of higher educational institutions while DELNET has all types of libraries as its members including university libraries, college libraries, public libraries, school libraries, private organizations etc.

Both INFLIBNET and DELNET are doing the efforts individually. However, it is suggested that some of their activities may be coordinated. INFLIBNET has developed IndCat service and has the bibliographical data of books, thesis, for online access. The serial database of INFLIBNET is also available for online access for the member libraries. Similar efforts are being made by DELNET; it may also be noted that some of the member libraries of INFLIBNET and DELNET are common. Such activities may be coordinated jointly by DELNET and INFLIBNET.

DELNET had also started consortia base subscription to e-journals while INFLIBNET is already providing this service to its member libraries. This activity may be jointly organized in India for the libraries and INFLIBNET may coordinate this activity as it has already developed UGC-Infonet digital library consortium.

It is also suggested that in the light of efforts of INFLIBNET and DELNET for document delivery services for making availability of reading resources, libraries should review their book acquisition and subscription policy of journals to save money of libraries.

It is also suggested that Dormitory Centres at regional and local level may be created so that one copy of book or document is available for reading or use by the users at local and regional level.

DELNET may help in promoting the SOUL (Software for University Libraries) developed by INFLIBNET.

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