
Assessing the use of UGC-INFONET E-Resources at Mahatma Gandhi University (MGU), Kerala: A Case Study

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Abstract

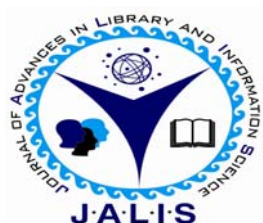
The present study explains the usage analysis of UGC-INFONET consortium by the users of the Mahatma Gandhi University library. A total number of 180 questionnaires were distributed to the users and 168 questionnaires were received back for analysing the data. The results have indicated that almost all users were accessing the e-journals and databases through UGC INFONET Consortia. 48.80% respondents were satisfied with the e-journals whereas 35.71% were satisfied with the bibliographical databases accessible through the consortia.

Keywords

UGC-INFONET, e-journals, bibliographical databases, Mahatma Gandhi University.

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INTRODUCTION

E-resources play a vital role in the process of information storage and retrieval. The environment of the library has been renovated in the emergence of e-journals and databases. The concept of consortia provides a wide access of e-resources in the higher education system especially in universities. The accessibility of a wide array of information resources is enabled with a mouse click on the desktop. The role of UGC INFONET has redefined the processing speed of information retrieval very effectively and efficiently to the learning, research and education environment of the universities.

Mahatma Gandhi University

Mahatma Gandhi University was established on 2nd October 1983 at Athirampuzha in Kottayam District. The university imparts teaching, education and research in the interdisciplinary areas of pure and applied sciences, social sciences and humanities. It offers professional disciplines of Legal studies, Technology, Pharmacy, Pedagogy, Engineering and Nursing¹.

Mahatma Gandhi University Library

The Mahatma Gandhi University Library was established in 1989 and is situated on the main campus of the University. The university has more than 30 libraries of the departments and 4 study centers in different campuses². The university library has 50,000 books, 350 journals, 1166 theses, 324 CD ROM databases³. The library subscribes to 651 online journals from Sage publication, back volumes of 41 journals from Wiley Blackwell and 81 online journals from different publishers in interdisciplinary subjects⁴. The library has access to 28 e-resources through UGC-INFONET Consortia. The details of the e-resources accessed in library are mentioned below:

Databases and online journals subscribed by M G University Library⁵

1. Current Contents - Reference Edition
Physical, Chemical and Earth Sciences
Engineering, Computing and Technology
Agriculture, Biology and Environmental Sciences
Social and Behavioral Science
2. Indian Science Abstract : 1990-1999
3. NUCSSI (National Union Catalogue of Scientific Serials in India) : 1996

4. PSYC Info : 1872-2002
5. Wilsons Social Science Abstract : 1983-2001
6. ERIC : 1982-1999
7. INSPEC : 1989-2002
8. LISA (Library and Information Science Abstract) : 1969-2003
9. Ulrich's International Periodicals Directory
10. Britannica 2003 Ultimate
11. Oxford English Dictionary
12. Proquest Database
13. EBSCO (Academic Search Premier)
14. [Sage Online Publications](#) (651 journals)
15. [Wiley Blackwell Publishers \(Back Issues of 41 Journals\)](#)
16. online access of 81 journals in other subjects

UGC INFONET Consortium

The UGC-INFONET Digital Library Consortium was launched in December 2003 by the Honourable President of India, Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam. The Consortium provides access of 10 bibliographic databases and more than 7500 peer-reviewed journals in different disciplines from 26 publishers and aggregators⁶. Table 1 shows the list of databases available in the M G University Library through UGC-INFONET Consortium⁷.

Table 1: List of databases available through UGC-INFONET Consortium

Sl. No	Full Text E- Resources
1.	AIP Archive
2.	American Chemical Society
3.	American Institute of Physics
4.	American Physical Society
5.	Annual Reviews
6.	Cambridge University Press
7.	Economic & Political Weekly
8.	Institute of Physics
9.	JSTOR
10.	Nature
11.	Nature Archive (1987-1996)
12.	OUP Archive
13.	Oxford University Press
14.	Portland Press
15.	Project Euclid
16.	Project Muse
17.	Royal Society of Chemistry
18.	ScienceDirect (10 Subject Collection)
19.	SIAM
20.	SIAM Locus (Archive)
21.	Springer Link

22.	Taylor & Francis
23.	Wiley-Blackwell
	Bibliographic Databases
24.	ISID
25.	JCCC
26.	MathSciNet
27.	SciFinder Scholar
28.	Web of Science

Review of Literature

Veenapani, Khomdon Singh and Rebika Devi (2008)⁸ studied the usages of the UGC-INFONET Consortium by the teachers and Research Scholars of Manipur University. Electronic information resources are highly useful for the research and academic community. The study reveals that 55 percent of the respondents have got awareness about the UGC-INFONET programme. The majority of the respondents revealed that the need of regular training programme to make effective use of the programme. The majority of the users expected more e-journals should be included in the UGC-INFONET. Top of Top of Form Vishala and Bhandi (2008)⁹ conducted study among the librarians of universities of Karnataka regarding the impact of using e-journals offered through the UGC-INFONET e-journals consortium project. The study revealed the academicians high acceptance of e-journals. All the librarians opined that e-journals enhanced the image of the library services, user satisfaction, meeting users' demands. The research demonstrates that all librarians are fully acquainted with the e-journal benefits and agree that electronic journals will continue to have an impact on the library and information services and library staff.

Patil and Parameshwar (2009)¹⁰ discuss the use of electronic resources by the research scholars and faculty members in Gulbarga university, revealed that the UGC INFONET fulfill the information needs of the users. It is essential to be included more journals in the consortium and to be conducted training to the faculty members and research scholars in using the electronic resources. 75.67 percent have requested electronic document supply service. The majority of the users are satisfied with UGC-INFONET Consortium and demanded better internet facility in the library. Walmiki, Ramakrishnegowda and Prithviraj (2010)¹¹ surveyed that less than 40 percent of the faculty members of Karnataka state universities are aware of and use the Digital Library Consortium resources. Majority of the non-users

were in social sciences and humanities department. The faculty in science uses the consortium than the social sciences and humanities. Lack of knowledge to use, insufficient internet nodes, slow bandwidth and lack of relevant information sources are found to be the major problems faced. About 37 percent of the faculty members were aware of and participated in user education programmes conducted by their university libraries. User education programmes conducted by the university libraries are found inadequate and not focused. Manoj Kumar Sinha, GauriSingha and BimalSinha (2011)¹² discussed the usage of UGC- INFONET electronic resources among the research scholars and teachers in the Assam University Library. 70% of the respondents are aware of availability of e-resources under UGC-INFONET Digital Library Consortium. Electronic resources are used for study purpose which are followed by the respondents who are using electronic resources for publishing journals (25.00 %), Research and Development (15%) and Project works (11.00 %). E-consortium (68.02 %) is highly useful for study purpose and research activities. Sohail and Ahmad (2011)¹³ on use of e-resources and UGC INFONET consortium by the teachers and research scholars in Aligarh Muslim University. It was revealed that the acceptance of electronic journals by the university academicians. 78.33% of the respondents need training programme to access the e-resources through UGC-INFONET Consortium. 100% of the respondents requested more e-journals to be included in the UGC-INFONET. The major problems are not aware of UGC-INFONET, Lack of ICT, Frequent power failure, slow internet speed and selection of desired title of journals

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To identify the awareness and use of the UGC-INFONET Consortium .
- To know the sources of information about the consortium.
- To find out the purpose of using the consortium.
- To find out the satisfaction level of the consortium.
- To identify the problems faced by the users.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

The scope of the study is limited only to the e-resources available through the UGC-INFONET consortium at Mahatma Gandhi University Library.

The usage of the other subscribed e-journals and databases have not been covered in this study

METHODOLOGY

The study used questionnaire based survey method for data collection. The population of the study consisted of faculty members, PG, M Phil, and Ph.D students of the Mahatma Gandhi University campus. The number of questionnaires distributed was 180 out of which 168 responded and considered for analysis. The collected data were analyzed and calculated with the simple percentage method.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The collected data is analyzed, tabulated and presented as follows.

Table 1: Awareness and use of UGC INFONET

Awareness and use	No. of Response	Percentage
Aware and use	168	100
Aware but not use	-	-

Users were asked whether they have the awareness and use of UGC INFONET Consortium or not. Table-1 shows that all the respondents were aware and use of UGC INFONET e-resources.

Table 2: Sources of information about the UGC INFONET

Sources	No. of Response	Percentage
Faculty	54	32.14
Library website	46	27.38
Library Professionals	36	21.42
Friends	26	15.47
Others	6	3.57

Table-2 depicts that 32.14 % said they know the UGC INFONET Consortium by faculty members followed by 27.38% users know the same in the library website, 21.42% users know the same through library professionals. 15.47% users learned about the consortium from the friends and the other i.e. 3.57% know the consortium through online search, seminars and workshops.

Table 3: Frequency of using UGC INFONET

Frequency of use	No. of Response	Percentage
As and when required	118	70.23
Several times a week	50	29.76
Daily	-	-

Table-3 reveals that most of the users use the UGC INFONET Consortium as and when required basis 70.23%, followed by 29.76% users use it several times a week. It is interesting that nobody uses the consortia daily.

Table 4: Purpose of using the consortium

Purpose	No. of Response	Percentage
Research	127	75.59
Assignments and seminars	56	33.33
Keep up to date in the subject area	48	28.57
Publishing Articles	32	19.04
Teaching	17	10.11

(Multiple responses were permitted)

Maximum users were using the UGC INFONET e-journals for their research work (75.59%) shows in Table-4. 33.33% were using the same for assignments and seminars, 28.57% use for updating their knowledge in the subject area, 19.04% use it for publishing the articles, only 10.11% users use the same for teaching.

Table 5: Preferred search method to the access of e-journals

Search method preference	No. of Response	Percentage
Keyword	75	44.64
Title	48	28.57
Subject	35	20.83
Author	6	3.57
Publisher	4	2.38

Table-5 shows the search method preference to access of e-journals in the consortia. It is found that 44.64% users were browsing journals by Keyword to access articles. 28.57% use to browse journals by title, 20.83% were using subject for searching articles, 3.57% were using author to access articles and only a few users browse journals by publisher.

Table 6: Preference of full text e-resources

E-resources	No. of Response	Percentage
JSTOR	76	45.23
Science Direct	69	41.07
Springer Link	45	26.78
Cambridge University press	43	25.59
Wiley Blackwell	19	11.30
Taylor and Francis	16	9.52
Economic & Political Weekly	16	9.52
Oxford University Press	15	8.92
American Physical Society	12	7.14
Nature	11	6.54
American Chemical Society	9	5.35
Royal Society of Chemistry	8	4.76
Annual Reviews	6	3.57

(Multiple responses were permitted)

Table-6 shows the preference of publisher wise access of full text e-resources. 45.23% respondents revealed that the most preferred full text e-resources are JSTOR, followed by 41.07% use Science Direct, 26.78% preferred Springer Link, 25.59% makes use of Cambridge University press, 11.30% preferred Wiley Blackwell, 9.52% makes use of Taylor and Francis and Economic & Political Weekly, 8.92% preferred Oxford University Press, 7.14% preferred American Physical Society 6.54% preferred Nature whereas 5.35% of them responded as they were preferred American Chemical Society, 4.76% use the Royal Society of Chemistry and only 3.57% use Annual Reviews

Table 7: Preference of bibliographical databases

Bibliographical databases	No. of Response	Percentage
JCCC	46	27.38
Web of Science	42	25
ISID	38	22.61
SciFinder Scholar	31	18.45
MathSciNet	11	6.54

The preferred bibliographical databases of UGC INFONET show in Table-7, reveal that 27.38% use of JCCC, followed by 25% preferred Web of Science, 22.61% make use of ISID, 18.45%

preferred SciFinder Scholar and only 6.54% respondents use MatSciNet database.

Table 8: Satisfaction level of resources

Satisfaction	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Moderately satisfied	Not satisfied
E-journals	66 (39.28%)	82 (48.80%)	20 (11.90%)	-
Bibliographical Databases	14 (8.33%)	60 (35.71%)	53 (31.54%)	41 (24.40%)

The results from table 8 reveal that the majority of the respondents 82 (48.80%) are satisfied with the e-journals accessible in UGC INFONET consortium, 66 (39.28%) respondents are very satisfied with the e-journals and only 20 (11.90%) are moderately satisfied with the e-journals. While in the case of bibliographical databases 60 (35.71%) are satisfied with the same, followed by 53 (31.54%) are moderately satisfied, only 14 (8.33%) are very satisfied and 41 (24.40%) are not satisfied with the databases.

Table 9: Problems faced while accessing consortium

Problems	No. of Response	Percentage
Difficulty in accessing to full text	98	58.33
Lack of accessibility in hostel	53	31.54
Lack of foreign and Indian journals	50	29.76
Slow internet speed	46	27.38
Unfamiliar with search methods	45	26.78
Lack of accessibility in Department	41	24.40
Lack of relevant information	39	23.21
Lack of support from the library staff	13	7.73

(Multiple responses were permitted)

Table-9 depicts the problems faced by users while accessing UGC INFONET Consortium e-resources. Majority of the users (58.33%) reported difficulty in accessing to full text, followed by lack of accessibility in hostel (31.54%), lack of foreign and Indian journals (29.76%), slow internet speed (27.38%) and unfamiliar with search methods (26.78%). A total of users marked lack of accessibility in the department (24.40%) and lack of relevant information (23.21%). While (7.73%) users noted the lack of support from the library staff..

FINDINGS

The significant findings of the study are given below:

- All of the respondents were aware and use of the UGC INFONET Consortium.
- 54 (32.14%) respondents came to know about the consortium through faculty.
- 127(75.59%)of the respondents used the consortium for their research work
- followed by 56 (33.33%) for assignments and seminars.
- 75 (44.64%) respondents stated that they were browsing the e-resources by Keyword followed by 48 (28.57%)use to browse journals by title for accessing the consortium of e-resources.
- 76 (45.23%) respondents revealed that the most preferred full text e-resource is JSTOR and46 (27.38%) used JCCC is the preferred bibliographical databases of UGC INFONET.
- 82 (48.80%) respondents were satisfied with the e-journals and 60 (35.71%) were satisfied in the bibliographical databases accessible through UGC INFONET consortium.
- The most common problem faced by the respondents was the difficulty in accessing full text 98 (58.33%), followed by lack of accessibility in hostel 53 (31.54%) and 50 (29.76%) reportedto the lack of foreign and Indian journals.

CONCLUSION

UGC INFONET have rapidly renovated the way of information retrieval in the academic and research activities of the universities. UGC INFONET is much helpful in fulfilling the information requirements. As can be inferred from the study that all users are aware and use of the consortium for research works, seminars and assignments. There is a need to evaluate the UGC INFONET periodically and include more journals and solve the problem of difficulty in accessing full text articles. To provide the accessibility of the resources in departments and hostel high speed internet connectivity will help in better accessing and downloading of the e-resources.

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