

ELECTRONIC JOURNALS ACCESSING THROUGH UGC-INFONET CONSORTIUM BY THE FACULTY MEMBERS AND RESEARCH SCHOLARS IN ALAGAPPA UNIVERSITY, INDIA

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ABSTRACT

This paper has been examined the faculty members and research scholars visit the library for accessing e-journals from UGC-Infonet consortium. It has been analyzed the information usage pattern and needs of the respective users a survey was conducted among faculty and research scholars in Alagappa University. The population included in the study comprised one hundred twenty respondents from Arts, Science, Management and Education departments and of that, faculty is forty five and fifty eight are research scholars. This study reveals that most of faculty members are access to e-journals at weekly 24 (44%). The faculty member and research scholars aware about UGC@Infonet accounted 103 (85.99%) and 17 (14.16) respondents are not aware this programme. The study observed that the faculty members who responded to the study, 70 (59.1%) learned through guidance from their teachers/guide 28 (56%). It is provide the highest proportion of faculty members 21 (42%) use their department for accessing the information, while research scholars 28 (40%) they were accessing their e-journals in their department itself.

Keywords: UGC-Infonet; Electronic Journals; Consortium; University Community; Research Scholars.

1 INTRODUCTION

The concept of e-journals has emerged from 1980's onward which were initially made available in CD-ROM formats and then advent of World Wide Web (WWW) and Internet has accelerated the publication of electronic version of print journals, whose number has been increasing by leaps and down. According to the statistics published in the Seventh edition of the Directory of Electronic Journals, Newsletter and Academic Discussion Lists in 1997, 1.049 e-journals were enlisted

which rose to 3.915 in its 2000 edition. Now the numbers would might have crossed 10.000 plus. Due to convenient in access, cost effective in publication and distribution, most of the publishers have started publishing e-version of their print journals.

A publication whose primary means of delivery to subscribers is through a computer file. Today, most often this means being published on the web but it also could mean being published on CDROM or DVD or as text file distributed by e-mail. Any serial produced, published and distributed via e-networks such as BITNET and Internet.

E-Journals may be defined very broadly as any journals, magazines, e-zine, newsletter or type of serial publication, which is available over the internet. The term 'consortium' literally means "[...] temporary cooperation of several powers or large interests to affect some common purpose" (THE CONCISE..., 1966).

A library consortium is "[...] a community (a cooperative) of two or more information agencies which have formally agreed to coordinate, cooperate in, or consolidate certain functions to achieve mutual objectives" (NARASIMHA, 2002). It is "[...] a group of libraries that agree to pool their resources by allowing the users of each institution some type of access to the resources of all other institutions, either through inter-library loan or borrowing privileges" (MURTY, 2002). "The value creation could be enhanced through resource sharing processes, products and service offerings of the participating library units in a consortium" (JAYAPRAKASH, 2006). As indicated, the idea of consortium is not new. There were instances of several libraries coming together voluntarily for the mutual benefit of the respective users just like cooperatives. It was the earliest stage of library cooperation. In the second stage computerized networks came into vogue for sharing of resources.

The UGC-Infonet consortium is providing large array of e-resources related to various disciplines and is very much successful in meeting the information is emerging sources of the faculty and research scholars of the country. The source extent to use the literature available reveals that lot of studies with different aspects had have been carried out by students, research scholars, faculty members and

academicians to prove the necessity and significance of the UGC-Infonet of consortium for the academic development in Higher education.

Generally, electronic journals were used heavily and the availability of electronic formats greatly enhances the total use of most titles. However, some electronic journals were used little or not at all, and there was a substantial increase in the use of some print titles (SEINBENBERG, 2004).

This study indicates significantly high acceptance of electronic journals by graduate students. There was strong acceptance, high expectation and enthusiasm for future electronic journals, although certain reservations remained (LIEW, 2000). "Survey was done at the Maryland University College to examine trends in distant students' use of library resources, services, usage patterns, needs and preferences. The results show that part time student's usage pattern has changed and they favor the use of electronic resources like internet" (KELLY, 2003). "The low-level technical problems are still faced by the Users in using electronic journals and they prefer not to read at length on screen" (WOODWARD, 1998).

E-Journal, printed journal, and database usage. Result showed increased use of e-journals and decreased use of printed journals by faculty and graduate students as the number of available e-journals increased from two hundred to more than three thousand. Little or no statistical correlation between age and frequency of use was found. The majority of frequent users of all three types of resources hailed from departments in the sciences. Transcripts from the 1998 poll provided insights into attitudes toward replacing printed journals with e-journals. The advantages and disadvantages mentioned were consistent with previous studies (ROGERS, 2001).

The journals use in three scientific disciplines, the previous study found that print use increased after electronic access was added and used the same methods to determine if the increase in the use of the paper has continued and in fact a cultural shift happened between the two studies. Although the use of paper journals increased with the advent of e-journals, a shift in use patterns occurred with patrons now favoring electronic formats. There are disciplinary differences in the use of paper and electronic formats. The most journal titles showing increases in print use also were available in electronic format. An extensive survey of the senior academic staff of the Israeli universities on their use of electronic journals and databases. The major findings were that the use of electronic sources is already widespread among the

respondents and more than 50 percent found the electronic services indispensable. Disparities were, however, found between the usage patterns in the different disciplines (BAR-ILAN, 2003).

2 UGC-INFONET DIGITAL LIBRARY CONSORTIUM

This consortium was formally launched in December 2003, it is a national initiative for providing access to scholarly electronic resources including more than 5000 core and peer-reviewed full-text journals and bibliographic databases in all subject disciplines from different publishers/aggregators for the benefit of academic community of selected universities in India. The access to e-resources was given to 50 universities in the first phase in 2004 and at present it has been extended to 157 universities in the country. INFLIBNET Centre, the driving force behind the UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium, has been organizing an International Conference-CALIBER (Convention on Automation of Libraries in Education and Research) every year.

The UGC-Infonet has brought a revolution in the service provision of university libraries in the country, LIS professionals have naturally been attracted to know the use of the consortium's e-resources by the teachers, researchers and students. Many LIS professionals have conducted quite a number of surveys in this regard and presented the results in annual CALIBERs. Also, several research papers have been published in the library and information science journals.

3 ALAGAPPA UNIVERSITY: A PROFILE

Alagappa University was brought into existence by a Special Act of the Government of Tamil Nadu, India in May 1985 with the objective of fostering research, development and dissemination of knowledge in various branches of learning. Alagappa University is recognized by the University Grants Commission (UGC) of India.

The University has 18 Departments, 5 Centers and 2 Constituent Colleges on its campus. There are 28 Affiliated Colleges located in the districts of Sivaganga and Ramanathapuram are part of the University. The University offers education through Regular, Week-end, Distance and Collaborative modes. The Distance Education Directorate offers variety of programmes to the student community spread across the country and in selected foreign countries. Through all modes of education, the University caters to the needs of the student community of around one hundred thousand. As a member of the Association of Indian Universities (AIU), as well as the member of the Association of Common Wealth Universities (ACU), it has rewarding relations with other academic institutions, research laboratories and industrial establishments that promise a spectacular feature.

The library is part of the UGC-INFONET e-journals, from which it is receiving around 4.300 academic and research titles from reputed publishers, societies etc. and an Air-Conditioned Internet Browsing Centre with about fifteen systems for free access.

4 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The main objective of the study is to assess the impact of e-journals access by the teaching faculties and research scholars in terms of availability of resources provided by UGC-Infonet: a) To identify the user pattern on age, department and gender impact; b) To observe the awareness of UGC-Infonet to access the e-journals; c) To measure the users often visit to access e-journals; d) To ascertain the needful journal from the various publishes to refer the articles; e) To observe the guidance need for access the e-journals.

5 METHODOLOGY

Survey method is being adopted for which the questionnaire was drafted and then distributed among the faculty members and research scholars in various departments of Alagappa University. The questionnaires were personally distributed

among the faculty members and research scholars. The data from collected the respondent's then feedback of the respondents have tabulated and analyzed. One hundred and twenty questionnaires have collected from the respondents from eleven departments in Alagappa University. A total of 120 out of 103 received their questionnaires giving a response rate of 85.83 percent.

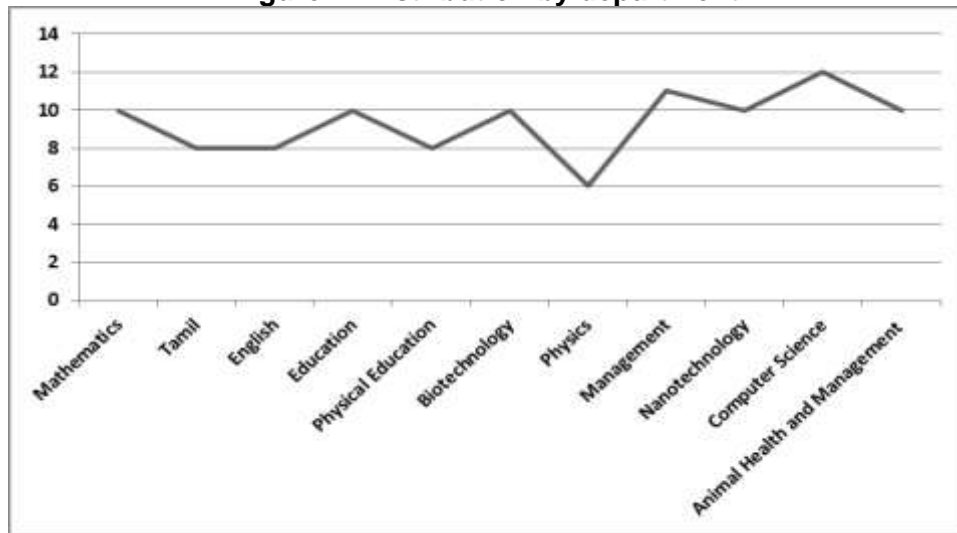
6 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The Table 1 shows the responses received from the faculty members and research scholars from eleven departments. Out of 103 respondents faculty members 45 (43.68%) and research scholars 58 (56.31 %) were selected as sample. It is evidently that department wise data shows in Figure 1 there are eleven departments have been chosen, the questionnaire distributed to 120 respondents among 103 reported.

Table 1: Distribution by department.

S. No.	Department	No. of Respondents	%
1	Mathematics	10	9.70
2	Tamil ¹	08	7.76
3	English	08	7.76
4	Education	10	9.70
5	Physical Education	08	7.76
6	Biotechnology	10	9.70
7	Physics	06	5.82
8	Management	11	10.67
9	Nanotechnology	10	9.70
10	Computer Science	12	11.65
11	Animal Health and Management	10	9.76
Total		103	-

Figure 1: Distribution by department.



The Table 2 reveals, there are four age groups have been categorized into 20-30 group is occupied predominant 33 (32.03 %) and it followed by 31-40 age group shows 28 (27.18%). The small portion of the respondents in the age group 50 and above 24 (23.30%). It is observed the age group of 50 and above is least number 18 (17.47%) of respondents compare to other age group which cause of 20-30 age group of the faculty members and research scholars are more want of e-journals.

Table 2: Age group.

S. No.	Age	No. of Respondents	%
1	20-30	33	32.03
2	31-40	28	27.18
3	41-50	24	23.30
4	Above 50	18	17.47
Total		103	-

The male respondents are predominantly use of e-resources when compare to female respondents 81 (78.64%), it is show that only female respondents are taking part 22 (21.36%). Probably the female respondents do not have spare more time to visit the library and use the e-resources, also Table 3 reveals that male respondents are interestingly visit the library and do access of electronic resources.

Table 3: Genre of respondents.

S. No.	Gender	No. of Respondents	%
1	Male	81	78.64
2	Female	22	21.36
Total		103	-

The Table 4 shows that 45 (37.6%) faculty members responded in the positive and 5 (4.16%) in the negative. The response of 58 (48.33%) research scholars are reported as positively, while 12 (10%) of respondents gives negative. The data reveals that research scholars and faculty were more aware as compared to unaware of electronic journals. Out of the total 120 respondents, 589 (71.39 per cent) users were aware about UGC-Infonet consortium and the remaining 17 (14.16%) with lacking of awareness about the e-journals and consortium. such awareness. It is exhibits that the awareness programme to access the e-journals of the UGC-Infonet Consortium is very needful to the faculty members and research scholars. The majority of faculty members already have adequate awareness in accessing e-journals, comparatively more than 5.84 percent of the research scholars.

Table 4: Awareness of electronic journals and UGC-Infonet.

S. No.	User Type	Yes	%	No	%
1	Faculty Members	45	37.6	5	4.16
2	Research Scholar	58	48.33	12	10
Total		103	85.99	17	14.16

Table 5: Access frequency.

S. No.	Frequency	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Occasionally
1	Faculty Members	21 (20.38)	17 (16.50)	02 (1.94)	05 (4.85)
2	Research Scholars	18 (17.47)	12 (11.65)	13 (12.62)	15 (14.56)

The Table 5 reveals that most of faculty members are access to e-journals at weekly 24 (44%). It followed by the faculty members are visit to access e-resources at daily 21 (20.38%). Whereas more number of research scholars 18 (17.14%) they visit to access the e-journals at daily. It followed by there are 17(16.50%) faculty members access the e-journals in weekly. Moreover a small portion of the faculty members accessing the e-journals by occasionally 5 (4.85%) and monthly 2 (1.94%).

Table 6: Access places.

S. No.	Place	Faculty Members (n=45)	Research Scholars (n=58)
1	Department	16 (15.53%)	20 (19.41%)
2	Library	14 (13.59%)	17 (16.50%)
3	Hostels	7 (6.79%)	8 (7.76%)
4	Computer Centers	8 (7.76%)	13 (12.62%)

The Table 6 shows that highest proportion of faculty members 16 (15.53%) use their department for accessing the information, while research scholars 20 (19.41%) they were accessing their e-journals in their department itself. It followed by the faculty members 14 (13.59%) are accessing e-journals in Library. Similarly research scholars 17 (16.50%) accessing the e-journals in computer centers. Furthermore a combined of faculty members 15 (14.56%) and research scholars 20 (20.38%) accessing e-journals in hostels and computer centers.

Table 7: Guidance for the use e-resources.

S. No.	Respondents	Faculty Members (n=45)	Research Scholars (n=58)
1	Professionals	22 (21.35%)	26 (25.24%)
2	Teachers/Guide	23 (22.33%)	31 (30.09%)
3	Colleague	-	1 (0.97%)

As indicated in Table 7, it is clearly note that the faculty members who responded to the study, learned through guidance from their teachers/guide 23 (22.33%). Similarly the research scholars obtained the guidance for accessing e-journals through Teachers/Guide 31 (30.09%).It followed by the research scholars 26 (25.24%) and faculty members 22 (21.35%) who have got guidance from the professionals from Computer Science and Library. The accessing techniques and methods on electronic resources by the colleague only 1 (0.97%) of research scholars. It has been reported that none of the faculty members and research scholars, who did not get guidance from the colleague.

Table 8: Preferred format.

S. No.	Format	Faculty Members (n=45)	Research Scholars (n=58)
1	Print	37 (35.92%)	40 (38.83%)
2	Electronic	8 (7.76%)	18 (17.47%)

The format of document based on availability of electronic information in addition to print document is necessarily for an advantage with a choice to use both form of materials. Table 8 reveals that the users instead of using either a print or electronic format of document preferred to use a source for obtaining information. It has been found that out of a total number of 103 respondents, 77 (77.75%) preferred print format; 26 (25.24%) electronic only, while more than 3 (2.91%); and 10 (9.70%) of the research scholars compare to faculty members preferred the print and electronic documents.

Table 9: Purpose of using UGC-Infonet e-journals.

S. No.	Purpose of using	Faculty Members (n=45)	Research Scholars (n=58)
1	Update knowledge	19 (18.44%)	25 (24.27%)
2	Study and research work	15 (14.56%)	14 (13.59%)
3	Career development	5 (4.85%)	10 (9.70%)
4	Write articles/conference papers	6 (5.82%)	9 (8.73%)

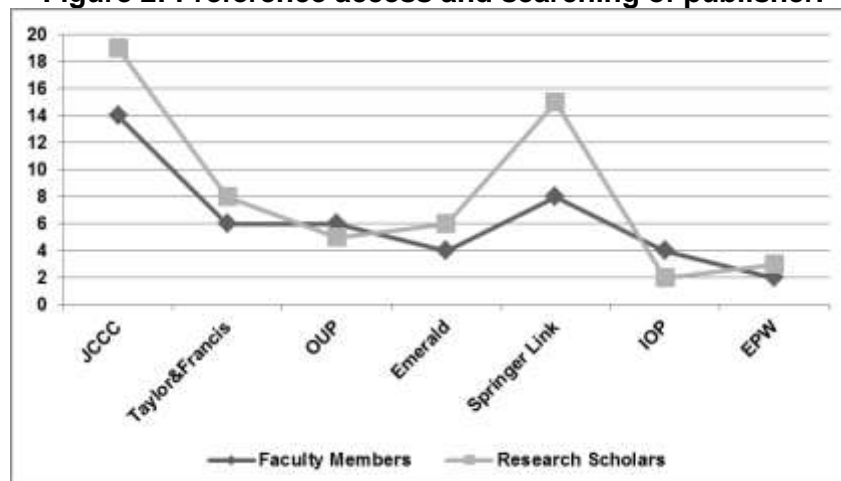
The Table 9 shows that purpose of accessing of e-journals among the faculty members and research scholars in Alagappa University. It is observed from this table highest faculty members 19 (18.44%) and research scholars 25 (24.27%) keenly update their knowledge through e-journals. However, It followed by the respondents are using e-journals for the purpose of study and pursuing their research shows the faculty members 15 (14.56%) and Research scholars 14 (13.59%). Finally, a small number of faculty members and research scholars 13 (18.57%) and 7 (14%) using the e-journals for career developments, It is also reveals the equal number of faculty members and research scholars 9 (18%) and (12.85%) using the e-journals for writing the Journals and conference papers.

Table 10: Searching for publishers.

S. No.	Publishers	Faculty Members (n=45)	Research Scholars (n=58)
1	JCCC	14 (13.5%)	19 (18.44%)
2	Taylor Francis	6 (5.82%)	8 (7.76%)
3	Oxford University Press	6 (5.82%)	5 (4.85%)
4	Emerald	4 (3.88%)	6 (5.82%)
5	Springer Link	8 (7.76%)	15 (14.56%)
6	Institute Physics	4 (3.88%)	2 (1.94%)
7	Economic Political Weekly	2 (1.94%)	3 (2.91%)

According to Table 10 inferred that faculty members and research scholars most wanted the journals from very prolific publishers. The e-journals access from UGC-Infonet consortium is accessible from various publishers. The data provided in Table 10 gives the details of the resources which are extent to use by the faculties in this University. J-Gate Custom Content for Consortia (JCCC) are used comparatively by the maximum number of research scholars and faculty members share 33 (32.03%), it followed by accessing of e-journals from springer link by the research scholars 15 (14.56%) and Faculty members 8 (7.76%), because there are several user awareness programmes were conducted by JCCC to the faculty members and research scholars in this University. It followed by the e-resources being accessed by the faculty members and research scholars in the series Taylor and fancies 14 (13.59%), Oxford University Press 11 (10.67%), Emerald 10 (9.70%), Institute of physics 6 (5.82%) and Economic and Political Weekly 5 (4.85%).

Figure 2: Preference access and searching of publisher.



6 CONCLUSION

This paper is discussed above on a survey taken among the faculty members and research scholars at Alagappa University, as to their access of electronic resources, in particularly e-journals. It has been analyzed that there is significant role of electronic journals by the university academicians and users in the present environment to acquire knowledge in field of universe. Major problems emphasized by the users towards lack of awareness in using electronic access.

Faculty members already have adequate awareness in accessing e-journals, comparatively more than 12.62% of the research scholars. Probably, the social science background users need to have more attention in use of computers they must be encouraged by the professionals. It can be concluded from above the discussions the faculty members and research scholars were obtained the guidance from teachers/ guide as well as other peoples.

It is inferred that Elsevier journals highly needful to the faculty members and research scholars for carry out their research. It has been observed that more number of faculty members and research scholars accessing their e-journals in department itself. It has been investigated above the study the more number of faculty members and research scholars are more interested for updating their knowledge with respect of accessing electronic journals from UGC-Infonet consortium.

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NOTES

¹ Tamil is a Dravidian language spoken predominantly by Tamil people of South India and North-east Sri Lanka. It has official status in the Indian states of Tamil Nadu, Pondicherry and Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Tamil is also a national language of Sri Lanka and an official language of Singapore and Mauritius. It is also chiefly spoken in the states of Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Andaman and Nicobar Islands as one of the secondary languages. It is one of the 22 scheduled languages of India and was declared a classical language by the government of India in 2004.

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