
Use of UGC-Infonet e-journals Consortium by the Research Scholars of Karnataka University, Dharwad: A study

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Abstract

The main objective of the present study is to determine the use of UGC-Infonet e-journals consortium by the research scholars of Karnatak University, Dharwad. The study further emphasizes on frequency of use of e-resources, factors which motivate them, information content on e-resources, impact of e-resources and opinion about UGC-Infonet e-journals consortium. The outcomes of the study indicate that: majority, i.e. 84 (51.14 %) research scholars use e-

resources on daily basis, 137 (83.53 %) respondents use e-resources because of core journals available in the consortium, 108 (65.85%) respondents opine that the content on e-resources is better than that of print version, and 76 (48.34%) respondents agree that the number of research publications have been increased after using UGC-Infonet consortium.

Keywords: E-journals Consortium, INFLIBNET, Karnatak University, Research Scholars, Resource sharing, UGC-Infonet, University Grants Commission,

Introduction

In the twenty first century no library is self sufficient, however the large it is to equip with all the resources available (Kumbar and Hadagali, 2009). In this regard the Resource sharing is a viable solution to overcome this problem. The collection development of e-resources is a challenging task unlike its print counterparts (Kumbar et al. 2006). In a changed environment INFLIBNET has moved to the digital environment in the delivery of information services to the academic community across the country. The University Grants Commission (UGC) has started providing access to e-resources to modernize the universities campuses with the state-of-the-art campus. The programme is fully funded by UGC and monitored by INFLIBNET centre. The UGC-INFONET programme will be a boon to higher education systems in several ways. It would facilitate free access to scholarly journals and databases in all areas of learning to the research and academic community. The consortium provides current as well as archival access to more than 5000 electronic journals.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to determine the use of UGC-Infonet e-resources by the Research Scholars of Karnatak University, Dharwad. The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. study the frequency of use of e-resources by the research scholars;
2. know the factors which motivate the research scholars;
3. elicit opinion about the information content on e-resources;
4. determine the impact of e-resources on research activities; and
5. study the opinion about UGC-Infonet e-journals consortium

Methodology

For the present study a questionnaire tool was used to collect the data from the regular research scholars of science and social science disciplines of Karnatak University, Dharwad. A total of 200 questionnaires were distributed randomly to the research scholars. Out of which, 164 questionnaires were received with duly filled in questionnaires resulting into a response rate of 82.0 %. The data collected then were fed into MS-Excel to calculate simple frequency.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Gender wise distribution of respondents

The table 1 depicts the gender wise distribution of respondents. The study reveals that out of 164 respondents, 117 (71.34 %) respondents belong to male category, whereas, 47 (28.66%) respondents belong to female category. Since the male research scholars are more in Karnatak University, Dharwad, hence the result.

Table 1: Gender wise distribution of respondents

| Sl. No. | Gender | No. of respondents | Percentage (%) |
|---------|--------|--------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Male | 117 | 71.34 |
| 2 | Female | 47 | 28.66 |
| | Total | 164 | 100.00 |

Frequency of use of electronic resources

A question was raised to know the awareness of UGC-Infonet e-journals consortium. The data reveal that all the 164 respondents are aware of the e-resources available in the consortia. The table 2 presents the frequency of use of e-resources by the respondents. The majority of respondents, i.e. 84 (51.14 %) research scholars use e-resources on daily basis, followed by 33 (20.12%) respondents use twice a week, 28 (17.07%) respondents use weekly. The other details are given in table 2.

Table 2: Frequency of use of electronic resources

| Sl. No. | Frequency | No. of respondents | Percentage (%) |
|---------|--------------|--------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Daily | 84 | 51.14 |
| 2 | Twice a week | 33 | 20.12 |
| 3 | Weekly | 28 | 17.07 |
| 4 | Fortnightly | --- | --- |
| 5 | Monthly | 04 | 2.43 |
| 6 | Occasionally | 15 | 9.14 |
| | Total | 164 | 100.00 |

Factors which motivate to use e-resources

The UGC-Infonet e-journals consortium facilitates free access to scholarly journals and databases in all disciplines of learning to the research and academic community. Hence, a question was raised on the factors which motivate the respondents to use e-resources. The study reveals that the majority, i.e. 137 (83.53 %) respondents use e-resources because of core journals available in the consortium, followed by 114 (69.51 %) respondents opine that wide range of online sources provided through the consortium motivates them to use e-resources. The other data on different factors such as Archival access, to obtain reprints and expert assistance by library staff are some of the factors which have less motivated them and are presented in table

Table 3: Factors which motivate to use e-resources

| Sl. No. | Factors | No. of respondents | Percentage (%) |
|---------|---|--------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Archival access | 87 | 53.04 |
| 2 | Core journals are available | 137 | 83.53 |
| 3 | Wide range of online sources are being provided | 114 | 69.51 |
| 4 | Obtain reprints | 67 | 40.85 |
| 5 | Easy to use | 98 | 59.75 |
| 6 | Expert assistance by library staff | 49 | 29.87 |

Opinion about Information Content on e-resources

The e-resources are gaining importance among the academic community. The table 4 provides the opinion about the content on e-resources compared to its print counterparts. The study indicates that 108 (65.85%) respondents opine that the content on e-resources is better than that of print version. Whereas, 30 (18.30%) respondents opine that the content on e-resources is not better than print version, followed by 26 (15.85%) are of the opinion the content is similar to that of print version.

Table 4: Opinion about Information Content on e-resources

| Sl. No. | Opinion | No. of respondents | Percentage (%) |
|---------|-------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Better than print version | 108 | 65.85 |
| 2 | Not better than print version | 30 | 18.30 |
| 3 | Same as that of print version | 26 | 15.85 |
| 4 | Not sure | --- | --- |
| | Total | 164 | 100.00 |

Impact of E-resources on their Research

A question was asked to the respondents on whether there is an impact of UGC-Infonet e-journals consortium on their research / academic activities or not. The data is present in table 5. It indicates that 64 (39.03%) and 72 (43.90%) respondents agree that UGC-Infonet consortium has made an impact on their research and academic life. Hence, the consortium has a significant impact even on science and social science research scholars.

Table 5: Impact of E-resources on their Research

| Sl. No. | Opinion | No. of respondents | Percentage (%) |
|---------|-------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 64 | 39.03 |
| 2 | Agree | 72 | 43.90 |
| 3 | Uncertain | 26 | 15.85 |
| 4 | Disagree | 02 | 1.22 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | --- | --- |
| | Total | 164 | 100.00 |

Opinion about increase in number of research papers

A question was raised to the respondents that whether the consortium helped them improve their research publications. The data is presented in table 6 which indicates that 40 (24.38%) respondents strongly agree and 76 (48.34%) respondents agree that the number of research publications have been increased after using UGC-Infonet consortium. The respondents are also of the opinion that the quality of the research publications has also been improved.

Table 6: Opinion about increase in number of research papers

| Sl. No. | Opinion | No. of respondents | Percentage (%) |
|---------|-------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 40 | 24.38 |
| 2 | Agree | 76 | 46.34 |
| 3 | Uncertain | 42 | 25.64 |
| 4 | Disagree | 06 | 3.64 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | --- | --- |
| | Total | 164 | 100.00 |

Opinion about UGC-Infonet Programme

The UGC-Infonet E-journals consortium was launched by the University Grants Commission (UGC) to provide access to e-resources to the academic community of Indian universities. A question was raised to know the opinion about UGC-Infonet Programme. The data reveal that 36 (21.96) respondents said the programme is excellent and 94 (57.32%) respondents said it is good initiative. The study also reveals that the consortium programme is gaining importance among the research and academic community.

Table 7: Opinion about UGC-Infonet Programme

| Sl. No. | Opinion | No. of respondents | Percentage (%) |
|---------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Excellent | 36 | 21.96 |
| 2 | Good | 94 | 57.32 |
| 3 | Satisfactory | 28 | 17.08 |
| 4 | Unsatisfactory | 06 | 3.64 |
| | Total | 164 | 100.00 |

Conclusion

The present study was conducted on the use of UGC-Infonet E-journals consortium by the research scholars of Karnatak University, Dharwad clearly reflects the current scenario of awareness of e-resources and their usage. The consortium has emerged as a necessary tool to provide information to both research and academic community. It can be observed from the study that e-resources are becoming more popular among the users community and considered as a better substitute of print journals. On the other hand, the usage statistics clearly indicate that there a lack of awareness of these e-resources among the most of the users. In this regard, it is high time for the library staff to create awareness of e-resources and their importance in research activities.

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