

Effective use of E-Resources Consortia for Indian Universities: New Challenges

By

Dr. P Dharani Kumar

Assistant Professor

Dept. of Library and information Science

Kuvempu University, Shankaraghatta , Shivmogga, Karnataka

E-mail: dr.dharanikumar@gmail.com

and

Narasappa K C

Librarian

Govt. First Grade College Bhatkal Uttara Kannada(D), Karnataka

e-mail: narasappakc25@gmail.com

Abstract

In the modern era of information technology and internet, knowledge is most powerful asset of the country. The library environment is currently undergoing a rapid and dynamic revolution leading to new generation of libraries with the emphasis on e-resources. UGC-INFONET and INDEST consortium are two major initiatives that have come to the rescue of academic libraries. The web resources and the use of web as a tool is changing the way users live and learn. In many consortiums a large number of electronic journals are hosted which outnumber other electronic resources. these revolutionary steps are providing scholarly resources including peer reviewed journals, databases, abstracts proceedings etc. the phenomenon of consortium or group of libraries buying e-information together has become very important in the last few years.

Key Words: E-resources, Library Consortia, Features of E-resources.

1. Introduction

The web resources and the use of web as a tool is changing the way users live and learn. The internet and electronic publishing have changed the role of libraries all over the world in providing access of e-resources to the users. The emergence of the internet is particularly the

World Wide Web, as a new medium of information storage and delivery in the 21st century. Library consortium is an association of a group of libraries to achieve mutually the common objectives. Now most of the Indian libraries of universities and research institutes are rich in e-resources. Access of e-resources has also been started up to college level in the university system through consortia.

2. Definition of E-resources

Electronic resources are a bibliographic or full text database that allows you to search for relevant articles in your subject areas for a book or journals that has been made available in electronic format that are accessed on electronic device such as a mobile phone, computer, web pages, etc. these are published resources in electronic version such as encyclopedias, pamphlets, e-books, e-journals, database etc.

3. The Mission

Indian Universities constitute of the largest higher education systems in the world. Today there are a total 665 Universities, including 45 central Universities, 322 state Universities, 128 deemed Universities, 192 Private Universities along with 35829 colleges, 7.8 million students and 3.1 million teachers, it is a great challenge to ensure effective coordination and communication.

In last three years UGC has taken certain steps to improve the network infrastructure and access to scholarly journals to all qualitative change especially for higher education.

4. Features of E-resources

- a) Easy access to information anywhere any time to any one without physical existence.
- b) Enhanced search ability including full text.
- c) Ability to satisfy request for surrogates photocopies, photographic prints, slides, etc.
- d) Integration of different media.
- e) The potential to display materials that are in accessible formats for instance, large volumes or maps.

- f) Comparatively economical and potential for integration into teaching materials.

5. Need of E-resources

The increasing growth of digital environment as digital libraries is becoming even more important in knowledge society. Libraries are needed to play to meet the demands of current and potential users. Information literacy ICT skills and library skills made enables to function effectively in the electronic resources due to following reasons.

- a) Provide access to very large and global information collection.
- b) User friendly.
- c) Digital consortia.
- d) Promote universal accessibility.
- e) 24X7 services.
- f) Collection development of the materials made core values of digital collections in librarianship.
- g) Contributes positively to the learning community and to society.

6. Types of e-resources

- a) E-journals
- b) E-books
- c) Websites
- d) Online database
- e) CD Rom
- f) Diskettes

7. Library consortia in India

During the last decade in India many consortium have been emerged for providing access of e-resources to the users. Library consortia are the sharing of e-resources among the participant's libraries. INDEST-AICTE and UGC-INFONET Digital library consortium are two large consortium covering most of the University and technical education institutions in India.

7.1 UGC-INFONET

UGC –INFONET E-journals consortium initiative was under taken by UGC to facilitate scholarly e-resources to Indian academic through joint partnership of UGC,

INFLIBNET and ERNR. All universities and colleges who are under the purview of UGC have been provided UGC-INFONET connectivity and access to scholarly e-journals and database. The access is based on IP range. This effort has had a noticeable impact on the research and academic community.

E-resources made available

Name of the E-resources	IP address
American Physical Society	http://www.aps.org
American Institute of Physics	http://www.aip.org
Annual Reviews	http://www.journals.annualreviews.org
American Chemical Society	http://pubs.acs.org/about_category.html
Cambridge University Press Journals	http://journals.cambridge.org
Encyclopedia Britannica	http://searcheb.com/
JSTOR	http://www.jstor.org
Science Online	Http://www.sciencemag.org/
SciFinder Scholar	http://www.aip.org

INDEST-AICTE

The Indian National Digital Library in Engineering Science and Technology (INDEST) consortium was set up in 2003 by the Ministry of Human Resources Development on the recommendation of an expert group appointed by the Ministry under the chairmanship of Prof. N Balakrishnan. The Ministry provides funds required for providing access to electronic resources to the core members through the consortium headquarters set-up at the IIT Delhi. The consortium subscribes to over 6500 electronic journals from a number of publishers and aggregators.

Name of the E-resources	IP address
ACM Digital Library	http://portal.acm.org/portal.cfm
IEEE/IEE Electronic Library Online	http://ieeexplore.ieee.org
Springer Link	http://www.springerlink.com
DEL	www.digitalengineeringlibrary.com
American Society of Mechanical	http://www.asme.org/pubs/journal

Engineering journal	
Proquest Science Journal	http://www.ll.proquest.com
Science Direct	http://www.sciencedirect.com
Inspection village	http://www.engineeringvillage2.org
Engineering Science Data Unit	www.esdu.com

7.2 INFLIBNET

Information and library network center is an integrated information system created in 1991 to support teaching and research in higher education. INFLIBNET is providing a variety of services to the academic community of the country and is helping libraries in their automation efforts.

7.3 N-LIST

Looking to the success of library e-resources consortium in India, the project entitled "National Library and Information Services Infrastructure for Scholarly Content. Under N-LIST selected resources of these consortiums are accessible to the users of both the consortium. N-LIST project the authorized users from eligible colleges under section 2(F) 12(B) of UGC Act 1956, can now access e-resources from the publishers website once they are duly authenticated as authorized users through services deployed at the INFLIBNET Centre.

7.4 Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)

CSIR research and development activities, NISCAIR implemented an agency for access to electronic journals. On behalf of CSIR, it has entered into an agreement with Elsevier to access its 1500 e-journals and intends to subscribe to more CSIR consortium has extended its access to other of e-journals.

7.5 HELINET (Health Sciences Library & Information Network)

A Health Science Library & Information Network hosted by Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences, Bangalore. HELINET is the first medical library consortium launched in the

country with an objective of networking the libraries affiliated to the University to promote resources sharing to international medical journal and databases.

7.6 IIM's Library Consortia (The Indian Institute of Management)

IIM Library consortia is a Digital Library network system based on internet technology to provide the IIM community an online web enabled access to the information resources available in all the IIM's without any barriers of the time and distance.

8. Issues and Challenges

There are several issues and challenges in optimum utilization of e-resources. A few among them are mentioned below.

- a) Cost factor
- b) Copyright issues
- c) Availability
- d) Achieving
- e) Infrastructure
- f) User attitude towards e-resources
- g) Technicalities

9. Conclusion

The effort of UGC-INFONET and INDEST consortium are appreciated and will definitely strengthen higher education system in India. The consortium with its collective strength of participating has attracted highly discounted rates of subscription with most favorable terms of agreement. Academic libraries have really understood that consortia based subscriptions is cost effective and also avoids redundant expenses and duplicate subscriptions. So it is essential that every user should be oriented from the latest technologies to maximize use of e-resources in minimum efforts.

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