

Role of E-Resources in Growth and Development of Higher Education in India

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Abstract

There is a large quantity of subscribed e-journals which are containing quality rich information in technical institutions libraries. Consortia based access of e-resource has been provided in most of the Indian libraries of higher education and research institutions during last decade. 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 so that they can cater to the needs of academic depending upon them. This paper briefly highlighted consortia for effective use of e-resources in Indian libraries, advantages, disadvantages of e-journals consortia.

Keywords: Library Consortia, High education, E-resources

1. Introduction

In the modern age of information technology and internet knowledge is most powerful system in the world. Our Indian higher education system is very large in the world. The development of internet, e-publishing industry has most powerful number of e-resource was available through the internet. 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 launch of UGC – INFONET e-Journals consortium in 2004 has changed the entire situation and enriched the resources of university libraries. University libraries in India have access to large number of scholarly journals from major national and international e- resource are subscription of the libraries. The UGC was formally established only in November 1956 as a statutory body of the Government of India through as Act of Parliament for the coordination and maintenance of standards of University education in India. Electronic resources are clearly changing the whole scenario of how the publishers, authors, librarians and readers are managing the information.

2. Higher Education in India

The Educational System of India has a large higher education system. The growth rate of educational institutions in India was very slow before independence in 1947. Today there are a total of 665 universities, including 45 Central universities, 322 State universities, 128 deemed universities, 192 Private universities along with 35829 colleges that provide education in all disciplines. The number of teachers is 3.1 million, and 7.8 million students are enrolled in higher education.

In last three years UGC has taken certain steps to improve the Network infrastructure and access to scholarly journals to all universities which is described in later part of this paper. Still we have long way to go and extend these facilities to remaining universities and colleges which needs additional grants. For XI plan, INFLIBNET has prepared comprehensive document to cover networking facility to all the universities and facilitate scholarly journals to entire universities and colleges

3. Definition of E-Resources

E-resources can be full text database that allows you to for relevant articles in your subject area 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 versions/format such as encyclopedias, pamphlets, e-books, e-journals, databases etc.

4. Types of e-resources

E- Resources major types are:

- Online e-resources, which may be include
- E-journals(Full text & bibliographic)
- E-books
- On line Databases
- Web sites
- Other electronic e- resources may be include
- CD Rom
- Diskettes
- Other portable computer databases

5. Effective use of e-resources

E-journals have been increased in Indian libraries providing access of e-resources on the basis of subject wise collection of publishers through consortia. Some of the publishers like INDEST- AICTE Consortium, Springer, ASME, Elsevier, Emerald, McGraw Hill, Taylor, Wiley and other world renowned publishers are famous for e- journals and e-books publishing work. These may be delivered on CD ROM, on tape, via internet and soon. Over the past few years a numbers of techniques and related standards have been developed which allow documents to be created and distributed in electronic form. Due to the applications of ICT users internet and to provide the access to books, current and previous issues of journals issues publishers have begun expanding their business market for e-resources and can serve better and faster compared to the print mode.

6. Library Consortiums in India

Changes are the law of nature and as it is very important in the present library culture libraries are not untouched by the change which is affecting almost every activity in the library. Library Consortia is the sharing of resources among the participant's libraries. Presently most of the Indian libraries are covered in different consortiums to provide the access of e-resources to their users. INDEST-AICTE and UGC-INFONET Digital Library Consortium are two large consortium covering most of the Universities and technical education institution in India.

6.1. UGC-INFONET Digital Library

The university Grant Commission was established by an act of Parliament in 1956. It is an autonomous advisory organization for the promotion and co-ordination of university education and for the maintenance of standards. UGC give direction for the development higher education in India. It was launched in the year 2004 by UGC through INFLIBNET for providing access of e-resource to the university and academic libraries in different phases. All Universities covered under section 128 of the UGC Act, 1956 are eligibility to get access to e- resource through the Consortium.

The UGC has played an important role in the improvement of University and College libraries. Modern Indian higher education is passing through the phase of knowledge revolution. UGC realizing the value of the library and its role in higher education accepted most of the recommendation of the several committees and commissions. UGC are providing financial assistance for collection development, acquisition of books, periodicals and e-resource.

6.2. INDEST-AICTE

The "Indian National Digital Library in Engineering Sciences and Technology (INDEST) Consortium" was set up in 2003 by the Ministry of Human Resource Development on the recommendation of an Expert Group appointed by the Ministry under the chairmanship of Prof. N Balakrishnan. The IIT Delhi has been designated as the Consortium Headquarters to coordinate its activities. The Consortium was renamed as INDEST-AICTE Consortium in December 2005 with the AICTE playing a pivotal role in enrolling its approved engineering colleges and institutions as members of the Consortium for selected e-resources at much lower rates of subscription. The Consortium enrolls engineering and technological institutions as its members and subscribe to electronic resources for them at discounted rates of subscription and

favorable terms and conditions. The Ministry provides funds required for subscription to electronic resources for 62 centrally-funded Government institutions including major technological institutions are IITs, IISc Bangalore, NITs, ISM, IIITs, IIMs, NITTTR's and few other institutions that are considered as core members of the Consortium. The INDEST-AICTE Consortium is the most ambitious initiative taken so far in the country. The consortium subscribes to over 6500 electronic journals from a number of publishers and aggregators.

6.3 INFLIBNET

Information and Library network Center is a integrated and information system created In 1991 to support teaching and research in higher education. It is a National Programme initiated by the UGC in 1991 with its Head Quarters at Gujarat University Campus, Ahmadabad. The information and library network center will network 123 Universities, 23 institutions, 6100 Colleges, and 200 Libraries affiliated to other organizations through UGC. INFLIBNET is a major player in promoting scholarly communication among academicians and research activities in India. INFLIBNET has developed "SOUL" is software for automation in –house functions. SOUL is installed at university libraries and has developed five utility software packages for participating universities. INFLIBNET has many services and activities are run for the development of Indian higher education to the each and every people of India.

6.4 Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)

Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) has also formed a consortium with National Institute of Science, Communication and Information Resources (NISCAIR) as the nodal agency. To augment 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 providers of e-journals. CSIR India a premier national R& D organization is among the world's largest publicly funded R&D Organization.

6.5 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 resource sharing, especially with reference to international medical journal and database. The health science education in India and the status of information technology and internet access infrastructure in the health science colleges. The digital library resources and activity at RGUHS are presented in detail. The formation and role of HELINET is the first resources sharing network and e-journal consortium in the medical education sectors. HELINET adopted an indigenously developed and locally available e-journals gateway for its need. J-Gate enables online access to all the consortia members for the e-journals subscribed by the consortia. It further enables shared access to printed journals through its customized database service.

7. Open Access Journals System

Open Journal System is a Journal management and publishing system that has been developed by the Public Knowledge Project through its federally funded efforts to expand and improve access to research. Comprehensive indexing, content part of the global system, OJS is open source software made freely available to journals World Wide for the purpose of making open access publishing a viable option for more journals as open access can increase a journals readership as well as its contribution to the public good on a global scale.

8. Google Reader

It is web- based aggregator developed by Google. It is used for reading and managing RSS feeds. Users are required g-mail accounting to use this free of cost services. User can subscribe RSS feeds from different e-resources in the Google Reader. Users need to click at subscribe button in the Google Reader than enter the URL of RSS feed. It will provide the facility to change the name of tag, create new folder, change folder etc. users can also unsubscribe the RSS feeds. Feeds from other feed reader can also be important in the Google Reader. Users send the feeds in social networking websites like Face book, Twitter.

9. Advantages of library Consortia

The advantages for libraries if they buy their resource through consortia can include.

- Consortia based subscription to electronic resources provides access to wider number of electronic resources at substantially lower cost.

- Shared access to information sources to libraries.
- Facilities to build up digital libraries
- Optimum utilization of Fund
- Ability to achieve goals
- Smaller libraries can benefit
- Helpful to provide better library services like CAS and SDI
- Possible ability to attract foreign investment
- The consortium have been offered better terms of licenses for use, archival access and preservation of subscribed electronic resources, which would not have been possible for any single institution and e-resources open any time.

10. Disadvantages of library Consortia

Some of the important disadvantages of the library consortium are as below

- Absence of a printed copy of journals.
- Confusion for libraries, vendors and patrons.
- Unreliable telecommunication links and insufficient bandwidth.
- Copyright problems.
- Lack of archiving and back files availability.
- Duplication of effort.
- Reduced buying power.
- Users are not accepting e-journals as per with the printed journals.
- Internet Access id necessary.
- Required training of staffs in handling electronic documents.

11. Conclusion

Library consortia have really understood that the subscription of cost effective and also avoids redundant expenses and duplicate subscriptions. Consortia purchasing projects have become a basic tool that expand collections and support co-operative technological development for libraries. The effort of UGC-INFONET and INDEST-AICTE consortium are appreciable and will definitely strengthen higher education system in India free and highly subscribed access to scholarly e-resources will help educational institutions in fulfill their mission in to reality. 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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