



Use of UGC-INFONET Digital Library Consortium in University libraries of Punjab and Himachal Pradesh: a Comparative study

Deepak Kumar Khara

Librarian

Aarohi Model Sr. Sec. School,

Bangaon, Fatehabad

Email: its.deepakkhara@gmail.com

Sanjeev Sharma

Associate Professor

Department of Lib. & Inf. Sc.

Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra

Email: sanju_sharma2004@rediffmail.com

Abstract

The study is aimed at the Use of UGC- INFONET Digital Library Consortium in University libraries of Punjab & Himachal Pradesh. For this purpose, a structured questionnaire was designed to collect the data. Out of 1000 questionnaires, 781 filled in questionnaires were received back. The study elaborates the various aspects of use of UGC- INFONET consortium such as frequency of library visits, awareness about UGC- INFONET, purpose of using e journals, place of accessing e journals, search methods, level of satisfaction about coverage of e-journals and problems faced by users while accessing e journals through UGC- INFONET consortium. The study found that 63.89% respondents of Punjab & Himachal Pradesh were aware about UGC-INFONET and majority of respondents were using UGC-INFONET consortium for completion of assignments and seminars.

Keywords: UGC-INFONET, Digital Libraries, Digital Library Consortium, University Library, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh

1. Introduction

We are living in an electronic age. Almost all the scholarly journals are available in electronic form. The immense growth of literature on one side and shrinking of budget on the other, continuous increasing cost of print information and time lag put the academic and research community on their back foot. Library consortium is one of the emerging tool kits for libraries to survive in the present circumstances (Ranganathan, 2013). The idea of consortium is not new. There were instances when several libraries coming together voluntarily for the mutual benefit of their respective users just like cooperatives, it was the earliest stage of library cooperation. At the second stage, computerized networks came into vogue for



sharing the resource material. Till this period, the library resources were mainly found in the traditional printed form. The networks created their bibliographical databases. The users of the participating libraries could get the required information from other libraries through document delivery services. With the advent of e-resources, the concept of consortia has been mooted mainly for the acquisition of e-journals. As the resources that are procured today through the consortium are mainly e-resources, it has become possible for the users to access and download the required information without even going through the elaborate process of inter library lending. Though library consortia have been created with a narrow concept, these can be turned into efficient instruments for sharing all types of library resources (Bedi and Sharma 2008).

2. Objectives

1. To know the awareness of users for UGC-INFONET Digital Library Consortium.
2. To examine the use pattern of UGC-INFONET Digital Library Consortium.
3. To know the purpose of using UGC-INFONET Digital Library Consortium.
4. To investigate the frequency of access to the consortium.
5. To identify the satisfaction level of the users regarding coverage of journals in the Consortium.
6. To identify the major problems faced by the users.
7. To provide suggestions for effective use of Consortium.

3. Review of literature

Hanchinal (2019) found that 50% of respondents were using e-resources of N-LIST Programme. The study also found that e-books were the most used e-resources of N-LIST as much as 88 respondents had accessed these resources for their study. Further the study revealed that the majority of the respondents revealed their main purpose of using e-resources through N-LIST was to prepare class notes & assignments. Mistri (2018) investigated that the majority of the users i.e. 85.45% were aware about e-resources. 54.55% of research scholars were using e-resources for their research /project work. Responses to another query indicated that nearly 60% of the respondents used e-resources at least once in a week. The study also found that slow internet speed was the most common problem faced by the respondents. Suman and Sharma (2016) found that 60.74% respondents were aware of the consortium, 35.55% respondents used this consortia 2-3 times a week. 88.57% Research Scholars used it for research purpose. The study also found that the majority of the respondents indicated that lack of knowledge to use was the major problem in accessing INDEST-AICTE Consortium. Bakkiaraj and Sathiyamurthy (2014) showed



that 82% of teaching staff and 79% of research scholars used bibliographic database for their teaching and research purpose. The majority of students and research scholars demanded print journals in addition to e-journals for their academic work. The study also showed that majority of the teaching staff knowing the UGC-INFONET Consortium through library professionals. Harish Kumar (2014) showed that the majority of the users i.e. 90.48% were aware about the UGC-INFONET Digital Library Consortium. 86.90% respondents have shown intense interest in print journals in addition to e-journals. The study also found that the majority of the users replied that there was need to add more e-journals. The most common problem faced by the respondents was the restricted access followed by time consuming while accessing e-journals.

4. Scope of the study

The scope of the present study was limited to the five selected universities of Punjab and Himachal Pradesh. Punjab state has three universities and Himachal Pradesh has two Universities. The universities included in the study are as follows:

State	Universities
Punjab	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Panjab University, Chandigarh• Punjabi University, Patiala• Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar
Himachal Pradesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Himachal Pradesh University, Shimla• Central University of Himachal Pradesh, Dharamashala

5. Methodology

A survey method was used for this study. A Structured questionnaire was developed for the purpose of data collection. The population was divided into two groups/strata i.e. Research Scholars and PG Students. Further the samples were taken from each group on random basis. A sample of 200 (50 Research Scholars and 150 PG Students) were taken from each University. Thus a total of 1000 questionnaires were distributed among the Research Scholars and PG Students of nine Universities, out of which 781 questionnaires were returned and only 499 questionnaires were found valid for the analysis purpose.

6. Data analysis and Interpretation

Data collected through questionnaire were carefully analysed and processed. Analysis of data has been tabulated.

Table 1
Awareness about consortium

Awareness	Punjab		Himachal Pradesh		Total
	PG Students	Research Scholars	PG Students	Research Scholars	
Yes	222 66.88%	112 74.67%	107 58%	58 42%	499 63.89%
No	110 30.12%	38 25.33%	92 46.23%	42 25.33%	282 36.11%
Total	332 100%	150 100%	199 100%	100 100%	781 100%

Respondents were asked to confirm their awareness about Digital Library Consortium whether they were aware about Consortium or not. The responses showed that majority of respondents 63.89% were aware about Digital Library Consortium in University libraries of Punjab and Himachal Pradesh. Table 1 reveals that 74.67% Research Scholars and 66.88% PG Students of the Universities of Punjab were more aware about UGC-INFONET Digital Library Consortium than the Research Scholars (58%) and PG Students (53.77%) of Universities of Himachal Pradesh.

Table 2
Experience of using consortium

Experience of use	Punjab		Himachal Pradesh		Total
	PG Students	Research Scholars	PG Students	Research Scholars	
Less than 6 months	92 41.44%	5 4.46%	32 29.91%	2 3.45%	131 26.25%
6 Months - 1 year	117 52.70%	11 9.82%	70 65.42%	3 5.17%	201 40.28%
1-2 years	13 5.86%	53 47.32%	4 3.74%	27 46.55%	97 19.43%



2-4 years	0	41 36.61%	1 0.93%	26 48.83%	68 13.64%
More than 4 years	0	2 1.79%	0	0	2 0.40%
Total	222 100%	112 100%	107 100%	58 100%	499 100%

Table 2 shows the experience of using Digital Library Consortium by the respondents of the University libraries of Punjab and Himachal Pradesh. Table 2 depicts that 65.42% PG Students of universities of Himachal Pradesh have 6 months – 1 year experience of using Digital Library Consortium than 52.70% PG Students of universities of Punjab respectively. 9.82% Research Scholars of universities of Punjab have 6 months – 1 year experience of using Digital Library Consortium than 5.17% Research Scholars of universities of Himachal Pradesh.

Table 3
Frequency of using consortium

Frequency	Punjab		Himachal Pradesh		Total
	PG Student	Research Scholar	PG Student	Research Scholar	
Daily	4 1.80%	17 15.18%	1 0.93%	4 6.90%	26 5.21%
2-3 times a week	72 32.43%	62 55.36%	19 17.76%	17 29.31%	170 34.07%
2-3 times a month	90 40.54%	25 22.32%	52 48.60%	35 60.34%	202 40.48%
Once in a month	56 25.23%	8 7.14%	35 32.71%	2 3.45%	101 20.24%
Total	222 100%	112 100%	107 100%	58 100%	499 100%



Table 3 depicts the frequency of using Consortium by the respondents of the Universities of Punjab and Himachal Pradesh. It is clear from the table that 48.60% PG Students of universities of Himachal Pradesh used 2-3 times in a month than 40.54% PG Students of universities of Punjab. 60.34% Research Scholars of universities of Himachal Pradesh used Consortium 2-3 times in a month than 22.32% Research Scholars of universities of Punjab.

Table 4
Time spend on using consortium

Time spend	Punjab		Himachal Pradesh		Total
	PG Students	Research Scholar	PG Students	Research Scholars	
Less than 1 hr a week	78 35.14%	10 8.93%	40 37.38%	2 3.45%	130 26.05%
2-3 hrs a week	136 61.26%	63 56.25%	65 60.75%	38 65.52%	302 60.52%
5-6 hrs a week	5 2.25%	36 32.14%	2 1.87%	18 31.03%	61 12.22%
7-9 hrs a week	1 0.45%	1 0.89%	0	0	2 0.40%
10-20 hrs a week	2 0.90%	2 1.79%	0	0	4 1%
Over 20 hrs a week	0	0	0	0	0
Total	222 100%	112 100%	107 100%	58 100%	499 100%

Table 4 shows the time spent on Consortium by the respondents of the Universities of Punjab and Himachal Pradesh. It is clear from the table that 61.26% PG Students of universities of Punjab spent 2-3 hours in a week on UGC-INFONET Digital Library Consortium than 60.75% of universities of Himachal Pradesh. 65.52% Research Scholars of universities of Himachal Pradesh spent 2-3 hours in a week on Consortium than 56.25% Research Scholars of universities of Punjab.



Table 5
Place of accessing consortium

Location	Punjab		Himachal Pradesh		Total
	PG Students	Research Scholars	PG Students	Research Scholars	
University Library	121 54.50%	92 82.14%	81 75.70%	53 91.38%	347 69.54%
Department Computer Lab	44 19.82%	15 13.39%	12 11.21%	2 3.45%	73 14.63%
Hostel	57 25.68%	5 4.64	14 13.08%	3 5.17%	79 15.83%
Total	222 100%	112 100%	107 100%	58 100%	499 100%

Table 5 shows the places from where the information was accessed through UGC-INFONET Digital Library Consortium by the respondents of the Universities of Punjab and Himachal Pradesh. Table shows that the majority of the respondents 75.70% PG Students of universities of Himachal Pradesh accessed information from University library compared to 54.50% PG Students of universities of Punjab. 91.38% Research Scholars from Himachal Pradesh accessed information from University library than 82.14% Research Scholars of universities of Punjab.

Table 6
Purpose of using consortium

Purpose	Punjab				Himachal Pradesh			
	PG Students N= 222		Research Scholars N= 112		PG Students N=107		Research Scholars N= 58	
	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
For research purpose	203 91.44%	19 8.56%	24 21.43%	88 78.57%	104 97.20%	3 2.80%	11 18.97%	47 81.03%



For UGC-NET exam	124 55.86%	98 44.14%	109 97.32%	3 2.68%	55 51.40%	52 48.60%	56 96.55%	2 3.45%
For publishing Articles/Books	211 95.05%	11 4.95%	67 59.82%	45 40.18%	102 95.33%	5 4.67%	44 75.86%	14 24.14%
For keeping up-to-date subject information	170 76.58%	52 23.42%	97 86.61%	15 13.39%	74 69.16%	33 30.84%	47 81.03%	11 18.97%
For finding relevant information	147 66.22%	75 33.78%	65 58.04%	47 41.96%	72 67.29%	35 32.71%	29 50.00%	29 50.00%
For completion of assignments & seminars	107 48.20%	115 51.80%	109 97.32%	3 2.68%	42 39.25%	65 60.75%	57 98.28%	1 1.72%

The respondents used Consortium for different academic purposes and many used it for more than one purpose which is shown in the table 6. It is clear from the table that 60.75% PG Students of universities of Himachal Pradesh used for completion of assignments and seminars than 51.80% PG Students of universities of Punjab. 2.68% Research Scholars of universities of Punjab used for completion of assignments and seminars than 1.72% Research Scholars of universities of Himachal Pradesh. Table also shows that 4.95% PG Students of universities of Punjab used for publishing articles and books than 4.67% PG Students of universities of Himachal Pradesh whereas 40.18% Research Scholars of universities of Punjab used for publishing articles and books than 37.72% Research Scholars of universities of Punjab.

Table 7
Problems faced by the users

Problems	Punjab				Himachal Pradesh			
	PG Students N= 222		Research Scholars N= 112		PG Students N=107		Research Scholars N= 58	
	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes



Slow access speed	139 62.61%	83 37.39%	66 58.93%	46 41.07%	71 66.36%	36 33.64%	32 55.17%	26 44.83%
Difficulty in finding relevant information	165 74.32%	57 25.68%	84 75.00%	28 25.00%	85 79.44%	22 20.56%	46 79.31%	12 20.69%
Lack of knowledge	200 90.09%	22 9.91%	107 95.54%	5 4.46%	98 91.59%	9 8.41%	53 91.38%	5 8.62%
Technical problems	182 81.98%	40 18.02%	96 85.71%	16 14.29%	86 80.37%	21 19.63%	53 91.38%	5 8.62%
Frequent power cut	213 95.95%	9 4.05%	111 99.11%	1 0.89%	103 96.26%	4 3.74%	56 96.55%	2 3.45%
Lack of assistance by library staff	215 96.85%	7 3.15%	103 91.96%	9 8.04%	103 96.26%	4 3.74%	53 91.38%	5 8.62%

Table 7 signifies the problems faced while accessing the information by the respondents from the Universities of Punjab and Himachal Pradesh. It is clear from the table 37.39% PG Students of universities of Punjab than 33.64% PG Students of universities of Himachal Pradesh considered that slow access speed of internet was the problem they faced in using Consortium. 44.83% Research Scholars of universities of Himachal Pradesh than 41.07% Research Scholars of universities of Punjab considered that slow access speed of internet was the problem they faced in using Consortium.

Table 8
Satisfaction level of users with coverage of journals

Satisfaction Level	Punjab		Himachal Pradesh		
	PG Students	Research Scholars	PG Students	Research Scholars	Total
Fully Satisfied	40 18.02%	14 12.50%	38 35.51%	14 24.14%	154 19.59%



Partially Satisfied	157 70.72%	85 75.89%	57 53.27%	32 55.17%	533 67.81%
Least satisfied	22 9.91%	12 10.71%	8 7.48%	8 13.79%	80 10.18%
Not Satisfied	3 1.35%	1 0.89%	4 3.74%	4 6.90%	19 2.42%
Total	222 100%	112 100%	107 100%	58 100%	786 100%

Table 8 shows the satisfaction level with the coverage of journals under the Consortium by the respondents from the Universities of Punjab and Himachal Pradesh. Table shows that 70.72% PG Students of universities of Punjab were partially satisfied with the coverage of journals than 53.27% PG Students of universities of Himachal Pradesh. 75.89% Research Scholars of universities of Punjab were partially satisfied with the coverage of journals than 55.17% Research Scholars of universities of Himachal Pradesh.

7. Findings

- Majority of the respondents 334 (69.29%) from Universities of Punjab and 165 (55.18%) from Universities of Himachal Pradesh were aware about Consortium
- Majority of the Research Scholars from the Universities of Himachal Pradesh (48.83%) have 2 years experience of use of use of than the Research Scholars from the Universities of Punjab (36.61%).
- Majority of the Research Scholars from the Universities of Himachal Pradesh (81.03%) used consortium for research purpose in comparison to Research Scholars from Punjab (78.57%).
- Majority of the PG Students from the Universities of Himachal Pradesh (60.75%) used Consortium for completion of assignments and seminars in comparison to PG Students from Punjab (51.80%).
- 44.83% Research Scholars from the Universities of Himachal Pradesh felt that slow access speed of internet was the problem they faced in accessing followed by Research Scholars from Punjab (41.07%).
- Majority of the respondents were partially satisfied with the coverage of Journals under the Consortium.

8. Conclusion



The information revolution has brought about major changes in almost all the sectors of day to day life since the last decade. The new technologies have not only transformed the shape of modern libraries but created many exciting possibilities and opportunities. It has rapidly digitalized the ways of information gathering in various academic and research processes of the universities. This study conducted in five major university libraries of Punjab and Himachal Pradesh clearly reflects that the academic community needs to accept and adapt new technology and electronic information skills in order to effectively utilize the wide variety of e-resources available to them. It is observed that the University Central Libraries and the Departmental computer labs are the most frequent places for accessing the Consortium. Majority of the users feel that the e-resources is the best way to gain information easily and without much expense. It also helps them to save their time and money. Majority of the respondents therefore desire that the Consortium should subscribe more e-resources in addition to the currently available e- resources. It has been found that PG students are slightly unaware about Consortium. In this context, it is suggested that the libraries should alert users beforehand about the training program schedule so that maximum users can get benefit from the training. The timing of internet sessions should be increased. The university libraries should also introduce Electronic Document Delivery Services (EDDS) for the benefit of the users.

References

- Bakkiraj, J. & Sathiyamurthy M.G. (2014). A Study on Use of E-Resources and UGC-INFONET Consortium by Faculties, Research Scholars and Post Graduate Students of Annamalai University, Tamilnadu. *Journal of Advances in Library and Information Science*, 3(2), 121-125.
- Bedi, Shalu & Sharma, Kiran (2008). Library consortia: A step forward the information society. http://eprints.rclis.org/11395/1/Shalu_Bedi_and_Kiran_Sharma_LIBRARY_CONSORTIA.pdf
- Hanchinal, V.B. Awareness and usage of E-resources of NLIST Consortium: a study with reference to academic colleges of Mumbai". *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)* 2340. <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/2340>
- Harish Kumar (2014). Use of UGC-INFONET Digital Library Consortium Resources by Guru Nanak Dev University Library Users. *Asian Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies*, 2(8), 171-174.
- Mistri, S.K. (2018). Use of E-Resources in the e-Shodh Sindhu Consortium: A Study of North Bengal University Library Users. *SRELS Journal of Information Management*, 55(6), 330-333



Ranganathan, C. (2013). Utilization of UGC-INFONET E - Journal Access By Research Scholars of Bharathidasan University in Trichurappalli: A Case Study. International Journal of Engineering Research & Technology, 2(4), 2162-2174

Suman and Sharma, Sanjeev (2016). Use of INDEST - AICTE Consortium in the Mahatma Gandhi Central Library of Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee". SSARSC International Journal of Library Information Network and Knowledge, 1(1), 1-22