USE OF ELECTRONIC JOURNALS BY THE FACULTY MEMBERS AND RESEARCH SCHOLARS AT THE OSMANIA UNIVERSITY: A STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The present study explores usage of e-Journals available at Osmania University, which are provided by UGC-INFONET of INFLIBNET digital library consortia. The present paper investigates the use of e-Journals by Faculty members, Research Scholars at Osmania University through IP based connectivity, the study has revealed that the statistical data is collected from the year 2005 to 2013 based on the statistical data, the usage of e-journals year wise is examined, and publisher's wise article were downloaded is presented in the tabular form. The data reveals that users are more utilising the e-journals like SciFinder, Elsevier ScienceDirect etc. SciFinder which provides e-journals exclusively under the subject chemistry. The paper also examined on the important common gateway JCCC, which helps users to access 8500+ in a single platform by using various search methods by Faculty members, Research Scholars etc, they are benefiting more with these e-Journals for their scholarly work and research activity. The findings of the study will certainly help the other university libraries in India to plan their e-journals for effective use by their Faculty Members and Research Scholars.

Keywords: e-Journals, e-Resources, User Awareness on e-Resources, Online Publishers

INTRODUCTION

Electronic journals also known as, e-journals or electronic serials, are scholarly journals or intellectual magazines which can be accessed through electronic transmission. In practice, it means that they are usually published on the Web. They are specialized form of electronic documents. The purpose of e-journals is providing the material for academic research study, and they are formatted approximately like journal articles in traditional printed journals. Being in electronic form, articles sometimes contain metadata that can be entered into
specialized databases, such as DOAJ or OACI, as well as the databases and search-engines for academic discipline concerned.

Most commercial journals are subscription-based, or allow pay-per-view access. Many universities subscribe in bulk to packages of electronic journals, so as to provide access to e-journals to their students and faculty. It is generally possible for individuals to purchase an annual subscription to a journal, via the original publisher.

An increasing number of e-journals are now available as open access journals; it requires the no subscription charges and offering free full-text articles and reviews to all. Individual articles form electronic journals will also be found online for free in an ad-hoc manner, in working paper archives, personal homepages, and collections in institutional repositories and subject repositories. Some commercial journals do find ways to offer free materials. They may offer their initial issue or issues free, and then charge thereafter. Some give away their book reviews section for free. Others offer the first few pages of each article for free.

Most electronic journals are published in HTML or PDF formats, but some are available in only one of the two formats. A small minority publish in DOC, and a few are starting to add MP3 audio. Some early electronic journals were first published in ASCII text, and some informally published ones continue in that format.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:**

1. To explore the scope of e-journals in libraries
2. To study the need of e-journals in libraries
3. To analyse the usage pattern of e-journals at Osmania University by Faculty and Research Scholars.
4. To find out the usage of e-journal articles downloaded by the identified e-journals of various publishers by faculty and research scholars at Osmania University.

**RELEVANCE AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY:**

The study helps to find out the use of electronic resources by the different publishers. It was felt appropriate to take up a study on the use of electronic resources by the faculty and students of Osmania University. This study may help to take up proper guidelines to keep good acquisition policy information. The scope of the present study is limited to Osmania University, Hyderabad.

**REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE:**

There are a number of studies related to the use of e-journals by the faculty, researchers and students of various institutions and universities. There are many factors which affect the use of e-journals. The related studies discuss some of these issues. The present study is conducted in the light of the previous studies.

Harter and Kim (1996) provide a measure of the impact, specifically on the formal, as opposed to informal, communication process. The study also examines the forms in which
scholars cite e-journals, the accuracy and completeness of citations to e-journals and practical difficulties faced by scholars and researchers who wish to retrieve e-journals through the networks. Ibrahim (2004) reports findings from a survey conducted to measure the use and perception of the United Arab Emirates University (UAEU) faculty members of electronic resources. Analysis confirmed the frequency of use of e-resources and it was found to be low. Reasons cited were lack of time because of the time needed to focus on teaching, lack of awareness to e-resources provided by the library, ineffective communication channels, and language barrier.

Sharma and Gobind (2009) examine the existence of various e-resources databases in Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University Library. They also highlight the preferences and importance of online resources among the teachers and research scholars. Guruprasad and Nikam (2010) report the results of the study covering 16 aerospace organizations of Bangalore, India. Analysis revealed that reading e-journals saved time and helped scientists and engineers to gain more scientific knowledge. All the 16 organizations show a significant difference (P<0.05) in their mean scores. Shukla and Mishra (2011) report that research scholars in Institute of Technology, Banaras Hindu University prefer e-resources against print resources because of its various good features, for their research progress and are looking in future to have more e-resources access within university campus with better internet connectivity.

UGC-INFONET

The UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium was formally launched in December, 2003 by Honorable Dr. A P J Abdul Kalam, the former President of India soon after providing the Internet connectivity to the universities in the year 2003 under the UGC-Infonet programme. The Consortium proved to be a recipe to university libraries which have been discontinuing subscription of scholarly journals because of "Serials Crisis". The term "Serials Crisis" refers to exponential and continuing increase in subscription cost of scholarly journals. The crisis is a result of rise in cost of journals much faster than the rate of inflation, increase in number of journals and the paucity of funds available to the libraries.

The Consortium provides current as well as archival access to more than 8500+ core and peer-reviewed journals and 11 bibliographic databases from 25 publishers and aggregators in different disciplines. The programme has been implemented in phased manner. In the first phase it began in 2004, access to e-resources was provided to 50 universities who had Internet connectivity under the UGC-Infonet Connectivity programme of the UGC. In the second phase, 50 more universities were added to the programme in the year 2005. So far 160 Universities out of 181 that come under the purview of UGC, have been provided differential access to subscribed e-resources. These e-resources covers almost all subject disciplines including arts, humanities, social sciences, physical sciences, chemical Sciences, life sciences, computer sciences, mathematics and statistics, etc. The programme is wholly funded by the UGC and executed by the INFLIBNET (Information and Library Network) Centre, Ahmedabad, Gujarat.

The benefit of subscription to e-resources would also be extended to the colleges, to begin with the College for Potential with Excellence (CPE) and autonomous colleges. The Consortium has also launched its "Associate Membership Programme" wherein private
universities and other research organizations are welcomed to join the Consortium for selected e-resources.

Table:1 shows the list of publishers who are providing electronic Journals on various subjects and also shows the number of journals covered under UGC-INFONET Digital Library Consortia.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S NO.</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>URL of Journal</th>
<th>No of Journals</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>American Chemical Society</td>
<td><a href="http://pubs.acs.org/">http://pubs.acs.org/</a></td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>American Institute of Physics</td>
<td><a href="http://journals.aip.org/">http://journals.aip.org/</a></td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>American Physical Society</td>
<td><a href="http://publish.aps.org/browse.php">http://publish.aps.org/browse.php</a></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Annual Reviews</td>
<td><a href="http://arjournals.annualreviews.org/">http://arjournals.annualreviews.org/</a></td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Cambridge University Press</td>
<td><a href="http://journals.cambridge.org/">http://journals.cambridge.org/</a></td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Economic &amp; Political Weekly</td>
<td><a href="http://ebw.in/">http://ebw.in/</a></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Emerald</td>
<td><a href="http://www.emeraldinsight.com/">http://www.emeraldinsight.com/</a></td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Institute of Physics</td>
<td><a href="http://iopscience.iop.org/journals">http://iopscience.iop.org/journals</a></td>
<td>46</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
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</tr>
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<td>12</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.ams.org/mathscinet/">http://www.ams.org/mathscinet/</a></td>
<td>1 Database</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Nature</td>
<td><a href="http://nature.com/">http://nature.com/</a></td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
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<td>198</td>
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<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Project Euclid</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Royal Society of Chemistry</td>
<td><a href="http://rsc.org/">http://rsc.org/</a></td>
<td>29 + 6 Databases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>ScienceDirect (10 Subject Collection)</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>SciFinder Scholar</td>
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<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Web of Science</td>
<td><a href="http://apps.isiknowledge.com/">http://apps.isiknowledge.com/</a></td>
<td>1 Database</td>
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</table>

The users search and browse according to the Publisher wise or Journal wise or Title wise etc. in the GUI search box provided in the home page of UGC-INFONET digital library consortia for retrieval of information from particular Journal and its archival data as shown in the Figure:1.

Figure: 1 - UGC-INFONET Home Page

Source: http://www.inflibnet.ac.in/econ/search.php
STATISTICAL INFORMATION ABOUT UTILIZATION OF E-JOURNALS

Osmania University providing 8500+ e-journals through UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortia to its Faculty members and Research Scholars. Initially in the year 2005 when it was started the users are not attracted more to use these resources, since the year 2008 onwards due to awareness programmes conducted in regular intervals, the usage is increased. Presently Research Scholars, Faculty Members are accessing and utilizing the e-journals. The Statistical data in table (2) shows in tabular form of different publishers articles were downloaded in various subjects from the year 2005 to 2013.

The detailed statistical data from the year 2005 to 2013 is presented in the table: 2 regarding the data usage and data downloads, publisher wise under various subjects.

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<th>2009</th>
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<td>6245</td>
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<td>850</td>
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<td>289</td>
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<td>257451</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: http://www.inflibnet.ac.in/econ/erams

A cursory glance at Table:2 reveals that out of 22 publishers articles downloaded by faculty members and research scholars from 2005 to 2013 were studied. Out of which ScienceDirect
got highest downloads (2,09,887) followed by J-Gate custom content consortia (1,88,906), Springer (1,14,552), SciFinder (1,10,240) etc and least downloads was Project Muse (26).

**Figure 2 - Publishers wise articles downloaded by users**

![Figure 2](http://www.inlibnet.ac.in/econ/erams/)

*Source: http://www.inlibnet.ac.in/econ/erams/*

In the table (2) and graph (2) it is showing that users are accessing more science journals when compared to social science online journals. Users were downloaded almost 2.1 lakhs of articles from only single publisher by 'ScienceDirect' it provides 1036 journals since from the year 2005-13. Users are benefited more with single publisher 'SciFinder' it publishes only Chemistry journals and downloaded more than 1.1 lakhs articles for their research activity.

**Figure 3 - Year wise Articles downloaded from SciFinder**

![Figure 3](http://www.inlibnet.ac.in/econ/erams/)

*Source: http://www.inlibnet.ac.in/econ/erams/*

Figure (3) shows that the number of articles downloaded from SciFinder publisher since the year 2005. Initially, upto the year 2010 SciFinder provided only 36 journals, based on the usage, importance and the status of Osmania University SciFinder publisher added more than 1000 journals full articles with archival data since 1998. Since 2011 users are accessing almost 1036 journals through ScienceDirect publisher’s website. Due to conduct of various awareness programmes the usage is increased tremendously.

In the table (3) and graph (3) shows that the increase in usage of e-Journals and also downloading number of articles from various publishers website since the year 2005 to 2013. Due to the awareness in availability of e-Journals through this consortia and also use criteria and search strategies, faculty members and research scholars are downloaded journal articles reveals that it is increasing year by year.
Table: 3 and Figure: 4 on Number of Articles downloaded (year wise)

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<td>TOTAL</td>
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<td>1002632</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: http://www.inflibnet.ac.in/econ/erams/

JCCC - Common Gateway

Since 2008 onwards UGC-INFONET introduced a common platform JCCC (J-gate Custom Content Consortia) to access all the e-journals provided through various publishers in a single gateway. The website www.jgateplus.com users were benefitted more and it also saves time to retrieve information through a single way. The figure (4) shown below website users can access information in various forms like Basic Search, Journal Search and Advanced search and this website includes other facilities like to attach a list of journals subscribed by the Institutions in "My Library Journals" so that users can also have a look about their institutions subscribed Journals. One more important feature is "My Favourite Journals" added in this website, users can also select and store some of the important journals who regularly access for their information needs.

Figure 4: J-Gate@UGC INFONET

Source: http://jgateplus.com/search
The figure (5) shows that, total number of articles downloaded through common gateway since the year 2008 the users are benefiting more through this website, it also saves the user time. The study reveals that almost 1.9 lakhs articles were downloaded in various subjects through this gateway.

CONCLUSION

Osmania University providing different e-resources through its IP based connectivity and also through Internet. Electronic Journals are accessed by faculty members, research scholars, etc. The day-by-day accessibility is increasing to e-journals, the statistical data is presented in the table shows that users are utilizing the e-journals for their research and scholarly communication.

The several awareness programmes are conducted in collaboration with INFLIBNET, to the research scholars, faculty members etc, to increase the usage of access to these e-journals. The present study further recommends that there is a need to conduct regular awareness programmes, trainings, workshops to the faculty and research scholars to improve the accessibility and scholarly communication further more in near future.

REFERENCES

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