

# Exploring the UGC Infonet E-Resources Consortia on the Universities Library in India with Special Reference to Jharkhand: A Study

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**ABSTRACT:** Due to impact of ICT, electronic resources are becoming more popular for research community as well as easy to use and consistent also. The electronic resources make the e-learning operative, which advances the attention among the students as well as staff, and encourage them for the independent learning. This paper discusses the awareness and utilization of e-Resources and UGC Infonet consortium in the users of Universities of Jharkhand in Eastern India. Concept of e-resources apart from this paper also covers the consortium in Indian context in brief. Today the value of Information and users need have increased enormously so much, no single publisher or institute fulfills their need. So that important of consortia is much more.

**Keywords:** Online Resources, Consortia, E- Journals, U.G.C. Infonet Consortia

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## 1. Introduction

The necessity, use and cost of information are increasing day by day. And budget of resource centers are shrinking, for fulfillment of this gap born a new term consortia. This era is digital era, where libraries are moving towards smaller and smaller but with rich of information resources. We can say that the information are stored, produced and disseminate in the form of bits and bytes. Library is based on digitized data of information that has gradually replaced paper-based records. Internet plays an important role in making these electronic journals available to the end users on their resource center. Libraries are communal institutions whose aims are to provide information services to the people. Libraries play a very special role in the digital era. The plan of the information centers today is to provide services not only to its registered members but also to every member of the community. In the present era computer and Internet plays an important role for the dynamic functioning of information technology. The growth of Internet technology is directly linked with the development of life and society. The major objectives of library consortia are to make best use of availability and accessibility of resources and services to a wider category of users in a very less budget. This study is based on use and awareness of only U.G.S.C. Infonet consortium on the users of Universities of Jharkhand state.

## 2. Definition of Consortium

A large number of definitions available a very few given below:

According to Online free dictionary (2013) an association or a combination, as of businesses, financial institutions, or investors, for the purpose of engaging in a joint venture. Or a cooperative arrangement among groups or institutions: a library consortium. According to Wikipedia, (2013) A consortium is an association of two or more individuals, companies, organizations or governments (or any combination of these entities) with the objective of participating in a common activity or pooling their resources for achieving a common goal. Or Consortium is a Latin word, meaning 'partnership, association or society' and derives from consors 'partner', itself from con- 'together' and sors 'fate', meaning owner of means or comrade.

As Dr. Ranganathan says that "Library is a growing organism" commands the whole world to the wave of Consortium. If the library becomes the part of the Consortium they can spread their wings all over the world with more resources and services.

## 3. Need of Consortium

The following few factors that necessitate the need for building library. E-Journal consortia are as follows:

- The rapid growth of electronic resources, information as made it more and more impossible for purchase the individual library to all the relevant information. The outcome has been that libraries have become more and more dependent on inter lending in order to fulfill the necessities of their users.
- The developments in scholarly publishing and price policies of publishers posed new challenges and opportunities for academic libraries in purchasing and managing the serials within their restricted budget. So, to solve the ongoing serial crisis, it is essential for a common infrastructure a firm to share the resources among libraries.
- The overwhelming application of new technologies, new methods of information retrieval/dissemination has contributed to rapid escalating user expectations in the sense that the users expect library information to be delivered as fast as any other information they need.
- The rapid technological developments have resulted in a constant pressure for new hardware, software and education and training of library staff.
- Better sharing of existing resources and jointly acquiring new resources at great savings.
- Providing enhanced library services with an emphasis on access to new electronic resources including databases and services offered through the Internet and the www.
- To leverage resources by sharing existing collections or resources through virtual union catalogues and material delivery services that provides reciprocal access from member library holdings.

To reduce the cost of member library operations by obtaining coup purchase price for information products. Prakash, A. Jaya. (2005).

## 4. Advantages of Library Consortia

With the help of library consortia e-resources provide access to wider number of resources at least cost.

- It will provide integrated access allowing greater search capabilities across multiple databases.
- Through Library Consortia, time efficiency is gained.
- Staff development and interaction enhances the quality of services.
- To economics cost of organization and management of libraries.
- Optimum utilization of funds.
- Available 24x7 hours.

- No requirement of space for E-journals. Bhaskaran, C. (2009).

## **5. U.G.C. Infonet Consortia**

The UGC INFONET Digital Library Consortium is major initiative of University Grants Commission (UGC) to bring qualitative change in academic libraries in India. It was formally launched in December 2003 by Honorable Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam, the then President of India, soon after providing the Internet connectivity to the universities in the year 2003 under the UGC-Infonet programme. It is a national initiative for providing access to scholarly electronic resources including full-text and bibliographic databases in all subject disciplines to academic community in India. It facilitates access to high quality e-resources to academia in the country to improve teaching, learning and research.

The Consortium provides current as well as archival access to more than 5,000 core and peer-reviewed journals and nine bibliographic databases in different disciplines from 23 publishers and aggregators. The access to all major e-resources was given 50 universities in first phase in the year 2004. It has now been extended to 157 universities in three different phases.

In terms of number of users, the UGC-INFONET Digital Library Consortium is the largest Consortium in India with a vision and plan to reach out to all universities and colleges affiliated to these universities, over a period of time.

## **6. Aims and Objectives UGC Infonet**

The main objective of the UGC INFONET Digital Library Consortium is to provide access to qualitative electronic resources including full-text and bibliographic databases to academic institutions at a lower rates of subscription. The major aims and objectives of the UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium are as follows:

- To provide access to a high-quality and scholarly electronic resources to a large number of academic institutions including universities and colleges at substantially lower rates of subscription and at most favorable terms and conditions.
- To promote rapid and efficient access to scholarly content to the users and to create and promote use of ICT in teaching and learning in universities in India.
- To extend the benefit of Consortium to its associate members including private universities and colleges.
- To impart training to the users, librarians, research scholars and faculty members of the institutions in use of electronic resources with an aim to optimize their usage.
- To promote use of e-e-resources with gradual decrease in print subscription.
- To promote interaction and inter-library cooperation amongst the participating universities.
- To evaluate the usage of the subscribed resources and to identify new resources that are required to be subscribed under the programme.
- To bring qualitative change in teaching, learning and research with an aim to meet the ever growing challenges of globalization of higher education.
- To increase the research productivity of the institutions both in terms of quality and quantity of publications.

## **7. Benefits of UGC Infonet**

The consortia-based subscription to e-resources is a viable solution for increasing the access to electronic resources across institutions at a lower rate of subscription. Major benefits of UGC-INFONET Digital Library Consortium are as follows:

- I. The Consortium acts as a single-window service for a large number of universities with their diverse research and academic interest.
- II. The Consortium, with its collective strength of participating institutions, attracts highly discounted rates of subscription with most favorable terms of agreement for a wider range of e-resources. Most of the e-publishers have responded positively to

he call of the Consortium. The rates offered to the consortium are lower by 60% to 99% depending upon the category of institutions.

III. Users have immediate access to material previously not subscribed to, at no incremental cost for accessing back files.

IV. It improves the existing library services and reduces the subscription cost.

V. The research productivity of beneficiary institutions is expected to improve with increased access to international databases and full-text resources.

VI. The Consortium is expected to trigger remarkable increase in sharing of both print and electronic resources amongst participating library through J-GATE Custom Contents for Consortia (JCCC).

VII. The Consortium has been opened-up for all other universities / educational institutions through its “Associate Membership Programme”. Private universities and other institutions can join the Consortium and get the benefit of not only highly discounted rates of subscription but also the favorable terms and conditions.

VIII. Members of the Consortium have the benefit of cap on the annual increase in the rates of subscription. While the usual increase in price of e-resources vary from 15 to 20%, the consortium enjoys the cap on increase in price ranging from 5% to 8%.

IX. The Consortium is offered better terms of agreement for use, archival access and preservation of subscribed electronic resources, which would not have been possible for any single institutions.

X. Since the subscribed resources is accessible online in electronic format, the beneficiary institutions have less pressure on space requirement for storing and managing print-based library resources. Moreover, all problems associated with print media such as their wear and tear, location, shelving, binding, organizing, etc. are not an issue for electronic resources. UGC Infonet (2013).

## **8. Review of Related Literature**

Before started the research I have studied the following earlier relevant research and case studies, which is beneficial for further my study.

Bhatt, R. K. (2010) studied that the use and availability of resources on the UGC-Infonet consortia by research scholars and faculty members of University of Delhi in the department of History and Political Science. And found that e-resources are becoming more popular and considered as a better substitute of print journals. The prompt access to large array of e- resources available in specialized/interest areas helps in the information, knowledge building and accelerating research activities. It can be inferred from the study that faculty members and research scholars need to accept and adapt new technology.

Chartron (2001) studied electronic resources and documentary consortia of French scientific institutions and observed that the field of documentary consortia in France is not very organized and the absence of a determined policy concerning electronic scientific documentation at national or any other level has resulted in a constructivist approach, often leading to reorganization of equipment that may culminate in wasted energy, time and money. Hewitson (2002) conducted the qualitative study about the use and awareness of electronic information services by academic staff at Leeds Metropolitan University and observed that the internet is the most popular information source but the factors affecting use at the expense of subscription-based services are complex. University staff, especially those with low level IT skills, frequently uses the internet because it is easy to access and provides instant results. Crawford et.al. (2004) conducted the study of use and awareness of electronic information services by students at Glasgow Caledonian University and observed that growth in usage in the relatively short period between the two surveys and subject area studied proved to be the main determinant of EIS usage, followed by integration into the programme. Manda (2005) studied rapid assessment of conditions under which electronic resources are used in academic institutions in Tanzania and reported that availability of basic technical and human resources for electronic resources access and use, limited access to PCs for student use, variations among institutions in accessing electronic resources problems in marketing electronic resources, inadequacy in enduser training; limited levels of use of PERI resources. Chauhan and Chand (2007) studied the UGC-Infonet E-Journals Consortium and Indian Academics and found that access speed and other difficulties need to be addressed appropriately by higher authorities in consultation with ERNET and effort has had a noticeable impact on the research and academic community. Wilson (2008) studied about the information users: past, present and future and reported that there is a disconnection between research and practice, to a significant extent. Nicholas et.al. (2009) reported that online use and information seeking behavior of institutional researchers of UK. He used Deep log analysis techniques and evaluated the use of Oxford

Journals database in regard to life sciences and found the subject and institutional differences was that they were sometimes considerable, which points to the danger of generalizing about usage and information seeking at the broad subject level. Pathak, S.K. et al. (2004) in this paper draws attention to the importance of consortia and their impact on society, especially in developing countries like India. The present scenario of consortia among university libraries, special libraries and different technical Institute libraries in India is discussed and found a consortium plays a vital role, especially in developing countries such as India, and the success of consortia very much depends on the members of consortia. The published literature and the discussion above give every indication that libraries will continue to form consortia. The library consortium, on the basis of strength of numbers of institutions, offers strong and healthy. business growth opportunities to the electronic publishers and attracts the best possible price and terms of agreement. Arora, Jagdish (2003) find out the efforts made by Indian libraries and institutions towards formation of consortia of libraries for buying access to electronic resources. Cooperation amongst institutions for sharing their library resources has been practiced for decades. consortia-based subscriptions” to journals everywhere in the world. Shared subscriptions to electronic resources through consortia of libraries is a feasible strategy to meet the pressures such as diminishing budgets, increased user demands, and rising costs of journals. The libraries and information centers, with their diminishing (or at best static) financial allocations, have to consider new ways to consolidate global resources in order to maximize their limited financial resources. These developments gave impetus to the formation of “shared subscriptions” or “consortia-based subscriptions” to journals worldwide. Raza, M. M., et al. (2006) studied that seeks to examine the usage of e-journals by the researchers at Aligarh Muslim University. The survey reveals that all the researchers are aware of e-journals in AMU. From this survey, the investigator has been able to find out that many research scholars are consulting e-journals from their departmental labs and computer centers, not only for research purposes but also to update their own knowledge. And find most of the researchers are aware of UGC-INFONET consortia provided by AMU, as well as JSTOR. Most of the researchers are not satisfied with the e-journals available related to their subject. However, it is a common feeling that e-journals will not replace the traditional print format but rather complement it as a new medium of communication. Kupryte, R., et al. (2005) studied goals, and development of eIFL.net in its five years of existence. The authors outline what it has achieved so far and provide an overview of the main challenges that developing countries face in accessing quality e-resources. Some success stories will demonstrate concrete accomplishments of the organization and its participating countries. All this considered, eIFL.net, together with the partnership and understanding of information providers and the enlightened vision and support of its funders, keeps moving the sustainability of national member consortia and the global eIFL.net coalition. Bostick, Sharon L. (2001) this article will explore library consortia in the United States, with particular focus on academic libraries. Libraries in the United States offer a rich and varied array of services and collections. Although the libraries often differ in focus, they all share a concern about the cost of resources and access for their clientele. Libraries in the United States also have a deep tradition of sharing their resources, often in the form of consortia. Alexander, Adrian W. (1999) studies library cooperation in America, with emphasis on the latter half of the 20th century. Motives for library cooperation, along with potential obstacles and keys to success are identified, and a nexus between service quality improvement and library cooperation is noted. The role of library consortia in the current electronic environment is described, with particular emphasis on the 1990s, during which the Internet became widely available. Mukherjee et. al. (2010) Studied that the users’ requirement of online journals in general and to know the use of online journals that are available through UGC-Infonet e-journals consortium in particular. A questionnaire survey was conducted amongst 100 research scholars of various departments like history, political science, sociology, psychology and economics at the Faculty of Arts, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi. And find, usage statistics, surveys and feedback always remain effective tools to measure the usage. To enhance the use of e-resources, more awareness programmes should be organized to acquaint them about the facilities and benefits obtainable from electronic format as compared to print. A well defined and proper infrastructure remains to be an encouraging factor for the use of e-resources.

## 9. Objective of Study

1. To know about access to quality electronic resources of universities in Jharkhand in India
2. The staff training and education programs for the maximum utilization of e – resources.
3. How useful existing training programme for users.
4. How useful Consortia to its associate members.
5. Tools and techniques of existing library system, which are used to manage the e – resources to its optimum utilization.
6. The research productivity of the institutions both in terms of quality and quantity of publications.
7. To know awareness of users in university users in Jharkhand in India

## 10. Research Methodology

For fulfillment of objective of study I have applied stratified random sampling method for collection of necessary data. For achieve the purpose of study a survey conducted through questionnaire among library users. The library users in the university may be students, (post graduate and graduate level) research scholars, faculty members and administrative staffs in the state of Jharkhand. In this study I have taken four University of Jharkhand state i.e. Ranchi University Ranchi, Birsa Agricultural University Ranchi, Central University of Jharkhand and Vinoba Bhave University Hazaribagh. The questionnaire related to awareness of electronic resources, uses of UGC Infonet consortium and its necessity and availability in university.

## 11. Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study focuses on the use and awareness of UGC-Infonet consortium on the users of universities of eastern India only for Jharkhand. Attempts have been made to know the information requirements and availability for the users. The main focus of this study is to identify the needs and requirements of users in general and to know the use of UGC-Infonet consortia in university library. The area of study is restricted to users of only universities of Jharkhand. Madhusudhan, Margam (2008).

## 12. Data Analysis and Interpretation

The total numbers of 170 questionnaires are distributed among four universities library users and 149 users provide their response and return data sheet. I processed 149 questionnaires and analyze as follows.

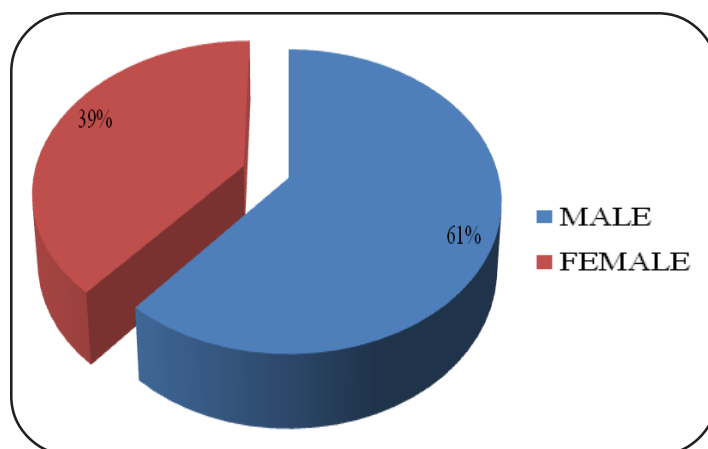


Figure 1. Gender

Here the figure 1 shows that 61% of respondents were male and 39% respondent's female candidates in total respondents. So it is clear that the number of male candidates is more than female candidates.

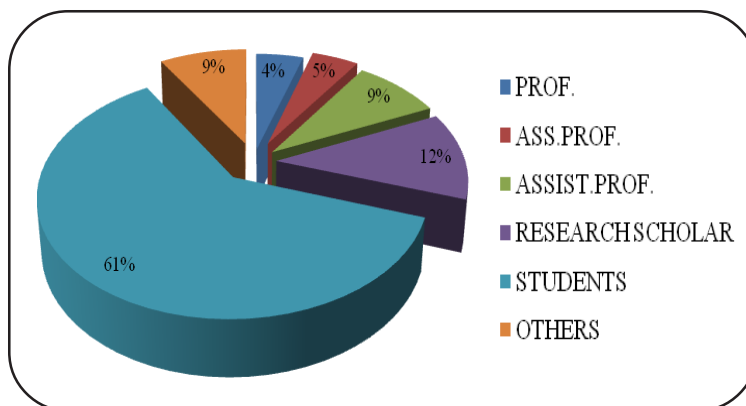


Figure 2. Professions

Figure number 2 shows that the category of respondents according to their profession. Professors 4%, Associate Professors 5%, Assistant Professors 9%, Research Scholars 12%, Students 61% and others 9%. Here it is clear that the student's number of respondents is much more than other category respondents.

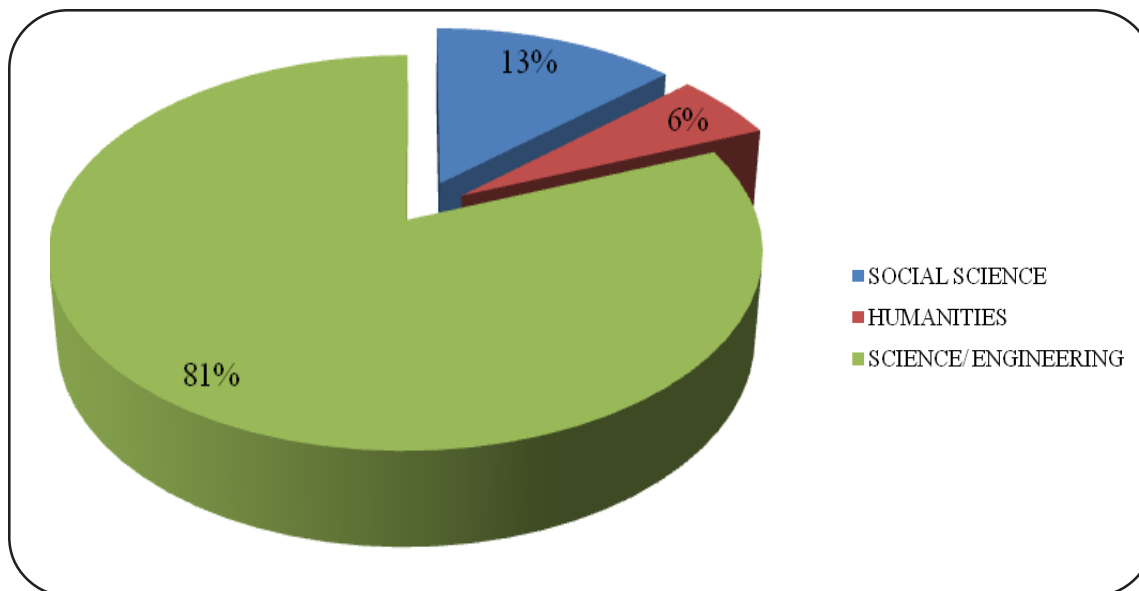


Figure 3. Streams

The table number 3 shows that the streams of respondents. Here 13% respondents are belongs to Social Science stream, 6% respondents are belongs are Humanities and 81% respondents belongs Science and Engineering streams, so it is clear that the number of respondents are much more than others streams respondents.

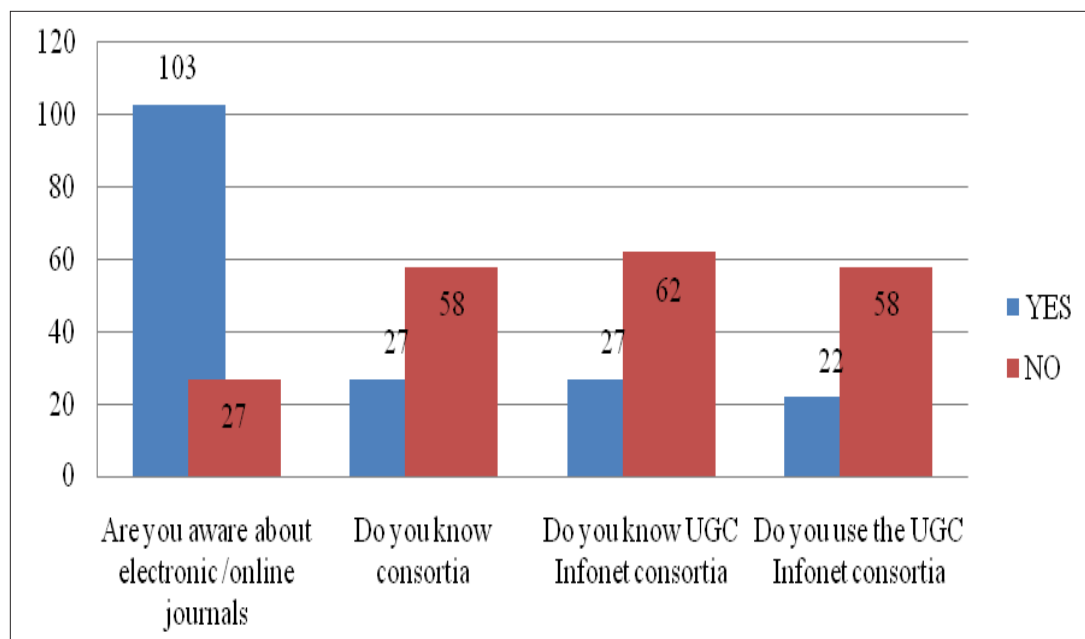


Figure 4. Awareness

The table number 4 shows that the awareness of users about online journals, consortia, UGC Infonet consortia. The figure shows that the awareness of on line journal is good but awareness about consortia and UGC Infonet consortia is poor as well as use is also very less among the users.

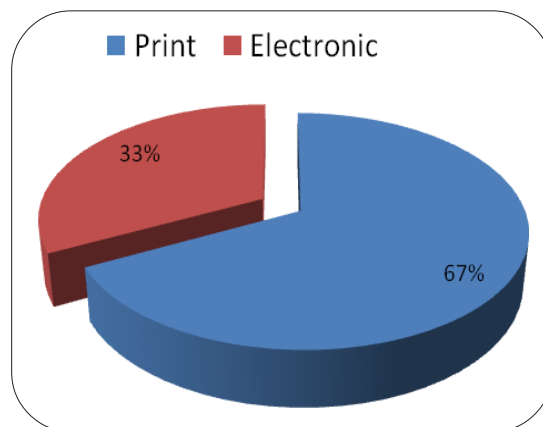


Figure 5. Compatibility with resources

The figure number 5 shows that the compatibility of users with resources, the graph represent only 33% users comfortable with electronic resources rest users 67% is comfort with print resources. So we can say the print document is more useable than electronic document according to this study.

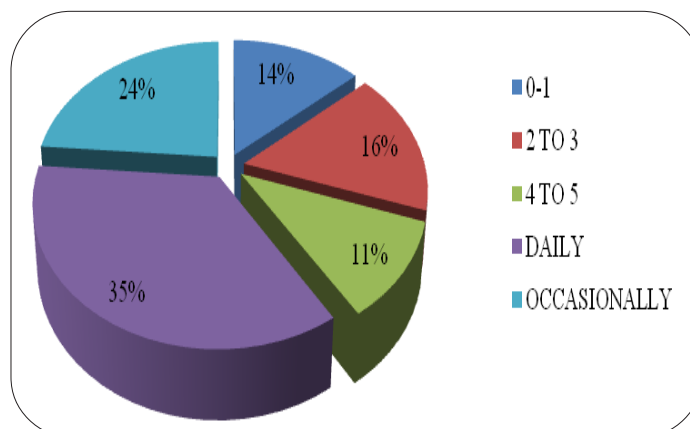


Figure 6. No. of times you visit in central library in a week

The figure number 6 shows that the frequency of users to visit central library in a week. 14% users visits only once in a week, 16% users 2-3 times in a week, 11% users 4-5 times in a week 35% users daily visits and 24% users occasionally visit in central library for fulfillment their needs.

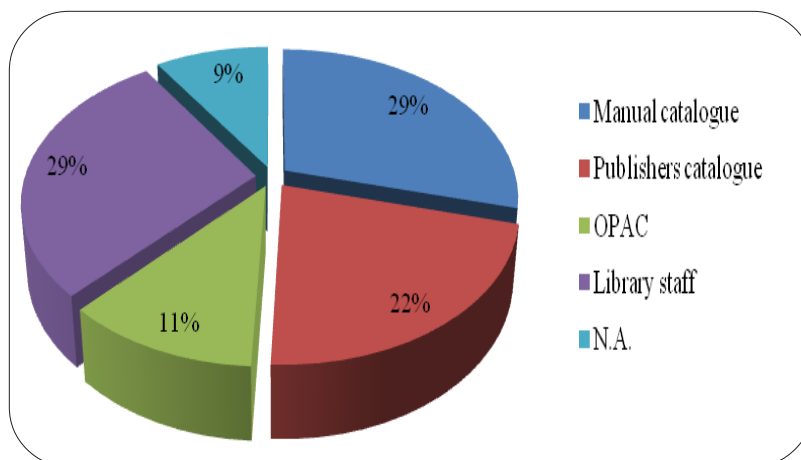


Figure 7. Search methods of relevant information in the library



Figure number 7 shows that the searching methods adopted by users for search their resources. 29% users use manual catalogue card, 22% use publishers catalogue card, 11% users use OPAC for search their resource, 29% user take help library staffs for finding their resource and 9% people don't do response.

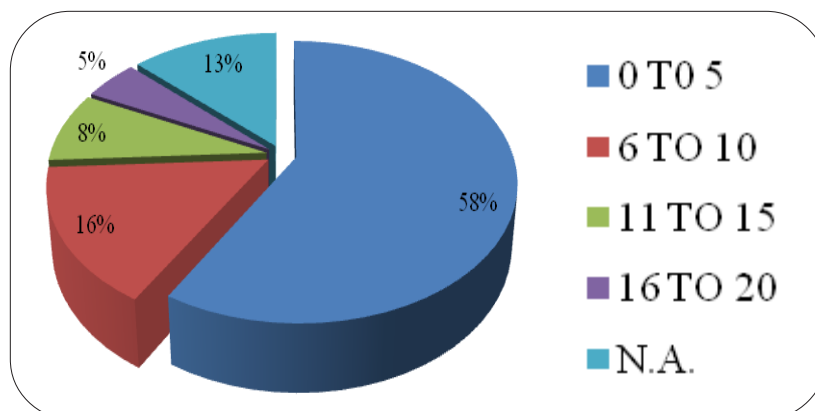


Figure 8. No. of journals use in a week

The figure number 8 shows that the number of journals used by users. Here 58% users use only 0 to 5 journals in a week, 16% users used 6 to 10 journals in a week, 8% users used 11-15 journals in a week, 5% users used 16 to 20 journals in a week and 13% are not sure about this.

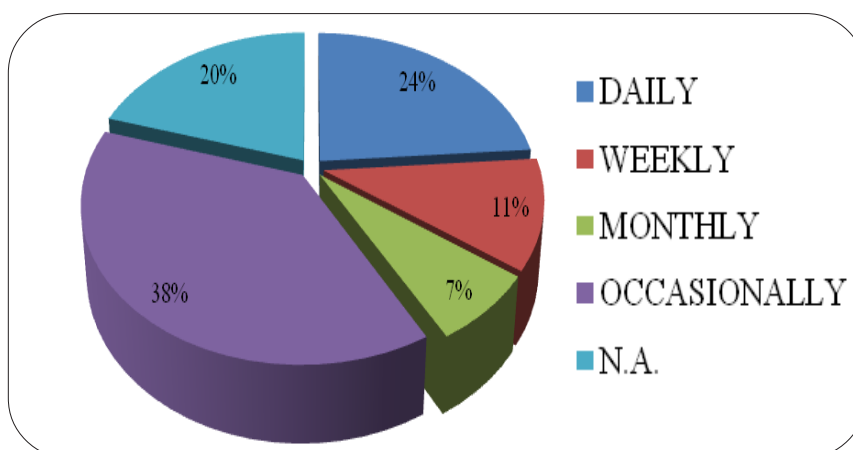


Figure 9. Frequency uses of UGC Infonet Consortia

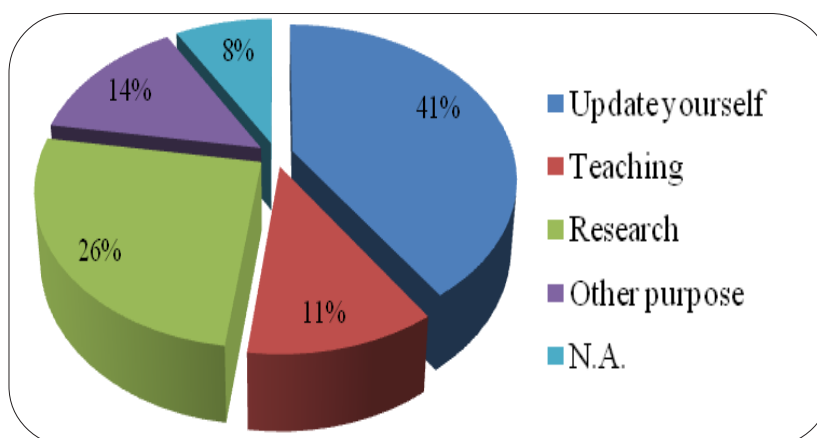


Figure 10. Purpose of use the UGC INFONET Consortia

Figure number 9 shows the frequency of UGC Infonet consortia use by users in a week. 24% users are used daily, 11% users are used weekly, 7% users are used monthly 38% users are used occasionally and 20% users don't know about this. So that we can say the very less number users used GC Infonet consortia.

The Figure number 10 shows that the purpose of users for UGC Infonet consortia. 41% users use for update yourself, 11% users are use UGC Infonet consortia for teaching purpose, 26% users are use for research purpose, 14% users use for many purposes, 8% users are not sure for any specific purposes. So that I can say the use of UGC Infonet consortia is multipurpose.

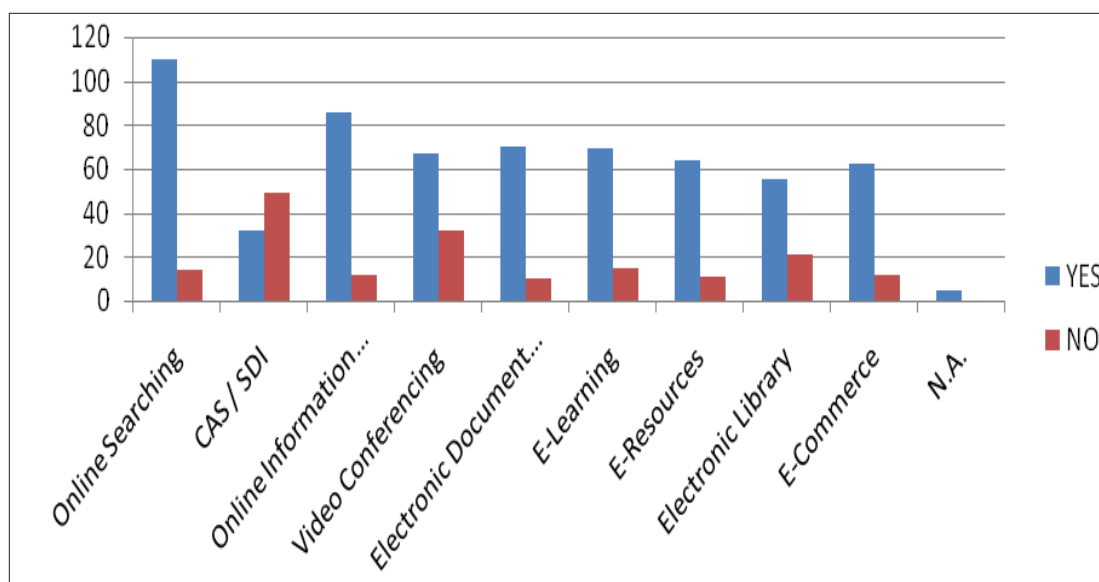


Figure 11. Awareness about services

Figure number 11 shows the awareness of users about Library & Information services. The blue line graph indicates the awareness about services and red line of graph indicates not aware about services. So that it is clear the lot of users aware about services except CAS/SDI. Online searching is most popular, on line retrieval, video conferencing, electronic document delivery, e learning, e resources, electronic library, e commerce etc. And a very less no. of users are not aware about following services.

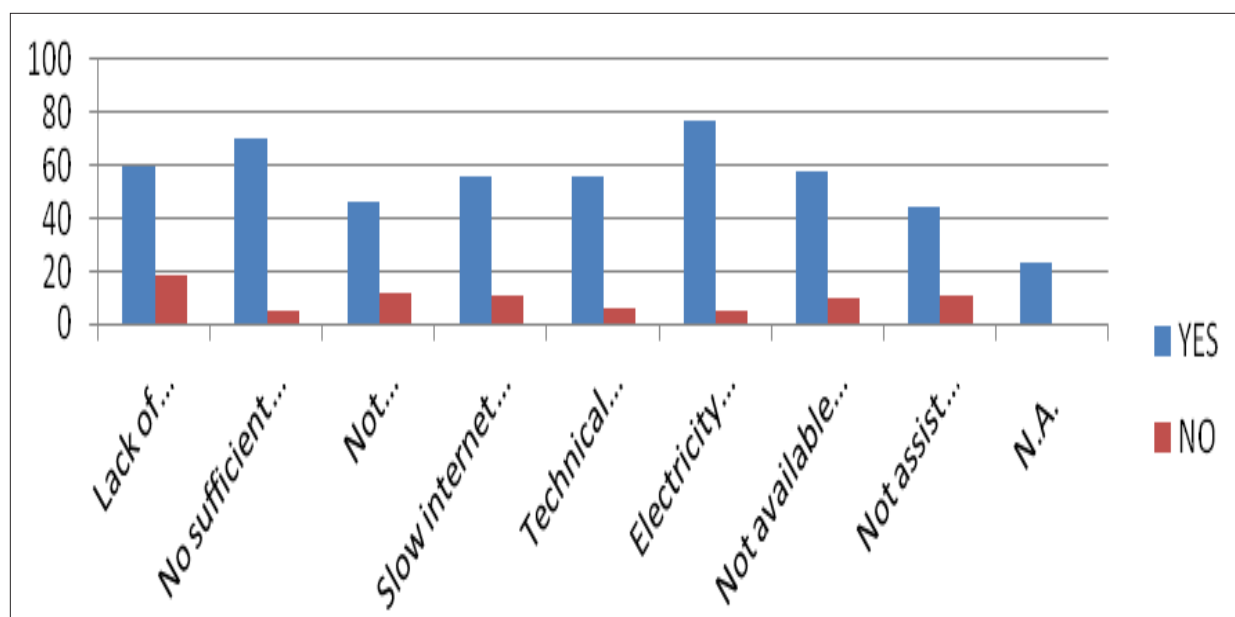


Figure 12. Problem of searching of UGC Infonet

The figure number 12 shows that about the problems affected to the users for use the UGC Infonet consortia. The main problem of users is electricity problem, not sufficient node available in central library, lack of knowledge how to use UGC Infonet consortia, technical problem, not access in library, slow internet speed, relevant information are not available etc.

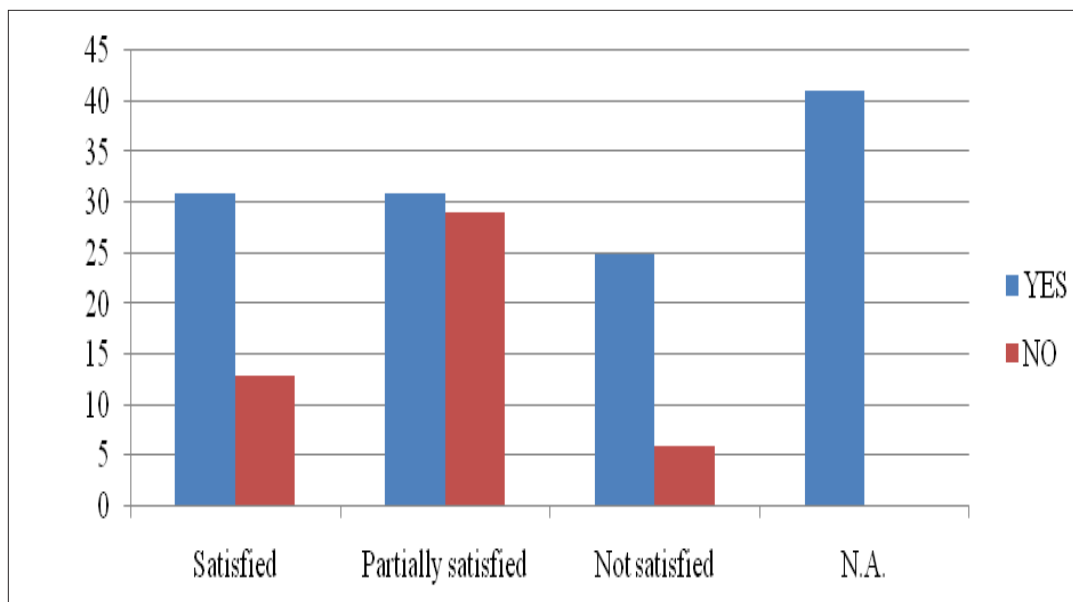


Figure 13. Satisfaction

Here figure number 13 shows the satisfaction about resources includes in UGC Infonet consortia. The lot of users are not opted this question few are satisfied about resources, few are partially satisfied and some users are not satisfied of UGC Infonet. So that I can say the users satisfaction level is good but need awareness and rich resources, infrastructure in library and information centers.

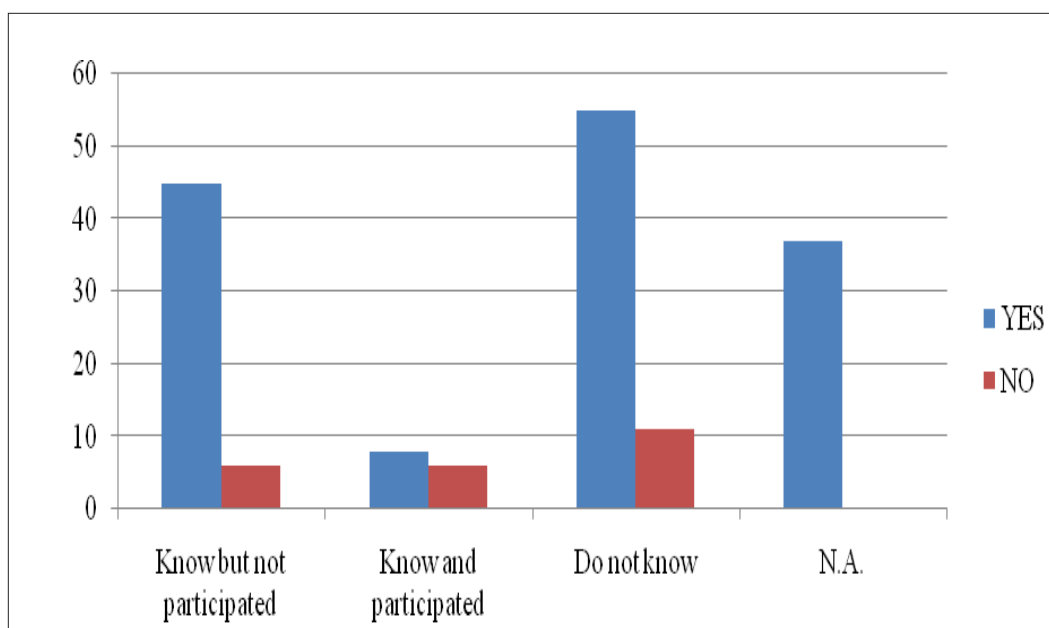


Figure 14. Awareness about UOP

The figure number15 shows the awareness of user about user orientation programme. Here the figure shows the lots of users are not aware about user orientation programme, very few users know and participated in UOP and lot of users know but not participated.

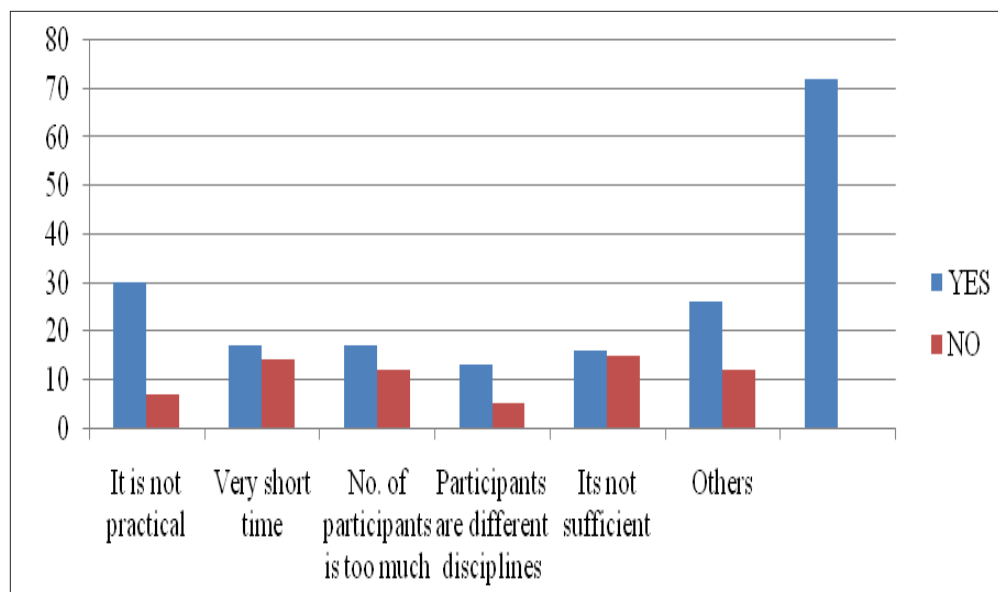


Figure 15. Satisfaction of UOP

Here figure number 15 shows the satisfaction of users during user orientation programme. A very large number of users say that it is not practical, some complain it is very short duration, some complain the number of participant is too much, some users complain the participants are different background so that problem create, some complain it is not very useful. Here it is clear the user orientation programme is not play a very effective role between users lot of users need for restructure about user orientation programme for effective between users.

## Conclusion

The study has conducted for UGC Infonet consortia to assess the availability of resources, user awareness, and available infrastructure in universities of Jharkhand in eastern India. The government spends a big amount to make sure availability of electronic resources in university libraries. The study has shown the importance of electronic resources in development of education and quality of research. The users reply well and found that users aware about electronic resources as well as UGC Infonet consortia, he need more availability of electronic resources in libraries. One thing notable here user's compatibility with print resources is better than electronic resources. To enhance the use of consortia more user's awareness program organized and upgradation of existing library services for maximum use of electronic resources is necessary. One more things about the users are more and more aware about library services but so many problems faced for avail the services. So that we can say the users is partially satisfied with UGC Infonet consortia and he wants more and more advancement in the context of facilities, infrastructures and availability of electronic resources.

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