

Use of N-List E-Resources by the Students of the Arts and Science Colleges in Kanyakumari District, Tamil Nadu

Dr. P. Sheela

Librarian, N.V. K. S. D. College of Education, Attoor, K. K. District, Tamil Nadu

Dr. P. K. Suresh Kumar

Assistant Librarian, Kerala University Library, Thiruvananthapuram 34, pksuresh@yahoo.com

Abstract

National Library and Information Services Infrastructure for Scholarly Content (N-LIST) Project being jointly executed by the e-ShodhSindhu Consortium, INFLIBNET Centre and the INDEST-AICTE Consortium, IIT Delhi provides access to e-resources to students, researchers and faculty from colleges and other beneficiary institutions. This paper investigates the awareness and use pattern of N-List resources by the Students of the Arts and Science Colleges in Kanyakumari District, Tamil Nadu, India. The sample of the study consists of 100 students – 80 females and 20 males -- of different disciplines. The study found that though 70 percent of the students are familiar with N-List e-resources and they are used for various purposes, the problems encountered by them like the difficulty to find relevant information, slow speed in accessing information, server problems, lack of ICT knowledge and limited access to computer systems warrant immediate remedial measures.

Keywords: Use of e-resources; N-List; Arts and Science College students, Kanyakumari District; Tamil Nadu

1. Introduction

In the present era, electronic resources are easily available due to advancements in technology. Users prefer e-resources rather than printed materials due to easy access, time saving, more economical and round the clock availability. Publishers also favour e-publications due to the innumerable advantages they offer. Libraries, especially academic libraries are spending huge amount for the purchase of e-journals, e-books, databases etc. But the sad fact is that due to financial constraint, a large number of libraries are unable to subscribe to or purchase all types of electronic resources. As a result, the concept of consortia came up to solve these types of problems. Advent of electronic journals has given rise to homogenous libraries and national governments to cope with scarcity of funds and unavailability of internationally produced scholarly literature by means of establishing library consortia (Suresh K. Chauhan and Preeti Mahajan, 2013). In India, various types of consortia models have evolved over a period of time. Some of the examples are:

Open Consortia: Eg: INDEST Consortium.

Closed Group Consortia: Eg: CSIR, DAE, IIM Consortium

Centrally Funded: Eg: INDEST, UGC INFONET, N-LIST, CSIR, ICMR, MCIT consortia etc.

Shared-Budget Centrally Funded: Eg: IIM and FORSA

National Consortia: Eg: UGC-INFONET, National Digital Library Consortium, and INDEST-AICTE consortium (Kumkum Rajawat, 2017)

2. N-LIST

The Project entitled National Library and Information Services Infrastructure for Scholarly Content (N-LIST), is jointly executed by the e-ShodhSindhu Consortium of INFLIBNET Centre. It provides for:

- i. cross-subscription to e-resources subscribed by the two Consortia, i.e. subscription to INDEST-AICTE resources for universities and e-ShodhSindhu resources for technical institutions; and
- ii. access to selected e-resources to colleges.

The N-LIST project provides access to e-resources to students, researchers and faculty from colleges and other beneficiary institutions through server(s) installed at the INFLIBNET Centre. The authorized users from colleges can now access e-resources and download articles required by them directly from the publisher's website once they are duly authenticated as authorized users through servers deployed at the INFLIBNET Centre.

2.1 Four components of N-LIST

The project has four distinct components:

- i. To subscribe and provide access to selected UGC-INFONET e-resources to technical institutions (IITs, IISc, IISERs and NITs) and monitor its usage;
- ii. To subscribe and provide access to selected INDEST e-resources to selected universities and monitor its usage;

- iii. To subscribe and provide access to selected e-resources to 6,000 Government/Government aided colleges and monitor its usage; and
- iv. To act as a Monitoring Agency for colleges and evaluate, promote, impart training and monitor all activities involved in the process of providing effective and efficient access to e-resources to colleges.

The INDEST and UGC-INFONET are jointly responsible for activity listed at i) and ii) above. The INFLIBNET Centre, Ahmadabad is responsible for activities listed at iii) and iv) above. The INFLIBNET Centre is also responsible for developing and deploying appropriate software tools and techniques for authenticating authorized users.

2.2 Eligibility to join N-list

- All Government Aided Colleges covered under Section 12B of UGC Act are eligible to access e-resources through the N-LIST programme.
- Non-Aided Colleges (except Agriculture, Engineering, Management, Medical, Pharmacy, Dentistry and Nursing) can get benefit from the N-LIST Programme by joining the programme.

2.3 Annual Membership Fee/period

- Registered colleges covered under 12B section of UGC are required to pay Rs. 5,900/- (Rs. 5000/- Membership Fee + Rs. 900/- (18% GST) extra as annual membership/renewal fee.
- Non aided Colleges registered for NLIST Programme are required to pay Rs. 35,400/- (Rs.30,000/- Membership Fee + Rs. 5400/- (18% GST) extra as annual membership/renewal fee.
- The period of membership is valid from April to March every financial year.

2.4 Current Status

As on 2nd November 2019, a total number of 3320 Government/ Government aided colleges covered under the section 12B of UGC Act as well as Non-Aided colleges make use of the services. Log-in ID and password for accessing e-resources has been sent to the authorized users from these 3320 colleges. All e-resources subscribed for colleges under the N-LIST Project are now accessible to these 3320 colleges through the N-LIST website (<http://nlist.inflibnet.ac.in>).

3. Review of Related literature

Some of the studies related to the present study are as given below.

Singh & Gill (2012) conducted a study to know the usage of e-journals among the users of ICMR libraries in Delhi. The study revealed that e-journals play a major role in information dissemination process in the libraries. A large number of users of ICMR libraries are well aware of the availability of e-journals at their libraries and they regularly use e-journals for their research needs.

Ambika and Naushad Ali (2014) made a survey to determine the awareness of e-resources among library users and promote the use of electronic resources available at the Kalasalingam University Library (KLUL). The study revealed several issues, including inadequate user account, lack of speed in access, lack of knowledge in searching techniques and lack of time. 53.84 percent of the respondents felt that the publicity of e-resources is essential and they listed the publicity method of creating links to the library web pages from the institutional homepages. As far as purpose for use of e-resources was concerned, majority of them use e-resources for their project work and for preparing papers for presentation in conferences and seminars.

The study of Parveen (2014) focused on the positive impact of the UGC INFONET Consortium on the users and the respondents which found that they are very much satisfied with e-resources available in the consortium. Users suggested to organize awareness programme in the library of University of Lucknow to access e-resources comfortably.

Biradar and Vinay Kumar's (2015) survey revealed that 99 percent respondents are aware of UGC-Infonet Consortium. It found that 50 percent respondents use e-resources at least once a week, 18.82% use several times, 11.76% use daily. While 88.24% access e-resources in library, 28.24% in departments, 27.06% in computer labs, 5.88% in cyber cafe and 4.71% in other venues. About 99% respondents prefer alphabetical and subject list of UGC-Infonet e-resources provided by library.

The study of Ravinder (2015) highlights the problems in accessing the UGC-Infonet e-journals consortium by the research scholars from the Sri Krishnadevaraya University library. The study revealed that users download huge information by the electronic journals for their research progress but they feel lack of training to access e-journals in the library. Users wanted to organize training and orientation program in the library. The study concluded that orientation and training programmes should be conducted from time to time by the university to provide training in the use of e-journals. The infrastructure facilities should be increased for the better utilization of UGC-Infonet e-journals.

The finding of the survey of Velmurugan and Amudha (2015) was that 58.59% respondents access daily ICT based resources, 29.08% access weekly, and 12.33% access monthly. While 37.58% respondents use ICT based resources for research purpose, 24.92% for career information, 19.75% for class teaching and 17.75% for getting general information. In order to use ICT based services 54.08% respondents spent 0-1 hours, 24.17% spent 1-2 hours, 13% spent 2-3 hours, and 7.75% spent more than 3 hours.

In IIT Roorkee, Yogendra Singh (2016) observed that 25% top titles are downloaded by less than 1% users, the next 25% downloaded by 2-3% users, and 50% titles are never used. The study reveals that out of 2500 titles only 250 titles (5%) are used heavily.

The aim of the paper by Jagjit Singh (2017) was to examine the use of various e-resources by the UG students of four Postgraduate Colleges of Jalandhar District, Punjab. The N-LIST Programme is providing 135000 e-books and 6000 e-journals for the college libraries at the national level. The study showed that 94.64% UG students are aware of the program. It showed that 75.92% of the students use the e-resources available in N-LIST Programme twice a week. The study covers 15 different aspects of the e-resources under the N-LIST Programme and is very helpful for college librarians to examine their e-resources very effectively.

Ashwini R. Kamble & Yogesh P. Surwade (2018) made a case study of use of N-LIST Consortia at Veer Wajekar AS.C. College, Phunde. The study came out with the suggestions that (i) the faculty should be trained in using advance search options available in search menu of N-LIST E-Resources for retrieval of relevant information (ii) the infrastructure in the college computer centre should be further improved for providing better N-LIST E-Resources and (iii) the faculty should further improve their information searching skills to make better use of largely available electronic information resources.

4. Objectives of the study

The investigator framed the following specific objectives:

1. To find out the usage of N-LIST e-resources by the students based on gender

2. To find out the usage of N-LIST e-resources based on age
3. To find out the awareness of N-LIST e-resources
4. To examine the frequency of access to the N-LIST e-resources
5. To identify the place of accessing N-LIST e-resources
6. To find out the purpose of accessing N-LIST e-resources
7. To find out the most preferred N-LIST e-resources
8. To identify the most used search strategies to access N-LIST e-resources
9. To find out the opinion of postgraduate students about the need for N-LIST e-resources training
10. To identify the problems faced in accessing the N-LIST e-resources.

5. Methodology

The sample of the present study consists of 100 students of different disciplines.

The investigator used survey method for conducting this study. A comprehensive questionnaire was prepared and distributed to students to collect data.

6. Limitations

The major limitations of the study are:

- i. It is based on the responses of 100 respondents.
- ii. Only 10 Arts and Science colleges were selected for the study

7. Analysis of data

A simple percentage analysis was carried out for the major part of the data analysis.

7.1. Distribution of Respondents based on Gender and Locale

It is obvious from table 1 that majority of the respondents (80 percent) who use N-LIST e-resources are female. Also majority of the respondents (63%) hail from rural background.

Table 1

Distribution of Respondents based on Gender and Locale

Sl. No.	Variable	Category	No of Respondents	Percent
1	Gender	Male	20	20
		Female	80	80
2	Locality	Rural	63	63
		Urban	37	37

Table 2

Age wise Distribution of Respondents

Sl. No.	Age	No. of Respondents	Percent
1	Below 25 years	78	78
2	25-30 years	19	19
3	31- 35 years	3	3
4	Above 40 years	0	0
	Total	100	100

7. 2. Age-wise Distribution of Respondents

Respondents for the study are classified into four groups based on their age. Age wise distribution of respondent is given in table 2.

(78 %) belong to the age group below 25 years, followed by the group 25 -30 years constituting 19%. Those who are above 30 years form only 3 percent.

7.3 Awareness of Students about N-LIST E-Resources

Awareness of students towards N-LIST e-resources is further studied and details are provided in table 3.

Table 3 reveals that majority of the respondents (70%) are aware of N-LIST e-resources, whereas the rest not familiar with it.

Table 3

Awareness of N-List E- Resources

Sl. No.	Awareness level	No of Respondents	Percent
1	Aware	70	70
2	Unaware	30	30
	Total	100	100

7.4. Frequency of Using N-LIST E-Resources

How frequently the respondents access the N-LIST e-resources was further analyzed and the details are given in table 4.

Data reveals that 24 percent of the respondents access N-LIST e-resources once in a week, followed by 20 percent twice in a week. While 6 percent search it daily, 15 percent access it once in a month. 35 percent of the

Table 4

Frequency of Using N-list E- Resources

Sl. No.	Frequency	No. of Respondents	Percent
1	Daily	6	6
2	Twice in a Week	20	20
3	Once in a Week	24	24
4	Once in Month	15	15
5	Seldom	35	35
	Total	100	100

respondents seldom use the N-LIST. It can be inferred that 5 percent of the respondents who are aware of N-LIST do not use it at all.

7.5. Place of Accessing N-LIST E-Resources

The place of accessing N-LIST e-resources by the user is a major factor which is to be stated to know further.

It is clear from the table 5 that out of the 65 respondents who have used N-LIST, 32 (of the respondents (49.24%) depend college library for accessing N-LIST e-resources, followed by their college computer lab (27.69%). A little

Table 5

Place of Accessing N-list E- Resources

Sl. No.	Place Access	Frequency (n=65)	Percentage
1	College Library	32	49.24
2	College Computer Lab	18	27.69
3	Home	10	15.38
4	Internet Cafe	5	7.69
	Total	65	100

7.6. Purpose of Accessing N-LIST E-Resources

The purpose of accessing N-LIST e-resources by the user is a major factor which has to be explored further.

Table 6 reveals that students use N-LIST e-resources for various purposes. About 57 percent of students use the service for the completion of projects, 20 percent to update subject knowledge, 12.31 percent for current information and 10.77 percent for to complete assignments.

7.7. Most Preferred N-list E- Resources

Most preferred N-LIST e-resources by the respondents of the study are given table 7.

Table 6
Purpose of Accessing N-LIST E- Resources

Sl. No.	Purpose	No. of Respondents (n=65)	Percentage
1	To Update Subject Knowledge	13	20.00
2	To Complete Assignment	7	10.77
3	To Complete Project	37	56.92
4	Current Information	8	12.31
	Total	65	100

Table 7
Most Preferred N-LIST Resources

Sl. No.	Preferred N-LIST Resources	No. of Respondents (n=65)	Percentage
1	Books	28	43.08
2	Journals	13	20.00
3	Theses	11	16.92
4	Audio/Video Lectures	7	10.78
5	Question Papers	3	4.61
6	Others	3	4.61
	Total	65	100

Table 7 shows that a little more than 43 percent of the respondents prefer books followed by journals (20%) and theses (16.92%). Audio/Video lectures come next with 10.78 percent.

7.8. Most Used Search Strategies to Access N-LIST E-Resources

Table 8
Most Used Search Strategies to Access N-LIST E- Resources

Sl. No.	Search Strategies	No of Respondents (n=65)	Percentage
1	Browse by Title	25	38.46
2	Browse by Subject	21	32.31

3	Browse by Publisher	4	6.15
4	Browse by Keyword	14	21.54
5	Quick Search	1	1.54
	Total	65	100

Table 8 shows that more than 38 percent of the students browse N-LIST e-resources by title followed by subject (32.31%). Keyword comes next with 21.54 percent. Search by publisher is resorted to by a minority. Only one person reported to use Quick Search.

7.9. Need for Training in using N-LIST Resources

Table 9
Need for N-LIST E-Resources Training

Sl. No.	Training Required	No. of Respondents	Percent
1	Yes	73	73
2	No	27	27
	Total	100	100

It was observed that majority (73%) respondents accepted the need for the training. But 27 percent did not feel that any training is required. Though 30 percent of the respondents are not aware of the N-LIST, 3 percent among them are of the view that training is very much essential.

7.10. Problems faced by the user while accessing N-LIST E- Resources

The problems faced by the respondents while accessing N-LIST E- resources are in given in the table 10.

Table 10
Problems faced by the user while accessing N-LIST E- Resources

Sl. No.	Problem	Frequency	Percent
1	Slow Access Speed	16	24.62
2	Difficulty in finding relevant Information	30	46.15
3	Lack of ICT Knowledge	10	15.38
4	Proxy server problem	12	18.46
5	Limited Access to Computer	9	13.85
	Total	65	

Table 10 reveals that most of the users face problem while accessing N-LIST e- resources. The main problem was found to be difficulty to find relevant information (46.15%) followed by followed by slow speed in accessing information (24.62). These two problems were highlighted by more than 70 percent of the respondents. Server problem (18.46%) and lack of ICT knowledge (15.38%) and limited access to computer systems (13.85%) were projected by more than 47 percent of the respondents. Since some respondents have identified more than one problem, it is not possible to give the total percentage.

8. Major Findings

Based on the analysis, the following findings are made:

1. Most of the students (70 percent) are familiar with N-LIST e-resources. Only 30 percent are not familiar with N-LIST e-resources.
2. Nearly one-fourth of the respondents access N-LIST e-resources once in a week, followed by 20 percent twice in a week. While 6 percent search it daily, 15 percent access it once in a month. 35 percent of the respondents seldom use the N-LIST.
3. About half of the respondents depend on library for accessing N-LIST e-resources, followed by 27.69 percent opting for their college computer lab for accessing N-LIST e-resources.
4. Nearly 57 of the percent students use N-LIST e-resources to complete their project work. While 20 percent use N-LIST e-resources to update their subject knowledge, 12.31 percent consult N-LIST e-resources for getting current information. Only about 11 percent using N-LIST e-resources to complete their assignment.
5. The preferred resources in N-LIST are e-books (43.08%), journals (20%), theses (16.92%) and Audio/Video Lectures (10.78%).
6. More than 38 percent of the students browse N-LIST e-resources by title followed by subject (32.31%). Keyword comes next with 21.54 percent. Search by publisher is resorted to by a minority. Only 1 respondent was found to resort to quick search.
7. Majority of the respondents (73%) accepted the need for training in the use of N-LIST. Though 30 percent of the respondents are not aware of the N-LIST, 3 percent among them are of the view that training is very much essential.
8. Most of the users encounter problems while accessing N-LIST e- resources. The main problem was found to be difficulty to find relevant information

(46.15%) followed by followed by slow speed in accessing information (24.62). These two problems were highlighted by more than 70 percent of the respondents. Server problem (18.46%) and lack of ICT knowledge (15.38%) and limited access to computer systems (13.85%) were projected by more than 47 percent of the respondents.

9. Conclusion

N-LIST Programme has become popular among the students since it provides free access to a number of qualitative resources. The college librarians should encourage the students to develop their reading and research habits with the use of N-LIST Programme and also consider their valuable suggestions for the maximum use of this program. It is quite essential that users are trained to frame proper search strategy while accessing e-resources. Along with that proper motivation and orientation must be periodically given to them. Digital literacy skills necessary to overcome the barriers such as lack if ICT knowledge should also be imparted in addition to providing more access facilities in the library as well as in the college campus.

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