

N-List: As An Effective Platform of Extending E-Resources to Colleges



Library Science

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Rajalaxmi A. Govanakoppa

Assistant Librarian, Library and Information Center, University College of Science, B. H. Road, Tumkur University, Tumkur – 572 103

Kumara B.

Assistant Librarian, University Library, Tumkur University, Tumkur – 572 103

ABSTRACT

Due to information explosion and increase in the cost of journals subscription and static library budget, libraries have witnessed a sharp and persistent decline in the number of research journals subscribed in print format. E-journals are the largest and fastest growing digital collections of the libraries. Through consortium libraries get the benefit of wider access to electronic resources at affordable cost and at the best terms of licenses. Here an attempt is made to analyze how younger child of INFLIBNET i.e., N-LIST program is useful to the college libraries.

1. Introduction:

Due to knowledge and information explosion during the past few decades more than 10 million journal articles are published every year besides news items, editorials and articles that are appearing in popular print media. Students, research scholars, faculty members all have to deal with information only and this is the responsibility of the library to collect, manage and disseminate the information to its user according to their need. The advent of Information and Communication Technologies, especially the internet and the web, have brought significant changes in the ways we generate, store, access and make use of information. E-journals are the largest and fastest growing digital collections of the libraries. The advancement in digital technologies and the recent proliferations in E-publishing have brought in a revolution in journal publication, subscription, and access and delivery mechanism. E-journals often referred to interchangeably as "Electronic Serials", "Online Journals" and "Electronic Periodicals". Lancaster (1995) defines E-journal as "a journal created for the electronic medium and available only in this medium". Electronic serials may be defined very broadly as any journal, magazine or newsletter which is available over the internet. 1

2. Concept of Library Consortium:

The 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.2 According to Oxford Dictionary "Consortium means temporary association of a number of countries, companies, banks etc for a common purpose".3

A library consortium is a collective activity of a group of libraries towards a common goal of sharing resources.4 Library consortium is a community (a cooperative) of two or more information agencies which have formally agreed to coordinate and cooperative of two or more libraries/information agencies which have formally agreed to coordinate, cooperate or consolidate certain function" to achieve mutual objectives. It is an association of group of libraries to achieve mutual benefits.5

3. Consortium Models:

The types of consortia identified are generally based on various models evolved in India in Varsity of forms depending upon participation, affiliation and funding sources.6

i) Open Consortia

This type of consortia is very flexible and it is the wish of members of consortia to join and leave any time they please. INDEST Consortium is an example to this.

ii) Closed Group Consortia

It is within defined group. This kind of consortia emerges either by affiliation or collaboration among the group like CSIR, DAE, IIM Consortium. The formation and operation of the consortia guidelines and its administration are fairly simple and easy.

iii) Centrally Funded Model

In this model, consortium will solely depend on the parent body. A few examples are INFONET by UGC, ICMR, and CSIR by DSIR.

vi) Shared-budget Model

In this model the participating libraries take the lead and form the consortium. IIM and FORSA are examples of this model".

v) Publisher Initiatives

The Emerald Full-Text Library published by the Emerald Publishing Group (formerly MCB University Press) is recent example. Here, the consortium members will get deep discount price to the participating libraries

vi) National Consortium

The end of this model is, national level licensing of products. And in this regard is INDEST-AICTE, UGC Infonet.

4. Need for Consortium

Due to information explosion and increase in the cost of journals subscription and static library budget, libraries have witnessed a sharp and persistent decline in the number of research journals subscribed in print format. Through consortium libraries get the benefit of wider access to electronic resources at affordable cost and at the best terms of licenses. Diversity in user needs along with technology has changed expectations of researchers and their willingness to accept services that are available on demand.

5. N-LIST Program

The project entitled N-LIST or "National Library and Information Services Infrastructure for Scholarly Content" is an initiative of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India under its National Mission on Education through ICT program, which operates through its headquarter set-up at the INFLIBNET Centre, Ahmedabad, Gujarat. The project was formerly launched by honorable Union Minister of Human Resource Development Sri Kapil Sibal on 4th May 2012 and is being jointly executed by the UGC-INFONET Digital Library Consortium, INFLIBNET Centre and the INDEST-AICTE Consortium, IIT, Delhi.

The N-LIST project provides access to e-resources to students, researchers and faculties from colleges and other beneficiary institutions through servers 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 (<http://nlist.inflibnet.ac.in>) with individual user id and password once they are duly authenticated as authorized users.

Access to N-LIST facility will help to boost the use of learning resources and e-resources in the college libraries at an affordable cost. This provides access to more than 3000+ e-journals and 75000+ e-books. As on 14 March 2013, a total number of 3233 colleges nationwide have registered themselves with the N-LIST program. This covers all the disciplines viz. pure science, social sciences and humanities including linguistics and languages.

N-LIST project provides cross-subscription to e-resources subscribed by the two Consortia, i.e. subscription to INDEST-AICTE resources for universities and UGCINFONET resources for technical institutions; and access to selected e-resources to colleges. This 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.

N-LIST project has the following Vision and Mission

- Access to scholarly information for all educational institutions
- Bridging digital divide and moving towards an information-rich society
- Provide access to subscription-based scholarly information (e-books and e-journals) to all educational institutions
- Providing access to scholarly content available in open access through subject portals and gateways.
- Host scholarly content generate indigenously in digital format in open digital repositories.

6. Advantages of N-LIST

- ❖ Ambitious program extending e-resources to colleges at affordable cost.
- ❖ Remote access to e-resources with user id and password.
- ❖ Provides multiple accesses of 24hrs a days and 7days a week.
- ❖ With advance online publication research papers are available online two months ahead of print collection.

7. Conclusion:

UGC and INFLIBNET have been making hard efforts to provide easy access to information for a wide user community. Many consortium have been initiated by INFLIBNET to benefit the academic community, N-LIST is one among them. N-LIST is a centrally funded open consortium with national level licensing of products. And N-LIST is one of the best consortia suitable for college libraries.

UGC has made significant efforts in the promotion of use of e-resources by the colleges. But still many colleges in the country have not registered and some of the colleges not engaged with access to its resources. College librarians must take the initiative to register and promote the benefits of N-LIST e-resources to the user community. Organization of appropriate ICT training programs would certainly help in the promotion and fruitful utilization of N-LIST resources.

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