
ORIGINAL ARTICLE



**USE OF N-LIST SERVICE BY THE COMMERCE FACULTY MEMBERS
OF THE COLLEGES IN GOA**

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ABSTRACT

Availability of electronic resources at a nominal rate for the colleges through N-LIST is a powerful step taken by the UGC to improve quality of higher education. It does not require huge investment or any special technical expertise and access is 24x7. Many colleges have taken its membership to support academic activities in the institution. **But** usefulness of the resources for the faculty can be known from the usage of the resources. In the present paper a study is made to evaluate the actual use of N-LIST service by the faculty members from commerce stream of the various colleges in Goa. This study will bring out the benefits and usefulness of the resources by the actual users. It will give opportunity to improve the present facility and encourage more use of the service.

KEYWORDS: electronic resources , quality of higher education , academic activities.

INTRODUCTION

N-LIST: National Library and Information Services Infrastructure for Scholarly Content (N-LIST) program was formally launched on 4th May, 2010. This project is jointly executed by UGC-INFONET Digital Library Consortium, INFLIBNET Centre and the INDEST-AICTE Consortium, IIT Delhi. It provides for cross-subscription to e-resources subscribed by the two Consortia, i.e. subscription to INDEST-AICTE resources for universities and UGC-INFONET resources for technical institutions; and 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 INFLIBNET Centre. It covers e-books, e-journals and databases. This program is specially meant for the colleges. Access is through server(s) installed at the INFLIBNET Centre. The authorized

users from colleges can access e-resources and download articles required by them directly from the publisher's website once they are duly authenticated by INFLIBNET. Lead is taken by INFLIBNET centre in respect of providing and maintaining infrastructure and technical set up essential for distribution of resources. From the initial stage of formation of INFLIBNET, various initiatives were taken up for distribution of information resources to educational institutions in India. But there was no special facility available solely for colleges.

Registration: The registration for this program is simple. Online form is available on the website. The membership fee is Rs. 5000/- p.a. only. At the time of registration the college is supposed to provide list of the users and their e-mail addresses. These members get individual password for accessing the resources. This program has large coverage as it does not have any restrictions on the number of members selected by the college. Membership is also open to students. Important feature of this program is unlimited access to resources. There are no restrictions on the number of downloads etc. The authorized users from colleges can 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. For obtaining any other information, or query or help, contact numbers and e-mail as well as postal address is provided

N-LIST and the College Libraries: Main function of the College library is to support academic activities of the college, research of the faculty and cater to the various information needs of the teachers, students and staff. The research activities in the colleges are gaining momentum with the support of the UGC through faculty improvement programs, financial assistance for the research projects etc. Many colleges have entered into the publication of their research journals. This has increased the demand for journals and databases by college faculty for pursuing their research based activities. But at the same time prices of these resources are increasing every year beyond the reach of library budget. One or two journals are not sufficient for the library as topics and subject areas of the research are in multiple number. Another important fact is that college curriculum has undergone several changes which have focus on continuous evaluation of individual performance rather than exclusively on written exams. Hence projects, presentations, assignments and other similar activities have been introduced at the degree level. This new pattern has forced students to do additional reading and little research. Many colleges run self financing programs of post graduate level where research is again given importance. Hence college libraries are trying to cope with these changes by acquiring print as well as online resources. But information explosion, rising prices and shrinking or stable budget does not allow library to procure or subscribe to all resources which are in demand. In this situation N-LIST program is a boon to colleges. Just with small portion of budget library is able to provide

access to thousands of journals and books. NLIST program came as a special information package for colleges. Letters were sent to all colleges with all details for making awareness drive. Demos and lectures were arranged at several places like sessions at refresher courses for librarians, seminars etc. Even question regarding the subscription of INFLIBNET services was included in self study report of NAAC.

Resources: All e-resources subscribed for college section under the N-LIST Project are made accessible to member colleges through the N-LIST website (<http://nlist.inflibnet.ac.in>). They are available directly from the publisher's Web site. The Consortium subscribes to Full text Journals from American Institute of Physics American Physical Society, Annual Reviews ,Cambridge University Press, Economic and Political Weekly, Indian Journals, Institute of Physics, Oxford University Press, Royal Society of Chemistry and H. W. Wilson. E-Books are available from reputed publishers like Cambridge Books, Hindustan Book Agency, Institute of South East Asian, Oxford, McGraw Hill, Springer and Taylor Francis. Also Bibliographic Database MathSciNet, resources of Web of Science, Annual Reviews, Project Muse and Nature is available.

BENEFITS:

N-LIST resources have improved the image of college libraries.
The subscription amount is affordable to all colleges.
Procedure for membership is online and simple.
No special infrastructure or software is required by the college to access the resources.
Access to variety of e-resources that includes books, journals and databases (Indian and Foreign publications)
New resources are added from time to time
Full text and back volumes of the journals has become reality
Feedback system is very effective
No limit on number of members and number of downloads
Statistics of usage is available
Each member has his own log in and password
Training is available

With all these positive notes on usefulness of this service it was presumed that this service will be explored to the fullest extent by the faculty. But it is not so. It was interesting to know the actual use made by the users and know their point of view. Hence this study was undertaken with the following objectives.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To find the frequency and place of access to N-List Services.
2. To understand the purpose for using N-List Services.
3. To find out the problems faced by them while accessing the N-List Services.

4. To find out the level of satisfaction about the information resources retrieved through N-List Services.
5. To know their comments and suggestions

METHODOLOGY:

The survey method was used for the data collection with the help of structured questionnaire. This questionnaire was distributed to the faculty of commerce stream in Goa. Out of 146 questionnaires distributed 131 (89%) filled in questionnaires were received back. Extracted data is presented in the form of table with derived data and interpretation for the same. For few questions multiple choice options were available and hence the percentage exceeded to more than 100%. At the end of the Questionnaire comments and suggestions were invited to know the overall reaction of the faculty towards this online facility. These suggestions were summerised and included in this study under the heading 'suggestions' at the end. This can act as a valuable input for studying the short comings in the service and can further improve the services.

Scope: This study is limited to usage of N-LIST services only by the faculty members of the Commerce stream of different colleges in Goa. These colleges are having N-LIST membership for the past two years.

Data analysis and findings: Collected data was classified based on question wise data was classified and percentage was derived for each option by using percentage method. Available data was then presented in the table form followed by the interpretation.

1. Awareness about the availability of N-LIST service

Yes	No
18%	82%

It is noted that only 18% of the faculty is using this facility which is very discouraging fact. Majority of the faculty are not using this facility in spite of knowing the availability of online resources. This fact has given rise to a serious discussion about the utility of online resources especially in education field which does not come in existence without a vision, huge investments and efforts of experts. In case of e-resources, it is observed that are very costly and it requires updating of systems, internet etc. and hence colleges cannot afford to acquire them. But this service is affordable by the colleges as the cost is very less and only internet connection is required for accessing the same.

2. Source of information about the availability of N-LIST service.

Library Notification	Orientation	Other sources	Not aware
83%	72%	2%	15%

This question had multiple choices and hence the percentage figure exceeds 100% count. It is seen that 83% of the faculty has taken note of library notice and 72% attended orientation program arranged by the library. Other sources include emails, colleagues, news etc. It is surprising to know that 15% of the population is not aware of this facility on the campus. Many time library notifications are taken very casually or ignored. Library is remembered only when need arises for any type of information. One reason may be because required textbooks and reference material for day to day already exist in the library. Also they could manage other activities without N-LIST facility as done in the past.

3. Individual log-in and password.

Yes	No	Not aware
73%	12%	15%

Faculty members are given individual log-in and password for remote access to these online resources. This has facilitated users with advantage of access without the time and distance barrier. They need not wait on the campus for using them. 73% of the faculty members have their own password and 12% are without it. Yet another 15% of the faculty members are unaware of the same. In both type members are away from getting the access. Resources are not accessible without password except if one goes to librarian for the same. Another possibility is that some of them might use another person's password. But this is very rare and applicable to those who are aware of this service. But the percentage will not get affected much even if these rare possibilities are taken into account.

4. Frequency of the use.

Daily	weekly	fortnightly	occasionally	rarely
Nil	2%	12%	33%	53%

The above table tells that N-LIST service is used occasionally (33%) and rarely (53%) by the majority of the users. This clears that resources are used for very specific purposes and not used on daily basis for day to day work.

5. Place of access to N-List Services.

Library	Staff room	computer laboratory	Home
38%	63%	58%	8%

Staff room and computer lab are the most convenient place for using N-LIST by the faculty. But also many of them also uses library for this purpose. This may be because users can make use of these resources while doing the job itself on the campus or may be because of good infrastructure. Hardly 8% of the users are using it from home.

6. Purpose of using the N-LIST

Teaching	classroom activities	Assignments	presentations	Projects	Research/Paper	Any other
Nil	3%	1%	4%	4%	8%	Nil

It is seen that none of the faculty uses N-LIST for teaching. For classroom activities (3%), assignments (1%), presentations and project (4%), Research/Paper writing (8%) the use is very negligible. Overall use of this service is very discouraging.

7. Reasons for limited use of N-LIST.

Not required	Not aware	Not useful	Availability of other resources	Other
29%	15%	61%	28%	81%

Efforts were made to know the various reasons behind the low rate of usage. Above given chart shows various reasons for not using the service. 22% of the users say that this type of service is not required by them. 15% says that they not aware about the availability of such facility in the college. 31% find that resources provided are not useful for their academic activities. This may be because of non availability of the journals of their own choice. 81% of the users have other more reasons for not using the service.

8. Satisfaction level about retrieval of information.

Fully satisfied	Satisfied	Moderately	Not satisfied
Nil	3%	8%	89%

In the above table it is very clear that majority i.e. 89% of the users are not satisfied with the information available from the N-LIST resources. Only 3% of the users are satisfied and 8% are moderately satisfied with the service. That means this service is as good as not useful for the users.

1. Summary of comments and suggestions:

This question provided open end for writing comments and suggestions regarding the N-LIST services. They were requested to write maximum seven points under this question to express their views. All answers are noted, summarized and presented in the form of following points.

1. Very few Indian journals from the commerce stream are available.
2. Latest issues are not available after publication
3. Total number of journals under the heading 'commerce' are more but actually most of them are related to other social science subjects like psychology, education etc.
4. Non availability of core journals in the commerce stream
5. Non availability of publications of Government bodies and associations in the field.
6. Archives are not available in sufficient number of years.
7. Most of the journals require subscription for getting full text article.
8. Most of the articles contain only abstract and citation.
9. There should be an online arrangement to get full text copy of the required article through N-LIST service
10. In case of paid articles certain number of full text articles should be provided free of charge to the member colleges
11. Search system should be revised to avoid varied search pattern and accessing of unwanted articles.
12. Cumulative index for each journal should be created to save time while searching for articles.
13. Colleges should be able to recommend journals to be included in the N-LIST.

CONCLUSION:

Electronic resources are playing pivotal role in providing information with speed anywhere in the world. Government of India has taken a good initiative to provide online resources to colleges which otherwise would not have afforded to subscribe them because of the high cost. Through N-LIST service of the INFLIBNET Colleges are provided with various types of resources to give boost to research and improve the quality of the education. But it is observed that these resources are not explored to a highest extent by the faculty. There are various reasons behind this issue. There is a need for revision of this service so that it can be made more useful to the users. A survey of the service shall help in improving the usefulness of the service. All colleges should state shortcoming of the N-LIST and should send their suggestions. This shall increase the usefulness of the service.

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