# Use of e-ShodhSindhu Consortium among the Faculty Members and Research Scholars of Department of Botany and Zoology of Banaras Hindu University: A Study

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*Abstract*

*The study examines how faculty members and research scholars of the Department of Botany and Department of Zoology, Banaras Hindu University (BHU) use the e-ShodhSindhu Consortium. The study further investigates the user's awareness of e-ShodhSindhu Consortium's resources, the purpose and frequency of use of e-resources, the factors influencing resource utilisation, the impact of e-resources and services on the academic work of the respondents and suggested methods for the efficient use of e-resources offered by the e-ShodhSindhu Consortium. It was found that 76.67% respondents of the Department of Botany and 67.86% respondents of Department of Zoology were aware about the electronic resources available through the e-ShodhSindhu Consortium. It was also noted that majority of the faculty members of the both the departments were used e-ShodhSindhu Consortium for teaching and also found that majority of the research scholars of the both the departments were used it to complete their research work.*
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## 1. Introduction

Consortia have become a major resource for accessing research literature in any subject field. The development of consortia is rooted in the philosophy of library resource sharing and organizational cooperation. A consortium is a group of organizations or institutions agreeing to procure common resources at economical rates to fulfil a common purpose. Consortia are of various types, i.e., academic, research or specialized, based on the common objectives of the organizations. It is observed that most of the consortia were set up by a small group of libraries or organizations, which later expanded in the larger interest of the research fraternity. Libraries agree through more or less formal agreements with common terms, conditions, rules, and procedures to combine their resources and deliver better services to the patrons. A library consortium is an aggregator or platform to process for procurement and finalization of terms and conditions of acquisition and dissemination of information products and services to satisfy the information needs of library users. As part of its preview, the Ministry of Education, formerly MHRD, introduced the ground-breaking programme e-ShodhSindhu Consortium for various educational and research institutes. The UGC-INFONET (Information Network) Digital Library Consortium, N-LIST (National Library

and Information Services Infrastructure), and INDEST (Indian National Digital Library in Engineering Sciences and Technology) - AICTE Consortium were combined to form the e-ShodhSindhu on the advice of an expert committee. To its member institutions, which include centrally-funded technical institutions, universities, and colleges that are covered under 12(B) and 2(f) Sections of the UGC Act, e-ShodhSindhu offers current as well as archival access to more than 15,000 core and peer-reviewed journals and a number of bibliographic, citation, and factual databases in various disciplines from a large number of publishers and aggregators.

## 2. Review of Literature

Arora (2003) discovered Indian libraries and institutions' efforts to form consortia of libraries to purchase access to electronic resources. For a number of decades, institutions have worked together to share library resources. Shared subscriptions to electronic resources through consortia of libraries are a feasible strategy to meet the pressures of decreasing budgets, increased user demands, and rising journal costs. Consortia-based subscriptions" to journals worldwide to make the most of their limited financial resources, the libraries and information centres must consider new strategies for consolidating global resources given their decreasing (or, at best, static) budgets.

Madhusudhan (2008) revealed that e-journals play an increasingly important role in research at the University of Delhi's Department of Library and Information Science. Not only are current e-journals important, but students and researchers also require electronic back volumes.

Bhatt (2010) evaluates the finding of his research. According to him more than 96% of those who participated in the survey titled "Use of UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium resources by research scholars and faculty members of the University of Delhi in History and Political Science" make extensive use of the readily available e-resources. Further, academics from both departments opined that the UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium had made it easier and faster to get information and made research more productive.

Gautam and Sinha (2017) conducted research on the use of e-resources among 45 faculty members and 53 research scholars at the University of Allahabad in Uttar Pradesh. The study revealed that only 43.87 per cent of researchers and 39.79 percent faculty members were aware of e-resources. About 28.56 per cent of respondents favored e-journals whereas e-theses were preferred by 6.12 percent.

Mistri (2018) explored how library users at North Bengal University use e-resources in the e-ShodhSindhu Consortium. The goals, challenges, benefits and levels of user satisfaction with the e-ShodhSindhu consortium's e-resources are the primary focus of the study.

Siwach and Malik (2018) focused on using e-assets by employees at Panjab College, Chandigarh, and viewed that 73.81% of respondents were aware of the e-assets applicable to their field. The study further analyzed that individuals generally utilize online diaries and free assets more frequently than institutional archives. In addition, it was demonstrated that 67.26 percent of respondents used e-journals for research and 65.56 percent used them to read articles.

Chanchinmawia and Verma (2020) conducted a study to determine faculty members and research scholars' awareness and use of the e-ShodhSindhu Digital Library Consortium. The

study found that 76% of respondents were aware of the consortium and used it, while 56% of users believed that more training and awareness campaigns were necessary to improve the use of the e-ShodhSindhu Digital Library Consortium.

Shibin (2020) examined the ways in which researchers at the National Institute of Technology, Calicut, used the Nalanda Digital Library to improve their academic pursuits. An online questionnaire was used to assess the research approach. Most academics (64.38%) were moderately familiar with the e-resources in their libraries, while e-journals are the most often used e-resource (49.32%). For their research and academic work, majority of researchers (69.86%) regularly used online resources.

## 3. Objectives of the study

The important objectives of the study are:
   a. To identify the degree of awareness among the faculty members and research scholars about e-ShodhSindhu resources.
   b. To examine the purpose of accessing e-ShodhSindhu.
   c. To assess the satisfaction level among faculty members and research scholars about e-ShodhSindhu resources.
   d. To determine the impact of e-ShodhSindhu on users' research output.
   e. To ascertain the need for user orientation/training programmes about e-ShodhSindhu.

## 4. Scope and Limitations

The study evaluates the responses received from faculty members and research scholars of the Department of Botany and Zoology, Institute of Science, Banaras Hindu University, who are using the e-ShodhSindhu consortium for their research. The study examines the usefulness of the e-ShodhSindhu consortium and the challenges associated with the accessibility and availability of e-resources. The scope of the study is confined to faculty members and research scholars of the Department of Botany and Department of Zoology of Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi.

## 5. Methodology

The e-ShodhSindhu Consortium and its awareness were studied using the survey (questionnaire) method. Considering the study's main goals, a structured questionnaire was designed to collect information from the faculty members and research scholars of the Department of Botany and Department of Zoology, Institute of Science, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi. To gather information, faculty members and researchers were personally approached. A total of 150 questionnaires were distributed among the faculty members and research scholars of both the departments and 116 (77.33%) dully filled questionnaires were collected during the given period. All 116 collected questionnaires have been used for tabulation and data analysis.

## 6. Data Analysis and Interpretation

### 6.1 Categories of Respondents

There were 116 respondents were selected for the present study. Out of the 116 respondents, 18 (15.52%) were faculty members and 98 (84.48%) were research scholars. The representation from both the departments are almost equal as 51.72% respondents from the

Department of Botany whereas 48.28% respondents from the Department of Zoology. The detailed number of respondents for each group is shown in Table-1.

**Table 1**: **Categories of Respondents**

| Department | Faculty Members | Research Scholars | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Botany | 10 (8.62) | 50 (43.10) | 60 (51.72) |
| Zoology | 08 (6.90) | 48 (41.38) | 56 (48.28) |
| **Total** | **18 (15.52)** | **98 (84.48)** | **116 (100.00)** |

Note: Numbers given in the brackets are shows the Percentage.

Table-1 shows that 10 (8.62%) and 8 (6.90%) Faculty Members respectively belongs to the Department of Botany and Department of Zoology. It also shows that 50 (43.10%) and 48 (41.38%) Research Scholars respectively belongs to the Department of Botany and Department of Zoology. The data collected from the respondents was afterwards collated, examined, and presented as follows in cluster columns.

### 6.2 Awareness of e-ShodhSindhu Consortium

It is evident from Table-2 that majority of the respondents were aware of the e-ShodhSindhu Consortium. According to the data, 76.67% of the faculty members and research scholars in the Department of Botany are aware about the e-ShodhSindhu Consortium. Similarly, 67.86% of the faculty members and research scholars in the Department of Zoology are familiar with the e-ShodhSindhu Consortium. It indicates that the vast majority of responders use the e-ShodhSindhu Consortium.

**Table 2: Awareness of e-ShodhSindhu Consortium**

| | Botany (No. of Respondents = 60) | | | | Zoology (No of Respondents = 56) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Awareness | FM | RS | Total Response | % | FM | RS | Total Response | % |
| Yes | 08 | 38 | 46 | 76.67 | 06 | 32 | 38 | 67.86 |
| No | 02 | 12 | 14 | 23.33 | 02 | 16 | 18 | 32.14 |
| **Total** | 10 | 50 | 60 | 100.00 | 08 | 48 | 56 | 100.00 |

### 6.3 Purpose of Using e-ShodhSindhu Consortium

Respondents were asked about the purpose of using e-ShodhSindhu Consortium. The consortium is being used for the various purposes like research work, teaching, update subject knowledge, publish articles, finding relevant information, etc. It can be seen from the analysis of Table-3 that majority of faculty members of Botany department mainly access the e-resources for the teaching work (60%) as well as to keep themselves up-to-date in their respective subject area (40%). 75% Faculty members of Zoology department using it for teaching purpose and 62.5% for finding relevant information in their subject field. In the case of research scholars of Botany department, 46% use it for their research work and 32% are for keeping up-to-date in their subject area. 43.75% research scholars of Zoology department use e-ShodhSindhu Consortium for the purpose of research work and 37.5% to keep them up-to-date in their subject area.

### Table 3: Purpose of using e-ShodhSindhu Consortium

| Purpose | Department of Botany | | Department of Zoology | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Faculty Members (N=10) | Research Scholars (N=50) | Faculty Members (N=8) | Research Scholars (N=48) |
| Research Work | 02 (20.0) | 23 (46.0) | 04 (50.0) | 21 (43.75) |
| Teaching | 06 (60.0) | 00 (0.0) | 06 (75.0) | 00 (0.0) |
| Publishing Articles | 02 (20.0) | 04 (8.0) | 05 (62.5) | 03 (6.25) |
| Keeping up-to-date | 04 (40.0) | 16 (32.0) | 03 (37.5) | 18 (37.5) |
| Finding Relevant Information | 03 (30.0) | 15 (30.0) | 05 (62.5) | 16 (33.33) |

(Note: Since the questions allow for numerous responses to the respondents, so that each row of the above table represents the 100% of the sample; 2. Numbers given in the brackets are shows the Percentage.).

## 6.4 Influence of e-ShodhSindhu Consortium on Research

The data shows that (Table 4) 80.0% of the faculty members of Botany department feel that e-ShodhSindhu Consortium expedited their research process as well as provided faster and easier access to information. In the case of Zoology department, 87.5% faculty members feel that e-ShodhSindhu Consortium expedited their research process and 75% said that it helped them to provide the easier and faster access to information. 64.0% of research scholars of Botany department access the e-ShodhSindhu Consortium to expedite their research work and 50.0% to access easier and faster access to information. 60.42% of the research scholars of Zoology feels that it expedited their research process and 47.92% said that it provides easier and faster access to information.

### Table 4: Influence of e-ShodhSindhu Consortium on Research

| Influence | Department of Botany | | Department of Zoology | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Faculty Members (N=10) | Research Scholars (N=50) | Faculty Members (N=8) | Research Scholars (N=48) |
| Expedited Research Process | 08 (80.0) | 32 (64.0) | 07 (87.5) | 29 (60.42) |
| Improved Professional Competence | 04 (40.0) | 10 (20.0) | 03 (37.5) | 08 (16.67) |
| Current Information Access | 06 (60.0) | 20 (40.0) | 05 (62.5) | 22 (45.83) |
| Wider Information Access | 05 (50.0) | 14 (28.0) | 05 (62.5) | 12 (25.0) |
| Easier and Faster access | 08 (80.0) | 25 (50.0) | 06 (75.0) | 23 (47.92) |

(Note: Since the questions allow for numerous responses to the respondents, so that each row of the above table represents the 100% of the sample; 2. Numbers given in the brackets are shows the Percentage.).

**6.5 Need for Orientation/Training Programme**

According to the analysis (Table 5), 84% of research scholars and 70% faculty members of the Department of Botany agree that there should be an orientation/training programme for using the e-ShodhSindhu resources. In the case of the Zoology Department, 75% of faculty members and 83% of research scholars suggested the need of orientation/training program.

**Table 5: Need for Orientation/Training Programme**

| Particulars | Department of Botany | | Department of Zoology | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Faculty Members (N=10) | Research Scholars (N=50) | Faculty Members (N=8) | Research Scholars (N=48) |
| Yes | 07 (70.0) | 42 (84.0) | 06 (75.0) | 40 (83.33) |
| Not Required | 03 (30.0) | 08 (16.0) | 02 (25.0) | 08 (16.67) |
| Total | 10 | 50 | 8 | 48 |

Note: Numbers given in the brackets are shows the Percentage.

**7. Important Findings of the Study**

Followings are the major findings of the present study:
- Majority of the respondents are very much aware of the resources of the UGC e-ShodhSindhu consortium. According to the analysis, 76.67 percent of the respondents know about the e-ShodhSindhu consortium, and just 23.33 percent of respondents know nothing about the consortium. In the case of the Department of Zoology, 32.14% of respondents are not familiar with the e-ShodhSindhu consortium, while 67.86% of respondents are aware of the consortium.
- Faculty members use e-resources primarily for teaching and staying current awareness in their respective fields. Research scholars' primary objective is to stay current and locate relevant information in their field and complete their research or project work. This demonstrates that the e-ShodhSindhu Consortium provides resources for teaching, research, and staying current with their subject matter for the community.
- Many respondents have found the content they were able to obtain through the e-ShodhSindhu Consortium to be very helpful. The consortium, in the opinion of all faculty members and research scholars has made it simpler and faster to acquire information and has helped to improve the process of research. By giving them access to current material, it also accelerated their research process thus helping to improve research productivity.
- All the respondents of Botany and Zoology department expressed that there is a need to organize orientation and training programme for the maximum benefit of e-ShodhSindhu Consortium.

**8. Conclusion**

Information-seeking behaviour of users has been completely transformed by modern technology in the modern age. The new information modes, such as e-resources have revolutionised the information-gathering process, storage, access and use. Online resources have become necessary for academic and research endeavours due to their speedy access and retrieval across various subject areas. The present study pertaining to the Department of

Botany and Department of Zoology of Banaras Hindu University clearly reflects the purpose and importance of the e-ShodhSindhu Consortium for faculty members and research scholars. This consortium is now a crucial tool for providing up-to-date information and assisting libraries in creating of collections, their preservation and quick information retrieval. As per the findings, e-resources are widely used and are perceived as an effective alternative to printed journals. The finding further reveals that faculty members, as well as research scholars, must adapt the new technology and ICT skills to make proper use of the vast array of e-resources that are made available to them.

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