

Open Access Initiatives of INFLIBNET: An Analytical Study

N. K. Sheeja

Assistant Librarian (Senior Scale), Department of Ship Technology
Cochin University of Science & Technology, Cochin, Kerala, India
E-Mail: nkscusat@gmail.com

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Abstract - This study aims to investigate open access initiatives of the Information and Library Network (INFLIBNET), an Inter-University Center (IUC) of University Grants Commission (UGC). It has started five major projects that provide open access to contents produced in Indian academic environment. Theses submitted to Indian universities are now in open access platform. The synopsis of ongoing research at Indian universities is also available on free platform. The accepted papers of the annual conference of INFLIBNET, training materials and press clippings, a subject gateway that provides an integrated interface to Indian electronic resources and an open journal platform for hosting e-journals are the other services by the INFLIBNET towards open access movement. The study found that INFLIBNET is the major open access player in India.

Keywords: Open Access, INFLIBNET, Shodhganga, ShodhGangotri, INFOPORT, IR@INFLIBNET, India

I. INTRODUCTION

Open Access (OA) is a term widely used across the globe to denote permanent availability of scholarly literature with the provision of free access to them. OA is opposed to the concept of access generally provided by proprietary publishing firms on subscription basis. It is free, unrestricted online access to research outputs such as journal articles and books (Nature, 2019). The term 'open access' was first originated in three public statements namely the Budapest Open Access Initiative (BOAI) in February 2002, the Bethesda Statement on Open Access Publishing in June 2003, and the Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities in October 2003. The OA is a significant development in which both commercial and not for profit publishers were supposed to make available free access to their publications a short period after their original publication (Grüttemeier, 2003). The creation of common standards for allowing searching, data retrieval, cross-linking and stable long term access is also part of OA movement.

II. OPEN ACCESS STRATEGIES

The OA platform includes scholarly journal articles, digital books, electronic theses and dissertations and research data. Scholars identify two major OA strategies. The first one is the open access peer reviewed journals and the second one is the practice of self-archiving. As of March 2019, the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) lists 12843 open

access journals and the Registry of Open Access Repositories lists 4737 open repositories across the globe. Apart from this many paid journals make some of their articles under OA mode.

III. OPEN ACCESS IN INDIA

The promotion of open access in India has been largely due to the efforts of Leslie Chan, Barbara Kirsop, Subbiah Arunachalam and the late T.B. Rajasekhar (Fernandez, 2006). The Indian initiatives in OA repositories date back to the development of the repository of Indian Institute of Science in 2002. Kumar (2009) reviewed that open access journals and institutional repositories are two main routes of open access publishing system in India. OpenDoar- a directory of open access repositories maintained by the University of Nottingham under the SHERPA umbrella of services and was developed in collaboration with Lund University lists 121 OA repositories in India. The National Institute of Science Communication and Information Resources (NISCAIR) made all 18 of their journals available on OA platform. The trend towards the development of open access repositories keeps on increasing among the higher education and research institutions in India (Singh, 2016). The INFLIBNET has played a major role in the OA movement in India. This study seeks to examine OA initiatives of INFLIBNET.

IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To find out and examine the various OA initiatives of INFLIBNET
2. To identify the OA strategies of INFLIBNET

V. OPEN ACCESS INITIATIVES OF INFLIBNET

INFLIBNET has a major role in India as an Inter University Centre of University Grants Commission (UGC). It has started five major projects, namely Shodhganga, ShodhGangotri, IR@INFLIBNET, INFOPORT and OJAS. Besides these a national e-content project of Ministry of Human Resources and Development named as e-PG Pathshala is also executed by INFLIBNET. It is meant for standardization of textbooks materials of postgraduate courses in different universities in India. It is a gateway to all Post Graduate (PG) courses. Presently, e-PG Pathshala has more than 23000 e-texts, 23000 videos on 70 subjects.

A. Shodhganga

Shodhganga is designed to be an open access repository of all Indian theses. It was started in 2010. It provides a platform for each university in India to deposit their Ph.D. theses upon their final acceptance by the universities. The Shodhganga is running on an open source digital repository software called DSpace developed by Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Libraries in association with Hewlett-Packard (HP). It replicates the academic structure of each University in terms of Departments/ Centers/ Colleges. The repository can be accessed at: <http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in>.

As of March 2019 there are 388 universities contributing to Shodhganga and 445 universities signed MOU with INFLIBNET. The repository has presently 218603 full-text theses. Users can freely download all the contents of Indian theses.

The repository shows the theses under each university facilitating to understand the major contributors. The repository has the ability to capture, index, and store, disseminate and preserve theses submitted by various Indian universities.

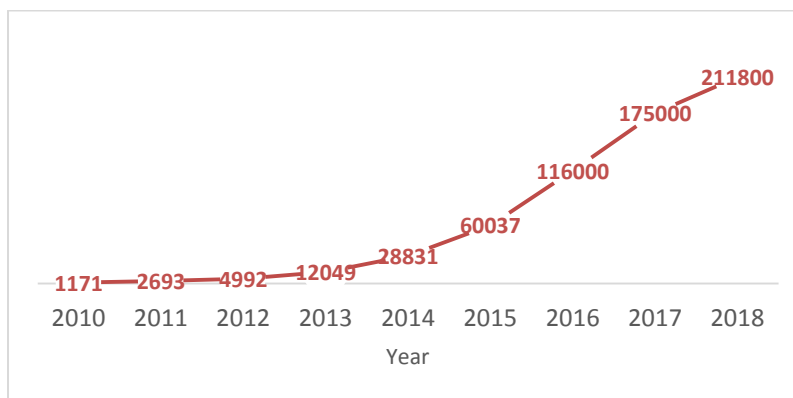


Source: <http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/>

Fig. 1 Screenshot of the Homepage of Shodhganga

Shodhganga has achieved a remarkable growth from 2010 to 2018. In 2010, the repository collected and provided full text access to 1173 theses. The number of theses doubled

and increased tremendously during 2012 to 2018. Figure 2 shows the year-wise growth chart of Shodhganga repository.



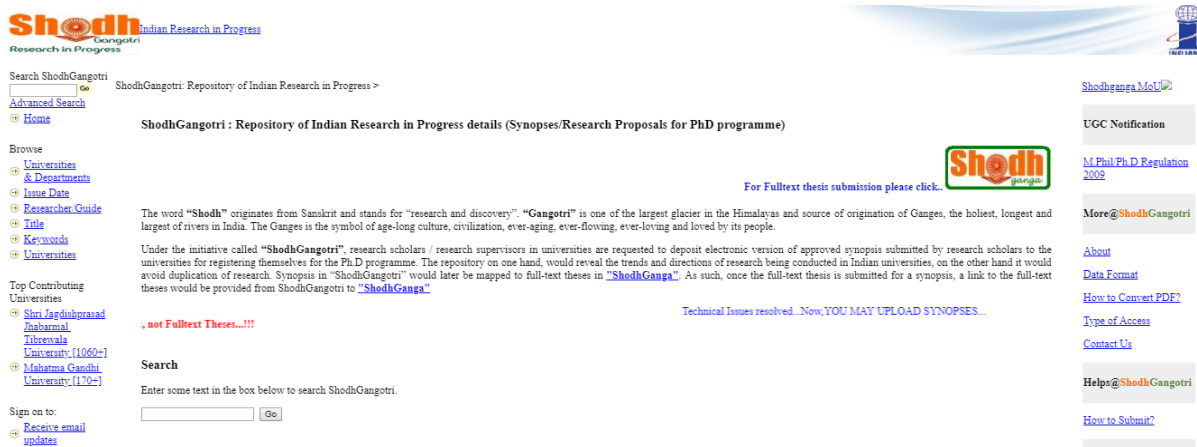
Source: <http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/>

Fig. 2 Year wise Growth Chart of Shodhganga

B. ShodhGangotri

ShodhGangotri is a repository of Indian research in progress. It consists of approved synopses of research proposals for the Ph.D. programme in Indian universities. Figure 3 shows the screenshot of ShodhGangotri. These

synopses in open access platform help the research scholars avoid duplication of work as well as understand the trends of research conducted across various Indian universities. As of March 2019 ShodhGangotri has 6450 synopses. ShodhGangotri can be accessed at: <https://shodhgangotri.inflibnet.ac.in/>.



Source: <https://shodhgangotri.inflibnet.ac.in/>

Fig. 3 Screenshot of the Homepage of Shodhgangotri

C. IR@INFLIBNET

IR @INFLIBNET is an institutional repository containing INFLIBNET’s own contents such as proceedings of the international and national conferences named as “Convention on Automation of Libraries in Education and Research Institutions” (CALIBER) and “Promotion of Library Automation and Networking in North Eastern Region” (PLANNER). CALIBER is a bi-annual convention, organized by the INFLIBNET Centre in different parts of the country in collaboration with universities since 1994. PLANNER was launched in 2003 to address the problems and issues in library and information services in the North-Eastern Region. The repository also contains publications of INFLIBNET staff, workshop materials and news paper clippings. This repository is also running on DSpace. The repository can be accessed at: <http://ir.inflibnet.ac.in/>. As of March 2019, this repository has 1986 conference papers, 19 documents under press and media and 148 documents under INFLIBNET publications. Open access to these documents

ensures their online distribution across the globe which will invite more citation to these documents.

D. INFOPORT

Launched in 2012, the InfoPort is INFLIBNET’s initiative to provide open access to Indian scholarly content through a Subject Gateway. It is designed and developed to serve as a comprehensive gateway to all Indian scholarly contents in electronic form. The gateway combines all Indian scholarly content scattered over the Internet through an integrated interface that supports search, browse and multiple listing and selectively catalogues online resources of Indian origin on diversified subjects. It works with the collaborations of librarians and scholars in colleges and universities in the process of identification and selection of resources. The universe of knowledge is classified according to the Dewey Decimal Classification. Figure 4 shows home page of InfoPort and this gateway can be accessed at <http://infoport.inflibnet.ac.in/>.

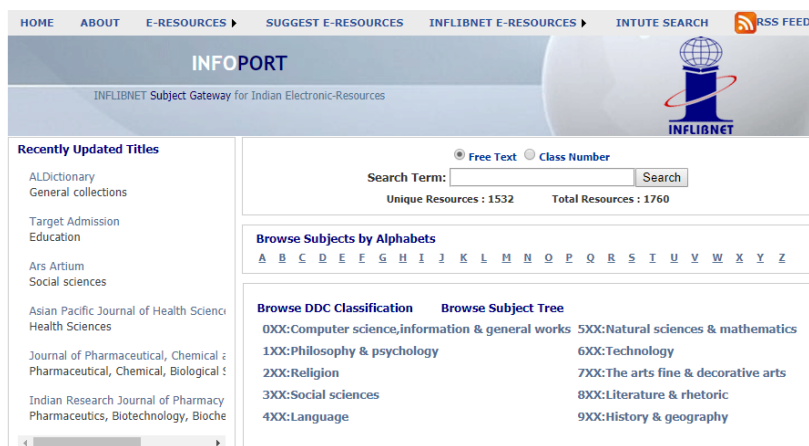


Fig. 4 Screen shot of the home page of INFOPORT

The InfoPort covers only Internet resources originated from India. It takes resources from institutional repositories, wikis, blogs, teaching and learning websites, e-books, e-journals, online libraries, etc.

E. OJAS

Open Journal Access System (OJAS) is a facility provided by the INFLIBNET Centre facilitating the hosting of the electronic version of print journals into open access mode.

This encourages the Indian academic community to publish their research articles online and reach-out to wider academic community through specialized search engines. It will increase visibility, use and citation through open access to scholarly articles to the academic community world-wide. Journals hosted on OJAS @ INFLIBNET are accessible to all users world-wide without any restrictions. Currently, OJAS @ INFLIBNET hosts 14 journals. Presently this service is partially ceased. The centre is providing training and assistance to the institutions.

VI. CONCLUSION

INFLIBNET Centre is playing an important role in the promotion of open access movement in India. The Shodhganga project of Indian theses is the largest open access platform in India which contains lakhs of digital theses. The ShodhGangotri helps to understand the emerging trends of Indian research without which scholars and guides may work on similar projects across the universities. InfoPort is serving another important service by enabling single window search for Indian open access

resources on electronic platforms. The Institutional repository serves mainly as an archives of all articles accepted by the CALIBER and PLANNER conventions. The OJAS is important as the open access journals support the publications of scholarly work as well as the familiarisation of the peer review process.

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