

Indian e-journals in library and information science: A study based on coverage in UGC approved list of journals

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In the recently released UGC list of approved journals, 11 out of 40 Indian LIS journals were found having e-ISSNs. While searching the ISSN database for e-ISSNs of the remaining journals, 7 more were found having e-ISSNs. However, four of these seven journals could not be considered for the present study as they had wrong country of origin, the journal is not an exclusive LIS journal, etc. Finally, fourteen LIS online Indian journals with e-ISSNs have been studied. The study finds that a detailed check list needs to be developed to assess the journals and concludes that there is a need for improving the quality of journals and making them comparable with the global standards.

Keywords: LIS Journals; Library and information science; ISSN; UGC list of journals; e-LIS journals

Introduction

On 10th January, 2017, the University Grants Commission (UGC) of India released a dynamic list of 38,652 journals gathered from three citation databases (SCOPUS, ICI and Web of Science)¹ in which Indian researchers can publish their articles. There were concerns in the academic community about the fate of their works they had published in past years. Some of the issues and concerns with the UGC list were reported in the press, social media and other sources. Library and information researchers and professionals have also been affected by UGC's decision.

The initial list, being a single long list, it was difficult to identify the list of journals belonging to any particular subject^{2, 3}. Later UGC brought out category-wise list of journals on 28th March 2017 that had only 15 Indian LIS journals⁴. The category-wise lists were again updated during 16th to 22nd June 2017 based on the recommendations received from universities. As on 25th April 2018, 357 LIS journals were included out of which 91 were Indian journals. In the further updated list issued on 5th May, 2018, a

total 293 LIS journals including 40 Indian LIS journals were released⁵. The present paper looks at only the 14 Indian LIS electronic journals in the current UGC list.

Review of literature

Maity and Teli analyzed 13 selected English language LIS journals indexed in Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)⁶. The journals which were published in English language only during the years 2004 to 2014 were considered in this study. Analysis was done to know the authorship pattern and subject area of LIS which had maximum productivity and also to find out year-wise productivity of articles. Only *DESIDOC Journal of Library and Information Technology* from India was included in the study. Lihitkar and Lihitkar made a study of 100 open access journals in library and information science indexed in DOAJ till January 2012⁷. This study included only *Annals of Library and Information Studies*.

Rufai, Gul & Shah also explored the status of open access titles in the field of library and information science⁸. Data for this study was taken from DOAJ,

Open J-Gate, and Ulrichsweb.com. The results clearly revealed an expounding growth of open access titles in the field of library and information science. The study highlighted that commercial publishers had also joined hands as open access market players.

Schlögl and Petschnig⁹ in their survey of 48 international and German-language LIS journals reported that the market of LIS journals, like others, has been very dynamic in the past 10 years. Lewandowski¹⁰ studied 35 major LIS journals pertaining to the years 2004 to 2006 for availability of their articles in Google Scholar (GS). They collected information on the type of availability—i.e., whether a certain article was available as a PDF for a fee, as a free PDF, or as a preprint. The study found that only some journals were completely indexed by Google Scholar, that the ratio of versions available depend on the type of publisher, and that availability varied a lot from journal to journal.

Yet another study to understand the characteristics of LIS open access journals analysed 65 English language LIS journals through descriptive statistical analysis and summative qualitative content analysis¹¹. The study found the growing diversity of subjects and target audiences, the central role of double-blind peer review in LIS OA, and the acknowledgement that consistency and interoperability among OAJs remain a challenge that may undermine goals for dissemination. Only one Indian LIS journal was covered in the study and name of the journal was not mentioned.

Khandare and Sonwane¹² focused on library and information science e-journals accessible under N-LIST Consortium and suggested that there should be more Indian e-journals of LIS under N-LIST consortium.

Pujar¹³ identified journals related to the field of LIS by undertaking a subject search on 'Library Science' using downloaded metadata of journals from DOAJ. It was found that 147 titles were related to the field of LIS. Websites of each of the journals were visited to check the current status of the journals. Impact factor of the journals were obtained from Journal Citation Reports 2012. The list of 147 journals included 7 journals published from India.

Awasthi and Jaiswal¹⁴ presented a bibliometric study of library and information science journals

archived in the DOAJ. A total of 72 LIS journals were included in the study. The analysis was done on different parameters like country-wise distribution, language-wise distribution, etc. The study covered two Indian LIS journals.

Thavamani, Kotti¹⁵ conducted a bibliometric study of 151 library and information science journals indexed in DOAJ. The study found that the start dates show a proliferation of journals appearing in a three-year period from 2004 to 2006 – 40 in all. While 2011 saw 13 new journals, the numbers have tapered-off significantly in the past two years. The list covered six Indian LIS journals.

Gupta, Kumar and Kabra³ studied the UGC list and found that this list covered 15 journals of library and information science published from India out of which 8 journals were found to be online of which 4 e-journals have e-ISSNs. The study provided comprehensive information and critically examined key aspects of UGC API such as: ISSN, reviewed/refereed/ coverage in abstracting and indexing in databases, journal ranking and updateness of journals in Indian Library and Information Science journals.

Based on review of literature, the relevant data to make a case for Indian online LIS journals is presented in the table-1

Table 1 that is drawn on the basis of existing literature indicates that the number of online journals vary in each study. Majority of the studies are related to open access. The earlier study made by Gupta, Kumar and Kabra (2018) identified 8 online journals and from which the journals not available in the UGC approved list presently, include *Journal of Digital Information Management*; *Information Studies*; and *COLLNET Journal of Scientometrics and Information Management*. So, there may be journals that have not been a part of any previous study and are part of this list. The present study makes a study of e-journals covered in the UGC approved list as updated on 2nd May 2018 after removal of journals.

Objectives of the study

- To identify Indian LIS e-journals covered in the UGC list of approved journals;
- To consolidate information about the e-journals published from India covered in the UGC list; and

Table 1—Studies on e-LIS Journals

Study by (Year)	No. of journals	No. of Indian journals	Title of Indian LIS journals	Source
<i>Dirk (2010)</i>	35	0	Nil	Google Scholar
<i>Rufai, Gul & Shah (2011)</i>	144	1	- Journal name not mentioned	DOAJ, Ulrichsweb.com and Open J-Gate
<i>Chauhan (2012)</i>	49	0	Nil	DOAJ
<i>Lihitkar and Lihitkar (2013)</i>	100	1	- <i>Annals of Library & Information Studies</i>	DOAJ
<i>Thavamani, Kotti (2013)</i>	151	6	- Journals name not mentioned	DOAJ
<i>Pujar (2014)</i>	147	7	- Journals name not mentioned	DOAJ
<i>Awasthi and Jaiswal (2015)</i>	72	2	- <i>International Journal of Information Dissemination and Technology</i> - <i>International Research: Journal of Library and Information Science</i>	DOAJ
<i>Maity and Teli (2015)</i>	13	1	- <i>DESIDOC Journal of Library and Information Technology</i>	DOAJ
<i>Te et al (2017)</i>	65	1	- Journal name not mentioned	LIS OAJs
<i>Khandare and Sonwane (2017)</i>	247	10*	- Journal names not mentioned	N-LIST Consortium.
<i>Gupta et al (2018)</i>	15	8 (4 with e-ISSN)	- <i>Annals of Library and Information Studies</i> - <i>COLLNET Journal of Scientometrics and Information Management</i> - <i>DESIDOC Journal of Library and Information Technology</i> - <i>Information Studies</i> - <i>Library Herald</i> - <i>SRELS Journal of Information Management</i> - <i>Library Progress(International)</i> - <i>Information Studies</i> - <i>PEARL: Journal of Library & Information Science</i>	UGC Approved list

*Duplicate/old titles of the journals were included.

- To identify and discuss issues about the e-LIS journals covered in the UGC list.

Methodology

A total of 14 LIS journals were identified and included in this study from the category-wise list of journals approved by the UGC as available on the UGC website. To identify the 14 journals that the UGC list was studied during 25th April to 25th May 2018. Data received from individual journal from the searches were tabulated and annexed with the name of the journal, ISSN, e-ISSN, Source, Subject, publisher, country of publication, broad subject category. Further, the study analyses various aspects of e-

journals that are found pertinent in regard to establishing a quality journals.

Analysis

Identification of online Journals

In the initial released by UGC on 11 January 2017, only 15 Indian LIS journals were included. Out of these, four journals had e-ISSNs. Later more journals were added and the UGC list had 357 LIS journals out of which 91 LIS journals were published from India (on the basis of UGC journals details which has column of country of publication) with 22 LIS journals having eISSNs. On 2 May 2018, UGC announced removal of several journals in which

51 Indian LIS journals were removed. Thereafter, 40 Indian LIS journals remained in the list. Both prior and post removal of journals’ list, the data are summarized below in the Table 2.

Out of the 40 journals in the final list, 11 journals have eISSNs. On checking the ISSN Database, it is seen that more journals have eISSNs (Table 3).

Subject-wise category

The UGC-approved list of journals is classified under four broad subject categories, namely: i) Science; ii) Social Science; iii) Arts and Humanities; and iv) Multidisciplinary. These broad subject categories are further divided into more than 300 sub-categories. The *Journal of Advances and Scholarly Researches in Allied Education* at UGC sr. no.49103 is included under Library and Information Science. However, this cannot be included under LIS neither the editorial board nor the coverage relate to LIS and hence has not been included for this study. The journal *Periodic Research* at serial number 41295 of the UGC list has also not be considered for the present study for the same reason.

Journal of Education of Library and Information Science at serial number 64137 with e-ISSN 2328-2967 is being published from the USA (as per ISSN

records) and hence excluded from the study. *International Journal of Information Library and Society* at serial number 43840 of the UGC list only has print ISSN as per the ISSN database and therefore has been excluded. The remaining 14 journals (Annexure I) have been taken up for the study.

Title of the journal

Journal titles are expected to be unique and as per ISSN India Guidelines¹⁶, journals changing their titles must mention the details of old title/ ISSN and the details of issues published during that period on the new journal or journal’s website. While going through the detailed information of the each journal, it is found that some journals have issues related to the change title (Table 4).

Table 4 reflects that a few journals have changed titles in the past. However, looking at the UGC list of approved journals, only one former title of the one journal was found, i.e. *DESIDOC Bulletin of Information Technology*. Mismatches have also been in titles of the journals with the UGC list and mentioning titles different from that the ISSN Database. *Journal of Advances and Scholarly Researches in Allied Education* is *Journal of Advances and Scholarly Research in Allied Education*

Table 2—Number of LIS journals: Pre and Post removal by UGC

Particular	Status before journals removal from UGC	Status after journals removal from UGC
Total No. of LIS Journals	357	293
Indian LIS Journal	91	40
Indian Online Journals (with eISSN)	22	11
Indian Print Journals (with ISSN)	76	31

Table 3—e-ISSNs of UGC approved Indian online journals

Journals with e-ISSN in the UGC List	Additional journals with e-ISSN through ISSN database
<i>Annals of Library and Information Studies</i>	<i>Journal of Indian Library Association</i>
<i>DESIDOC Journal of Library and Information Technology</i>	<i>Library Herald</i>
<i>Gyankosh : Journal of Library and Information Management</i>	<i>Library Progress International</i>
<i>International Journal of Information Library and Society</i>	<i>Pearl: Journal of Library & Information Science</i>
<i>International Journal of Information Studies and Libraries</i>	<i>World Digital Libraries: An International Journal</i>
<i>International Journal of Library, Information, Networks and Knowledge</i>	<i>SRELS Journal of Information Management</i>
<i>Journal of Advancements in Library Sciences</i>	<i>KIIT Journal of Library and Information Management</i>
<i>Journal of Advances and Scholarly Researches in Allied Education</i>	
<i>Journal of Education for Library and Information Science</i>	
<i>Journal of Scientometric research</i>	
<i>Periodic research</i>	

and *KIIT Journal of Library & Information Management* is *KIIT Journal of Library and Information Management* in the ISSN Database^{17,18}.

ISSN

‘The ISSN is a standard identifier for serials (e.g., journals, magazines, newsletters, newspapers, annuals) whether published in print, online or other media. Each medium version is assigned a separate ISSN’ means online and printed versions of a journal are required to have separate ISSN¹⁹. As pointed out in the Table 3, 7 journals were having e-ISSNs as per ISSN database while UGC list does not mention them. It is seen that the *Journal of Scientometric Research* has different ISSN in the ISSN database (2320-0057) where as the UGC list gives the ISSN as 2320-0059.

Issuing body vis-a-vis publisher

Each journal is brought out by an issuing body/sponsoring body and published by a publisher/printer. In some cases both are one and the same. While studying the 14 Indian LIS e-journals, the following variations are noted: The *World Digital Library* is brought out by TERI and published by TERI Press as mentioned at both TERI website and IOS Press website. While looking at the list of journals on the UGC list, the only IOS Press is mentioned as publisher. *SRELS Journals of Information Management* is brought out by Sharda Ranganathan Endowment for Library Science and published by Informatics Publishing Limited as mentioned on journal’s website. However, only the name Sharda Ranganathan Endowment for Library Science is given on the UGC list. For the journal, *Gyankosh: Journal of Library and Information Management*, the name of publisher at the UGC list is same as that of the journal name.

Coverage in ROAD and DOAJ and indexing databases

The quality of a journal is determined by many factors including coverage in recognized bibliographical and full text databases. The inclusion of a journal in subject specific indexing databases should be a matter of concern for the researchers. The UGC API gives higher weightage to a researcher, if his/her paper is published in a journal, which is indexed. The UGC journal evaluation checklist also prescribes one of the criteria as ‘The journal claims that it’s indexed in a given database and this claim is verified.’ Major abstracting and indexing databases in the subject Library and Information Science include: Library and Information Science Abstract (LISA); Library and Information Science and Technology Abstract (LISTA); Library Literature and Information Science Index^{20, 21, 22}.

The Communication and Information Sector of UNESCO has developed the Global Open Access Portal(GOAP) which presents a snapshot of the status of Open Access (OA) to scientific information around the world. ROAD (Directory of Open Access Scholarly Resources) has been conceived as an additional mechanism to GOAP²³. Whereas DOAJ is a community-curated online directory that indexes and provides access to high quality, open access, peer-reviewed journals²⁴. The indexing status of the 14 journals in the above-mentioned databases is given in Table 5. Only three journals are covered in one or more indexing databases.

Ranking of journals

There are various databases like Web of Science and Scopus which rank journals based on impact of the published papers. Google Scholar also provides metrics for academic resources and scholarly

Table 4—Titles of Indian Online e-LIS Journals

Name of the Journal	Former Title-1	Former Title-2	Coverage on the Website
<i>DESIDOC Journal of Library Information technology</i>	<i>DESIDOC Bulletin of Information Technology</i>	<i>DESIDOC Bulletin</i>	Information of former Title-1 only
<i>Journal of Indian Library Association</i>	<i>ILA Bulletin</i>	<i>Indian Library Association Bulletin</i>	No information given on the website
<i>SRELS Journal of Information Management</i>	<i>Library Science with a Slant to Documentation and Information Studies</i>	<i>Library Science with a Slant to Documentation</i>	Information about both the titles has been given on the website
<i>Annals of Library and Information Studies</i>	<i>Annals of Library and Information Science and Documentation</i>	<i>Annals of Library and Information Science</i>	Information about both the titles has been given on the website

Table 5—Indexing status of Indian e-journals in ROAD and DOAJ

Sr. No.	Journal Name	Availability of Full-text	Coverage in ROAD	Coverage in DOAJ	LISA	LISTA	Library Literature
1	<i>Annals of Library and Information Studies</i>	Open	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
2	<i>DESIDOC Journal of Library and Information Technology</i>	Open	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
3	<i>Gyankosh : Journal of Library and Information Management</i>	Restricted	No	No	No	No	No
4	<i>International Journal of Information Studies and Libraries</i>	Restricted	No	No	No	No	No
5	<i>International Journal of Library, Information, Networks and Knowledge</i>	Open	No	No	No	No	No
6	<i>Journal of Advancements in Library Sciences</i>	Open	No	No	No	No	No
7	<i>Journal of Scientometric research</i>	Open	No	No	No	No	No
8	<i>Journal of Indian Library Association</i>	Restricted	No	No	No	No	No
9	<i>KIIT Journal of Library and Information Management</i>	Restricted	No	No	No	No	No
10	<i>Library Herald</i>	Restricted	No	No	No	No	No
11	<i>Library Progress (International)</i>	Restricted	No	No	No	No	No
12	<i>Pearl: Journal of Library & Information Science</i>	Restricted	No	No	No	No	No
13	<i>SRELS Journal of Information Management</i>	Restricted	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
14	<i>World Digital Libraries: An International Journal</i>	Restricted	No	No	No	No	No

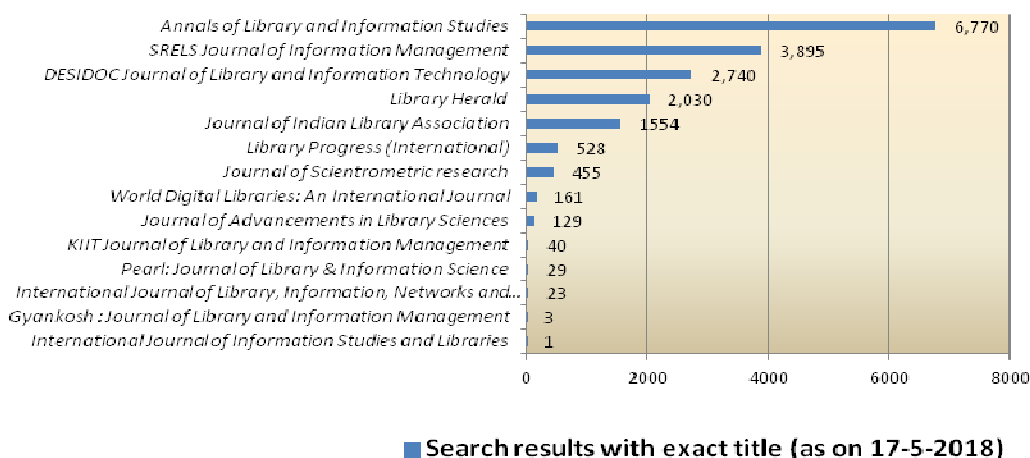


Fig. 1—Ranking of Journals based on Google Scholar Search results with the exact title of the journal (as on 17-5-2018)

literature. Each of the journals under the study is searched with advance search option using exact title of the journal in Google Scholar. Ranking of the selected journals based on Google Scholar based metrics such as h5 Index and h5 median for ranking of the is shown in figures 1 and 2.

On the basis of total number of search results with exact title of the journal, the higher results were found

for *Annals of Library and Information Studies* and *Annals of Information Studies*, followed by *SRELS Journal of Information Management*, *DESIDOC Journal of Library and Information Technology*, *Library Herald*, and *Journal of Indian Library Association*. While looking at the H5 index and H5-median, the journals that got highest score include: *DESIDOC Journal of Library and Information Technology*, *Annals of*

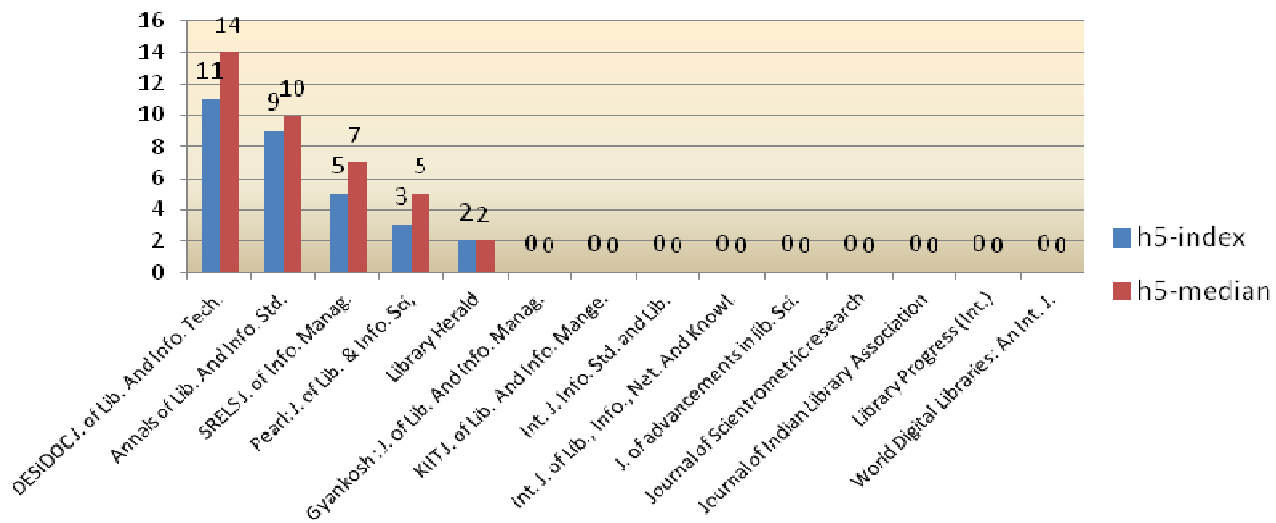


Fig. 2—Google Scholar Based Metrics: h5-Index* and h5 median# (as on 17-5-2018)

***h5-index:** h5-index is the h-index for articles published in the last 5 complete years. It is the largest number h such that h articles published in 2012-2016 have at least h citations each.

#**h5-median:** h5-median for a publication is the median number of citations for the articles that make up its h5-index

Library and Information Studies and Information Studies, SRELS Journal of Information Management, Pearl: Journal of Library and Information Science, and Library Herald.

Conclusion

Variations about the Indian LIS e-journals in the UGC list and the ISSN database is seen. There is a need for detailed guidelines from UGC that need to be followed for identifying e-journals. Publishers/issuing bodies also need to be careful in bringing out the e-journals and adopt international best practices to fulfill UGC's expectations.

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Annexure-I**List of Indian Online journals which covered in the study (After Exclusion/Inclusion)**

Sl. no.	Title	Publisher	ISSN	E-ISSN	Source	Place	Year of Starting	Frequency	Language
1	<i>Annals of Library and Information Studies</i>	National Institute of Science Communication and Information Resources (NISCAIR)	972-5423	0975-2404	Scopus & ICI	New Delhi	1954/2001	4/12	English
2	<i>DESIDOC Journal of Library and Information Technology</i>	Defense Scientific Information & Documentation Centre (Desidoc)	0974-0643	0976-4658	Scopus	New Delhi	1981/2008	6/12	English
3	<i>Gyankosh : Journal of Library and Information Management</i>	Gyankosh : Journal of Library and Information Management	2229-4023	2249-3182	UGC	Ghaziabad	2010	2/12	English
4	<i>International Journal of Information Library and Society</i>	Publishing India Group	-	2278-0386	UNIV	Bhopal	2011	1/12* 2/12	English
5	<i>International Journal of Information Studies and Libraries</i>	Publishing India Group	-	2456-1827	UNIV	Delhi	2016	2/12	English

Contd—

List of Indian Online journals which covered in the study (After Exclusion/Inclusion)

—Contd

6	<i>International Journal of Library, Information, Networks and Knowledge</i>	Scientific Society of Advance Research and Social Change	-	2455-5207	UNIV	Ghaziabad	2016	2/12	English
7	<i>Journal of Advancements in Library Sciences</i>	STM Journals	-	2349-4352	UNIV	Noida	2014	3/12	English
8	<i>Journal of Scientometric research</i>	phcog.net	2321-6654	2320-0059 2320-0057 [#]	UNIV	Mumbai/ Bangalore	2012/2011	3/12 4/12*	English
9	<i>Journal of Indian Library Association</i>	Indian Library Association, Delhi	2277-5145	2456-513X	UGC	New Delhi	1942/2015	4/12	English
10	<i>Library Herald</i>	Indianjournals.com	0024-2292	0976-2469	ICI	New Delhi	1963	2/12	English
11	<i>Library Progress (International)</i>	Bulletin of Pure and Applied Sciences	0970-1052	2320-317X	ICI	New Delhi	1981	2/12	English
12	<i>Pearl: Journal of Library & Information Science</i>	Indianjournals.com	0973-7081	0975-6922	ICI	Hyderabad/ New Delhi	2007/2009	4/12	English
13	<i>SRELS Journal of Library Management</i>	Informatics Publishing Ltd Bangalore	0972-2467	0976-2477	UNIV	New Delhi	2000/1964	4/12	English
14	<i>World Digital Libraries: An International Journal</i>	The Energy & Resources Institute (TERI) Delhi	0974-567X	0975-7597	UNIV	New Delhi	2008	2/12	English
