Revisited Indian Origin Library and Information Science Journals included in UGC API: A Study

Dinesh K. Gupta[*], Vijendra Kumar, and Neelam Kabra

Department of Library and Information Science, Vardhman Mahaveer Open University, Kota - 324 021, India
[*]E-mail: dineshkg.in@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

University Grants Commission (UGC) listed more than 38,000 journals based on three databases, Web of Science, Scopus and Indian Citation Index for selection/promotion of teachers and other academic staff in the universities and colleges, in India. The first covers 15 journals in the area of Library and Information Science which are published from India. This study provides comprehensive information of those journals with the objectives of critically studying on the aspects such as: reviewed/refereed/coverage in abstracting and indexing in databases, journal ranking and updateness of the journal. The list of LIS Journals presently available on the UGC website is reviews.

Keywords: Library and information science journals; University Grants Commission; Journal selection; UGC API

1. INTRODUCTION

There is a phenomenal growth of library and information science journals during last one decade. The study by Dutta and Sen describes that during last 100 years in all 186 periodicals have been published from India out of which 60 periodicals started during 2011-14[1], which indicates that about one-third of total periodicals started only during this period of five years. The possible reason could be linking publications with the career progression of library and information professionals working in higher education system in the country. While looking at the background the University Grants Commission (UGC) Regulations of 1998[2] prescribed a fix number of publications and thereafter introduction of academic performance indicator (API) for selection and promotion of teachers and librarians in the 'UGC regulations on minimum qualifications for appointments of teachers and other academic staff in universities and colleges and measures for the maintenance of standards in higher education 2010' linked publications with the recruitment and career progression.

The Regulations 2010 prescribes various activities for counting of APIs, namely: Teaching, learning and evaluation related activities; Co-curricular, extension and professional development related activities; and research and academic contribution. In the category 'Research and Academic Contributions' various areas are included, namely: Research papers published in refereed journal; Research publications (books, chapters in books, other than refereed journal articles); Research projects; Research guidance; and Training courses and conferences/seminars/workshop papers. The UGC notification No.F.1-2/2016 (PS) Amendments, dated 10 January 2017[3] comprising of a list of 38652 journals across the subjects,

mentions that the list is dynamic and may be reviewed from time to time. Through the amendment the UGC decided to compile the list in view of complaints that academics were publishing in sub-standard, and sometimes paid for publications[4].

These journals are from all branches of knowledge and covers large number of journals published from foreign countries. There was no source giving consolidated information of the Indian library and information science journals covered in the UGC list[5]. In this study, authors tried to review the Indian LIS journals which are covered in the list and various aspects of the regulations for the journal articles published by teachers, namely ISSN, reviewed/refereed/abstracted and indexed in databases, journal ranking and updateness of journals.

2. JOURNAL FOR GRADING ACADEMIC POINTS

The UGC Regulations 2010[6], and thereafter four amendments in the Regulations have been brought out to make the APIs effectively operational. The weightage of API for journal publications in the UGC Regulations 2010 and amendment Regulations of 2016[7] is summarised in the Table 1.

Table 1 makes it clear that there are changes in the weightage in API in 2010 and the fourth Amendment of 2016 in regard to maximum points for refereed journals (from 15 points to 25 points); papers with impact factor between 1 and 2 and between 5 and 10; and non-refereed journals.

3. CRITICISM OF THE UGC LIST OF JOURNALS

UGC has taken a bold step to bring research publications of the Indian teachers and research community in the legitimate and high standard journals but the proposed list received criticism from higher education community in the social media and press and media on many grounds including:

Table 1. Journal Weightage in UGC regulations 2010 and 4th Amendment 2016

Type of Journal	UGC regulations, 2010	4th Amendment regulations, 2016	
	Maximum points for university and college teacher	Maximum points	Remark
Refereed Journal	15 per publication	25 per publication	-
Augmented as Indexed journal	by 5 point	-	-
Impact factor between 1 and 2	by 10 points	by 10 points	Journals with impact factor less than 1 - by 5 points
Impact factor between 2 and 5	by 15 points	by 15 points	
Impact factor between 5 and 10	by 25 points	by 20 points	Journals with impact factor above 10 by 25 points.
Non-refereed but recognised and reputable journals and periodicals having ISBN/ ISSN	15 per publication	10 per publication	Other reputed journals as notified by the UGC

* The University shall identify journals and will be approved by the UGC, may also recommend journals for inclusion in the list.

- It excludes many reputed Indian journals and also journals in Hindi and regional languages.
- It arranges alphabetically irrespective of subject and discipline which makes it user-unfriendly.
- It denotes journals of one subject in other subjects/faculties which creates confusion and does not help teachers in developing a list of journals for any particular subject.
- It covers multiple occurrences of many titles.
- It covers large number of titles which have been 'Inactive' titles from the Scopus source list.

In communication of 30 January 2017[8] from the UGC, requested all the universities to submit the list of journals for the inclusion in the UGC list.

4. OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

- To provide information about the library and information science journals published from India covered in the UGC list; and
- To discuss aspects such as ISSN, reviewed/refereed, coverage in abstracting and indexing databases, journal ranking and updateness for the journals covered in the list.

It is essential to know the details of the Library and Information Science journals published from India which are covered in the UGC list. A comprehensive analysis of these journals would help the potential contributors for making appropriate decisions for publications in the Indian LIS journals to facilitate their selection and career progression in universities and colleges by attaining APIs as per the UGC Regulations. Also briefly reviews the list of the LIS Journals available on the UGC website as on 20 October 2017.

Table 2 gives country-wise distribution of the journals covered in the UGC list[9]. Table represents that India is the third country after USA and UK in the country-wise distribution of journals published and covered in the list. 15 Library and Information Science Journals published from India covered in the UGC List are mentioned in the *Annexure-1*. This list excludes journal entry with multiple names/occurrences with earlier name (e.g. DESIDOC Journal of Information technology); journal entry with 'Library' as subject in the UGC list while belonging to others subject (e.g. Electronics

and Information Planning) as it is covered in Engineering (with class number 621.38 as per UDC Classification scheme) in ISSN database and the broad subject Engineering sub-category Electrical and Electronic Engineering as per Scimago[10].

The following sources were consulted and used for getting maximum information relating to every individual journal:
- Ulrich International Periodicals Directory
- ISSN Database
- Source list(s) from and information Citation databases like Scopus, Web of Science, Indian citation Index, Scimago, Google Scholar
- List of journals covered Library and Information Science Databases like LISA, LISTA and Library Literature and Information Science Index.
- Journal platforms like OJS, www.indianjournals.com
- Individual/organisational website of journal/sponsor
- One recent issue of the journal for when lesser information is received from other sources like: Indian Library Movement, Indian Journal of Information Library and Society, KELPRO Bulletin, Journal of Library and Information Technology.

The UGC's first list covers journals mainly from three databases, namely Web of Science, Scopus and ICI. 12 of the 15 journals in this study are covered only in ICI while 3 journals namely: *DESIDOC Journal of Library and Information Technology*; *Annals of Library and Information Studies;* and *Journal of Digital Information Management* are covered in

Table 2. Country-wise distribution of LIS journals

Country	Journals	Country	Journals
Australia	2	Malaysia	1
Canada	3	Netherlands	5
Denmark	1	Nigeria	1
Germany	8	Pakistan	1
Hungary	1	Singapore	1
India	15	Taiwan	2
Iran	2	United Kingdom	28
Japan	1	United States	54
		Total	**126**

2 databases, viz., ICI and Scopus. No Indian LIS journal is covered in Web of Science till this study.

5. DISCUSSIONS

(a). Journals are the most important research outlets for earning APIs for teachers and librarians. The column three of the Table 1 indicates the points given to a journal and periodical publication (both for refereed and reputed) and additional points for having ISSN, indexed and impact factor as incorporated in the UGC Regulations 2010. Fourth amendment in the Regulations excludes the word periodicals from journals and periodicals. However, universities follow different pattern on the matter of inclusion of journals/periodicals; publications in free/paid journals, etc.[11-13].

(b). Subject prescribed in the UGC List: The list indicates different subjects for the journals and one such subject 'library' is covered. The journals covered in the subject 'library' do not denote an accepted subject. The accepted subject may include 'library science', 'library and information science'. Looking at the list, the journal '*Annals of Library and Information Studies*' is covered in computer science in place of library and information science. The journal '*Digital Information Management*' is covered in business, management and accounting; computer science; and social sciences. The journal '*DESIDOC Journal of Library and Information Technology*' is covered in 'library' as per the ICI while covered in 'social science' as per the Scopus List.

(c). Referring or reviewing process of the Journals: If the journal is refereed, a teacher gets more weightage in the API score for his/her publication. The frequently used terms include: refereed/peer reviewed. There is no standard procedure to follow for referring/review process. In some journals the editorial team members are involved in referring/review process while in others the editor takes the responsibility to get reviewed/refereed by experts in the area. Sometimes mix of the two takes place. In special issue on any particular theme, the guest editor takes such responsibility.

All the journals are refereed or reviewed. Many of these have highlighted such information on the cover page of the journal. However if a comparison of the pre API and post API period is made, one can find that it was not practice in pre-API era.

(d). ISSN: Studies on increase in the number of journals having ISSN mention that 'One of the reasons for the phenomenal increase during 2006 to 2015 in the number of journals seeking ISSNs is linking of journals with API. A journal with ISSN used to have more weightage in the API score of the UGC's 'minimum qualifications for appointments of teachers and other academic staff in universities and colleges and measures for the maintenance of standards in higher education 2010'[14-16].

Although in the 4th amendment, the UGC has eliminated the ISSN link with the journal publication may be due to the reason that acquiring ISSN is customary for any reputed or refereed journals. '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 ISSN[17]. While studying ISSN of journals, it is noticed that: All the 15 listed journals have ISSN, with 7 print only journals; 8 journals print and online (e-ISSN) both; and none of journal is available exclusive online. The print journal 'Digital Information Management' does not have e-ISSN while content is available full text online of the period 2010-2016. The journal makes a mention of the print ISSN on the webpage of the journal.

(e). Editor and Editorial Board affiliations: Many of the factors contribute for establishing reputation of the journal including ISSN. Though ISSN is simply an identifier for the journal title and does not in any way contribute to the reputation/ quality of the journal. The editor and editorial board affiliations of the journal can significantly raise the reputation of the journal. The practice for editorial board in the journals varies as mentioned below:

- 12 journals have more than 10 members in the editorial board/committee whereas 2 journals have less than 10 members in editorial board. One journal does not have editorial board.

- There is one or more members from foreign countries in 6 Journals.

- 7 journals have more than one member from one organisation.

- 9 journals have not mentioned full affiliation of editorial board members.

- 3 journals do not have proper editorial page.

Although, the guidelines for requesting an ISSN through the National centre of ISSN, India prescribes that editorial boards with complete addresses of the editorial board members including email address of the members and full contact address of publisher with publisher name should be displayed on the journal website. The journal should have a valid URL address and should cover a precise subject or address a specific target audience. Further the guidelines state that the journal should have a proper editorial page with affiliation of editor(s)[18].

Reputations of the organisations which run the journals also contribute to the prestige of the journal. When looked at the sponsoring body, 2 journals are govt. publication, 4 journals are association's publication, 7 journals are private publication (NGO, foundation etc.), 1 journal is university publication and 1 journal is individual publication.

(f). Online Access to the Journals: In recent, journals are fully/partly migrating to the online mode/platforms for easier access to the journal content. 9 of the 15 journals are available online. The complete picture of the journals in regard to online availability is presented in the Table 3.

(g). Coverage in abstracting/Indexing Databases/Directories: A journal gets recognition by many ways including coverage and listing in various subject based indexing and abstracting databases. It gives visibility to the journal and is useful in making bibliographies and bibliometric studies. LISTA, LISA and Library Literature and Information Science Index are popular databases in the subject[20,21,22]. However, individual journal gives description of the

Table 3. Online access to journals

Criteria	Journal	Remarks
Online Journals	*Annals of Library and Information Studies*	Online Archive Available (1954-2016); access through OJS.
	DESIDOC Journal of Library & Information Technology	Online Archive Available (1981-2017); access through OJS.
	Journal of Digital Information Management	ISSN assigned only for Print Version and Online Archive Available (2003-2016); access through journal website.
Online Journals with login	*Library Herald*	Online Archive Available (2003-2016); Hosted on Indianjournals.com[19]
	SRELS Journal of Information Management	Online Archive Available (1964-2016); Self hosting
	Library Progress(International)	Online Archive Available (2010-2016); Hosted on Indianjournals.com
	Information Studies	Online Archival Available (2000-2015)); Hosted on Indianjournals.com
	COLLNET Journal of Scientometrics and Information Management	Online Archive Available (2007-2016); Self hosting
	PEARL: Journal of Library & Information Science	Online Archive Available (2007-2016)); Hosted on Indianjournals.com

database coverage as described in the column 8 of the Annexure-1.

(h). Ranking of Journals: Ranking of a journal in the scientific community is decided on the basis of the impact of the published papers. In other words how the journal papers are cited over a period of time by others will be the impact of the journal. Citation tools have different criteria for calculating impact of the journals. The following table gives a picture of the journal ranking from three sources, namely: Google Scholar, Scimago, Indian Citation Index[23,24]:

In the Table 4 it is witnessed that there are different ranking of journals being the criteria of evaluation is different in each evaluating tool and those are incomparable. However, impact factor is considered as an important criteria for getting of extra points for the paper authored by the teacher.

(i). Updateness of the Journals: While going for calculating impact factor of the journal on the basis of ICI, it was intended to calculate impact factor for 2016 but all the issues of many journals were not available. More so, calculating impact factor of journals covered in the ICI database for 2015, the following limitations were observed:

- The Journal of Digital Information Management had no record since 2010.
- International Library Movement did not have articles from 4th issue of the 36th Volume in 2014.
- For Library Herald, issue no. 52 & 53 exist in the year 2014.
- For Journal of Library and Information Science, from 2nd issue of 2013 and later issues are not available.

While checking with the availability of the last issue of the journal, it was found that some of the journals were lagging behind the time schedule of more than a year.

6. UPDATING THE JOURNALS' LIST

Apart from Journals covered in the three indexing sources, namely Scopus, Web of Science, and Indian Citation Index; Journals recommended by the members of UGC standing committee and language committee(s); and Journals recommended by the universities (after de-duplication). Total number of journals covered in the UGC-approved list of journals is around 32,000. Besides, 13,130 journals are ceased publications that are stored separately.

Current statistics of UGC approved journals[25] :
- Total UGC approved journals in all subjects : 32745.

Table 4. Ranking of the journals

Journals	Google Scholar (H5-Index)*	Scimago Ranking (H – Index)#	Indian Citation Index (ICI) Impact Factor for the 2015)$
Annals of Library and Information Studies (ALIS)	7	5	0.211
SRELS Journal of Information Management	5	-	0
DESIDOC Journal of Library & Information Technology	13	4	0.208
Journal of Digital Information Management	5	9	0
Collnet Journal of Scientometrics and Information Management	7	-	0.018
Indian Journal of Information, Library & Society	-	-	0.024
Others	Result not found	Result not found	Not Calculatable$1

*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 2011-2015 have at least h citations each.
H-Index - Journals number of articles (H) that have received at least h citations over the whole period.
$ Impact Factor (IF): Citations to 2013 & 2014 in 2015 / Total no. of articles of 2013 & 2014 (as per available data of Indian Citation Index (ICI);
$1 Complete issues/articles of the journals of 2013 to 2015 not available, so it is not exactly calculable.

- All Journals are categorised in 4 broad subject categories: (Science; Social Science; Arts & Humanities; and Multidisciplinary).
- 'Library and Information Science' subject journals are covered in Social Science Subject Category.
- Total UGC approved journals in subject of 'Library and Information Science' are 383 (from 42 different countries).
- 93 LIS journals published from India out of 383 journals (24% of total LIS journals) are being covered in the list.

The number also increases manifold from 15 journals to 93 (more than 6 times) from the first list of journals published by the UGC.

Journal titles recommended for inclusion either by the Committee(s) or by the Universities were subjected to the checklist developed by the Standing Committee on Notification on Journals on the criteria[26] as shown in Table 5.

Journal titles that scored 6 or more score in Science, Social Sciences and Multidisciplinary category and 5 or more score in Humanities on the checklist criteria were included in the UGC-approved List of Journals.

Journal titles recommended by the universities that did not have ISSN number have not been included in UGC-approved list of journals. Recommendations of various universities for titles that were invalid or did not qualify the checklist have also not been included in this list.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Whether, the UGC list of journals would yield qualitative improvement in the scientific literature or assist the authors in gaining personal benefits is still unknown. The greatest limiting factor in advancing professional/technical communication at the initial stage was restricting the publication to select three citation databases to the list of journals by the UGC for career progression of teachers in the universities and colleges. The present study proves that there are variations in the practices followed by Indian LIS journals in regard reviewed/refereed/coverage in abstracting and indexing in databases, journal ranking and updateness of journals. There is a need for studying all the 93 journals based on such aspects to apprehend the library and information professionals to decide on choosing the right journal for publishing their researches.

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Table 5. Checklist criteria used for inclusion of journals

Criteria	Answer	Score
The journal has a website which provides full postal and email addresses of Chief Editor and Editors, and at least some of these addresses are verifiable official addresses	Yes/No	If yes, then only proceed further
		Select score
1. The website provides complete instructions to authors/reviewers	Yes/No	+1 for 'Yes' /-1for 'No'
2. The journal has a well-defined peer-review and publication Policy	Yes/No	+1 for 'Yes' /-1for 'No'
3. The journal has a well-defined Ethics policy	Yes/No	+1 for 'Yes' /-1for 'No'
4. The journal has a declared frequency of publication each year	Yes/No	+1 for 'Yes' /-1for 'No'
5. The journal is published regularly and in time following its declared frequency	Yes/No	+1 for 'Yes' /-1for 'No'
6. The journal claims that it is indexed in a given database and this claim is verified	Yes/No	+1 for 'Yes' /-1for 'No'
7. Journal levies submission/publication charges	Yes/No	0 for 'Yes'/+1 for 'No'
8. Since when is the journal being regularly published (select any one)	<4 years	0
	4-6 year	+1
	>6years	+ 2
Final Score (taking into consideration scores of points 1-8)		

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CONTRIBUTORS

Prof. Dinesh K. Gupta, holds a PhD in Library and Information Science in 1995 from University of Rajasthan, Jaipur. He is Professor, Library & Information Science at Vardhman Mahaveer Open University, Kota. He served as Member of Standing Committee of IFLA Education & Training Section, 2011-2015, IFLA Management and Marketing Section, 2003-2007 and 2007-2011. He has published more than 50 papers, books. His area of research includes: Management and Marketing LIS; e-learning.
His contribution in the current study includes, Introduction, contextualising and overall outputs.

Mr. Vijendra Kumar obtained his Master in Library & Information Science in 2013 from Vardhman Mahaveer Open University, Kota. He is qualified both NET& JRF from UGC, New Delhi. He is presently Junior Research Fellow and pursuing his Ph.D. on Digital Libraries from Vardhman Mahaveer Open University, Kota. He is served as Research Intern for two years in CSIR-NISCAIR, New Delhi. He has published 5 papers in journals, books and conferences. His area of research includes: Digital Libraries; IRs and LIS education.
In the current study, he carried out the collection of data, tables, figures, references etc.

Ms Neelam Kabra has completed her Master in Library & Information Science in 2014 from Vardhman Mahaveer Open University (VMOU), Kota. She is presently pursuing doctoral research on E-learning in LIS from VMOU, Kota. She has published 2 papers in journals/conferences. Her area of research is E-learning.
In the current study, she did collection of data and data entry, etc.

Annexure -1

Library and Information Science Journals published from India covered in the UGC List

UGC List Sr. No.	Journal and Frequency	Source	Subject as per UGC List	ISSN/e-ISSN	Latest Issue Available+	Covered in Indexing/Abstracting Databases as described in Webpage/ Journal/
12	Annals of Library and Information Studies (Quarterly)	Scopus & ICI	Computer Science; Social Sciences	0972-5423 0975-2404(e)	Year 2016, Vol. 63, Issue 4	Abstracted in Library and Information Science Abstracts (UK) and Indian Library and Information Science Abstracts (India)
7940	COLLNET Journal of Scientometrics and Information Management (Quarterly)	ICI	Library	0973-7766 2168-930X(e)	Year 2016, Volume 10, Issue 2	British Library Inside, EBSCO Databases, ESCI®, Genamics, Journal Seek, Google Scholar, Portico, ProQuest LISA, SciBase, Ulrich's Periodicals Directory, WorldCat Local (OCLC)
9575	DESIDOC Bulletin of Information Technology (Renamed as DJLIT)	ICI	Library	0974-0643		Scopus, LISA, LISTA, EBSCO, Library Literature and Information Science Index, The Informed Librarian Online, ProQuest, Open J-Gate, Indian Science Abstracts,
9576	DESIDOC Journal of Library & Information Technology (Bio-monthly)	ICI	Library	0974-0643		Indian Citation Index, WorldCat
9577	DESIDOC Journal of Library and Information Technology	Scopus	Social Sciences	0974-0643 0976-4658(e)	Year 2017, Vol. 37, Issue 6	-
10695	Electronics Information & Planning	ICI	Library	0304-9876	-	Library and Information Science Abstract; INSPEC; Indian Library Science Abstract; Guide to Indian Periodical Literature
14951	IASLIC Bulletin(Quarterly)	ICI	Library	0018-8441	Year 2016, Vol.61, Issue -2&3	-
15597	Indian Journal of Information, Library & Society (Quarterly)	ICI	Library	0971-4286	Year 2016, Vol. 29, issue 1	LISA; LISTA; Library Literature*
15902	Information Studies(Quarterly)	ICI	Library	0971-6726 0976-1934(e)	Year 2015, Volume-21, Issue-4	-
17778	International Library Movement (Quarterly)	ICI	Library	0970-0048	Year 2014, Vol. 36, Issue 4	Engineering Index- COMPENDEX Scopus, INSPEC & others (Indexed in different 67 databases and secondary services)
182	Journal of Digital Information Management (Quarterly)	Scopus & ICI	Business, Management and Accounting; Computer Science; Social Sciences	0972-7272	Year 2016, Vol14 No.6	Library and Information Science abstracts (LISA) and Library literary index.
21358	Journal of Library and Information Science(Quarterly)	ICI	Library	0970-714X	Year 2015, Volume 40, Number 1 & 2	-
21360	Journal of Library and Information Technology (Quarterly)	ICI	Library	0975-6183	Year 2016, Vol. 12, issue 1	-
24019	KELPRO Bulletin(Quarterly)	ICI	Library	0975-4911	Year 2016, Vol. 20, Issue 20	