

*Full Length Research Paper*

## Maharashtra University of Health Sciences (MUHS) digital library consortium: A case study

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This paper aims to give an understanding of the e-resources available in the MUHS digital library consortium. Survey method based on observation was used for the study. Data were collected from MUHS digital library consortium website through search engine. The author evaluated different types of e-resources available based on faculty and subject in MUHS digital library consortium. There is increasing demand of e-resources by academic and research community. The Maharashtra University of Health Services (MUHS) has launched MUHS digital library consortium to facilitate access of UG and PG students, researchers, and faculty members in the medical and allied health sciences institutions to e-resources. This is to support core functions of medical institutions which in turn improve the quality of patients care. MUHS digital library consortium contains large number of e-resources with very considerable or affordable amount. It is very much useful for researchers, faculty, undergraduate and post-graduate students. The study reveals that the number of e-resources available satisfies the needs of researchers, but faculty members should be motivated to use e-resources in order to improve the quality of patients care, research as well as academic work.

**Key words:** Consortia, E-resources, e- journals, e-books, MUHS, Digital library consortia

### INTRODUCTION

The word consortium is derived from Latin, meaning association or partnership. It means the collaborative acquisition of rights of access to electronic databases and journals. Journals play a major role in research and development, but unfortunately the cost of journals is increasing enormously (Varaprasad and Madhusudhan, 2010; Manjunatha and Shivalingaiah, 2003; Mayank 2006). Due to the financial crunch and rising costs of journals, many research or scientific libraries cannot subscribe to all the required journals and databases (Ratnakar et al., 2009). The crisis arises not only because of rise in cost of journals but also the rate of inflation, increase in number of journals and the paucity of funds available to the library.

The demand of e-resources by academic and research community has increased over the years. The Maharashtra University of Health Services (MUHS) has launched MUHS digital library consortium to facilitate access to e-resources by UG and PG students, researchers and faculty members in the medical and allied health sciences institutions. The consortium enables medical and allied health sciences libraries to access large number of scholarly journals from reputed publishers, aggregators and societies with very less amount of subscription. It is very difficult for individual institutions to raise the necessary funds to develop the digital network infrastructure. A MUHS digital library consortium has provided the network infrastructure (Bhaskar and

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**Abbreviations:** MUHS, Maharashtra University of Health Sciences; e-resources, Electronic resources; MBBS, Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery; ENT, Ear, Nose and Throat; TB, Tuberculosis; Skin and VD, Skin and Venereal diseases.

**Table 1.** Different types of electronic resources available in the MUHS Digital Library Consortium.

No.	Types of electronic resources	Quantity of electronic resources	Percentage of electronic resources
1.	E- Journals	1115	69.47
2.	E- Books	315	19.62
3.	Articles	80	04.98
4.	Resources	40	02.49
5.	News letters	31	01.93
6.	Magazines	13	0.80
7.	Bulletins	06	0.37
8.	Information	02	0.12
9.	Online course	01	0.062
10.	Dictionary	01	0.062
11.	Encyclopedia	01	0.062
Total electronic resources		1605	

Prashant, 2010).

Electronic resources especially journals are important component of medical institutions because they support core functions of medical institutions of teaching, learning and research. For academic institutions offering medical education e-resources further support evidence based practice which in turn improves the quality of patients care. In the past decade, e-resources have become significant component of library collections worldwide (Kinengyere et al., 2012).

After successful crossing over the embryonic phase towards development, MUHS digital library consortium was launched on 14<sup>th</sup> Nov. 2005 to provide full text e-resources to all institutions affiliated to the university. All colleges related to health sciences including medical, dental, ayurvedic, homeopathic, nursing, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, unani etc (except pharmacy) are under the umbrella of Maharashtra University of Health Sciences. All institutions and medical colleges are expected to have a digital library to facilitate use of these consortia for teaching-learning and research. This consortium consists of over 1600 medical journals, magazines, newsletters, bulletins etc. The university intends to run this project on "No profit- no loss" basis.

Nowadays the value and use of consortia based e-resources have increased. Therefore, there is a necessity to do study on different aspects of consortia based e-resources available to medical fraternity of Maharashtra State. So far, no survey has been undertaken to know the different types of e-resources available in MUHS consortium The present study is an attempt to analyze the different types of e-resources available in MUHS consortium.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study is an analytical study of MUHS digital library consortium. The survey method based on observation was used for

the study. Data were collected from MUHS digital library consortium website through search engine. The present study was conducted to understand the consortia based e-resources available in the MUHS digital library consortia. The scope of present study is limited to MUHS digital library consortium.

The present study was undertaken:

1. To know the different types of electronic resources such as e-books, e- journals etc available in the MUHS digital library consortia.
2. To know faculty wise electronic resources available in the MUHS digital library consortia.
3. To analyze exclusively subject wise electronic resources available in the MUHS digital library consortia for M.B.B.S. course.

## RESULTS

The data were available on website in alphabetical order. This available data collected from MUHS digital library consortia website were recorded according to the types of electronic resources (e-books, e-journals etc), faculty wise available resources and subject wise e-resources. These data were analyzed, categorized as per their percentage and interpreted accordingly. The results and observations of present study are elicited in Tables 1 to 3. It was found that MUHS digital library consortium has 69.47% e-journals and 19.62% e-books; and 10.91% are other resources such as magazines, bulletins newsletters etc (Table 1 and Figure 1). It was observed that 31.339% e-resources are of medical faculty and 55.20% e-resources are related to all allied health sciences (Table 2 and Figure 2).

## DISCUSSION

1. MUHS Digital Library Consortium consists of a total 1605 e-resources, out of which 69.47% are e-journals and 19.62% are e-books; and 10.91% are other resources such as magazines, bulletins newsletters etc.

**Table 2.** Faculty wise electronic resources available in the MUHS Digital Library Consortium.

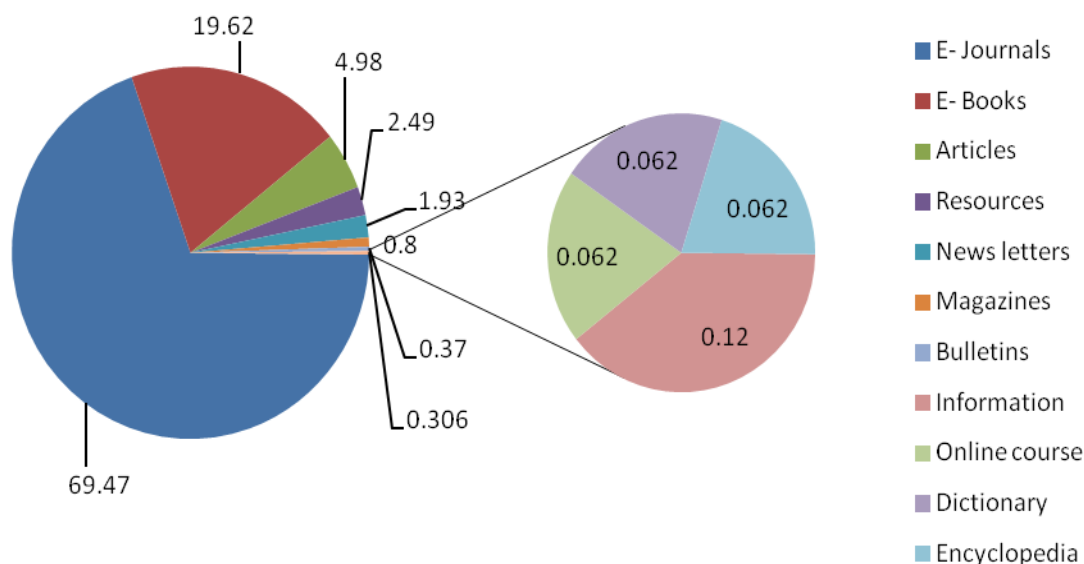
No.	Faculty	Quantity of electronic resources	Percentage of electronic resources
1.	Medical	503	31.339
2.	Dental	79	04.922
3.	Homeopathy	57	03.551
4.	Ayurvedic	20	01.246
5.	Nursing	25	01.557
6.	Physiotherapy	21	01.308
7.	Occupational therapy	09	0.560
8.	Unani	05	0.311
9.	Related allied health sciences	886	55.20
Total	Electronic Resources	1605	

**Table 3.** Exclusively subject wise analysis of electronic resources available in the MUHS Digital Library Consortium for M.B.B.S. course.

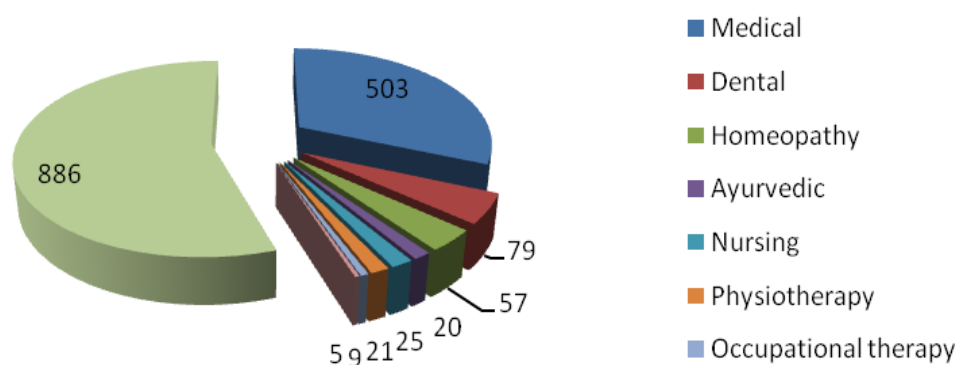
No.	Subject	e-journals	e-books	Others	Total e-resources
1.	Anatomy	02(0.60%)	---	11(34.37%)	13 (2.58%)
2.	Physiology	27(08.13%)	01(0.71%)	---	28 (5.56%)
3.	Biochemistry	07(02.10%)	04(02.87%)	---	11 (2.86%)
4.	Pathology	16(04.81%)	14(10.07%)	---	30 (5.96%)
5.	Microbiology, Immunology	47(14.15%)	07(05.03%)	---	54 (10.73%)
6.	Pharmacology	20(06.02%)	10(07.19%)	---	30 (5.96%)
7.	Forensic medicine and toxicology	06(01.18%)	03(02.15%)	---	09 (1.78%)
8.	Preventive & social medicine, Community Medicine, Epidemiology, public health	23(06.92%)	15(10.79%)	01(03.12%)	39 (7.75%)
9.	Medicine	23(06.92%)	07(05.03%)	---	30 (5.96%)
10.	Surgery	21(06.32%)	07(05.03%)	02(06.25%)	30 (5.96%)
11.	Obstetrics and Gynecology	08(02.40%)	10(07.19%)	01(03.12%)	19 (3.77%)
12.	Ophthalmology	12(03.61%)	04(02.87%)	03(09.37%)	19 (3.77%)
13.	Orthopedics	06(01.18%)	05(03.59%)	01(03.12%)	12 (2.38%)
14.	ENT, Otolaryngology	08(02.40%)	05(03.59%)	---	13 (2.58%)
15.	Psychiatry	21(06.32%)	09(06.47%)	---	30 (5.96%)
16.	Skin & VD / Dermatology	42(12.65%)	18(12.94%)	---	60 (11.92%)
17.	Anesthesia	12(03.61%)	01(0.71%)	03(09.37%)	16 (3.18%)
18.	TB and Chest	01(0.30%)	---	---	01(0.19%)
19.	Radiology	12(03.61%)	16(11.51%)	---	28 (5.56%)
20.	Pediatrics	17(05.12%)	03(02.15%)	10(31.25%)	30 (5.96%)
21.	Medical Education	01(0.30%)	---	---	01 (0.19%)
	Total	332 out of 503 (66.0%)	139 out of 503 (27.63%)	32 out of 503(06.36%)	

The MUHS digital library consortium contains large number of e-journals as compared to e-books and other e-resources. The probable reason for availability of large journal compared to other resources could be because in medical college libraries researchers require more e-journals than e-books or other resources for their research.

2. We have analyzed faculty wise electronic resources available in the MUHS Digital Library Consortium. It was observed that 31.339% e-resources are of medical faculty and 55.20% e-resources are related to all allied health sciences. This consortium contains maximum number of e-resources of medical faculty as compared to faculties like dental, homeopathy, nursing, ayurveda,



**Figure 1.** Different types of electronic resources available in the MUHS Digital Library Consortium.



**Figure 2.** Faculty wise electronic resources available in the MUHS Digital Library Consortium.

physiotherapy, occupational therapy, unani etc. The possibility of having maximum number of e-resources of medical faculty could be because medical faculty deals with more subjects compared to other faculties.

3. Among medical sciences faculty subjects like anatomy, biochemistry, forensic medicine and toxicology, orthopedics, ENT, otolaryngology, anesthesia, TB and chest and medical education have less number of e-resources as compared to other subjects. They have to be increased (Table 3). Dermatology and Microbiology have the highest number of e-resources.

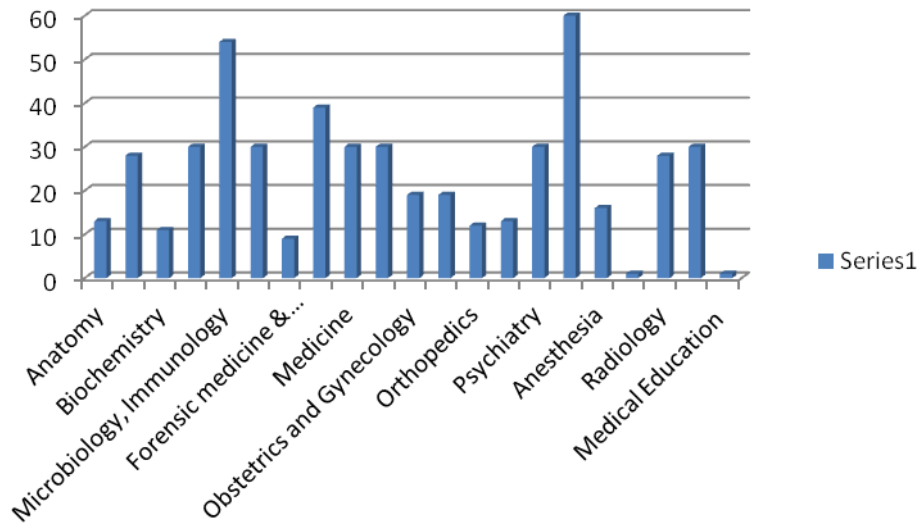
We have also done exclusively subject wise analysis of electronic resources available in the MUHS Digital Library Consortium for M.B.B.S. course. It is observed that 66% are e-journals, 27.63% are e-books and 06.36 % are other e-resources (Table 3 and Figure 3).

## Conclusion

Due to financial crunch and the rising costs of journals, many research or scientific libraries cannot subscribe to all the required journals and databases. The crisis is not only as a result of rise in cost of journals but also the rate of inflation, increase in number of journals and the paucity of funds available to the library. To overcome these problems, many health universities have started digital library consortia.

Nowadays, the purchasing of electronic resources is generally accepted because of the ease of its usability, readability, affordability and accessibility. E-resources are networked products used around the clock at multiple points by many users simultaneously at a time.

E-resource is a very much faster media which helps user to save their time in searching. It is also useful to



**Figure 3.** Medical science (MBBS) subject wise electronic resources available in the MUHS Digital Library Consortium.

extract information, integrate that information into other material and to cross-search between different publications.

MUHS digital library consortium contains large number of e-resources with very considerable or affordable amount. It is very much useful for researchers, faculty, undergraduate and post-graduate students. This facility can be availed by multiple sharing accesses. The study reveals that the number of e-resources available satisfies the needs of researchers, but faculty members should be motivated to use e-resources for research and academic purpose. Based on present study, it is suggested that institutional libraries need to arrange orientation programmes for postgraduate students and faculty members for the optimum use of available e-resources.

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