USE OF ONLINE DATABASES AVAILABLE FROM DELNET, NEWDELHI: A STUDY

Ch.N.Bhavani

Librarian, JKC College, JKC Nagar, Guntur-6, Andhra Pradesh, India
Email:bha.jkcc@gmail.com

Abstract: Online database is a record of logically related information, recorded in computer files in a uniform form to facilitate easy and efficient retrieving of data by means of internet or communication networks. DELNET (Development Library Network) is one of major resource sharing network in India, offering a range of online databases and services to facilitate the exchange of information among academic libraries in the 21st century. At present Academic libraries are facing a lot of problems due to static budget and exponential price hike of library collection materials. A lot of troubles have been taken in past few years to overcome this problem of financial shortage by resource sharing through DELNET for all Academic Institutions. DELNET service is very economic and useful to all academic library users. This article gives an overview of the various online databases provided by DELNET and describing their salient features.

Keywords: Academic Libraries, Bibliographic Databases, DELNET, Online Databases.

1. Introduction: Generally, online database is an integrated collection of bibliographic information arranged logically in a far located central computer with which users can communicate via telecommunication networks. The emergence of online databases has introduced a new era for information searching and retrieval from traditional retrieval systems to network based IR systems.

Online databases involve searching of remotely located information through interactive computer and communications networks irrespective of any physical or geographical location. Today's online databases typically work on time-sharing and real-time modes to enable users to access information simultaneously by communicating host computer directly.

Online databases include information that is organized and represented in a logical manner. Structurally, online database made up of records, further divided into a number of fields (author, title, etc.) for categorizing, searching and retrieving information. Initially, online databases were used to provide bibliographic information, later they started to comprise full-text information to provide actual information, since then they were called as full-text online databases. These are the vast and continuously updated records of information in the form of abstract, full-text references or citations on general or specific field of knowledge. Thus, these are the online sources that provide information on different fields of study with greater ease, accuracy and speed.

Online database is an important source to locate different types of electronic documents, such as books, scholarly journals, theses, reviews, official documents and so on. These are the collection of logically arranged information sources that enable a user to search information on a particular topic, article, or book by using different descriptive elements, i.e., keyword, author, title, subject and date of publication etc. However, some of these databases contain full-text information, while others contain only abstracts and indexes; and citations of published literature. Online databases can be general, multidisciplinary or subject specific in scope. The availability of these databases enables users to search information in a variety of forms and formats, such as HTML, PDF, RTF, etc.

Definition of Online Databases:

- **ODLIS (2012) defines databases as**, "A large, regularly updated file of digitized information (bibliographic records, abstracts, full- text documents, directory entries, images, statistics etc.) related to a specific subject or field, consisting of records of uniform format organized for ease and speed of search and retrieval and managed with the aid of database management system (DBMS) software. Content is created by the database producer (for example, the American Psychological Association), which usually publishes a print version (Psychological Abstracts) and leases the content to one or more database vendors (EBSCO, OCLC etc.) that provide electronic access to the data after it has been converted to machine readable form (PsycINFO), usually on CD-ROM or online via the Internet, using proprietary search software.
- According to the Macmillan Dictionary of information Technology (2014), "Database is a collection of interrelated stored data so that it may be accessed by users with simple user friendly dialogues".
- The Chambers Science and Technology Dictionary (1999) defines database as "A collection of structured data independent of any particular application".

Types of Online Databases: Online databases are divided into the two main categories; Reference and Sources databases, on the basis of information incorporated in them. According to Chowdhury (2010), online databases are categorized under the two major divisions include, reference databases and source databases. Reference databases direct seekers towards the source of information, while source databases include actual information itself.

1. Reference Databases: It has two types of online databases.
a. **Bibliographic databases**: Bibliographic Databases Bibliographic database is one of the most important forms of reference databases. These databases are widely used as reference tools and provide citations or references, abstracts and index to published literature. Online bibliographic databases provide quick information about publications, which may or may not be available in library's own collection. These are the excellent means to access information, rather than merely an item of information in the collection of any library. Bibliographic databases contain elements of bibliographic description that used to describe books, journals, documents, and other publications or portions. Rice (1985) stated that these databases are typically online bibliographic files, are the online equivalent of print abstracts and indexing services and mostly used for bibliographic verification of literature.
   Examples: LISA, Indian Citation Index, Scopus and Web of Science etc
b. **Referral databases**: Referral databases direct users towards the particulars of actual source of information i.e. name of a person or institution. It offers references to information, such as names, address, specialization of persons, institutions, information systems, and so forth.
   Examples: Ulrich's Periodicals Directory and Electronic Yellow Pages

2. Source Databases: Source Databases are divided into two types one is Numeric databases and second one is Full text database.
a. **Numeric Databases**: A numeric database is a computer-readable collection of data that are primarily numeric in nature. These are also known as the fact sources and non bibliographic databases and are mostly used for supporting business or financial research. These databases include organized numerical data along with brief textual description and provide it access in the form of statistics, demographic and financial reports, stock market quotations, chemical and physical properties, and chemical nomenclature and graphic structures, etc. These are the files of primarily statistical information from which a user can extract specific forms of data.
   Examples: COMPUSTAT and ProQuest Statistical Insight.
b. **Full-text Online Databases**: A full-text database is a compilation of documents or other information in the form of database in which complete text of each referenced document is available for online viewing, printing, or downloading. In addition to, text documents, images are often included as graphs, maps, photos, and diagrams. Full text online databases are comprising full text information of the publications that are basically either print or online in origin. It includes large

files of text such as, all the paragraphs of a journal article or all the chapters from a book along with abstract or citations of the text files incorporated in them. According to Bandyopadhyay (1999), Full text online databases are now being using as effective and important sources of periodical literature that are not usually available in local collection of libraries. Examples: JSTOR, Emerald insight and Wiley Online Library etc.

History of DELNET: DELNET stands for Developing Library Network (formerly Delhi Library Network). It is the first operational library network in India. It was started as a project of the India International Centre in January 1988 with the initial, financial and technical assistance by National Information System for Science and Technology (NISSAT), Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, Govt. of India. It was registered as a society in June 1992 under the Societies Registration Act of 1860 and is currently being promoted by the National Informatics Centre (NIC), Planning Commission, Govt. of India and India International Centre, New Delhi.

DELNET is a major resource sharing library network in India. DELNET services play an important role in the aspect of providing information by using online data bases and e-resources to all academic institutions. It is today important to learn and know the assessing the use of DELNET services among the faculties, research scholars and students.

DELNET project is good step towards the quality of higher education ,where everyone can utilize the online data bases and e-resources at the best possible way at the medium cost. This is an excellent initiative, which should greatly help research activity in all academic institutions. DELNET facility will be useful for faculty, research scholars and students community.

Objectives of DELNET: DELNET has been established with the prime objective of promoting resource sharing among the libraries through the development of a network of libraries. Its aim is to collect, store and disseminate information besides offering networking service to users ,to undertake scientific research in the area of Information science and technology.
- To promote sharing of resources among the libraries by developing a network of libraries, by collecting, storing and disseminating information and by offering computerized services to the users.
- To offer guidance to the member libraries on cataloguing database services, circulation, acquisition, serials control, online services, selection of hardware and software, etc.
- To develop specialist bibliographic database of books, serials and non-book materials.
- To develop a database of projects, specialists and institutions.
- To coordinate efforts for suitable collection development and for reducing unnecessary duplication wherever possible.
- To undertake scientific research in the area of Information Science and Technology, create new systems in the field, apply the results of research and publish them
- To establish a referral centre, to monitor and/or facilitate catalogue search and maintain a central online union catalogue of books, serials, and non-book materials of all the participating libraries.
- To facilitate and promote delivery of documents manually and mechanically.
- To possess and maintain electronic and mechanical equipment for the fast communication of information and delivery of electronic mail.
- To coordinate with other regional, national and international networks for exchange of information and documents.
- To undertake, facilitate and provide for the publication of newsletters/journals devoted to networking and sharing of resources.

Current status of DELNET: DELNET at present has 6783 libraries as its members, of which 6761 libraries are in India in 33 states and Union Territories and 22 in overseas countries. The following is a brief geographic break-up:

India	-	6761
Bhutan	-	1
Nepal	-	3
Oman	-	4
Philippines	-	1
Sri Lanka	-	8
United Arab Emirates	-	3
United States	-	2

Resource Discovery through DELNET Databases:

- **DELNET Online Databases:** DELNET has been actively engaged with the compilation of various union catalogues of the resources and online databases are available in member libraries. These union catalogues, union lists and databases are continuously updated and are growing rapidly.

DELNET has around eleven databases available online for its users. These are:

a) Union Catalogue of Books : DELNET maintains an online catalogue of books available with its Member –Libraries. It contains bibliographic records. It is continuously updated and the request for inter library loan can be placed through the online system. It can be accessed by author, title, subject, conference, series etc. and also Boolean Operators can be used. At present 2,83,58,450 bibliographic records are available in it.

b) Union List of Current Periodicals: DELNET has created union list of current periodicals in science and technology, social sciences and humanities. These databases are provided through online to DELNET users. At present DELNET has 38,184 titles of periodicals both national and international and is regularly updated and new titles are added annually.

c) Union Catalogue of Periodicals: Union catalogue of periodicals with bibliographic details maintained by DELNET. Presently it contains 20,235 records, which include full holdings data of the libraries.

d) Database of Periodical Articles: The database contains bibliographic details of articles and this can be searched under the title, author, compiler, name of periodical and subject. It has 9,84,809 records and updated from time to time. It is very useful database to the researchers and scholars.

e) CD-ROM database: It is a collection of bibliographic database of CD-ROMS available with the member libraries. It has 61,750 records.

f) Union list of Video recordings: It is a database of videocassettes available in DELNET member libraries .It has 6,000 records.

g) Union List of Sound Recordings: This union list consists of 1025 audio cassette records available in member libraries.

h) Database of Theses and Dissertations: A database of theses and dissertations submitted to Indian universities

i) Union list of News Papers: This database consists of 70 newspapers records,which contains the information about the newspapers including the title, name of editor, place of publication, email address and web address of internet edition.

j) Database of E-Books: This data base contains 1613 records.

k) Profile of Member – Libraries: A directory containing information about the member -libraries is available for reference purpose.

- **Access to Database through INTERNET:**
  a. Cambridge dictionaries online
  b. Networked digital library of thesis and dissertations
  c. GISTNIC databases: DELNET provide access to GISTNIC database of the National Informatics Centre.
  d. ODLIS: Online dictionary of library & Information Science
  e. MEDLINE & other databases of NLM
  f. Open Access Journals
  g. Engineering &Technology E-Journals : Table of Contents
  h. U.S.Patents : Full Text

  i. Full text Midical Books
  j. Full Text Medical Journals
  k. Full Text Engineering &Technology E-Journals
  l. Learning Resources for LIS Professionals
  m. Digital Libraries of the world

- **National Bibliographic Database:** DELNET undertook the compilation of the national bibliographic database with the support of the department of culture, Government of India in 1998 as a pilot project. 50,000 records of books were created at Punjab University, Patiala and International Institute of Tamil Studies, Chennai. At present compilation works are going on at Andhra University, Asiatic Society of Bombay and Asiatic Society, Kolkata.

DELNET Services relating to Online Databases:
1. Access to Union Catalogues and Databases: DELNET provides online access to the union catalogues, union lists and databases to its member libraries. These union catalogues and databases are regularly updated and are growing rapidly. These are available worldwide through the web. Any registered user of DELNET can search these databases through their allotted login and password. Recently DELNET has introduced an online facility for uploading of the library databases to DELNET for merging in the centralized union catalogue.
2. Inter Library Loan and Document Delivery Services: Inter Library Loan and Document delivery services are one of the most popular services with member libraries. DELNET Users in can search literature information by using bibliographic databases and then requests for the supply of books on Interlibrary Loan or requests for journal articles are received by DELNET through various modes including DELNET Online System, e-mail, also through fax and at times through post. DELNET promotes electronic communication since it is faster and interactive and facilitates the process of quick and safe delivery of the ILL/DDS items. The following number of collection accessible from DELNET.

DELNET Database as on 31.08.2019	
Union Catalogue of Books	2,83,50,450
Union Catalogue of Periodicals	20,235
Union List of Current Periodicals	38,184
Database of periodical articles	9,84,809
Database of E-books	1,613
Database of CD-ROM	61,750
Union list of Video Recordings	6,000
Union List of Sound Recordings	1,025
Database of Theses and Dissertations	1,30,753

3. Data Base Creation: DELNET assists the participating libraries in creation of bibliographic databases. It also provides technical assistance to member libraries in handling IT applications in libraries.
4. Reference Services: DELNET maintains a referral centre which provides reference facilities to participating libraries. This centre also looks after the access to the central databases and provides prompt replies.

DELNET Net worked library Resources (Full-text Digital Library Resources): Recently the following digital library resources are provided by DELNET.
1. Knowledge Gainer: Knowledge Gainer offers anytime and everywhere intuitive access and learning environment on a wide array of subjects in Engineering & Technology, Management, Medical Science, Pharmaceutical Science, Pure Sciences, Social Sciences, Arts & Humanities for Graduate and Post Graduate students including researchers and teachers. It gives access to **85,71,243** of resources including E-journals, E-books, Articles, Institutional Repositories content.

2. Indian Manuscripts: DELNET is one of the best website ,which offers free online reading of 500 thousand page's of manuscripts & antique book's.

3. *E-Books Directory: E-Books directory contains* 10955 free e-books in **709** categories. It is a daily growing list of links to freely accessible e-books, documents and lecture notes found all over the internet.

4. **Language learning portal**: DELNET provides language learning portal ,which includes 40 languages.

Conclusion: Having a basic knowledge of these online databases and using them effectively will help researchers and authors to improve their writing and publishing skills. There is a scope and need to develop better online databases for which will have features like improved storage, improved user search, experience and quality. DELNET is one of the better library resourcing sharing network to develop online databases for information retrieval, mainly designed to retrieve documents required by the users. It works on the principle of providing right information to the right user instantly. DELNET increases online databases from time to time with the aim of providing scholarly information in one or more areas of education and research.

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