

“ROLE OF DELNET IN ENHANCING SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATION SERVICES IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES : AN ASSESSMENT”

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Abstract :

DELNET was established with the primary objective of promoting resource sharing and cooperation among libraries through a networked information infrastructure. Its major functions include collecting, organizing, storing, and disseminating information; providing computerized information services; supporting collaborative collection development; and minimizing duplication of library resources. DELNET has also played a significant role in developing union catalogues and bibliographic databases of resources available in member libraries, including the Union Catalogue of Books, Union List of Current Periodicals, Union Catalogue of Periodicals, and other electronic information databases. Through these services, DELNET facilitates resource discovery, inter-library cooperation, document delivery, and scholarly communication, thereby strengthening access to information and improving the effectiveness of academic and research libraries.

Keywords : DELNET, e-journals, e-books, e-databases, scholarly communications.

Introduction :

DELNET was started at the India International Centre Library in January 1988 and was registered as a society in 1992. It was initially supported by the National Information System for Science and Technology (NISSAT), Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, Government of India. It was subsequently supported by the National Informatics Centre, Department of Information Technology, Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, Government of India and the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. DELNET has been established with the prime objective of promoting resource sharing among libraries through the development of a network of libraries. It aims to collect, store, and disseminate information besides offering computerized services to users, to coordinate efforts for suitable collection development and also to reduce unnecessary duplication wherever possible.

DELNET has been actively engaged with the compilation of various Union Catalogues of the resources available in member-libraries. It has already created the Union Catalogue of Books, Union List of Current Periodicals, Union Catalogue of Periodicals, CD-ROM Database, Database of Indian Specialists, Database of Periodical Articles, Union List



of Video Recordings, Urdu Manuscripts' Database, Database of Theses and Dissertations, sample databases of language publications using GIST technology and several other databases. The data is being updated in these databases and is growing rapidly. All the DELNET databases have been resident on DELSIS, an in-house software developed on BASIS Plus, an RDBMS, the product of Information Dimensions Inc. of USA which has been provided to DELNET courtesy National Informatics Centre, New Delhi.

Functions of DELNET :

DELNET is a network of libraries in India, aimed at providing resource-sharing and collaboration between libraries. It connects libraries from various sectors, including academic, public, and special libraries. Some of the key functions of DELNET include:

Resource Sharing and Inter-Library Loan Services :

- DELNET promotes the sharing of resources such as books, journals, and other materials among member libraries through an efficient inter-library loan (ILL) system.

Database and Union Catalogue Development :

- DELNET creates and maintains union catalogues of books, journals, and other resources available in its member libraries, facilitating easy access and retrieval of materials.

Digital Library Services :

- DELNET has been involved in creating digital libraries and providing access to digitized resources, especially rare and old publications, for its members.

Cataloguing and Bibliographic Services :

- DELNET provides cataloguing services and maintains bibliographic databases, enabling libraries to organize and manage their collections effectively.

Access to Online Databases :

- DELNET provides its members with access to a variety of online databases and e-journals, facilitating easy access to academic research and scholarly information.

Development of Library Standards :

- DELNET is actively involved in developing library standards and promoting library automation in India, helping libraries to improve their efficiency and management.

Networking and Collaboration :

- DELNET fosters collaboration between libraries, ensuring a broader and more effective exchange of information and resources.



Objectives of the Study :

- To assess how DELNET network contributes to the development of libraries, educational institutions, and research in India.
- To assess the online services, databases, and e-resources available through DELNET
- To analyze the technological frameworks, systems, and software that DELNET use to provide services to libraries.
- To assess the level of digital infrastructure and technology adoption within the networks.
- To evaluate the training programs, workshops, and capacity-building initiatives offered by both networks to librarians, researchers, and institutions.

Scope and Limitations of Study :

DELNET (Developing Library Network) involves examining the functions, services, objectives, and reach of these two prominent networks in India that aim to enhance access to library resources and support academic institutions

Limitations :

- Availability of Data
- Institutional Variability
- Technological Disparities
- Geographic Limitations
- Focus on Library Services Over Other Aspects
- Different Organizational Objectives
- Changing Nature of Services
- Limited User Feedback
- Financial and Policy Constraints
- Lack of Standardized Metrics
- Focus on National Level

Below is a table summarizing the key programmes and activities undertaken by DELNET:

Programme/Activity	Description
Union Catalogue Development	DELNET has developed a comprehensive union catalogue of books, journals, and other resources available in member libraries, facilitating resource sharing and reducing duplication.
Inter-Library Loan (ILL) and Document Delivery Services	DELNET provides inter-library loan and document delivery services, ensuring timely access to books, journal articles, and other documents through courier or online delivery.
E-Resources Access	Members have access to a wide range of e-journals, e-books, CD-ROM databases, and other digital resources, benefiting researchers, faculty, and students.



Professional Training and Development	DELNET organizes tutorials, workshops, lectures, and training programmes to enhance the skills of library and information professionals. These activities are complemented by the National Convention on Knowledge, Library, and Information Networking (NACLIN).
Knowledge Discovery Portals	DELNET has introduced advanced Discovery, Knowledge Gainer, and Vision portals, offering a single window to explore a rich collection of academic content and video lectures.
Current Awareness Services	DELNET provides announcements from the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) and global library science job listings, keeping professionals informed about opportunities and developments in the field.
National Bibliographic Database	DELNET created a national bibliographic database, generating records of books to facilitate resource sharing and cataloging among libraries.

Table - 1
Initiatives By DELNET

S. No.	DELNET Initiatives
1.	Knowledge Gainer Portal
2.	Vision Portal
3.	Concour Portal
4.	GRIP Portal
5.	AI Tools & Technologies
6.	E-JOURNALS (Full-Text)
7.	Language Learning Portal
8.	Manuscripts, Rare Books & Archival Materials
9.	E-Books & Audio Books
10.	E-Newspapers
11.	Divyangjan Resources
12.	Other Online Databases
13.	THESIS/DISSERTATIONS
14.	Other Links

Table - 1 shows DELNET has 14 initiatives focused on library networking, access to rare resources, multilingual learning, and inclusion.. DELNET, on the other hand, emphasizes resource sharing and networked access. Its portals such as the Knowledge Gainer Portal, Concour, and E-Journals provide seamless access to books, journals, and rare resources across member libraries. DELNET also caters to diverse users through platforms like Language Learning Portal and Divyangjan Resources, these organizations are pivotal in transforming India's library landscape into a dynamic, digital, and interconnected ecosystem.



Table - 2
DELNET: E-JOURNALS

S. No.	DELNET E-JOURNALS
1.	Aerospace Sciences [102 titles]
2.	Agriculture & Horticulture [116 titles]
3.	Architecture [93 titles]
4.	Artificial Intelligence (75 Title)
5.	Arts and Commerce [12 titles]
6.	Ayurveda [43 titles]
7.	Dental [178 titles]
8.	Divyangjan (Persons with Special Needs) [385 titles]
9.	Education [206 titles]
10.	Engineering and Technology [911 titles]
11.	Fashion Technology [30 titles]
12.	Food Technology [133 titles]
13.	Homeopathy [40 titles]
14.	Hotel Management [90 titles]
15.	Law [132 titles]
16.	Library and Information Technology [55 titles]
17.	Management [240 titles]
18.	Mass Media [43 titles]
19.	Medical [3337 titles]
20.	Nursing [145 titles]
21.	Paramedical [1642 titles]
22.	Pharmacy [390 titles]
23.	Physiotherapy [54 titles]
24.	Police Research [41 titles]
25.	Science (13 titles)
26.	Skill & Entrepreneurship [58 titles]
27.	Social Science [1182 titles]
28.	Startups, Innovation and Entrepreneurship [53 titles]
29.	Unani (22 Titles)
30.	Women and Child Development [71 titles]
31.	Yoga [24 titles]

Table - 2 shows that DELNET have total 31 e- journals of different subjects. DELNET, offers a vastly diversified subject-wise collection with a particular emphasis on professional, vocational, and technical fields, including medical sciences, engineering, management, law, and social work. It provides more subject categories and higher total volume, making it especially valuable for specialized and applied disciplines



Table - 3
DELNET: E-Books

DELNET E-Books	
10677 free e-books in 709 categories in E-Books & Audio Books	Union Catalogue of Books: Over 4.13 crore records.
Hindi e-books [3 titles]	Union List of Current Periodicals: 1,12,779 records.
E-books (Delhi Sanskrit Academy) [7 titles]	Union Catalogue of Periodicals: 63,080 records.
E-books - Central Sanskrit University [100 titles]	Database of Periodical Articles: 11,24,250 records.
Sanskrit e-books (Read only) [36 titles]	CD-ROM Database: 70,670 records.
	Union List of Video Recordings: 6,000 records.
	Union List of Sound Recordings: 1,025 records.
	Database of Theses and Dissertations: 1,48,995 records.

Table - 3 shows that. DELNET, provides a smaller but specialized selection of e-books, with a focus on Hindi and Sanskrit e-books and collections like the E-books from the Delhi Sanskrit Academy and Central Sanskrit University. It also offers a massive number of 10677 free e-books across 709 categories, highlighting its broad offering in terms of free digital access. DELNET focuses on providing access to regional language resources (Hindi and Sanskrit) along with an array of free e-books and resources for Indian and South Asian studies. DELNET, on the other hand, has a broader network of over 8,000 member libraries and focuses on resource sharing and interlibrary loan services. It maintains larger bibliographic databases, including 4.13 crore book records, over 11 lakh periodical articles, and extensive audio/video collections, making it ideal for resource pooling across institutions. DELNET is especially useful for libraries seeking collaboration, document delivery, and access to a wide range of multimedia and bibliographic records.

Table - 4
Core objectives and missions of DELNET

Aspect	DELNET (Developing Library Network)
Affiliation	Registered society with financial support from various bodies
Main Objective	To promote sharing of resources among libraries through networking
Core Mission	Develop a network of libraries for resource sharing and cooperation
Key Services	• Union Catalogues • Interlibrary Loan (ILL) • Document Delivery • Access to databases



Focus Area	All types of libraries: academic, public, special, etc.
Resource Sharing	Facilitates interlibrary loans and access to union catalogues
Digital Initiatives	Provides access to digital content and databases, though limited compared to INFLIBNET
Software Development	Uses standard networking and library software systems
Coverage	Thousands of libraries of various types across India and some abroad

Table - 4 shows that DELNET (Developing Library Network) is a significant initiative aimed at enhancing the library ecosystem in India, but they differ in scope, services, and focus areas.

DELNET, which began as the Delhi Library Network in 1988, has grown into a national-level registered society that supports a wide variety of libraries, including academic, public, and special libraries. Its overarching goal is to foster the sharing of resources among libraries through networking and cooperation. DELNET provides services such as union catalogues, interlibrary loan (ILL) systems, document delivery, and access to various bibliographic and full-text databases. Unlike INFLIBNET, which is more research-centric, DELNET is inclusive of all types of libraries, making its scope much broader. DELNET, however, connects thousands of libraries of all types, both within India and internationally, emphasizing resource sharing and interlibrary cooperation.

Table - 5
Technological aspect of DELNET

Aspect	DELNET
Core Software	Uses standard library management software (e.g., Koha, LibSys)
Software Purpose	Library automation and catalog integration through open standards
Digital Repositories	Access to digital collections and union catalogues via custom portals
Consortia Management	Facilitates shared subscriptions and document delivery
Metadata Standards	Supports MARC21, UNIMARC, and ISO-compliant metadata formats
Interoperability	Z39.50, Web OPACs, and protocols for catalog sharing
Access Protocols	Username/password & IP-based access to union catalogues and databases
Union Catalogue Integration	Union catalogues maintained on DELNET servers for global searching
Search & Retrieval Tools	Multi-database federated search through DELNET portal
Cloud Services	Cloud-hosted databases and catalogues for easy remote access
User Interface	Web-based interface with search filters and interlibrary request options
Support and Training	Provides workshops and training for library networking and services



Table - 5 shows that DELNET focuses on interoperability and wide-scale resource sharing among all types of libraries. Instead of developing proprietary software, it uses standard library systems like Koha and LibSys. DELNET maintains extensive union catalogues, enabling interlibrary loans and document delivery services. It supports open protocols such as Z39.50 and uses federated search tools through its web portal. DELNET employs a cloud-based infrastructure for hosting its catalogues and databases, making remote access easy and scalable. It also provides training and workshops to help libraries integrate into its network. DELNET is especially useful for libraries seeking collaboration, document delivery, and access to a wide range of multimedia and bibliographic records.

Table - 6
Financial and Operational Comparison of DELNET

Aspect	DELNET
Funding Source	Receives financial support from multiple sources: Govt. grants, membership fees, and project-based funding
Financial Model	Hybrid model: a mix of government grants, institutional membership subscriptions, and service fees
Budget Allocation	Directed toward infrastructure maintenance, union catalogue services, and support for interlibrary loans
Revenue Generation	Generates revenue from membership fees, paid services, and database access
Cost to Member Libraries	Charges annual membership fees and nominal service charges for ILL and database access
Operational Efficiency	Efficient in networking diverse libraries; scales well due to flexible financial structure and lean operations
Sustainability	More diversified and financially adaptable due to multiple income streams
Governance	Managed by an independent registered society with broader operational autonomy
Expansion Capability	Can expand more freely through strategic partnerships and paid collaborations

Table - 6 show that DELNET (Developing Library Network) operates on a hybrid financial model, combining government grants with self-generated revenue from membership fees, service charges, and project-based funding. This model makes DELNET more financially adaptable and diversified, enabling it to respond more swiftly to the needs of a wider variety of libraries—academic, public, special, and institutional.

DELNET generates operational revenue through services like interlibrary loans, document delivery, and access to union catalogues and databases. Member libraries pay annual subscription fees and may incur nominal charges for specific services, which makes the network financially self-reliant to a greater degree, because of its structure as an independent registered society, DELNET enjoys greater operational autonomy and



governance flexibility, allowing it to form partnerships, expand services, and initiate collaborations without being entirely dependent on government budgeting cycles.

Table - 7
Training & Capacity Building: of DELNET

Aspect	DELNET
Target Audience	Librarians, information professionals, and library staff
Types of Programs Offered	- Training workshops - Seminars - Webinars on library networking and digital services
Focus Areas	- Union catalogue integration - Interlibrary loan systems - Digital library tools - ICT in libraries
Online Training	Offers webinars, online training sessions, and video demonstrations
Collaboration with Institutions	Collaborates with member libraries across India for training programs
Certifications	Offers certificates for training and workshop completion
Customization	Training customized to suit diverse libraries (academic, public, special)
Frequency & Reach	Regular but more regional or institution-specific programs; expanding reach
Resource Material	Training documents, handouts, and digital content
Impact	High impact in academic and research circles; instrumental in repository adoption

Table - 7 shows that DELNET provides practical, network-oriented workshops focused on interlibrary cooperation and ICT tools, tailored to a broader range of libraries.

Table - 8
DELNET – Initiatives by Thematic Category

Thematic Category	DELNET Initiatives
Thesis & Dissertation	• EBSCO Open Dissertations • Global Full-text Thesis and Dissertation • Networked Digital Library of Thesis and Dissertations • Yale Medicine Thesis Digital Library
E-Resources	• E-Journals (Full-text) • E-Books & Audio Books • E-Newspapers • Other Online Databases
Library Automation	• INDCAT (Union Catalogue)



	• AI Tools & Technologies
Federated Access & Networking	• INFOPORT (Library info portal) • Vision Portal
Research & Academic Support	• Language Learning Portal • Divyangjan Resources
Institutional Repositories	INFOPORT again used for access to local content
Reports & Analytics	(None directly comparable)
Manuscripts & Rare Materials	Rare Books & Archival Materials

Table - 8 shows that DELNET, while equally strong in providing global thesis access, brings a broader approach in inclusivity and language initiatives, including dedicated portals for language learning and resources for the Divyangjan (persons with disabilities). Its strength also lies in rare books and archival material, offering a rich cultural repository. Both platforms offer comparable services in e-resources and research support, showing a balanced commitment to digital content delivery and academic assistance. DELNET shines in inclusive access, language diversity, and cultural preservation. Together, they complement each other in enriching India's academic and library networks

Table - 9
DELNET – Language Initiatives

Thematic Category	DELNET Initiatives
Language Learning & Support	Language Learning Portal – dedicated platform for language education
Regional Language E-Books	- Hindi E-Books (3 titles) - Central Sanskrit Univ. (100 titles) - Delhi Sanskrit Academy (7 titles) - Sanskrit e-books (36 titles, read-only)
Multilingual Access/Interface	Multilingual content and categorization (709 categories across languages)
Cultural & Classical Works	- Rare Books & Archival Material (Includes classical Indian texts)

Table - 9 shows that. DELNET takes a more structured approach to language education through its Language Learning Portal and offers a more extensive categorization of multilingual content. It also hosts a curated collection of Hindi and Sanskrit e-books, enhancing access to regional and classical literature. DELNET demonstrates a more targeted commitment to language learning and regional language resources, in promoting linguistic diversity and cultural heritage through digital means.

Conclusion :

DELNET has 14 initiatives focused on library networking, access to rare resources, multilingual learning, and inclusion. DELNET, on the other hand, emphasizes resource sharing and networked access. Its portals such as the Knowledge Gainer Portal, Concur, and



E-Journals provide seamless access to books, journals, and rare resources across member libraries. DELNET also caters to diverse users through platforms like Language Learning Portal and Divyangjan Resources. DELNET have total 31 e- journals of different subjects. DELNET, on the other hand, offers a vastly diversified subject-wise collection with a particular emphasis on professional, vocational, and technical fields, including medical sciences, engineering, management, law, and social work. DELNET, on the other hand, provides a smaller but specialized selection of e-books, with a focus on Hindi and Sanskrit e-books and collections like the E-books from the Delhi Sanskrit Academy and Central Sanskrit University. It also offers a massive number of 10677 free e-books across 709 categories, highlighting its broad offering in terms of free digital access. DELNET focuses on providing access to regional language resources (Hindi and Sanskrit) along with an array of free e-books and resources for Indian and South Asian studies. DELNET has a broader network that connects libraries of all types including public, academic, and special libraries across India and abroad. Its strength lies in its union catalogues, inter-library loan services, and wide-reaching connectivity that enable users to access diverse resources from member libraries.

DELNET play complementary roles in strengthening India's library infrastructure. Their continued growth and collaboration can significantly enhance information access and academic productivity across the country.

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