USER AWARENESS AND USE OF ELECTRONIC JOURNALS AT THE PUNJABI UNIVERSITY, PATIALA: A STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The advancement in information technology has changed the reading habits and the publication format of documents. E-journal is a well established and the most popular phenomena. The present paper deals with the awareness and use of e-journals by researchers. The study reviled the purpose of using e-journals, frequency of use, location of accessing e-journals, using patron and satisfaction level of users

Keywords: e-journal; Use of e-journal; Awareness of e-journal; Punjabi University

INTRODUCTION

Library is a metaphor of the memory of mankind. Information and communication technologies, the Internet and the web have given rise to a situation where we are having more and more of data but less and less of information and knowledge on the web. Barring the commercial domain, there is a lot of chaos on the web in the Public domain. Rapid cycle of innovation and obsolescence has made our job more difficult and challenging. New formats of information communication are appearing in the digital environment like e –books, e-journals etc. E-journals are also well-established phenomena.

E-JOURNAL

E-Journal is a digital version of a print journal, or a journal-like electronic publication with no print counterpart (example: First Monday, Webology), made available via the Web, e-mail, or other means of Internet access. Some Web-based electronic journals are graphically modelled on the print version. The rising cost of print journal subscriptions has led many academic libraries to explore electronic alternatives.

PUNJABI UNIVERSITY, PATIALA

Punjabi University, Patiala (India) is the second university of the world to be named after language, the first being the Hebrew University, Israel. Majority of the students obtaining admission to various courses being offered by this university are from rural areas. The university campus spreads over 600 acres of land, it has a faculty of 500 teachers imparting instruction and guidance to nearly 9,000 students in a multi-faceted, multi-pronged and multi-faculty environment comprising 65 Teaching and Research Departments on its Campus, five Regional Centres, six Neighbourhood Campuses and 166 Colleges affiliated to it.

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Chandra (2006) gives a brief introduction about the building e-collection in libraries and their features. It also discusses the e-books and e-journals, their utility, features, advantages, factors for the selection. The paper further narrates the experience with screenshots for providing access to e-books and e-journals at IIT Madras under intranet and the Internet with the help of central Library website. This usage statistics and selected e-journal publishers and gateways are also listed.

Nikam and Pramodini (2007) describe the use of e-journals and data bases by the users of University of Mysore. Nearly 200 responses to a survey based on questionnaire have been analyzed and presented by the authors. The paper also examines the utilization and satisfaction levels of users with respect to the e-resources.

Dilek-Kayaogly's (2008) study focused on use of e journals by faculty of Istanbul University, Turkey. The majority of respondents of survey supported the transition from print to e-only. Some respondents reported that the major barrier to use e-journals was the lack of subscriptions in their field.

Kumber and Gururaj (2009) revealed that 88.09% faculty members and 93.33% research scholars felt the necessity to include more e-journals in the current consortium programme. 81.66% research scholars and 64.29% faculty members felt the need of regular training programmes. The study revealed that 27.45% respondents found UGC-InfoNet e-journal programme as excellent. 66.67% faculty and 70% research scholars prefered both electronic as well as print version of journals. Almost half of the faculty members (47.61%) and a little more than half of research scholars (61.66%) felt that the information content available in e-journals is better than the printed version.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To ascertain awareness and acceptance of e-journals.
- To explore the use of electronic journals.
- To study the purpose of utilization of e-journals.
- To ascertain the frequency of using e-journals.
- To study the preferred format for using e-journals.
- To study the satisfaction level of users.

METHODOLOGY

Keeping in view the above mentioned objectives, a structured questionnaire was prepared to collect data from users accessing e-journals available online relating to various disciplines at Punjabi university, Patiala. The questionnaire contained relevant questions pertaining to awareness with respect to e-journals. For this purpose a total of 35 questionnaires were distributed among Ph.D. researchers. Out of the 35 questionnaires distributed, 32 valid

questionnaires were collected and then data was analyzed, tabulated, interpreted and graphically represented in this paper.

RESULTS

Population Study

Table 1: Population studied

Gender	Number	
	Distributed	**Received**
Male	20 (57.14%)	20 (62.5%)
Female	15 (42.86%)	12 (37.5%)

The table shows the gender difference between the researchers studied. 62.5% male responses were studied and 37.5% of the total female responses were studied, who accessed e-journals available through the Internet.

Awareness about e-journals

Table 2: Awareness of e-journals

Gender	Aware	Not Aware
Male	18 (90%)	2(10%)
Female	9 (75%)	3 (25%)

Table 2 depicts the awareness relating to e-journals among the researches. 90% male researchers are aware about e-journals whereas only 75% female researchers are aware about e-journals. It is thus analyzed that male researchers are more aware than their counterpart.

Preference level

The result reveals that 31% of researchers would like to access only the electronic version of the journals whereas 22% researchers prefers at reading the printed version of the journals. But 47% researchers are using both the electronic and printed versions of the journals.
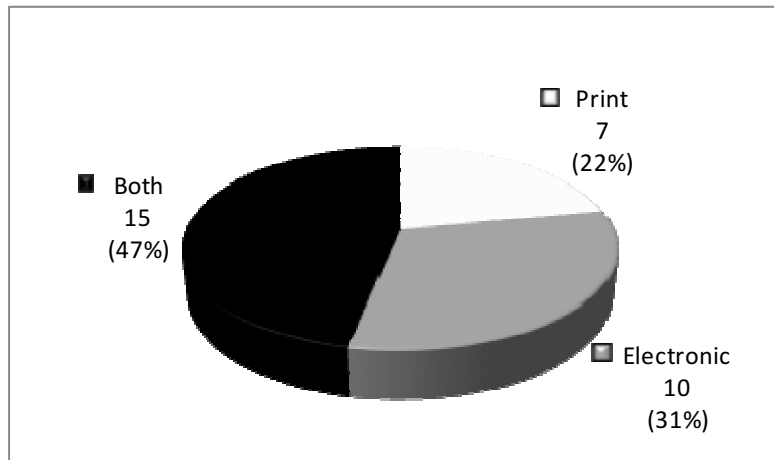
Fig. 1: preference level of users

Purpose of using e-journals

Table3: Using Purpose of e-Journal

Purpose	Number	Percentage*
For Research work	25	78.1
For Writing Paper	11	34.3
Updating Subject Knowledge	18	56.2
For Other Purpose	03	0.09

* More than one responses were allowed to be made for the study

Table 3: shows that 78.1% researchers use e-journals for their research work. 34.3% researchers use the e-journals for the purpose of paper writing. 56.2% researchers use it for updating subject knowledge and a few (0.09%) researchers use it for other purposes like exam's, etc.

Frequency of use

It is observed from the analysis that 15.6% researchers access e-journals every day, 9.3% researchers access 2-3times in a week, 25% researchers use it once a week. E-journals are occasionally accessed by 50% researchers.
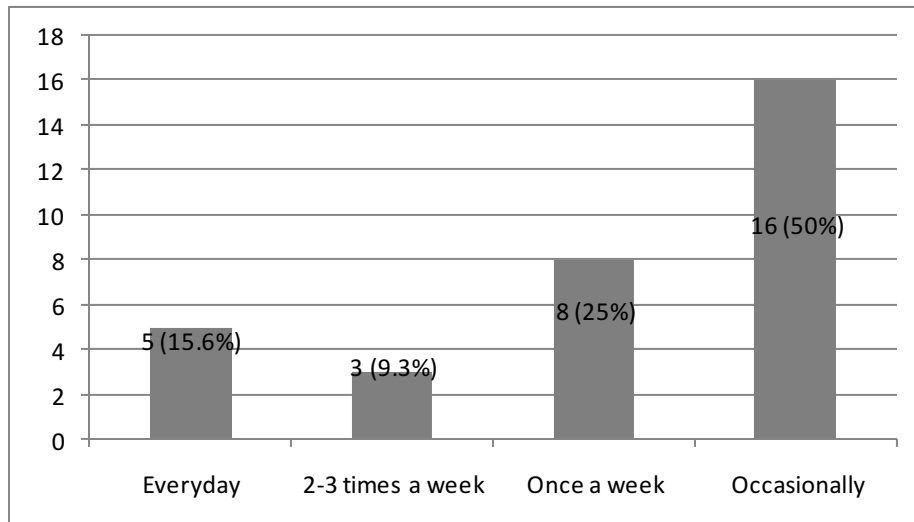
Fig. 2: Using frequency of researchers

Location for accessing e-journals

The study renders that only 13% researchers use the e-journals at the main library of the university. E-journals are accessed in the concerned department by 31% researchers. 56% researchers access e-journals at other places like hostel, research flat, home, etc.
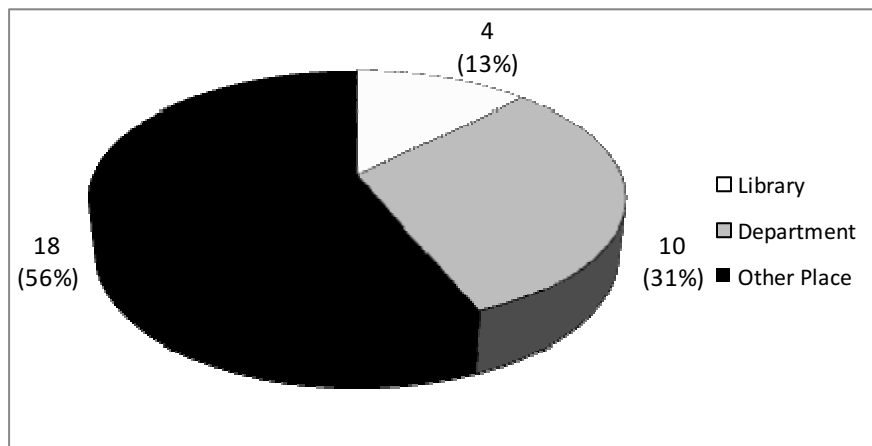

Fig. 3: Using Place

Using Pattern of e-journals

The results shows that the maximum numbers of researchers (47%) take print of the electronic article for their study. 34% users store the relevant document in their removable storage device. While 19% researchers read it on their system's screen.
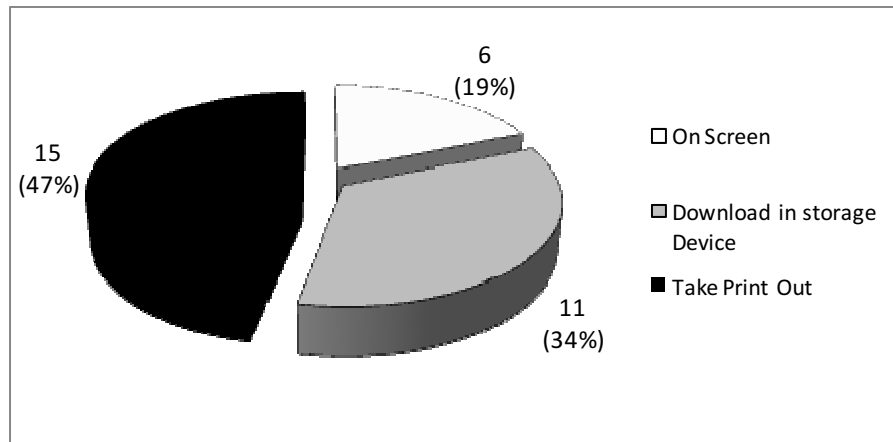
Fig. 4: Using style of e-journals

Formats of e-journals

There are many formats available to present or publish research paper and article in electronic format. Most researchers (40.6%) prefer the HTML format, because it is easy to read, dynamic in style & colours, ready to read (no downloading required), etc. PDF is also a popular style. 37.5% researchers like this format, because it is ready to print, easy to save, standard format, etc. The image format is also liked by 12.5% researchers. 9.4% researchers have no preference about the format of e-journal.
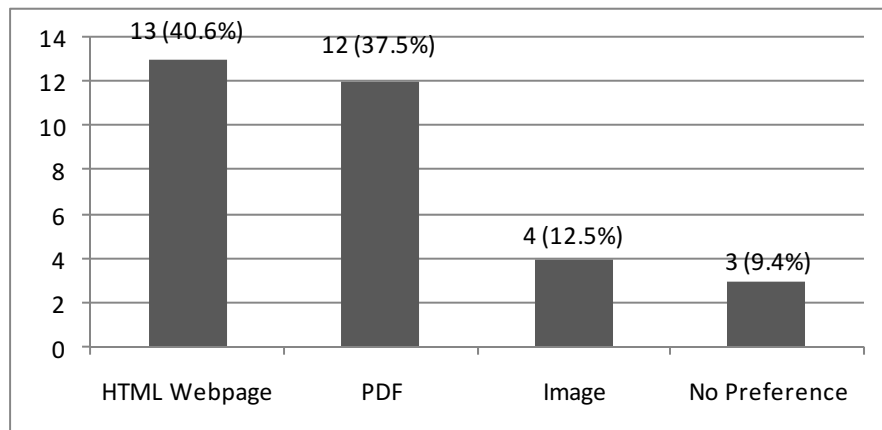

Fig. 5: Format preferences of e-journals

Satisfaction level

It was observed that majority of researchers are satisfied with the using, style, information presentation and searching style of e-journals. Out of it, 25% are highly satisfied, 43.7% are satisfied and 21.9% are average satisfied. 9.4% researchers are not satisfied with e-journals.
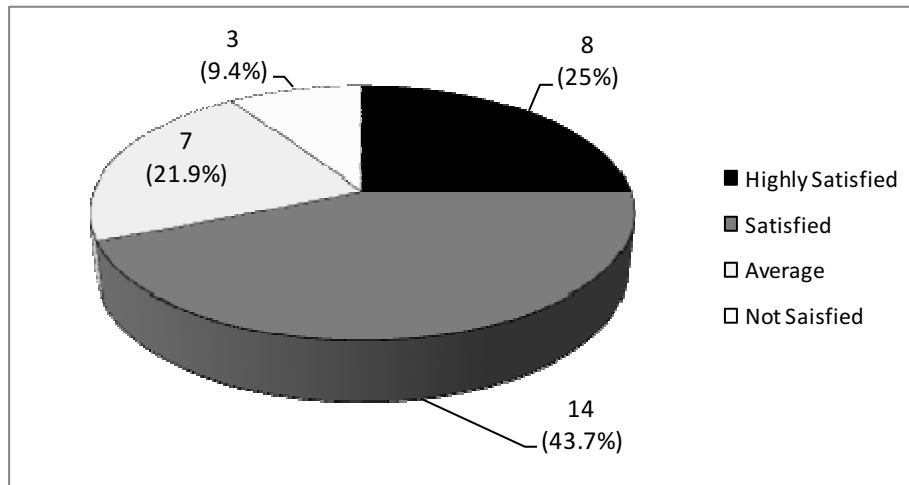
Fig 6: Satisfaction level of users

CONCLUSION

From the above study it has been observed that e-journals have become a vital part for providing information. E-journals have turned out as a vital knowledge base for our research community. Efficient management of time has been made possible through their usage. Thus the present scenario entails for spreading of awareness among the users and for development of proper infrastructure within the library system to achieve significant results.

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