

## Reading Habits of E-Journals among Engineering Students in Erode District: A Study

K.C.MAHESH

Research Scholar

Department of Library and Information Science  
Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai, Tamilnadu  
India

Dr. K. CHINNASAMY

Head

Department of Library and Information Science  
Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai, Tamilnadu  
India

### Abstract:

*This paper attempts to deal with Students' opinion regarding the usage of electronic journals by the users of engineering colleges. This study attempts to find out the familiarity, preference and utility of e-journals by the users of engineering colleges. Analysis and interpretation are mainly from the information collected through questionnaire method. This paper provides few suggestions for the effective use of e-journals among engineering college libraries.*

**Key words:** Academic Library, E-journals, E-resources, Usage Study, User Survey

### 1. Introduction

The electronic sources of information are becoming more and more important for the academic community for their teaching and research. Electronic journals have revolution the scholarly and scientific communication since their inception in the late 1980s. The exponential growths of e-journals over the last five

years were popular among scientific information providers, publishers, libraries and information centers. Current developments in e-journals and their institutional licensing and subscriptions arrangements clearly indicate a rapid revolution.

The libraries first began tracking electronic journals in 1991 and the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) published its first directory of electronic journals, which indicated that only seven of 110 online journals and newsletters were peer-reviewed titles [1]. By 2000, the number of refereed electronic journals had dramatically increased to over 4,000. During this decade it can be seen that libraries and information centers are transitioning into hybrid journal collections from traditional print journal collections. The result of hybrid journal collections provide access to either as print-only, or electronic-only, or in both print and electronic formats. Further it facilitates to access to select journals, full text journal articles from aggregator databases.

The users of e-journals, especially academic libraries, are more concerned about the means and methods in handling with those publications because it necessitates at most care in subscribe to these scholarly journals. This situation has given rising to study how the users utilize the e-journals.

## **2. E-Journals**

An electronic journal simply seems to be serial publications, where the end products are available in digital format and whose content may or may not be peer-reviewed. Two media, such as CD-ROM and the internet, are used for dissemination of these e-journals. According to Ali, “an electronic journal is a publication, often scholarly, that is made available in a computerized format and distributed over the internet.” Rich and Rabine define the “electronic journal as a periodical literature that is made available as an individual title via an electronic medium, typically the World Wide Web.” To-day the

majority of the publishers provided electronic journals and offer them as special services via databases (e.g.) Science Direct (Elsevier), Springer Link (Springer).

### 3. Related Studies

Okeke (2000) viewed the art of reading as a priceless instrument for everyone. He opined that reading is one of the most important activities in life, through which we enter into the life and experiences of others and extend our knowledge, scope of experience, and enjoyment. Reading is particularly important in education as well as for unhindered intellectual growth of a person. Tella and Akande (2007) asserted that the ability to read is at the heart of self education and lifelong learning and that it is an art capable of transforming life and society. Shabi and Udofia (2009) noted that active learning from books are better than passive learning such as watching televisions and playing games. A number of studies on the use of e-journals in academic libraries have been carried out during last ten years. The two CALIBER International Conferences 2008 and 2009 focused mainly on electronic resources and their usage in libraries. Boyce(2004), *et al* examined the impact of electronic journals and changing pattern of reading habit of scholars over the past decade. It has been identified by Watson(2005) this study explained on the majority of libraries are migrating to electronic format of e-journals from their print journal subscriptions. Rogers(2005) pointed out that there has been an increased use of e-journals than that of print journals among faculty and graduate students at Ohio State University. Raza and Upadhyay (2006) in their study states that Aligarh Muslim University researchers are satisfied with e-journal available in the library related to their subject of research. Also many research scholars are consulting e-journals from their departments and computer centers. Their responses said that e-journals not only for research purposes but also to update their

own knowledge. Liu (2006) pointed out that electronic sources are more heavily used by students of Computer Science Schools, Business Schools and LIS than those in Social Sciences. Researchers spend less time for reading per article. There is a strong correlation between the print and electronic journals uses have been identified by Rowlands(2006). Further he points out that researchers are spending less time in retrieving their requirements in electronic formats, which indicates that the researchers are technically proficient in searching and employing a range of coping strategies to navigate e-resources.

#### **4. Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the present study is to find out the readers opinion on reading habits of the e-journals in the Self-financing engineering colleges. The main objectives of the study are:

1. To study the demographic profile of engineering students and identify the preferred journals of readers.
2. To Study frequency of e-journal access and time spent.
3. To identify the e-journal readers habit and purpose of reading.
4. To know the level of satisfaction of e-journal readers.

#### **5. Methodology**

A questionnaire has been administrated to the PG Students of engineering colleges under study in order to examine the opinion on use of e-journals by the users. This study attempts to find out the familiarity, preference and utility of e-journals by the users of engineering colleges. Among the 400 questionnaires circulated among the engineering colleges in Erode District 383 responses (95.75%) were received.

## 6. Data Analysis and Discussion

The data thus collected have been further analysed.

**Table 1 User Preferred Form of Journals**

Preferred Form	Respondents	Percentage
Print Only	96	25.06
Electronic Only	88	22.98
Both Equally	199	51.96
<b>Total</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: Primary Data

From the Table 1, it can be seen that 199 respondents (51.96%) preferred both print and electronic version equally where as 88 (22.98%) preferred electronic journals. Altogether only 96 (25.06%) of respondents preferred print journals. These 287 readers view alone further taken up for the study. Therefore the 'n' value is taken as 287 for the remaining part of the study. Further frequency of reading of e-journals among the e-journal users (i.e. n=287) have been identified and the same is shown in Table 2.

The Demographic characteristics of respondents are shown in Table 2. The majority of the respondents were male (68.29%) compared to female. Majority respondents for the both gender belongs to the age of 21 years are 114 (39.72%), and it followed by 22 years age is 107(37.28%). The reader preference of electronic journals have been analysed and the same is shown in Table 2.

**Table 2 Demographic Details**

Factors	No. of Respondents	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	196	68.29
Female	91	31.71
Total	287	100.00
<b>Age</b>		
Upto 20	054	18.82
21	114	39.72

**K. C. Mahesh, K. Chinnasamy- Reading Habits of E-Journals among Engineering Students in Erode District: A Study**

22	107	37.28
Above 22	012	04.18
Total	287	100.00

Source: Primary Data

**Table 3 Frequency of Read of E-journals**

Frequency	Respondents	Percentage
Daily	48	16.72
Once in a Week	101	35.19
Once in a Fortnight	42	14.63
Once in a Month	29	10.11
Rarely	67	23.35
<b>Total</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: Primary Data

The frequency of read of e-journals, 35.19% of the respondents read e-journals once in a week. Only 23.35% of the respondents read e-journals rarely. Average time spend by the readers in a day on e-journals has been identified and the same is show in Table 4. Nearly 62.37% of the respondents spent more than one hour on use of e-journals. On an average one hour has been spent by the users on a day.

**Table 4 Average Time Spent by the Readers on Use of E-Journals**

Frequency	Respondents	Percentage
One hour	108	37.63
Between 1 to 2 hour	85	29.62
Between 2-3 hour	63	21.95
Above 3 hour	31	10.80
<b>Total</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: Primary Data

**Table 5 Preferred Reading Time**

Preferred Time	Male		Female		Total	
Morning	52	18.12%	17	5.92%	69	24.04%
Evening	87	30.31%	34	11.85%	121	42.16%
Afternoon	18	6.27%	3	1.05%	21	7.32%
Late night	39	13.59%	37	12.89%	76	26.48%
Total	196	68.29%	91	31.71%	287	100.00%

It is an evident that the students mostly preferred to read in the evening (42.16%) compared to late night (26.48%) and

morning (24.04%). The gender analysis shows evening as the favourite time for reading by both categories. However, male students (13.59%) prefer reading during late night than females (12.89%) whereas males (18.12%) prefer to read in morning more than female counterparts (05.92%). (Table 5)

**Table 6 Places to Access Internet**

Preferred Time	Male		Female		Total	
Access at College Library	102	35.54%	72	25.09%	174	60.63%
Access at Home	137	47.74%	91	31.71%	228	79.44%
Access at Cyber Cafes	98	34.15%	54	18.82%	152	52.96%

Places to access Internet Table 6 shows that places where students use to access the Internet are quite diverse. Most of the students (228, 79.44%) access the Internet from Home, which is closely followed by “College Library” (174, 60.63%). It is noticeable that a good number of students (152, 52.96%) also access the Internet from the College Library. most of the male and female students access e-journals at home only.

Similarly the purpose of e-journal has been identified and the same is showed in Table 5. Purposes of reading Table 7 shows those students read E-journals not only to prepare for exams or acquire knowledge but also for a number of other reasons. The largest number of respondents (164, 57.14%) indicated that they read mostly to develop their life. This was followed by “To While away Time” (151, 52.61%) and “To get a job” (101, 35.19%). The Study purpose 71.43% of the respondents read mostly e-journals for preparing their course and faculties (68.99%) read mostly and study enough time in Research articles and (65.16%) preparing Projects, for Writing Articles, to update knowledge. The aware of reading habits were created among different methods.

**Table 7 The E-Journal Readers Habit and Purpose of Reading**

Purpose	Mostly		Rarely		Not		Total	
To Course Related	205	71.43%	51	17.77%	31	10.80%	287	100.00%
To Teaching Related	97	33.80%	124	43.21%	66	23.00%	287	100.00%
To Research Related	198	68.99%	69	24.04%	20	6.97%	287	100.00%
To Prepare Projects	187	65.16%	98	34.15%	2	0.70%	287	100.00%
To Writing Articles	124	43.21%	97	33.80%	66	23.00%	287	100.00%
To Update Knowledge	101	35.19%	164	57.14%	22	7.67%	287	100.00%
To Examination Related	97	33.80%	174	60.63%	16	5.57%	287	100.00%
To Have a Fun	54	18.82%	35	12.20%	198	68.99%	287	100.00%
To Be Well Informed	78	27.18%	21	7.32%	188	65.51%	287	100.00%
To Develop Life	164	57.14%	98	34.15%	25	8.71%	287	100.00%
To While Away Time	151	52.61%	121	42.16%	15	5.23%	287	100.00%
To Get a Job	101	35.19%	169	58.89%	17	5.92%	287	100.00%
others	21	7.32%	38	13.24%	228	79.44%	287	100.00%

**Table 8 Opinion Regarding Reader's Satisfaction on E-journal**

Satisfaction Level	Male		Female		Total	
Excellent	102	35.54%	41	14.29%	143	49.83%
Good	58	20.21%	34	11.85%	92	32.06%
Moderate	21	7.32%	12	4.18%	33	11.50%
No Opinion	15	5.23%	4	1.39%	19	6.62%
<b>Total</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>68.29%</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>31.71%</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Source: Primary Data

Attempts were made to know the satisfaction level of the users of e-journals. The responses received from the students are presented in this Table 8. The overall satisfaction of the readers of e-journals is excellent 143 (49.83%). Few respondents feel no opinion of impression.

## 7. Findings

The followings are major findings of the present survey:

- a) 35.19% respondents read e-journals once in a week.
- b) 62.37% of users spent more than one hour on use of e-journals.
- c) 71.43% of respondents use the e-journals is regard to related to course
- d) The overall satisfaction of the read of e-journals (49.83%) is Excellent. Few respondents feel no opinion of impression.

## 9. Conclusion

Majority of academic community use electronic information sources still most of the users prefer print sources as well as electronic information sources. So many problems are faced by the Students but overall maximum users are satisfied with the use and accessibility of e-journals. Finally the impact of promotional activities needed to be measured regularly by examining usage statistics, surveys and conducting user meets. Reading is inseparably linked to learning. And learning leads to an overall mental, professional, and human development. Reading not only gives people new ideas, information, and insights, it also helps them to become more completed in every aspect. Therefore, reading is crucial for every human being because it benefits people not in one way but several ways. With the decline of the reading habit among young people, it is important to find new ways to instill love for reading in their hearts and improve their reading habit.

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