

Scholarly Use of Print and Online Journals in Rajiv Gandhi University: A Comparative Study

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to compare the scholarly use of print and online journals at Rajiv Gandhi University, Arunachal Pradesh, India. The analysis and results of this paper is based on the data collected from questionnaire distributed to all research scholars of the University. The main findings are that the respondents are more attracted towards e-journals than print journals. However, they depend more on open-source materials than those available via E-Sodhsindhu INFLIBNET. Respondents also identified the need for training in using e-resources and retrieving information from them from time-to-time. The use of e-resources, particularly e-journals, is increasing in the developing countries. Studies such as this one are required to understand the problems faced by the users and to increase the use of e-resources.

Keywords: Electronic Journals, Electronic Media, Information Retrieval, Academic Libraries

1. Introduction

With the advent of online access to full-text journals, many academic libraries find themselves in the position of offering both print and electronic access to journals. In this transitional environment, measuring journal usage by both access methods is essential for collection development decisions. Journals constitute an important part of a library collection being the most important vehicle for global scholarly communication. Tremendous developments in ICT in the recent years have given amazing boost to electronic publishing. While usage statistics are a tested and necessary measure for evaluating the value and cost-effectiveness of electronic and, for that matter, print journals, most

measures do not take into account how the new format and added capabilities of electronic journals may be affecting the process of scholarly research and communication. Traditional usage counts cannot tell if users employ print or electronic versions of journals for the same purposes or if browsing of electronic journals affects the serendipitous discovery of information that occurs when users leaf through print journals. This paper reports on a pilot study conducted at the University Library at Rajiv Gandhi University, Arunachal Pradesh, India that incorporated both traditional usage counts and an examination of whether research scholars of all departments of the university use print and electronic journals differently to investigate if dissimilarities forecast a shift in the processes of idea generation and scholarly research.



2. Literature Review

Although there is sizable literature on the collection management rationalization of books, there are relatively few journal-use studies and even fewer studies about the comparative study on the use of prints and online journals. Recent studies in other institutions suggested that scholars still relied on scholarly journals in both print and electronic. With the rapid evolution of web technology during the past two decades, more and more journals are appearing in electronic form alongside print.

Tenopir, King & Bush [1] in their studies concludes that among the scholars convenience is an important factor in reading and medical faculty nonetheless often depend upon personal print subscriptions for convenience. This phenomenon has been slower with university medical faculty but may occur as subscription prices continue to rise and as electronic alternatives become more widely available. Curtis, Weller, and Hurd [2] study demonstrated that medical faculty made use of their personal journal subscriptions as much as other scientific fields make use of library subscriptions. Tenopir and King [3] in their studies found that, on the whole, personal print or electronic subscriptions by scientists have declined from 5.8 subscriptions per scientist in 1977 to 2.2 subscriptions in 2000 to 2001. This decline can be mostly attributed to the rising costs of print journals.

Several studies have shown that implementation of online databases has an impact on internal library use, particularly when databases are Internet accessible. Studies that have looked specifically at health professionals and students have all shown an increased reliance on online databases and electronic resources, especially when the products are made available by libraries at no cost or free [4–7].

Groote & Dorsch [8] in their studies on the impact of online journals on print journal usage concludes that, Print journals in the Online/Print Group experienced higher usage overall than journals in the Print Only Group. Selection criteria for purchasing online journal titles include the prominence of a journal and high use of the journal in print, and this could account for some of the difference in usage between these two groups. While use of print journals with an online counterpart decreased, these journals still retained higher usage than journals available only in print. However, the finding that journal usage was also declining for journals without an online counterpart raised concerns. The results of this study demonstrate that the advent of online journals decreased the use of print titles, actual use declined only by slightly more than a quarter in 1999 compared to 1998. It is not reasonable to cancel print titles with online duplicates based on these findings. The impact of online journals on print journal usage needs to be studied for a longer period of time to achieve a better understanding of emerging use patterns. Therefore, definitive conclusions regarding implications for collection development, in terms of whether print journal subscriptions should be dropped if an online license is owned, cannot be made at this time. However, users' apparent preference for online over print journals suggests new journal titles added to a collection should be made available online, if possible.

3. Rajiv Gandhi University

Rajiv Gandhi University was previously called as Arunachal University and the university was established in the year 1984.. The University was converted into a Central University with effect from 9th April 2007 as per notification of Ministry of

Human Resource Development, Government of India.

The study has been limited to the research scholars of all departments of Rajiv Gandhi University.

4. Objectives

The main objectives of this study are as follows-

- ❖ Use of print and online journals
- ❖ To know the frequency of use Print and online journals
- ❖ To know whether the research scholars are interested to print out the online journal articles
- ❖ To know research scholars preference to journal subscriptions.
- ❖ To know how much scholars are satisfied with the library print, back volumes and online Journals.

5. Scope and Purpose

The scope of the present study is limited to the research scholars of the Rajiv Gandhi University of Arunachal Pradesh. The central library provides access to online journals both subscribed and open access through E-Sodhsindhu INFLIBNET and direct subscriptions from different publishers. The library also subscribes 91 journals in hard form and contains approximately 4500 of back volumes. The purpose of this paper is to compare the scholarly use of print and online journals by research scholars at Rajiv Gandhi University, Arunachal Pradesh, India.

6. Methodology

The study was conducted through questionnaire based survey method. The questionnaires were personally distributed to the research scholars of

Rajiv Gandhi University at their library and departments. The questionnaires were distributed to 188 research scholars out of 214 who have library membership. 155 filled in questionnaires were returned by the research scholars with the response being 92.26%.

7. Data Analysis

7.1. Use of print and Online Journals

The result shows that 56% of the respondents mostly use online journals whereas 43.22% research scholar makes use of print journals. (Fig-1)

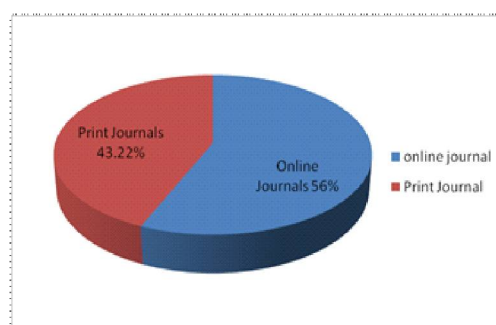


Figure :1

7.2. Frequency of Use

The analysis reveals that 40% of the scholars use print journals daily and 34% weekly whereas 56% use online journals daily and 24% weekly (Fig. 2)

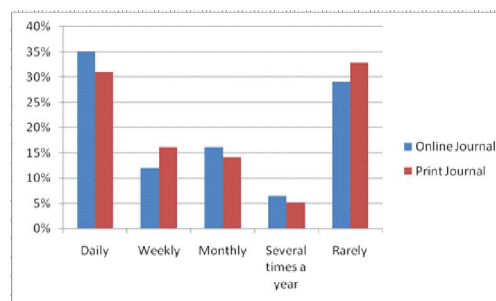


Figure :2

7.3. Scholars Preferences in Journal Formats

Table: 7.3.1

Online Journal	46.45%
Print Journal	21.29%
Both	32.26%

The results of the study shows that 46% of the scholars prefer online journals, 21% scholars prefer print journals whereas 32.26% of them prefer both online and print journals.

7.4. Print out of Online Article

The study also disclosed that 23.87% of the research scholars always prefer print, 65.81% print sometimes and 10.32% never print relevant articles of online journals.

Table: 7.4.2

Duration	Online Journal
Always	23.87%
Sometimes	65.81%
Never	10.32%

7.6. Satisfaction Level

Table: 7.6.3

Library Collection	Highly Satisfied	Satisfied	Fairly Satisfied	Slightly Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Print Journals	7.09%	33.55%	5.16%	16.77%	37.42%
Back volume	-	-	43.23%	22.58%	34.19%
E-Journal	56.77%	33.53%	-	-	9.68%

Table 7.6.3 shows that 7.09% research scholars are highly satisfied with the print journals whereas 56.77% of research scholars are highly satisfied with the online journals. It is shown that 43.23% are fairly satisfied with the back volume journals.

7.5. Preferences for Journals Subscription

The data analysis also indicated that 35% of the scholars suggest that library should subscribe only online journals, 10% suggest print journals, whereas 55% of them are of the opinion that library should subscribe both online and print journals. From this study we came to know that most of the scholars prefer to subscribe only online journals.

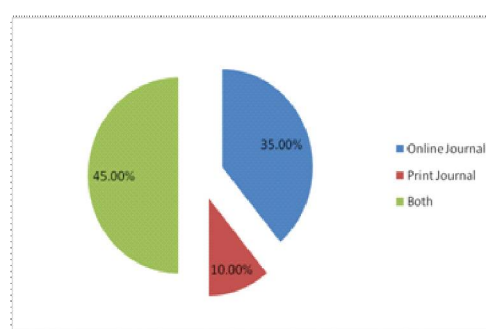


Figure: 3

8. Findings

- ❖ Most of the scholars use online journals 56% for their research purpose as compared to print 43.22%.
- ❖ The scholars often use online journals daily (35%) as compared to print whereas print journals are mostly used by research scholars weekly as compared to online journals.
- ❖ The scholars often read full text of the relevant articles of both print and online journals.
- ❖ The scholars mostly prefer online formats (46%) as compared to print formats (21%).
- ❖ Most of the scholars take printouts of online journal articles sometimes (65.81%)
- ❖ Most of the users are highly satisfied with the online journals (56.77%) whereas 33.55% scholars are satisfied with the print journals.

9. Suggestion

The following recommendation are suggested for providing better services -

- i) The Library should acquire a well defined collection development policy so that it may help to build a good collection in library satisfy their user community.
- ii) Administrative support is a necessary part for development of a library. Administration should provide sufficient budget for journal acquisition.
- iii) There is a need for aggressive information awareness for all departments of University and students on services and resources available in the library. Orientation programme/ seminar for

all teachers, research scholars and students should be organized.

10. Conclusion

The university library should play a pivotal role in facilitating the users in the use of all print and online resources and other library and information services. The usage of Rajiv Gandhi University library and its resources need to be increased and improved. The library should organize awareness programmes and seminars to educate the students on seeking information from e-resources and to maximize the use of library resources and services. The findings are succinct to conclude that the use of online journals is on the rise but the traditional print format is not dead.

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