

E-Resources: New Models for Content Delivery- Preference to forms of journals by the Academicians of Universities of Karnataka: A Survey Report

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Abstract

Use studies of journals dominate the literature. An attempt has been made in this paper to report the preference of the physical form of the journals amongst the academicians in Karnataka. In the situation where both electronic and print versions are available, the study revealed that the respondents preferred to have both the versions equally.

Keywords: Electronic Journals, Electronic-Resources, UGC- Infonet Digital Library Consortium, User Study

1. Introduction

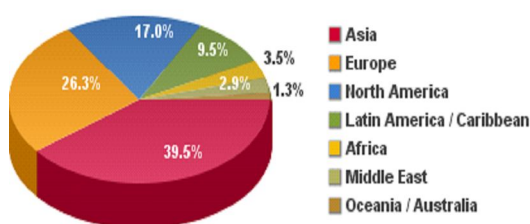
One cannot imagine the existence of society without information and communication. In the emerging information society, the availability and use of information contributes towards development of individuals and nations. It is the basis for knowledge and vital component for decision making. It is an essential input for social, economic, educational and technological development of a society. "I have a simple but strong belief: How you gather, manage and use information will determine whether you win or lose" said Bill Gates. (1)

Information is available in different forms and formats like books, magazines and journals, CD-ROM, Internet sources, online databases, microfilms, magnetic tapes etc. "Although the Internet is the newest medium for information flows, it is the fastest growing new medium of all time, becoming the information medium of first resort for its users."(2)

1.1 Internet users through out the world

The current digital revolution especially Internet technology integrated with treasure of information, have been widely recognized and used by the citizens through out the world. As the availability of information online is increasing the access to online information is also growing tremendously. Figure 4 shows the consumers of Internet through out the world as on June 30th, 2008.

**World Internet Users
by World Regions**



Source: Internet World Stats - www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm
1,463,632,361 Internet users for June 30, 2008
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Figure 1: Internet users by world region (Source: <http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm>)

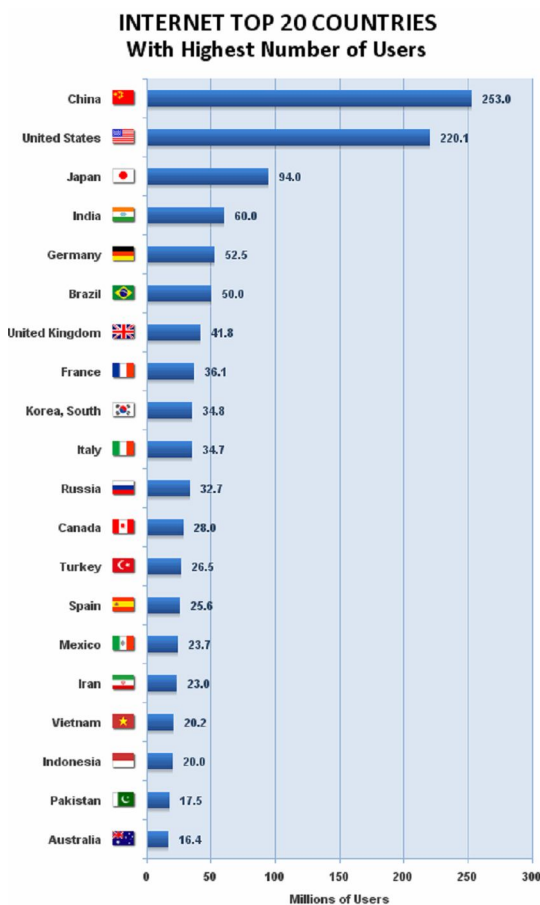
It is observed that a majority of 39.5% Internet users are recorded from Asia. Out of 3,776,181,949 (2008



Est.) population, 578,538,257 (39.5%) have used the Internet followed by Europe 26.3 % then by North America 17%.(3)

Figure 5 illustrates that India stands in the 4th place among the top 20 countries of Internet users. Out of 1,147,995,898 only 60,000,000 (5.2%) people have used the internet.(4)

The above data shows that internet usage in India is gaining importance during the recent past. The use of Internet and its popularity through out the globe, made the publishers to move towards publishing their books and journals in electronic form.



Source: www.internetworldstats.com/top20.htm - June 30, 2008
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Figure 2: 20 Top countries in Internet usage

(Source: <http://www.internetworldstats.com/top20.htm>)

In a library although acquiring materials in digital form and organizing them for use is both costly and challenging, the libraries are giving priority to the acquisition of electronic resources. This opens new vistas for teaching, learning and research.

2 Objectives of the Study

The study seeks to:

1. Identify the users' preference for printed and electronic journals.
2. Identify the status-wise preference for printed and electronic journals.
3. Identify the university-wise preference for printed and electronic journals.

3. Review of Literature

Cornell University, New York conducted interviews with thirty-nine users of the Chemistry Online Retrievals Experiment (CORE) to gather information for the design of electronic journals. The survey results revealed that a significant group of users was pessimistic about their ability to experience serendipity, read comfortably, and forgo printed copies. (5)

A paper survey was administered on 350 faculty members from 71 departments at Texas A&M University in 1998. The return rate was 56%. The result revealed that awareness of e-journals differed highly with the faculty the academic was affiliated with. 61% of the respondents preferred printed journals over e-journals, and even 40% of the e-journal users preferred the printed format. However, the large majority of the respondents' opinions were positive about the place of e-journals in scientific research.(6)

At the University of Oklahoma, a survey was conducted among Physical Scientists in the spring of 1998 to determine the use of e-journals. The response rate was 61% with 49 responses to an e-

mail survey. The results of the survey showed that less than 50% of the respondents used electronic journal articles. 60% to 65% of scientists preferred the print versions of journals, 23% to 31% preferred electronic versions, and 5% to 16% liked both. (7)

The findings of the survey of Stanford E-journal study (eJUS) Project, carried out by the Stanford University Libraries showed that over 75% of the respondents' preferred e-journals to their printed counterparts. Lack of back issues was considered a negative factor for disfavoring the use of e-journals. About 34% strongly agreed that electronic format provided additional features.(8)

In spring of 2001, a large – scale online survey was administered to the entire faculty and a sample of graduate students at the University of Maryland to determine their views on and use of electronic journals. The most significant findings from the survey were the high levels of adoption of e-journals among faculty. The results also revealed that out of 39% response rate, about half of the faculty members reported using electronic form of printed journals. Preference between printed and electronic form was given for both core journals and non–core journals. The large majority, 70% wanted core journals to be available in both forms, while for non core journals, 70% preferred electronic access only. The survey results suggested that faculty were ready for electronic access only for certain segments of the journal collection while graduate students, both in the general population and in the science and technology departments, were more willing to use electronic journals only. But they too preferred to maintain access to print in core collections.(9)

In late winter 2003 a readership survey of faculty and students use and outcomes of university library print and electronic collections was carried out at the University of Pittsburg (Oakland) and four other campuses, to determine the amount of reading of

journal articles and the time spent on reading. The survey result revealed that the faculty and students at Pittsburgh had quickly adapted themselves to electronic journals. About 63% of reading was from electronic versions for a total of 1.2 million such readings. Faculty was less likely than students to use the electronic versions, because they continued to subscribe to print versions for their personal subscription. (King et al., 2004)

A study was conducted by a User Survey Task Force at University of Hong Kong Libraries to provide an opportunity for users to evaluate their performance and to study users' preference for print and electronic materials. A total of 2,564 responded to the survey. The findings disclosed that 68.8% of the respondents preferred to use journals online compared to 31.2% who preferred to use print journals. Preference for online journals by patron type varied from a high of 79.5% for others, 79% for postgraduates, and 78.6% for academic staff to a low of 63.4% for Honk Kong University (HKU) Space students, 63.6% for Circle of Friends' members, and 65.1% for undergraduates.(10)

4. Research methodology

Survey research method has been adopted for the present study to investigate the preference for printed and electronic journals by the faculty and research scholars of universities of Karnataka State.

5. Limitation of the study

Out of nine general universities in Karnataka State- the Bangalore University-Bangalore, Karnatak University-Dharwad, Gulbarga University-Gulbarga, Kuvempu University-Shimoga, Mangalore University-Mangalore, University of Mysore-Mysore, Kannada University-Hampi, Tumkur University-Tumkur, and Karnataka State Women

University-Bijapur, only three universities- Kannada University-Hampi, Tumkur University-Tumkur, and Karnataka State Women University-Bijapur are omitted as these universities are deprived of the benefit of accessing UGC-InfoNet e-journals consortium project.

6. Data analysis and interpretations

6.1 Population surveyed and response rate

The academic communities covered under the study are the faculties and research scholars of six general universities in Karnataka State where the UGC-InfoNet e-journals consortium project benefit has been extended. In total structured questionnaires were distributed to 1367 teachers and research scholars of selected departments of all six universities. Out of the total of 1367 questionnaires distributed 979 respondents returned filled in questionnaire. The response rate therefore accounts for 71.62%. Thus, the rest of the analysis is based on the 979 coded filled in questionnaires.

The total strength of such academic communities of various departments, who were considered for the study and the questionnaire distributed and responses received are shown in Table 1. It depicts that the largest population (313) was from University of Mysore. It also reveals that the highest response, out of 178 respondents 170 (95.51%) was collected from Mangalore University.

Table 1: Questionnaires distributed and responses received.

Sl.No.	University	Total Population	Questionnaire Distributed	Response Received	Percentage
1.	Karnataka University	246	246	176	(71.54)
2.	Bangalore University	264	264	177	(67.05)
3.	Mangalore University	178	178	170	(95.51)
4.	University of Mysore	313	313	199	(63.58)
5.	Gulbarga University	216	216	135	(62.50)
6.	Kuvempu University	150	150	122	(81.00)
	Total	1367	1367	979	(71.62)

6.2 Preference to form of journals

One of the objectives of the research study was to identify the users' preference to printed vs. electronic journals. The respondents were asked to identify the preferred form of journals. The options given were print, electronic, both equally and online (available in CD – ROM). Table 2 explains that 539 (55.1%) respondents considered print version as well as electronic version equally as the most favourable form of journal. This was followed by 234 (23.9%) respondents who preferred the print version. Electronic journals were preferred by 80 (8.2%) respondents and e-journals available offline (CD-ROM) form were preferred by 53 (5.4%) respondents.

Table 2: Preferred form of Journals

Form of journals preferred N=(979)	Respondents
Both equally	539 (55.1)
Print	234 (23.9)
Electronic	80 (8.2)
Offline (Available in CD-ROM)	52 (5.4)
Others	74 (7.4)

(Note: Percentages are shown in parentheses)

The result of the present study similar to the result of the survey administered to the faculty of University of Maryland. The majority of faculty (70%) preferred core journals to be available in both forms. (9)

6.3 Status-wise preference to form of journals

A further analysis of preference to the format of journals by faculty and research scholars of various

universities is shown in Figure 1. The results demonstrate that more than half of the respondents among the faculty-262 (53%) and research scholars-277 (58%), preferred print and electronic versions of journals equally. Those who preferred only print version are-115 (24%) research scholars and 119-(24%) faculty members. Journals only in electronic form were preferred by 40(8%) each of the faculty and research scholars. Journals available in CD-ROM were opted by 31(6%) faculty members and 21(4%) research scholars. There are 45(9%) faculty and 29(6%) research scholars who preferred to use the combination of various forms of journals.

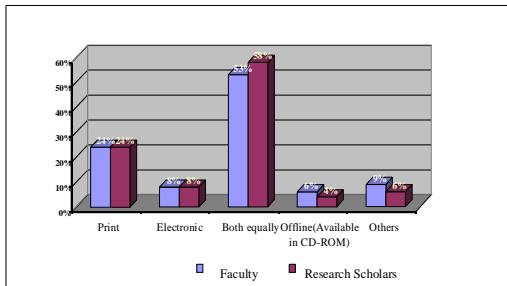


Figure 3: Form of journal preferred by faculty and research scholars

6.4 University -wise preference to forms of journals

It is depicted from Table 3 that the opinions about the preference for form of journals by respondents of various universities were similar. The majority of respondents of all six universities preferred both print and electronic versions equally and this was followed by those preferred only print version. Only electronic form of journals was preferred by the majority of faculty of Bangalore University-(12.5%) and research scholars of Mangalore and University of Mysore-(10%).

KUD=Karnatak University Dharwad,

BAU= Bangalore University,

MAU=Mangalore University,

UMY =University of Mysore,

GUU= Gulbarga University,

KUV= Kuvempu University,

Fac. =Faculty, R.S=Research Scholars

(Note: Percentages are shown in parentheses)

Table 3:University-wise preference to form of journals

Campus	Print		Electronic		Both equally		Offline (Available in CD-ROM)		Others		Total	
	Fac.	R.S	Fac	R.S	Fac	R.S	Fac	R.S	Fac	R.S	Fac	R.S
KUD	31 (34)	18 (21)	7 (8)	6 (7)	43 (47)	53 (62)	6 (7)	2 (2)	4 (4)	6 (7)	91 (100)	85 (100)
BAU	18 (20)	22 (25)	11 (12.5)	5 (6)	46 (52)	53 (60)	4 (5)	5 (6)	9 (10)	4 (4)	88 (100)	89 (100)
MAU	19 (21)	15 (19)	8 (9)	8 (10)	54 (59)	47 (60)	3 (3)	4 (5)	8 (9)	4 (5)	92 (100)	78 (100)
UMY	23 (23)	25 (26)	4 (4)	10 (10)	54 (53)	47 (48)	9 (9)	5 (5)	12 (12)	10 (10)	102 (100)	97 (100)
GUU	14 (22)	22 (30)	5 (8)	6 (8)	31 (49)	38 (52)	6 (10)	4 (5)	7 (11)	3 (4)	63 (100)	73 (100)
KUV	14 (23)	13 (22)	5 (8)	5 (8)	35 (56)	39 (65)	3 (5)	1 (2)	5 (8)	2 (3)	62 (100)	60 (100)
Total	119 (24)	115 (24)	40 (8)	40 (8)	262 (53)	277 (57)	31 (6)	21 (4)	45 (9)	29 (6)	497 (100)	482 (100)

7. Major findings of the study

At the time of the survey, the strength of faculty and research scholars in selected departments of six universities was 1367 (719 faculty and 648 research scholars). Questionnaires were distributed to the entire population. The response received was 979 accounting to the response rate of 71.61%. Out of 719 faculty 497 responded accounting to the response rate of 69% and among 648 research scholars, 482 responded, accounting to the response rate of 74%.

It is observed that the majority of respondents-930 (95%) were familiar with the Internet use and only 49 (5%) were not familiar with the Internet use. It is also reported that 806 (82.3%) were familiar with e-journals' use and 171 (17.5%) were not.

One of the objectives of the study was to analyze the users' preference to printed and electronic journals. The results of the study regarding the preference to the form of journals demonstrated that the majority of the respondents-539 (55.1%)-considered print and electronic version equally as the most favourable form of journals that they preferred. These were followed by 234 (23.9%) respondents who preferred print version. Electronic journal was preferred by 80 (8.2%) respondents and e- journal available in offline (CD-ROM) form was preferred by 53 (5.4%) respondents. A further study about the preference to form of journals by the faculty and the research scholars in various universities revealed that among faculty 262 (52.71%) and among research scholars 277 (57.47%) preferred both print and electronic version of journals equally. The opinions of the respondents of all six universities regarding the preference to the form of journals were similar.

8. Conclusion

Now a day the publishing industry is switching over from print media to electronic media. Most of the publishers offer their journals in electronic form. Academic libraries in India are in a transition period due to the economic environment and increase in price of electronic and print journals. Electronic journals consortia are playing an important role in facilitating access to electronic journals through co-operative purchase options. First time In Indian Higher Education system the UGC through UGC-InfoNet e-journals consortium programme facilitated access for scholarly full text journal articles to the departmental level, libraries and the doorsteps of the academicians. In the situation where both electronic and print versions were available the study revealed that the respondents preferred to have both the versions equally and preferred to read an article print out instead of reading it on the screen, after locating articles from journals. The result of this survey shows a significant interest in and acceptance of e-journals within the academic community.

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