

A Study on Usage Pattern of E-Books and E-Journals in Calcutta University Central Library (CUCL)

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Abstract:

With the advancement of information and communication technology, the trend of using electronic resources other than printed materials is increasing day by day. Because of the various facilities like saving time, open access to web, 24/7 accessibility the libraries and information centers are purchasing a large number of electronic materials besides printed documents. With the availability of both e-books and e-journals in the library, it has become necessary to compare and evaluate the effectiveness of e-books and e-journals from users' and library's point of view. A study has been undertaken in CUCL, college street campus in order to give an overview on this matter. A questionnaire-based survey method has been followed and after analyzing the collected data conclusion has been reached.

Keywords: Print journal, Electronic journal, Electronic books, Usage pattern, CUCL.

1. Introduction:

Some defined e-book as text that is available in an electronic format such as Word's doc, txt, HTML or XML (Hawkins, 2000; Ormes, 2002; McKnight and Dearnley, 2003; Vidana, 2003) ^[1]. Other definitions related to the conversion from print to electronic aspects of e-books, as printed text converted into digital form to be read on a computer screen (Saurie and Kaushik, 2001; Desmarais, 1994) ^[1]. Some definitions combined both the electronic text as well as the electronic reader device that is required for an e-book to be read (Abrew, 2001; Lynch, 2001; Goh, 2003; Grant, 2002) ^[1].

Electronic journals also known as e-journals and electronic serials are scholarly journals or intellectual magazines that can be accessed via electronic transmission. In practice, this means that they are usually published on the Web. They are a specialized form of electronic document: they have the purpose of providing material for academic research and study, and they are formatted approximately like journal articles in traditional printed journals. Many electronic journals are listed in directories such as the Directory of open access journals (DOAJ) and the articles indexed in bibliographic databases and search engines for the academic discipline concerned.

Libraries of all sizes and types are embracing digital collections, although most academic libraries continue to offer both print and digital collections for many years to come ^[2]. This study focuses on the usage pattern of e-books and e-journals in Calcutta university central library (CUCL). The University library, at present, has a collection of more than 10 lakh books. Besides books, the seven campuses of the university together possess more than 2 lakh volumes of bound journals, M.Phil and Ph.D. dissertations, proceedings of conferences, reports, maps, standards, patents, newspapers, manuscripts, microfilms, CD-ROMs ^[3]. The departmental libraries serve the academic disciplines bearing their names. The central library serves the entire university community. The university library holds about 60000 volumes of e-books (approx) and 30000 volumes of e-journals. ^[3]

Basically, this article deals with the LIS undergraduate and postgraduate students' usage pattern of e-books and e-journals in Calcutta University Central Library (CUCL).

2. Objectives of the study:

The objectives of the study are:

- To draw an overview of the usage pattern of e-books and e-journals;
- To analyze the preferences of the students regarding both formats of sources;
- To suggest measures to improve the existing e-books and e-journals facilities in CUCL;
- To find out the impact of e-books and e-journals on the academic performance of the LIS undergraduate and postgraduate students and future trends of using these resources.

3. Scope and coverage:

The study has been confined to the undergraduate and postgraduate students of the University of Calcutta. A survey work has been carried out over 100 students. This article attempts to cover the usage pattern of e-books and e-journals by the LIS undergraduate and postgraduate students. Out of 100 students, 50 students were from undergraduate and 50 students were from postgraduate.

4. Methodology:

To fulfill the objectives mentioned in a structured questionnaire based survey method has been conducted and based on the collected data, data analysis has been done and the conclusion has been reached. The questionnaires were distributed to 100 students of undergraduate and postgraduate levels. After reaching the conclusion necessary suggestions have also been given.

5. Data collection and analysis:

5.1. The frequency of library visit by undergraduate students and postgraduate students in CUCL:

Frequency	Number of U.G. Students	Number of P.G. Students
Daily	22 (44%)	31 (62%)
Weekly	15 (30%)	11 (22%)
Fortnightly	9 (18%)	7 (14%)
Monthly	3 (6%)	1 (2%)
Seldom	1 (2%)	0 (0%)

Table 1. The frequency of library visit by undergraduate students and postgraduate students

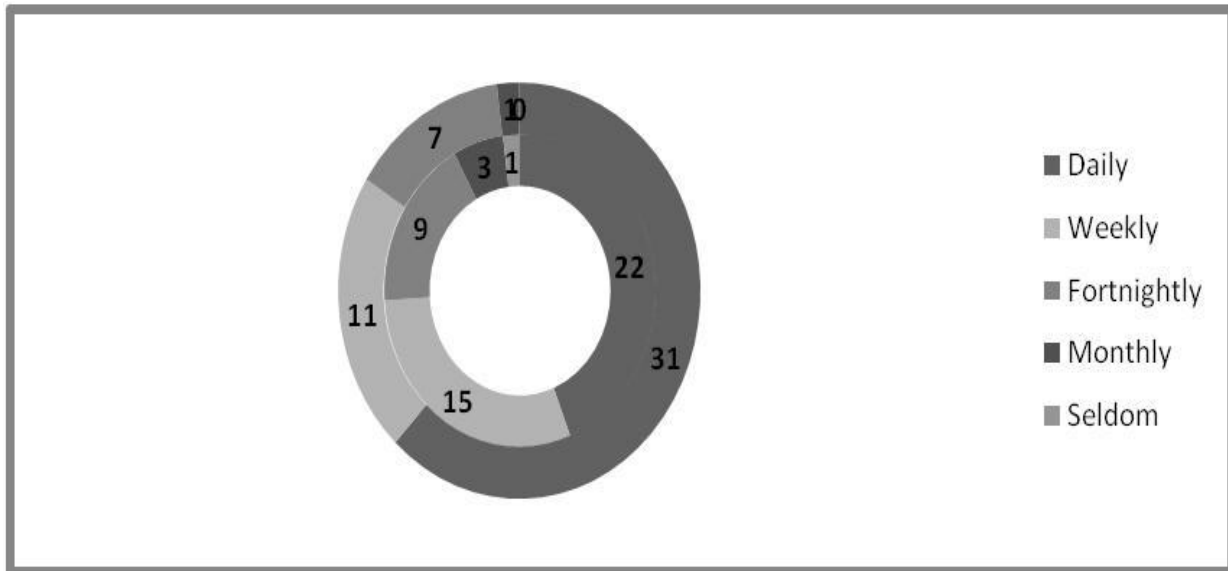


Chart 1. The frequency of library visit by students

The Table 1 and Chart 1 show that the highest frequency of library visit of the students is weekly (44% of U.G. students and 62% of P.G. students) and second highest frequency is daily (30% of U.G. students and 22% of P.G. students). This means a big number of students use the library much frequently and thereby are familiar with the various services provided by the library.

5.2. Preferences of students using e-books and e-journals in CUCL:

Sources	U.G. students	P.G. students
E-books	39 (78%)	28 (56%)
E-journals	11 (22%)	22 (44%)

Table 2. The preferences of students for using e-books and e-journals

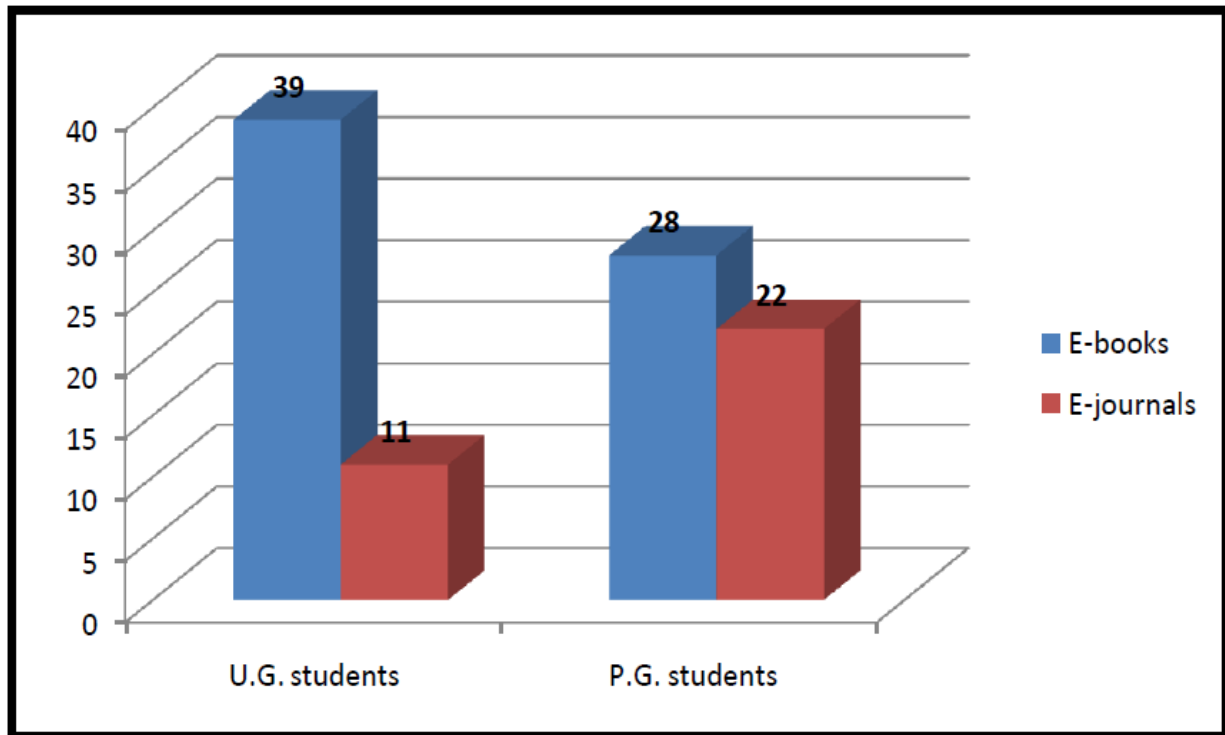


Chart 2. The preferences of students for using print/electronic journals

From the above data analysis, it can be said that the postgraduate students prefer the electronic journals more than of the undergraduate students. 44% of the postgraduate students prefer e-journals whereas only 22% of graduate students have given preference to e-journals. On the other hand, 78% undergraduate students have preferred e-books and 56% of the postgraduate students have given preferences to the e-journals.

5. 3. Purposes for using e-books/ e-journals in CUCL:

Reasons	U.G. students	Percentage (%)	P.G. students	Percentage (%)
Preparing projects	26	52	21	42
Writing articles	10	20	13	26
Other purposes	5	10	5	10
Making study notes	9	18	11	22

Table 3. Purposes for using e-books/ e-journals

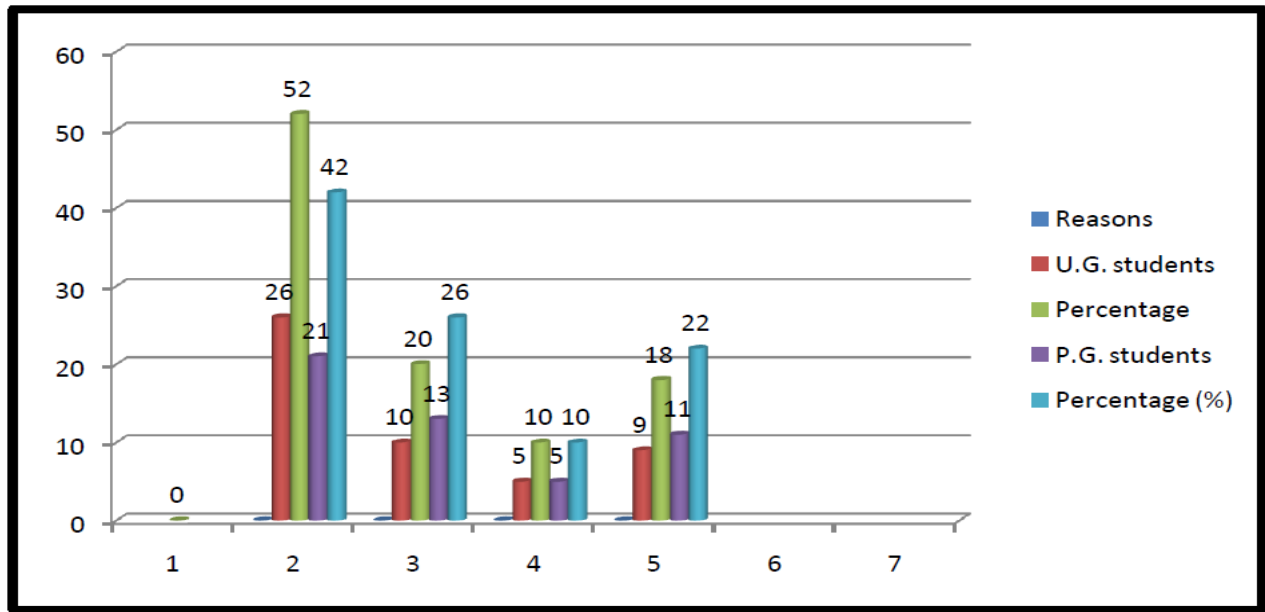


Chart 3. Purposes for using e-books/e-journals

This analysis reveals that most of the students use the e-books and e-journals for preparing projects (26% of U.G. students and 21% of P.G).

5. 4. The frequency of usage of e-books in CUCL:

Frequency	U.G. students	Percentage	P.G. students	Percentage
Weekly	11	22	19	38
Fortnightly	15	30	12	24
Monthly	9	18	10	20
Yearly	9	18	5	10
Seldom	6	12	4	8

Table 4. The frequency of usage of e-books

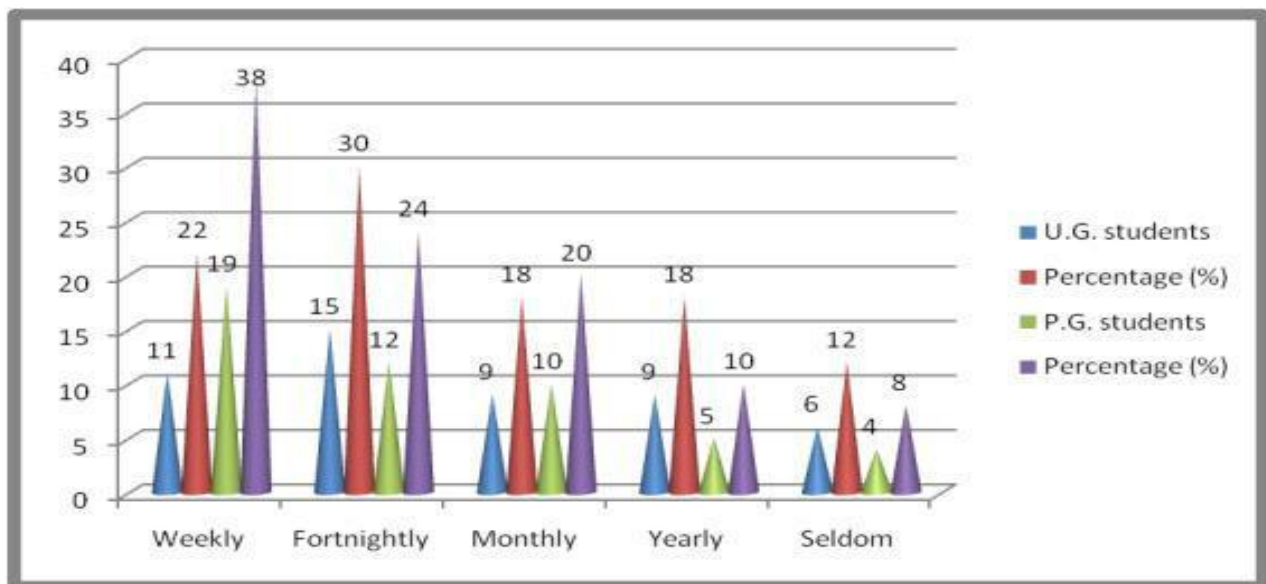


Chart 4. The frequency of usage of print journals

This analysis reveals that majority of P.G. students (38%) use e-books weekly whereas the majority of U.G. students (22%) use e-books fortnightly. A big number of P.G. students (24%) use e-books fortnightly also.

5.5. Frequency usage of e-journals in CUCL:

Frequency	U.G. students	Percentage (%)	P. G. students	Percentage (%)
Weekly	3	6	5	10
Fortnightly	11	22	12	24
Monthly	3	6	13	26
Yearly	8	16	20	40
Seldom	25	50	0	0

Table 5. Frequency usage of e-journals

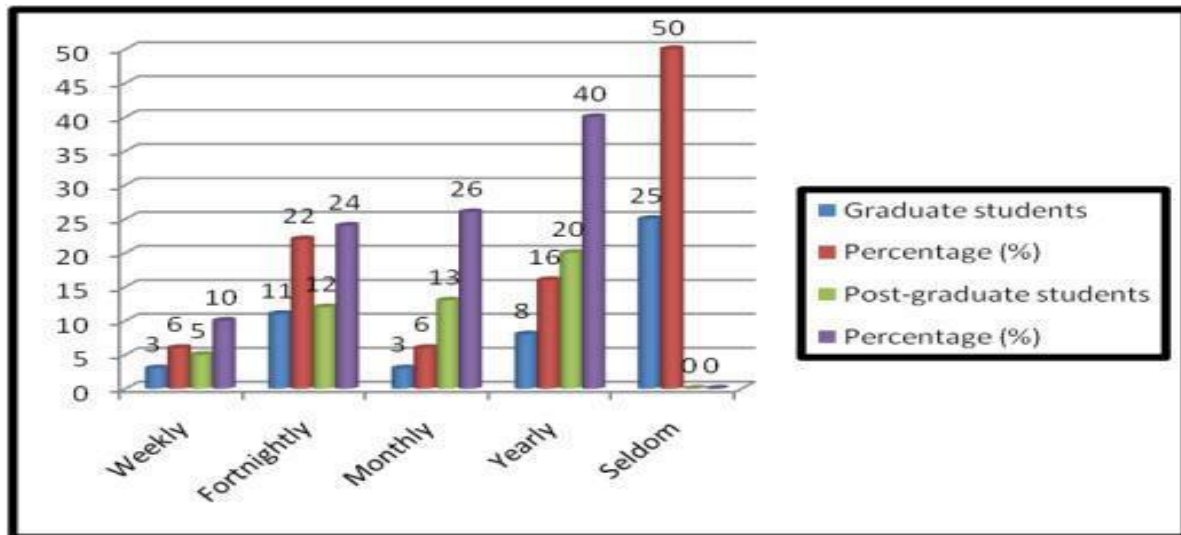


Chart 5. Frequency usage of e-journals

The study reveals that majority of U.G. students (50%) use e-journals seldom and the majority of P.G. students (40%) use them yearly. It is clear that frequency of usage of e-journals is less comparatively. 26% of P.G. students use e-journals on monthly basis also.

5.6. Usage techniques of e-books/e-journals in CUCL:

Techniques	U.G. students	Percentage (%)	P. G. students	Percentage (%)
By browsing	17	34	11	22
E-mail attachment	30	60	35	70
Printout on paper	3	6	2	4
Downloading on CD-ROM/ Pen drive	0	0	2	4

Table 6. Usage techniques of e-books/e-journals

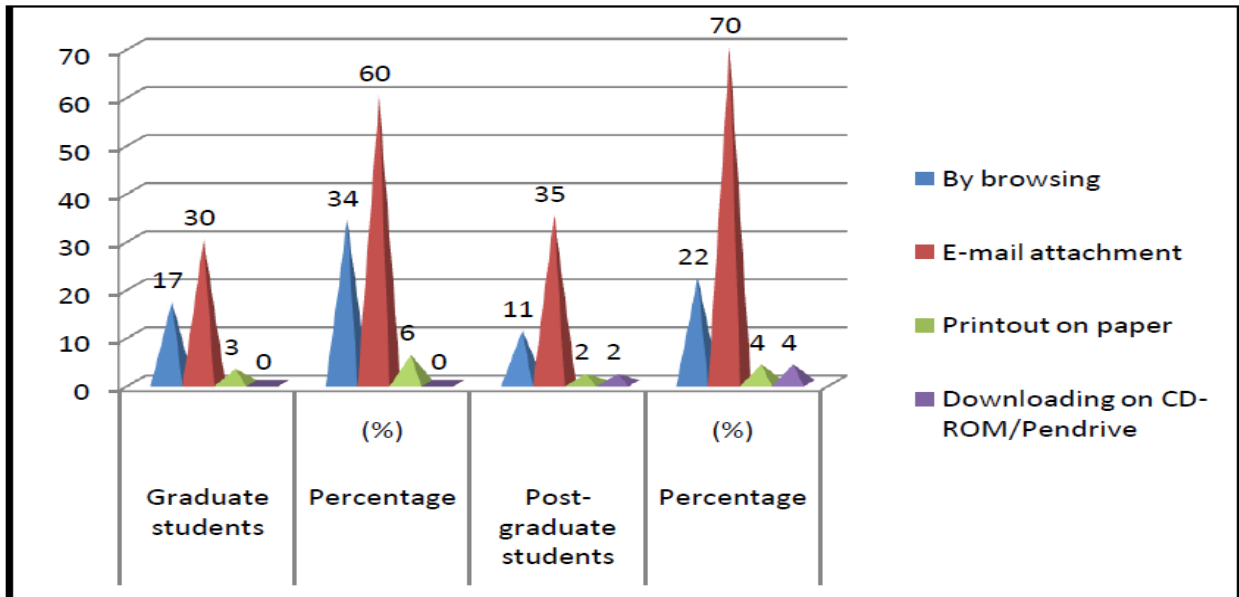


Chart 6. Usage techniques of e-books/ e-journals

It has been found that most of the P.G. students use e-books/e-journals by e-mail attachment (70%). The majority of U.G. students also prefer the technique of e-mail attachment (60%). 34% of U.G. students and 22% of P.G. students also prefer the browsing technique.

5.7. Difficulties faced while using e-books/e-journals in CUCL:

Difficulties	U.G. students	Percentage (%)	P.G. students	Percentage (%)
Lack of user training	3	6	3	6
Absence of user friendly interface	5	10	2	10
Insufficient computer terminals	24	48	29	58
Slow internet speed	7	14	1	2
No off-campus access	11	22	15	30

Table 7. Difficulties faced while using e-books/e-journals

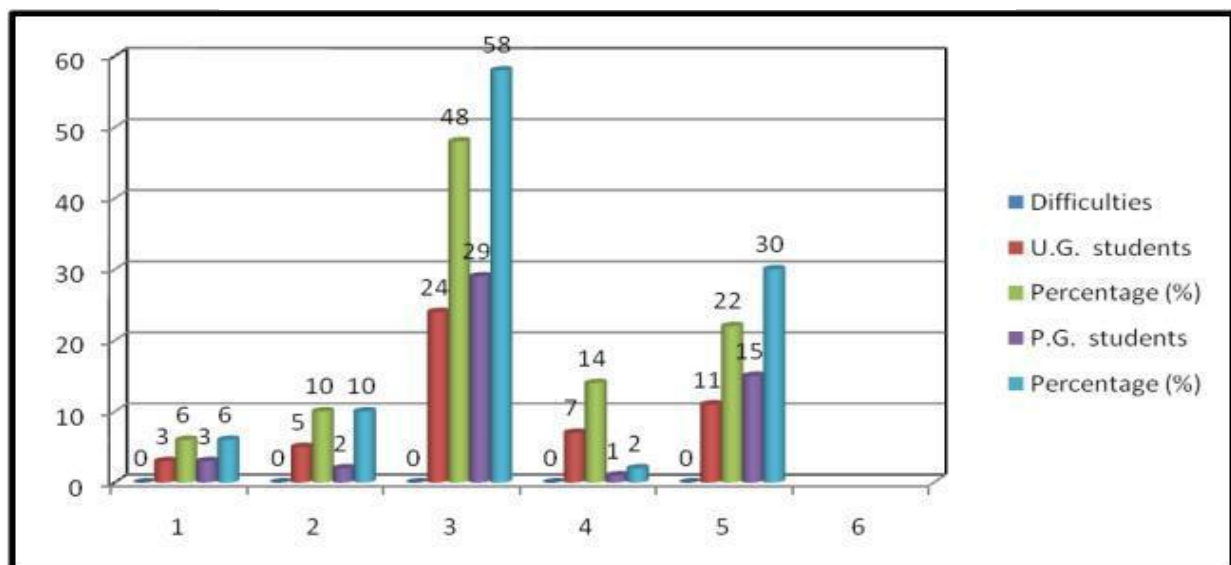


Chart 7. Difficulties faced while using electronic journals

This analysis reveals that most of the graduate students (26.6%) have pointed the difficulties- the absence of user-friendly interface, slow internet speed, and no off-campus access. Many of them have also pointed the slow internet speed. Whether the postgraduate students have pointed the insufficient computer terminals (24%) and no off-campus access (28%) to be the major hindrances towards access and use of electronic journals.

6. Conclusion:

Users desire a hybrid information environment in which online information does not supplant information in print but adds new access opportunities for users to choose. Electronic books and journals opened up many exciting opportunities and potentials for academic libraries. Looking at the present situation of information explosion and competency in acquiring it, it is on the part of the library staff to create more awareness about the e-resources availability among the users and provide them a friendly environment so that they can make a better use of the facility. The study shows that the usage patterns of e-books and e-journals run almost parallel. The considering factor in this is that the preferences towards these both of the resources are differed by the undergraduate and postgraduate students. E-journals are used more by postgraduate students whereas e-books are used more by the graduate students. Not only has that- their usage techniques, caused by preferences, hindrances faced etc. also differ. At last, it has to be said that the library staff should be more aware towards the electronic information services provided to their users. The aspects of inaccessibility discussed above must also be taken into consideration.

7. Suggestions:

- Orientation and awareness programmes must be conducted to keep the users up to date about the present collection of journals.
- In case for accessing the e-resources the provision of off-campus access and 24/7 availability must be implemented.
- Library homepage should give users access to the individual e-book/e-journal's homepages by hyperlinks, which will help them in avoiding the hassle of remembering the password or the URL.
- The library staff should cooperate with the users and help them in overcoming the technical difficulties faced while using e-journals.
- To increase the interest among users regarding the e-materials, content pages should be distributed to users through e-mail.
- The library staff should cooperate with the users and help them in overcoming the technical difficulties faced while using these resources.

- Number of computer terminals must be increased.

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