A Survey of e-Book Awareness and Usage amongst Students belonging to Arts and science, Engineering Colleges and Management Departments in Coimbatore

*V. Harish

ABSTRACT

E Books has been in the Indian market for almost a decade where publishing companies have been trying to capture the market in the early stages. The top most market in terms of numbers for Academic publishing companies is the Engineering and Arts and Science segment. This study aims to study the Awareness and Acceptance of E-Books among Arts and science colleges, Engineering Colleges and Management departments with respect to faculty and students and also to study the primary purpose of using E Book among students and faculty of Arts and Science College and Engineering College and Management departments. The cross sectional study was primarily a descriptive cum causal study, an instrument was developed with questions to measure the awareness and acceptance level and the primary reason for using E books. The sample size for this study was 507 students and 155 faculty from Arts and Science, Engineering and Management colleges. The results indicated that there was a higher level of awareness about E books among students and faculty of Management and engineering college than their Arts and Science College. The primary purpose for using E books among students is to read novels whereas it is was to use for reference purpose among faculty. The implication for publishing companies is that they should focus on Management segment , engineering segment and finally arts and Science colleges. The implication for librarians is that students / faculty use E Books more for reference and hence libraries should acquire more of Reference books and should be ready for the steady increase in usage of E Books.

Introduction

The web development has prompted to the including of a ton of ideas beginning with "e-to our lives. Email, e-shopping, e-managing an account, online business, e-government, e-marks and e-learning are driving ideas among them. E books with developing per user/client populace are a book arrangement that the greater part of us have heard and utilized a considerable measure of late in view of their long-standing history and the across the board utilization of data advances.

E Books

The term e-book is used variously in the literature to refer to hardware, software and document content. Whereas from the user perspective, an e-book is frequently viewed as a dedicated reading

*   Assistant Professor, PSG College of Technology, Coimbatore. E-mail: vharish05@gmail.com.
     Mobile: +91-97919 37869

device and not as the associated content, according to a survey on e-book features undertaken by Henke (2002). The Oxford Dictionary of English (2003) also defines an e-book as "an electronic version of a printed book which can be read on a personal computer, or hand held device designed specifically for this purpose". Hawkins, (2000), defined e-book as text that is available in an electronic format such as Word's doc, txt, HTML or XML. 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). Some definitions combined both the electronic text as well as the electronic reader device that is required for e-book to be read (Abrew, 2001; Lynch, 2001; Goh, 2003; Grant, 2002). Connaway (2003) defined e-book as a publication that characterized an electronic format, utilizing Internet technology to make it easy to access and use. Rao (2003) defined e-book as "text in digital form, or book converted into digital form, or digital reading material, or a book in a computer file format, or an electronic file of words and images displayed on a desktop, note book computer, or portable device, or formatted for display on dedicated e-book readers"

E books can be perused with various number.of gadgets. For example, eBook Reader, E-Book Plus, Kindle, arouse application , and also desktops, tablet PCs, iPhones and iPads, Blackberry's, cell phones, and route gadgets. According to Cox and Mohammed, as said by Lee (2002), an "eBook is a term used to describe a text analogous to a book that is in digital form to be displayed on a computer". Lee (2002) also included the definitions of an e-book from the *The New Concise Oxford English Dictionary* as "an electronic version of a printed book which can be read on a Personal Computer or hand held device designed specifically for this purposes" .

Many attempts have been made to classify the types of e-book. For example, Hawkins categorised E-books into four different types according to their accessibility whereas Crawford identified nine types of e-books based on various facets including their formats, standard, and length of content. E-books can also be characterised in terms of how the e-book can be displayed or read: on a computer through a network; a standalone desktop PC, notebook or PDA ; using e-book reader software (e.g. Adobe Acrobat eBook reader); on a dedicated hardware device or via the web ; Chen-on the other hand, defines e-books in terms of four perspectives: media, device, delivery and content.

E Book Awareness

Nilgün Tosun Trakya in their study tried to determine the preferences of student-teachers on reading printed books or e-books and the reasons for these preferences, finding out the awareness among the students and teachers – finding initially the awareness level. Reading printed books and e-books preferences of students are discussed in terms of gender and department variables. 258 student-teachers who are studying in various department is studied. Borchert, Martin and Tittle, Clare and Hunter, Alison and Macdonald, Debby (January 2009) particularly encouraging was that academics thought that E books would be suitable for the courses they teach and would be preferred for their own research and scholarship if suitable titles were available.

E-Book Usage

Many studies have been done on the use of e-books in libraries and classrooms, but few studies have been done on the use of e-books for pleasure reading..In one study, Clark (2009) tracks the genres requested by e-book readers via Kindles lent out by libraries, finding that light fiction, children's titles, and fantasy literature are the most popular e-books. A study of scholarly e-book usage (van der Veld & Ernst, 2009) shows academics praise e-books for their search capacity but believe print books will persist as the most comfortable means of reading a text cover-to-cover. A study by Shelburne (2009) explores e-book user attitudes and behaviors in an academic library, finding the most commonly listed (27%) advantage of e-books to be instant access. The most cited disadvantage is difficulty reading from the screen (33%). Also, while respondents find e-books superior to print books for searches, accessibility, and research, most cite print books as better for ease of reading and leisure reading

Objectives

The main objective of this paper is to find the following

i. To study the level of awareness about E-books among students and faculty from arts and Science College as well as Engineering colleges.

ii. To study the acceptance level of E- book among students and faculty of Arts and science college and Engineering college.

iii. To study the primary purpose of using E Book among students and faculty of Arts and science college and Engineering college.

Research Methodology

The study was primarily a descriptive cum causal study, with the key objective of identifying the awareness and acceptance level of E books among faculty and students of arts and Science College and Engineering colleges. An instrument was developed with questions to measure the awareness and acceptance level and the primary reason for using E Books. The data collection was cross-sectional rather than longitudinal as it represented a snapshot of the perceptions at one point in time. The collected data was then further analyzed for other relationships.   The research design used in the project is Descriptive and Quantitative.

Sample: The population for the study were all the students who are studying in arts and science colleges and Engineering colleges in Coimbatore and the sampling technique adopted for this research is the CONVENIENT SAMPLING technique. The sample size used for the research was a total of 507 respondents from students and 155 faculty from 20 Arts and Science Colleges and 25 Engineering college and 25 Management colleges were returned the breakup is as follows

	Student	Faculty
Arts and Science	176	40
Engineering	189	60
Management*	142	55
	507	155

*for the purpose of this study Management departments affiliated with Engineering and arts science colleges as well as standalone Management colleges were considered as there were few standalone colleges.

Results and Discussion

Respondents Profile: GENDER

The respondents profile indicated that the gender diversity was as follows

	Arts and Science College				Engineering college			
	Student		Faculty		Student		Faculty	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Male	107	61	23	58	106	56	27	45
Female	69	39	17	42	83	44	33	55
	176	100.00	40.00	100.00	189	100	60	100

	Management College			
	Student		Faculty	
	No	%	No	%
Male	91	64	37	67
Female	51	36	20	33
	142	100	55	100

There were 61 Percent of Male students in Arts and science colleges whereas the corresponding number in Engineering colleges and management Colleges was 56 and 64 percent among students and 58, 45 and 67 percent of faculty in Arts and science colleges , Engineering colleges and Management Colleges respectively.

Respondents Profile: BRANCH OF STUDY

The respondents profile in terms of branch of study was as follows

	Arts and Science College				Engineering college				
	Student		Faculty			Student		Faculty	
Branch	No.	%	No.	%	Branch	No.	%	No.	%
B.Com	53	30	14	35	CSE	59	31	20	34
BBM/ BBA	42	24	10	25	IT	26	14	8	13
B.Sc	62	35	13	32	ECE	45	24	15	25
Others	19	11	3	8	Mech	25	13	7	11
					Civil	15	8	5	9
					Others	19	10	5	8
	176	100	40	100		189	100	60	100

Objective 1: To study the level of awareness about E-books among students and faculty from arts and Science College as well as Engineering colleges.

Based on the assumption that the term E Book refers to an electronic form of a book that can be viewed and read on a computer or any other portable device the level of awareness among the respondents were as follows

	Arts and Science College				Engineering college			
	Student		Faculty		Student		Faculty	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total	134	76	35	88	169	89	58	97

	Management College			
	Students		Faculty	
	No.	%	No.	%
Total	131	92	54	98

There was a higher level of awareness about E books among management students (92%) then engineering students (89.42 %) finally Arts and science (76.14) students. When it came to the level of awareness among faculty the Management faculty had higher levels of awareness (98 %) while the faculty from engineering and Arts and science had an awareness of 97 % and 88 respectively.

Objective 2: To study the acceptance level of E- book among students and faculty of Arts and Science College and Engineering College.

The study revealed that among those who were aware of E books 62.69 % of students of arts and Science College have used E Books to some extent while 82.86 % of arts and science faculty have used E books. In the Engineering stream 74.56 % of students who were aware about E books have used E Books and 89.66 % of faculty have used E Book showing a higher usage pattern of E Books among engineering segment than Arts and Science College.

		Arts and Science College				
		Student			Faculty	
		Count	%		Count	%
Usage		84	63		29	83

	Student			Faculty		
Branch	Total No	Use E books	%	Total No	Use E books	%
B.Com	53	31	58	14	13	93
BBM/ BBA	42	18	43	10	7	70
B.Sc	62	25	40	13	8	62
Others	19	10	53	3	1	33
		84			29	

When analysed at a micro level when it came to arts and science colleges there was a high level of usage by students of B.Com that is 58.49 % of the students who were aware about E books have used them. Among faculty the level of usage was very high among faculty teaching B.Com with 92.86 % of them having used E books.

		Engineering College				
		Student			Faculty	
		Count	%		Count	%
Usage		126	75		52	89.66

	Student			Faculty		
Branch	Total No	Use E books	%	Total No	Use E books	%
CSE	59	42	71	20	18	90
IT	26	18	69	8	8	100
ECE	45	31	69	15	14	93
Mech	25	16	64	7	5	71
Civil	15	8	53	5	4	80
Others	19	11	58	5	3	60
		126			52	

With respect to engineering courses the level of usage of E Books was high among computer science students followed by IT department with 71.19 and 69.23 % respectively. Among faculty the usage was high in IT department followed by ECE and CSE department with 100, 93.33 and 90 % respectively.

Objective 3: To study the primary purpose of using E Book among students and faculty of Arts and science college and Engineering college.

The study revealed that among Arts and science student's E books were used for reading novels with 61% and amongst faculty 35% of them used E books for reference while 13 % used it for text.

Primary Purpose of using E book	Arts and Science		Engineering		Management	
	Student (%)	Faculty (%)	Student (%)	Faculty (%)	Student (%)	Faculty (%)
Text	2	13	5	12	8	19
Reference	13	35	14	47	22	58
Novel	61	15	55	19	41	07
Entertainment	17	21	18	14	12	05
Self Help Books	7	16	8	8	17	11
	100	100	100	100	100	100

Primary Purpose of using E book	Arts and Science		Engineering		Management	
	Student (%)	Faculty (%)	Student (%)	Faculty (%)	Student (%)	Faculty (%)
Would you use E book if your college has	67%	89%	74%	92%	94%	100%
What purpose would you likely use in library						
Academic & reference	52%	79%	62%	84%	78%	95%
Pleasure	48%	21%	38%	16%	22%	05%

In the engineering segment while 55% of the students stated that the primary purpose of using an E book was for reading Novels 47% of the faculty felt that the primary propose was to use for reference purpose. In Management there was a higher usage level if E Books by students as well as faculty.

An interesting pattern that emerged out of the study was while the students irrespective of arts and science or Engineering used E books primarily for reading Novels, Faculty in both streams used for reference and as a text. It can also be referred that the students and faculty are both willing to use E Books if their Institutional library has E Books and they would most likely use it for academic and related purpose.

Limitations

There are various limitations of the study which include

i.   The sample was restricted to the students of a sample of 20 arts and science colleges and 25 Engineering colleges and 25 Management institutes from Coimbatore

II.   The sample size was restricted to 507 students and 155 faculty from both Arts and Science Colleges.

iii. The scope was limited in studying the awareness, usage of E books and primary purpose of using E book.

Conclusion

Technology is changing the way higher education institutions are offering instruction Thus from the comparative study that is studied on awareness and acceptance of E-books among students in various courses in Coimbatore, concludes that there is a growth in E-books in the publishing industry. There is high level of awareness among engineering students and faculty when compared to the Arts and Science students and Faculty. The level of acceptance of E-books, initially is based on the reading habit of the students and their preference in the usage of books. Publishing companies will have to target Engineering colleges when compared to arts and science colleges. Library across arts and science and engineering colleges should focus on more reference EBooks rather than text book for now as students and faculty prefer to refer an E book rather than use EBooks as a text book. The study also indicates that the awareness and usage is increasing and hence libraries should equip themselves to brace the change of students and faculty moving towards E Books slowly but steadily.

References

1.   Abdullah, N., & Gibb, F. (2006). A survey of e-book awareness and usage amongst students in an academic library. In *Proceedings of International Conference of Multidisciplinary Information Sciences and Technologies, Merida, 25-28 October, 2006*.

2.   Allen McKiel, (2011) *Global Student E book Survey*, Proceedings of the Charleston Library Conference.

3.   Anuradha, K. T., & Usha, H. S. (2006). Use of e-books in an academic and research environment: A case study from the Indian Institute of Science. *Program*, *40*(1), 48-62.

4.   Baier, K., Hendricks, C., Warren Gorden, K., Hendricks, J.E., & Cochran, L. (2011). *College students' textbook reading, or not! American Reading Forum Annual Yearbook [Online], Vol. 31*.

5.   Borchert, Martin and Tittle, Clare and Hunter, Alison and Macdonald, Debby (2009)

6.   Brown, Gary J. (2001) "Beyond print: reading digitally" *in Library Hi Tech, Volume* 19, Number 4, pp 390-399

7. Chan Li, California Digital Library Felicia Poe, California Digital Library Michele Potter, UC

8. Gelfand, Julia (2002) "User input: experiences in assigned reading from e-books – one net Library experience" *in Library Hi Tech News*, Volume 19, Number 1.

9. Gonca Kýzýlkaya Cumaoðlu, E-book versus printed materials: university student's preferences, *International Conference on Communication, Media, Technology and Design.* May 2012

10. Harri Heikkilä, Kajsa Hytönen, & Merja Helle (Aalto School of Art and Design) Karri Kallinen & Niklas Ravaja (Aalto School of Economics), Jan Kallenbach (Aalto School of Science).

11. Kara Anne Burritt, B.A. Washington, D.C.(2010), *Digitized books, or e-books*, A Thesis.

12. Mercieca, P. (2004). E-book acceptance: what will make users read on screen?. In *VALA 2004* (pp. 1-11). Victorian Association for Library Automation.

13. Nancy M. Foasberg,(2009), Queens College, City University of New York, Flushing, New York

14. Nayereh Shahmohammadi, On-line electronic journals use among University academic faculty members of Islamic Azad University, Vol. 1. No. 1. March 2012

15. Nilgün Tosun Trakya University, Faculty of Education, CEIT Department, Edirne, Turkey

16. Noorizah Mohd. Noor, Reading habits and preferences of efl post graduates: a case study, conaplin journaL *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics, Vol. I No. 1 (July 2011)* .

17. Noorhidawati and Forbes Gibb, How students use e-books – reading or referring?, *Malaysian Journal of Library & Information Science, Vol.13, no.2, Dec 2008: 1-14*

18. Riverside Brian Quigley, UC Berkeley Jacqueline Wilson, (May 2011)California Digital Library

19. Robert W. Stone and Lori Baker-Eveleth*, Factors Influencing Students' Likelihood to Purchase Electronic Textbooks, *Interdisciplinary Journal of E-Learning and Learning Objects Volume 9, 2013*

20. Silas Marques Andrews University, E-Textbooks Usage by Students at Andrews University: A Study of Attitudes, Perceptions, and Behaviors, *Proceedings of the IATUL Conferences 2012.*

21. Zalinawati Abdullah, Norudin Mansor and Noor Aini Hassanuddin*, School Teachers Acceptance of E-book, *World Applied Sciences Journal 23 2013.*