Chapter III

Awareness, Access and Use of E-Journals among Researchers of LIS
**Awareness, Access and Use of E-Journals among Researchers of LIS**

E-journals are a new phenomenon in comparison to the print journals. These are in fact, the technological addition to the category of journals. Undoubtedly, awareness of e-journals among the students, researchers and the academicians has been constantly and rapidly increasing. Obviously, the increasing awareness has accelerated the access and use of e-journals among the information seekers. The relevance of the awareness and use of e-journals in the subject of LIS acquires more prerequisite significance. Reasonably, e-journal is an occurrence of Library and Information Science. Hence, it is relevant to carry out a comprehensive study to examine the scale of the awareness and use of e-journals among the researchers and faculty members of LIS.

The present study is a precise attempt to be acquainted with the awareness, access and use of e-journals among researches and teaching faculty members of LIS. Furthermore, the study is also an attempt to recognise the expectations of the researchers and faculty members of LIS in regard to e-journals. As mentioned in the methodology of the study while discussing the research plan, the present study is an empirical approach to recognise the selected patterns. To conduct a methodological study, total 180 respondents, formally affiliated to the subject of LIS, have been taken into consideration. Among them 120 are researchers; while other 60 are the faculty members. In the present chapter, the awareness, access and use of e-journals among researchers of LIS have been examined.

**Preference to particular format of Journals**

Initially, while examining the 120 researchers, the first query was to know the preferences they give to particular format of journals, i.e.
print or electronic. The respondents have expressed quite deviant views. Only 17.50 per cent respondents have confirmed their preference to the print journals. Further, 23.33 per cent respondents have asserted their preference to e-journal. Noticeably, the 59.17 per cent respondents have articulated their equal preference to both the print as well e-journals.

![Figure 3.1: Preferences to Particular format of Journals](image)

The data depicts that the print journals are the least preferred journals among the researchers. Reasonably, the access to the print journals requires the information seekers to visit a library, find the relevant research journals from the catalogues, which is obviously a time consuming process. The fixed timings of the libraries also forbade the information seekers to prefer print journals. Again, the time consuming process of selecting, publishing and delivering the print journals result in the information seekers becoming quite impatient. Furthermore, the print journals are limited to the single user access. But it is a fact that still 17.50 per cent researchers prefer the print journals. It is obviously due its easy-to-read feature and moreover its capability to enhance the imagination of the reader. The
date further corroborates that 23.33 per cent researchers prefer e-
journals over print journals. The most frequent reasons for more
likeliness of e-journals include their round the clock online access at
the desktop; their access to more than one person at the same time,
with less storage space and more colourful graphics at marginal cost.

It is noteworthy here that positively 59.17 researchers give equal
preference to both print as well e-journals. Reasonably, it is
dependent on their accessibility and choice to any particular research
journal that generally varies their timely preferences to one format
over the other.

**Awareness of e-journals**

Further, it was enquired from the researchers whether they were
appropriately aware about e-journals. The term 'Appropriately Aware'
was not limited only to the general information about e-journals but
included the comprehensive awareness about the access, types,
searching strategies and data bases of e-journals. Positively, all the
respondents have declared their appropriate awareness of e-journals.

![Bar Chart]

**Fig 3.2: Awareness of e-journals**
The 100 per cent awareness of e-journals among the researchers was reasonably because of their formal affiliation to the subject of LIS. E-journal is the formal part of the UGC Model Curriculum of Masters of Library and Information Science. Additionally, e-journals supplement the information required by the researchers, especially in the field of LIS. Moreover, all the researchers were quite young and were familiar with the latest trends and techniques in the field of information science.

**Major Purposes of using e-journals**

Another inquiry was conducted to be acquainted with the most frequent purposes of researchers for using e-journals. The respondents have revealed four major purposes of their using e-journals. 13.33 per cent respondents have claimed to be using e-journals for teaching purpose. There are 22.67 respondents who use e-journals for the purpose of writing the papers. The other 24 per cent have asserted to use e-journals for updating knowledge. Besides that, 40 per cent of the total respondents probably use e-journals for research work.

![Fig 3.3: Major Purposes of using e-journals](image)
Use of e-journals for teaching purpose only by 13.33 per cent researchers is probably because very less number of researchers is assigned the teaching work. Noticeably the rest of 66.67 per cent researchers use e-journals for the works directly or indirectly related to the research.

**Frequency of using or accessing e-journals**

In response to the query that how frequently the researchers use or access e-journals, the respondents have given diverse responses. Only 7.50 per cent of the respondents use/access e-journals everyday, while 17.50 per cent use them occasionally. Additionally, 23.33 per cent respondents have confirmed to use e-journal once in a week and the remaining 51.67 have corroborated that they use or access e-journals once in a month.

![Pie chart showing frequency of using or accessing e-journals](image)

**Fig. 3.4: Frequency of using or accessing e-journals**

It is an evident fact that the researchers need to access the journals frequently only at the initial stage of their research. Afterwards the journals (including e-journals) are deemed to access occasionally or
periodically, most probably after a month, as mostly the minimum periodic time for the publication of new addition of journals is one month. Consequently, very less number of researchers uses e-journals everyday or even after a week. Due to the similar reasons, most of the researchers access e-journals occasionally or monthly.

**Extent and amount of using e-journals**

To examine the amount of the use of e-journals, it has been deemed relevant to ask the respondents that approximately what number of articles are accessed by the researchers within a month's time span. Noticeably, there are 11.67 per cent respondents who access 4 to 6 articles in a month. Addition to that, 62.50 per cent respondents have responded as accessing 7 to 10 articles. There are 25.83 per cent respondents who have asserted that they access more than 10 articles from e-journals in a month.

![Fig. 3.5: Extent and amount of using e-journals](image)

The data divulges that the researchers make utmost use of e-journals. It has been confirmed from the fact that the number of those researchers who access only 4–6 articles in a month is very minimal
(11.67 per cent). Contrarily, vast number of researchers (86.33 per cent) access more than 7 articles from e-journals in a month. It establishes that there is admirablel acceptahle trend among researchers to access the articles from e-journals.

**Probable sources of finding e-journals**

To identify the probable source of finding e-journals among researchers, the respondents were asked to confirm their most probable sources. In their response, 05 per cent of the respondents revealed library web sites; 10 per cent respondents declared e-mail alerts and total 12.50 respondents confirmed the mailing lists as their probable source of finding e-journals. Furthermore, the directories are confirmed as preferable source by 17.50 respondents. Noticeably, 55 per cent of the total respondents rely on search engines to find e-journals.

![Chart showing probable sources of finding e-journals](chart.png)

**Fig. 3.6: Probable sources of finding e-journals**

Although, the library web sites are the most formally ratified and reliable source to find out e-journals. But the study has confirmed that very less number of researchers find e-journals from library web
sites. The directories, other formally ratified source of e-journals, are also not much obliged among researchers. It has been witnessed that the general sources, in spite of the formal and particular sources, are preferred by the researchers to find out e-journals. E-mail alerts and mailing lists collectively are the second most preferable source among researchers. The general search engines are most popular among researchers for the task as a considerable majority (55 per cent) of researchers invariably prefers search engines to find out e-journals.

**Probable locations to access e-journals**

To identify the probable location of researchers to access e-journals, the respondents were asked to reveal the place where they mostly access e-journals. As many as 47.50 per cent respondents have confirmed that library is the most probable place where they access e-journals. Further, 32.50 per cent respondents have confirmed Department; while total 17.50 have confirmed Home as the most probable place. However, there are 02 per cent respondents who prefer other places, than the above mentioned, to access e-journals.

![Fig. 3.7: Probable locations to access e-journals](image-url)
The data confirms that as many as 80 per cent of the total researchers prefer the university campuses to access e-journals. Reasonably, university campus is the most appropriate place for the same as university campus has maintained the required infrastructure along with maintaining round the clock internet accessibility with the wi-fi facility. In campus too, library is always the most probable and preferable place as the library is equipped with adequate subscription of e-journals, and properly maintained computer labs at minimal charges. The teaching departments are the second preferable places due to the reasons, quite similar to the above mentioned. The data asserts that the researchers having internet access at their homes prefer to access e-journals at home also. As mostly, the researchers reside in the hostels of the university campuses, the number of researchers accessing e-journals at home is very less.

**Methods of reading e-journals**

In general, there are two methods of reading e-journals, i.e. on screen and print on paper. While realising it relevant to know the method adopted by the researchers to read the full text, the relevant query was asked from the respondents. In response 37.50 per cent respondents asserted that they got a print on paper to read out a full article from e-journals, while the remaining 62.50 revealed that they read the full text on screen.
Fig. 3.8: Methods of reading e-journals

The data corroborates that there are minority of researchers who get a print on paper to read out full text e-journals and the noticeable majority of researchers prefer to read out e-journals on screen. There are number of reasons for the prevalence of that trend among researchers. Firstly, there is dearth of printers and papers among researchers to print out every article to read. Secondly, the printing facilities available around, are costly for them to afford frequently. Thirdly, in today’s age of technology, most of the researchers have their personal laptops or desktops to access, download and save e-journals' articles to read any time on screen.

Preference to particular format of information display

Further, it was asked from the researchers to ascertain that what format of information display they prefer in e-journals. In response, 59.17 per cent of the respondents confirmed that they preferred HTML format, while the PDF format had been confirmed as preferred by 40 per cent of respondents. In addition, only 0.83 per cent respondents gave their preference to the DOC format.
The data confirms that most of the researchers prefer HTML format as it is a dynamic in style, displaying quality graphics, multimedia and hyperlink features. The PDF format occupies second preference due to its print-friendly features. The DOC format is given the least priority as it can be easily edited and hence altered by anyone. Due to these drawbacks, the DOC format is least used format in e-journals.

**Relevance, Usefulness and Value of e-journals**

While examining the use of e-journals, it is relevant to study the relevance, usefulness and value of e-journals for the information seekers. Considering this, four types of variables of the usefulness of e-journals were given to respondents and they were asked to notify their preferences. While responding, 47.50 per cent of the respondents confirmed e-journals as Most Helpful. Other 50 per cent respondents noticed an Average usefulness of e-journals, while 2.50 per cent of the respondents considered e-journals as Little Helpful in their research. Noticeably, none of the respondents had considered the fourth variable, i.e. Not Helpful.
Fig.: 3.10: Relevance, Usefulness and Value of e-journals

The data verifies that e-journals are invariably considered as most helpful for the approximate half of the researchers. For other half of the researchers, e-journals occupy an average usefulness. Only a negligible number of researchers (2.5 per cent) consider e-journal as little helpful and not even single respondent considers e-journals as not being useful.

**Subscription of the ToC of relevant e-journals**

For the regular and frequent reader of e-journals, it is helpful to subscribe via e-mail, the Table of Contents (ToC) of e-journals. Therefore, it was asked from the researchers that whether they have subscribed via e-mail, the subscription of the ToC of the relevant e-journals. The responses of the respondents revealed that 59.17 per cent researchers had subscribed the ToC of e-journals while the other 40.83 had not subscribed the same.
Fig. 3.11: Subscription of the ToC of relevant e-journals

The general depiction of the data is that though immense majority of the researchers have subscribed the ToC on their e-mails, still noticeable number of researchers have not subscribed it. A thorough analysis of the concern exposes reasonable causes for the same. The researchers who probably find any journal/s relevant to their research area usually subscribe the ToC of the particular journal/s. considerably there is dearth of variety of journals to deal with every research area of the subject. Hence, the researchers, who do not find e-journal relevant to their research area, do not usually subscribe the ToC of e-journals and prefer to find out e-journals with help of the search engines and other sources.

Usefulness of subscription of ToC service
All the 59.17 per researchers, when asked to reveal the usefulness of the subscription of the ToC, had considered the subscription of e-journals as useful. It verifies the fact the subscription of ToC of e-journals is significant for the researchers to supplement their research.
**Recommendation of e-journals to other information seekers**

Further, it was enquired from the respondents that whether they recommended e-journals to other students. Positively, 100 per cent of the respondents admitted they had recommended e-journals to the others also.

**Fig. 3.13: Recommendation of e-journals to other information seekers**
The data asserts that all the researchers recommend e-journals to the students and other information seekers. It further confirms the significance and reliability of e-journals among the researchers.

**Publication or submission of articles in e-journals**

It was realised from a comprehensive research’s viewpoint to ask the respondents that whether they had submitted or published any of their articles to the open access e-journals. Interestingly, as many as 47.50 per cent respondents have confirmed that they submitted or got published their article/s in the open access e-journals. However, 52.50 per cent of the respondents had not done the same so far.

![Publication or submission of articles in e-journals](image)

**Fig. 3.14: Publication or submission of articles in e-journals**

The notion that majority of the researchers have not published or submitted their articles in the open access e-journals should not be considered as an unenthusiastic trend of researchers towards e-journals. Reasonably, A noticeable number of the researchers are at the initial stage of their research work and have not yet developed their article-writing skills and aptitude manifestly. Moreover, the preference given by 47.50 per cent researchers to e-journals to get
their articles published in them, expresses the acceptance and authenticity of e-journals.

**Recommending and supporting others for publication**
After examining the interest of the researchers in getting their articles published in e-journals, other related query was to know whether the researchers recommended and supported others to get their articles published in e-journals. Positively, 100 per cent of the respondents responded that they recommended and supported others for the same.

![Graph](image)

**Fig. 3.15: Recommending and supporting others for publication**

The encouragement and support by all the researchers to other associates (scholars, colleagues) to publish papers in e-journals again strongly verifies the acknowledgement and acceptance of e-journals among the researchers. E-journals are not only preferred by the researchers themselves to publish their papers but other seekers are also encouraged and even supported by them for the same.
**Extent of effect of use of e-journals**

It is significant to examine from those who use frequently e-journals, the extent of effect of the use of e-journals. To verify the same, it was asked from the respondents that whether the access to e-journals had increased their ability of research and teaching. As many as 85 per cent of the respondents admitted that the access to e-journals had enhanced their research and teaching abilities; however remaining 15 per cent had totally or partially denied that.

![Fig. 3.16: Extent of effect of use of e-journals](image)

The data corroborates that regular access to e-journals has actually holistically enhanced the research and teaching abilities of the enormous majority of researchers. The negligible number of researchers who could not recognise the relevance of the access of e-journals to increase their research and teaching abilities are probably those who access e-journals less frequently.

**Problems while accessing e-journals/ if any**

It is an obvious fact that those who access e-journal may face variety of problems while using/accessing e-journals. Thus, it was considered
appropriate to enquire from the respondents the problems faced by them while using/accessing e-journals. Positively, as many as 56.67 per cent people denied any problem faced by them. But quite perceptibly, 43.33 per cent of the total respondents admitted that they faced variety of problems while using/accessing e-journals.

![Bar Chart]

**Fig. 3.17: Problems while accessing e-journals/if any**

It establishes as an evident fact that a number of problems are faced by the researchers while accessing e-journals. The most prominent problems include fluctuating connectivity to internet, limited access points, limited subscription and the slow speed of internet server. The positive aspect in regard to this is that noticeable majority of researchers do not face any revealable problem in accessing e-journals.

**Types of problems faces while accessing e-journals**

It has been found in the previous query that 43.33 per cent of the researchers do face problems while accessing e-journals. Another query arises here as well that what type of problems the researchers generally face. All 43.33 per cent researchers have divulged that there
are three major problems that they most frequently face. Among all those who commit to face the problems, 57.69 of them feel that the slow speed of the internet server is the major problem; while 26.92 per cent censure the limited access points. The remaining 15.38 per cent consider the problem of fluctuating internet connectivity as the major setback while accessing the Internet.

![Pie Chart](image)

**Fig. 3.18: Types of problems faces while accessing e-journals**

The data confirms that the problems associated to the accessing of e-journals are majorly the problems related to the internet processing and not the problems directly concerned to the display, readability, printability etc. Only the 26.92 per cent respondents have considered the limited access points as the major problem. According to the remaining 67.8 per cent, the problem of inconsistent internet connectivity (15.38 per cent) and the slow speed of the internet (57.69 per cent) is the major problem in accessing e-journals.

**Requirement of any technical training to use e-journals**

Obviously, e-journal is a phenomenon associated to the information science, hence is a technical task. It is considered worthwhile to ask
the users that if any training or technical know-how is required to access and use the e journals. Only 45 per cent of the researchers feel the need of training or technical knowhow, while 55 per cent do not feel any such prerequisite.

Fig. 3.19: **Requirement of any technical training to use e-journals**

The assortment of response received from the researchers establishes that while accessing and using the e journals is not much complex task and the literate persons, as the researchers of LIS, who are well aware about the information science, are able to access the e journals. But undoubtedly, to make comprehensive use of e-journals, the formal or informal knowledge is required. That is the reason that slight majority of the researchers have felt the need of a training of technical know-how to access e-journals properly.

**Types of technical training**

It was further asked from those, who feel the necessity of training programme, that what type of training they regard as required for the purpose. In their response, 55.56 per cent of the respondents have
preferred a short term training programme while the remaining 44.44 per cent have advocated the online training programme.

Fig. 3.20: Types of technical training

It has been manifested by all the researchers, who feel the requirement of a formal training programme, to properly access e-journals, that the training programme should not be complex, long-term and wider. Instead, they all prefer a brief, informal and minor programme fulfilling their purpose. That is why 55.56 per cent researchers have preferred short term programme while other 44.44 per cent have feel that any training or technical know-how provided to them online (via internet) is sufficient for them.

Amount of satisfaction from e-journals
In due course, it was asked from the researchers that whether they were satisfied from e-journals. Positively, 62.50 per cent of the respondents expressed their complete satisfaction to access e-journals, while the remaining 37.50 per cent appeared partially satisfied to use and access e-journals.
Fig.3.21: Amount of satisfaction from e-journals

It is positive from the use and access of e-journals’ viewpoint that none of the researchers have articulated complete dissatisfaction to use and access e-journals. A noticeable majority of researchers are totally satisfied while only approximately one third of the total researchers are partially satisfied. Those who are partially dissatisfied include the researchers who apparently face various problems while using and accessing e-journals.

Whether e-journals are replacing print journals

The formal interface with the researchers has depicted that there is quite overwhelming enthusiasm among researchers about e-journals. Thus it was asked from the researchers that if the popularity of e-journals was really increasing to an extent that these were replacing the print journals. Noticeably, 67.50 per cent of the total respondents acknowledged that e-journals were undoubtedly replacing the print journals. But on the other side, there were other 32.50 per cent who believed that certainly, the popularity of e-journals had been constantly increasing but these had not yet been replacing the print journals.
Fig. 3.22: Whether e-journals are replacing print journals

The enormity of the popularity and acceptance of e-journals has been confirmed from the fact that nearly two third majority (67.50) of the researchers firmly believe that the use and access of e-journals is getting widespread and prominent enough to make the researchers of the LIS believe that it has been replacing the print journals. On the other side, one third of the total researchers believe that eventhough e-journals are getting illustrious day by day, but these are not replacing the print journals.

Causes of less acceptance of e-journals, if any
To examine the causes of feeble acceptance and less use of e-journals, if any, the researchers were asked to expose their specific reasons. Among total respondents, 32.50 per cent revealed that the lack of knowledge of e-journals in the LIS is responsible for less use of e-journals. Other 27.50 per cent censured the lack of time, while other 25 per cent reportedly felt uncomfortable with e-journals. The remaining 15 per cent believe that the quality of e-journals did not match to the print journals.
The data verifies that majority of the researchers do not use e-journals with less curiosity due to the substandard quality or complex process to access e-journals, but the lack of knowledge about e-journals or the lack of time forbade them to use e-journals with priority. Further, there are only 15 per cent researchers who assert to use e-journals less than the print journals due to their substandard quality in comparison to print journals.

**Obstacles in using e-journals**

It was further asked from the researchers that whether they had observed any additional obstacles in using e-journals. The respondents divulged variety of obstacles. Of the total respondents, 70 per cent believed that the lack of infrastructure was the main cause. There were other 17 per cent who revealed that their priority to the print journals was the cause of less use of e-journals. While according to the 6.67 per cent researchers, it was the lack of training, and remaining 5.83 per cent felt that e-journals are not easy to use and access.
It was further asked from the researchers that whether they observed any obstacles in the growth of e-journals. The researchers had disclosed variety of obstacles while responding. For 70 per cent researchers, the lack of infrastructure was the main obstacle; while for other 17.50 per cent, it was the preference given to the print journal. Total 6.67 per cent observed that it was lack of training and the remaining 5.83 were of the view that the complex process to access e-journals was the cause.

**Fig. 3.24: Obstacles in using e-journals**

Thus it establishes as a fact among researchers that mainly the lack of infrastructure is the prime obstacle in the expected growth of e-journals. However, even the lack of know-how makes it complex for the users to access e-journals.

**Proposed steps to make e-journals more efficient**

Eventually, it was asked from the researchers that as per their opinion, what else should be done to make e-journals more efficient. As many as 55.83 per cent researchers were of the view that the access to the internet should be at affordable rates. There were other
25 per cent who believed that bandwidth should be improved; while according to 19.17 per cent, sufficient infrastructure was required for making e-journals more efficient and effective.

![Pie chart showing percentages](image)

**Fig. 3.25: Proposed steps to make e-journals more efficient**

The data confirms that due to unaffordable internet access, majority of the researchers quite criticize e-journals. While there is noticeable number of researchers who believe that upgrading the technical infrastructure, especially improving bandwidth and disseminating internet access at affordable rates can really enhance the popularity of e-journals.

While examining empirically and observing analytically the scale and scope of awareness, access and use of e-journals among researchers, it establishes as an obvious fact that the researchers have been showing overwhelming response while using e-journals. The researchers are properly aware about the modes and methods to access e-journals. Though, there are noticeable number of researchers who feel the need of technical training for the same. The researchers frequently access e-journals at various places preferably their departments, houses and libraries. Furthermore, the study has exposed a variety of problems and obstacles faced by the researchers.
while accessing e-journals. Major problems and obstacles include the fluctuating internet access, slow speed of the internet etc. Positively, these obstacles are the problems associated to the information technology, and not the quality of the content and substance of e-journals. These problems, if eradicated, may enhance the extent of awareness, access, and use of e-journals among researchers.