

# Reading Preference of the Library Users: Print Vs Electronics at Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India

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**Abstract** - The result of the study is to access the influence of print and digital media among the engineering students and other disciplines of Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, Coimbatore. For the purpose of data collection, questionnaires were distributed among 250 students of the University. The findings reveal that more students are digitally literate and engaged with both print and electronic media. The study realized the convenience of online reading to print media. Students are found engaged to online media more. One of the significant finding of the study is that students prefer print sources to comprehend better than from online media. Email and internet browsing were the most preferred services used every day by the majority of respondents. Majority of the users had laptop and smartphones for internet access. Regular evaluation and assessment have to be conducted to determine whether the print media and digital resources are effectively used by the students and also to find their changing needs. The study makes stress on the value of the printed word for learning and academic development.

**Keywords:** Reading preferences- Academic Reading format, Print – Digital-format, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham

## I. INTRODUCTION

With the advent of technology reading habits of people have changed enormously. Reading habit greatly influences a student's knowledge, academics, self-development, creativeness and soft skills. Our ancestors stored information on clay tablets, papyrus leaves, and vellum scrolls, but with the advancement of information technology reading devices have undergone a revolutionary transformation from paper to e-Paper, from print to electronics. With access to electronic devices like smartphones, phablet and tablets, the production of information resources in e-format has risen tremendously as compared to the print format.

Electronic resources have its advantages of mobility and portability, but still from libraries' point of view, both print and electronic resources are an essential form of its collection. Therefore, nowadays we see a hybrid mix of e-resource and print resources in libraries. From readers' point of view also, the satisfaction and comfort level in reading e-format resources and print format resources are different. Therefore, in this current study the preference level of undergraduate students and postgraduate students for e-format resources and print format resources is being studied.

## II. OBJECTIVES OF THE CURRENT STUDY

The study has been carried out to address the following goals-

1. The students' perception of reading electronics and printed materials
2. The student's preferences for reading electronic vs. printed materials
3. Preference in the reading format for academic reading, Textbooks, Reference materials, Research Journals, Project reports Standards, Back volumes, Magazines, Newspapers, and In-House publications.
4. To identify reading preferences for pleasure reading
5. Impact of language for native language and foreign language
6. To identify preference for highlighting and marking important words in the academic reading format.

## III. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to determine the reading format preferences (Print and Electronics) of the students of Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham.

## IV. COLLECTION OF DATA

A survey method was adopted to conduct the study. A structured questionnaire was prepared using google form and mailed to the students. A target population of 250 students was chosen for the study. Out of 250, 175 responses were received, of which 93 were from male respondents, and 82 from female respondents.

## V. LITERATURE REVIEW

Reading, which Orasamu (1982), "Preferences in the Era of ICT" by Thulasimani Munohsamy, Universiti Teknologi Brunei, defines as the art of interpreting printed and written words, is one of the most effective processes of conscious learning and sometimes, it influences the extent and accuracy of information as well as the attitudes, morals, beliefs, judgment, and action of readers. A creative and pragmatic education involves the habit of personal investigation. The art of personal investigation requires self-study to be followed by self-thinking and analysis. Self-study, otherwise referred to as reading at one's own accord, requires a habit, which, according to Smith (1982), is

known as a reading habit. Reading makes way for a better understanding of one's own experiences, and it can be an exciting voyage of self-discovery. "The reading habit is best formed at a young impressionable age in school, but once formed it can last one's life" (Green, 2001).

Spencer, C. (2006). Research on learners' preferences for reading from a printed text or from a computer screen. *Journal of Distance Education*, 21(1), 33-50. echoes the findings of a survey of 254 graduate and undergraduate business students in British Columbia, Canada. The author found that 92% of the students printed out the item when they worked concurrently with something else, 82% printed it out if it was long or complicated, 80% printed it out if they wanted to study from it, and 75% printed it when they wanted it to take notes. Flexibility, portability, reliability, and the physical holding of the material were cited as reasons for printing. Therefore, these studies show that the preferences of using online materials and printed materials are very much dependent on the student's comfort, affordability and most importantly the type of materials they prefer reading in either printed copy or on electronic copy.

**VI. DATA ANALYSIS**

TABLE I GENDER WISE DISTRIBUTION

Gender	N	%
Male	93	53
Female	82	47
Total	175	100

N = Number of respondents

The respondents were asked about their gender. The response received has been presented in table number 1. Out of 175 respondents, 93(53%) of them were males and 82(47%) were female.

TABLE II USER PREFERENCE – DEPARTMENT WISE

Course	Print		Electronics		P&E	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Engineering	37	48	3	3.9	37	48.05
Humanities	39	58	3	4.48	25	37.31
Social Science	12	39	2	6.45	17	54.84
Total	88	50	8	4.57	79	45.14

N=Number of respondents, P&E = Print, and electronics

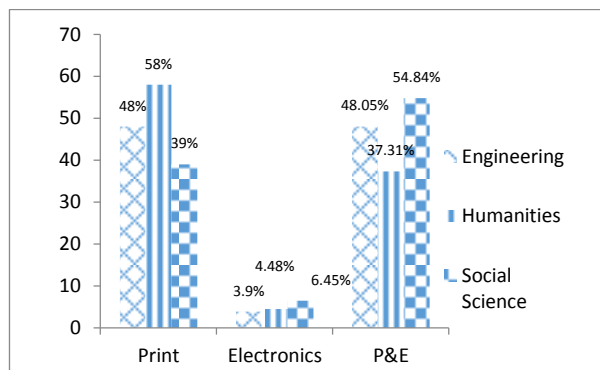


Fig. 1 User preference – Department wise

It can be noted from table no.II and figure no.2 that 77(44%) respondents were engineering students, 67(38%) Humanities and 31(18%) were Social science students.

TABLE III READING PREFERENCE FOR AN ACADEMIC PURPOSE

Reading format	Print		Electronic		P&E		No response	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Textbooks & Course materials	88	50	8	5	79	45	0	0
Reference materials	69	39	43	25	62	35	1	1
Research Journals	44	25	79	45	48	27	4	2
Project Reports	57	33	48	27	64	37	6	3
Standards	51	29	43	25	65	37	16	9
Back volumes	56	32	42	24	56	32	21	12
Magazines	111	63	20	11	38	22	6	3
Newspapers	122	70	12	7	39	22	2	1
In-House publications	61	35	43	25	58	33	13	7

N=Number of respondents , P&E = Print and electronics

1. *Text book& Course materials* : Table 1 reveals (N=88; 50 %) students' prefer print materials for text book, (N=79; 45 %) print & Electronics, (N=8; 5 %) respondent preferred electronics. Study showcased print is still prompt in text book reading.
2. *Reference materials*: It revealed that (N=69; 39%) student preferred print, (N=62; 35 %) of respondent preferred in print and electronics, (N=43; 25 %)

- referred to electronics. Hence, it is revealed that most of the students preferred Print format.
3. *Research Journals*: (N=79; 45 %) respondents suggested electronics format for academic reading, (N=44; 25 %) student preferred in print, (N=4; 27 %) of respondents preferred print and electronics. For research Journals, the majority respondents preferred electronics.

4. *Project reports:* (N=64; 37 %) of the of respondents preferred print and electronics, (N=57; 33 %) of respondent preferred print and (N=48; 27 %) suggested electronics format. It shows that majority prefers print & electronic format.
5. *Standards:* Table 1 revealed that (N=65; 37%) students preferred print and electronics, (N=51; 29 %) respondent preferred print format only, (N=43; 25 %) of respondents preferred electronics. Hence most of the respondents expressed their preferences for academic reading in print and electronics.
6. *Back volume:* (N=56; 32 %) of respondents' preferences was for print, (N=56; 32 %) students for print and electronics, (N=42; 24 %) students for electronics.
7. *Magazines:* (N=111, 63 %) students showed a preference for print, (N=38; 22 %) of the respondents preferred electronics & print, (N=20; 20 %) respondents preferred electronics format. In this analysis most of the student's preference was print magazines.
8. *Newspaper:* (N=122; 70 %) of respondents preferred newspapers in print, (N=39; 22 %) preferred electronics and print, (N=12; 7 %) preferred electronics. Hence most of the students preferred print newspapers.
9. *In-House publications:* (N=61; 35 %) of students preferred print. (N=58; 33 %) of the respondents preferred print and electronics, (N=43; 25 %) of students preferred electronics. Hence, it showed that majority preferred print.

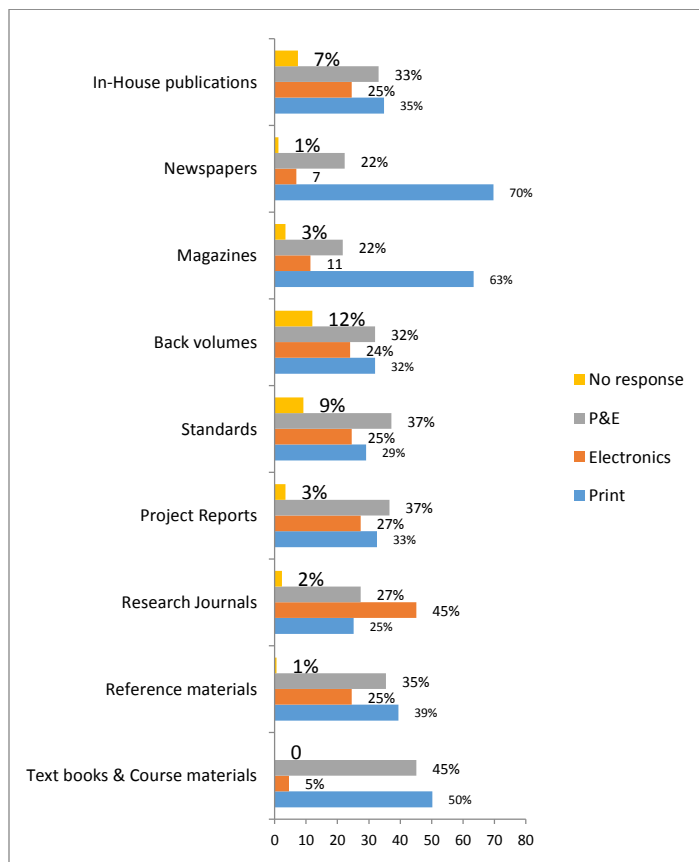


Fig. 2 Reading format for academic reading

Above table shows that print is the predominantly preferred type of academic reading material.

TABLE IV READING PREFERENCE FOR PLEASURE:

Reading preference for pleasure	Print		Electronic		P&E	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
	103	58.86	11	6.29	61	34.9

N=Number of respondents, P&E = Print, and electronics

The analysis given in table No.II indicates that 58.86 % respondents preferred printed books for reading for pleasure, 34.9 % respondents opted for both print and

electronics while 6.29 % only preferred electronics. Hence, it is observed that most of the students preferred print for reading pleasure.

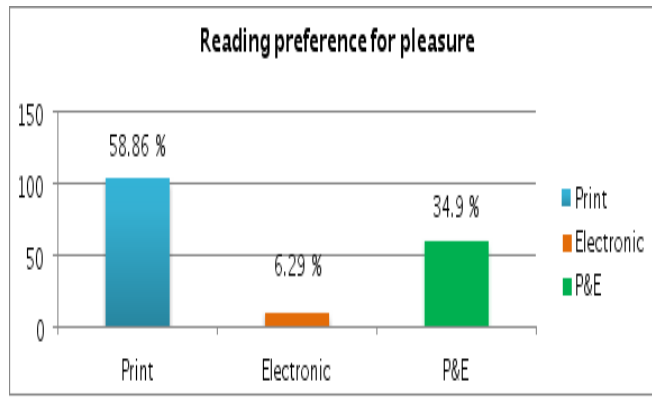


Fig. 3 Reading preference for pleasure

TABLE V LANGUAGE IMPACT ON READING PREFERENCE:

Language	Print		Electronic		P&E		No response	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Prefer to read Native	103	58.86	7	4	60	34.3	5	2.86
Prefer to read Foreign	66	37.71	23	13.1	81	46.3	5	2.86

N=Number of respondents, P&E = Print, and electronics

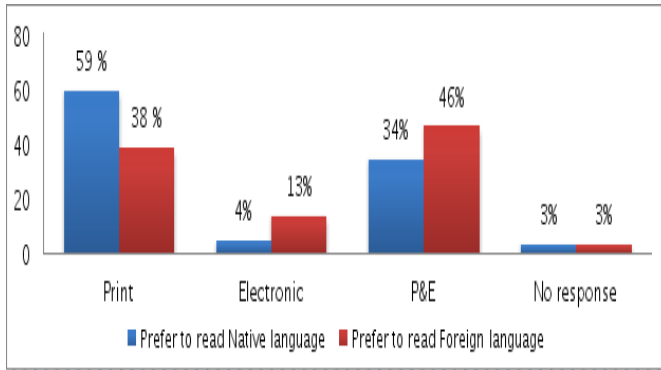


Fig. 4 Impact of Language

1. *Native language:* Table no.III, shows 59 % respondents wish to read in print in the native language, 4% electronics and 34% print and electronics.
2. *Foreign language:* 38% preferred in print, 13% preferred electronics, and 46% preferred print & electronics.

Above table revealed that for the native language most of them preferred Print and for Foreign language, most of them preferred print and electronics.

TABLE VI HIGHLIGHTING AND MARKING IMPORTANT WORDS IN ACADEMIC READING FORMAT

	Strongly agree		Neither agree or disagree		Disagree		Strongly disagree		No response	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Usually highlighting and marking printed course readings	104	60	41	23	19	11	5	3	6	3
Usually highlighting and marking my electronics course readings	56	32	63	36	37	21	7	4	12	7

N=Number of respondents, P&E = Print, and electronics

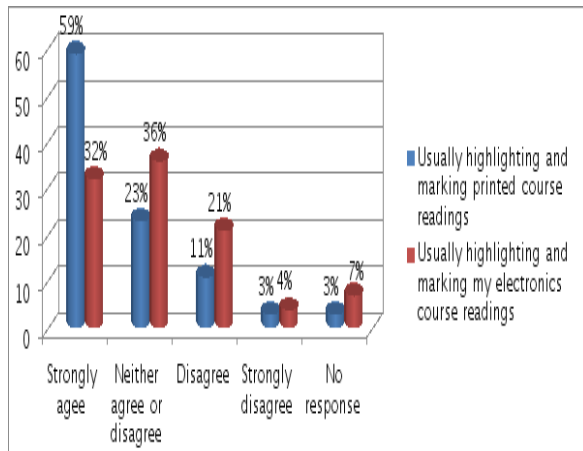


Fig. 5 Highlighting and marking important words in academic reading format

It can be noted from table no. 4 that 60 % of students strongly agree to highlighting and marking on printed course materials, 23 % of students neither agree or disagree, 11 % of students disagree, 3 % students strongly disagree. It showed that majority of students are interested in highlighting and marking on the printed material.

### VII. CONCLUSION

This study investigated the reading format (Print, Electronics, and Print & Electronics) preferences of students of Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham. Learning using print format is more conducive to focusing and remembering

materials, and students are more likely to engage in their print materials through highlighting, notating, and reviewing. The student's preference of a format also influences reading. Students indicated that their learning through print format is the best media resource. Since it is easy to access, most of the students prefer it in spite of its cost. Nowadays most of the newspapers are available in Print & Electronics free of cost. A substantial number of students prefer print format for their course materials. With more libraries investing in electronic textbooks, it is important to understand our students' attitude towards using them. So libraries must be more vigilant in spending on reading materials.

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