

*Full Length Research Paper*

# Impact of online journals among management graduates at Dubai international academic city - A pragmatic study

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In this information age, libraries are now coming to be known more as Knowledge resource centers or Digital information centers. Gone are the days where Library meant only rows and rows of books now it means an Information center with access to different media available. The hardcopy books are being complimented with e-Journals and e-Books which are now being implemented at most libraries in UAE and across the globe. This study examines the need and necessity of electronic collections at University libraries and its impact on Management graduates. It also identifies the level of awareness among the graduates and their usage pattern on using digital information.

**Key words:** E-journals, e-books, digital products, e-learning initiatives and management studies.

## INTRODUCTION

Traditionally libraries were an integral part of any Academic and/or Research institutions. In this Information age, the traditional setup is gradually getting converted into digital/online systems. This allows the library resource accessible to a wider user base. Developed countries like U.S.A., U.K. and Japan digital resources are being effectively utilized in libraries. Whereas in developing countries especially in the Middle East existing Libraries are slowly converting to digital resource centers. But the conversion is near to that of developed countries, even in institution of international importance like Higher College of Technology, Zayad University and American Universities Libraries, the usage patterns of online resources are moderate compared to European countries.

In UAE an action plan / time bound effort is being taken up to convert the existing libraries into Information centers similarly few commissions are setup to identify issues related to building digital libraries and promote e-learning. The study is now being carried out in University/Institution Libraries located in Dubai Academic City, which houses many international universities offering numerous graduate and research programs. These institutions have

now started subscribing to both print and e-Journals.

## Need for the study

The libraries across the UAE have started showing interest in building e- collections therefore it is necessary to identify the usage pattern of e-journals, e-books and other similar products across the libraries. This study will reveal the users' perception especially users of library materials and also the initiatives taken-up by the organizations to promote e-learning.

## Objectives

- 1 Identify various methods used to locate articles within the journals
- 2 Categorize the purpose of using e-journals
- Identify the preferred document format
4. Analyze the level of awareness of electronic products.

## Literature review

In India, Ramkumar and Aswini Ghosh have made an attempt to study the emergence of e-learning. They

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**Table 1.** Age and awareness of e-books.

Age group	Opinion			Total
	Rich	Familiar	Never	
20-30	40.00	36.00	2.00	78.00
31-40	6.00	8.00	8.00	22.00
Total	46.00	44.00	10.00	100.00

argued that computer networking has paved way to support learning in personalized, flexible, portable and on demand basis. E-learning practices have gained rich familiarity among the academic society within the institutes of higher education.

They have also discussed about online courses to make learning more effective and pointed out the advantages of e-learning, which includes flexible timing, cost effective, lifelong learning, global teaching phenomenon, sharing of knowledge and academic productivity. It has been concluded that though e-learning may not replace the traditional class room teaching, but it will improve the learning standards and flourish the level of lectures.

A recent study by King, Donald E and Montgomery, Carol Hansen have concluded that 70% of the faculty members and 77% of doctoral students preferred access to electronic resources which is higher than any other information sources. This survey was conducted at Drexel University W. W. Hagesty Library with sample respondents of 496 faculty, 342 doctoral students, and 104 master degree students. The data was published in the article titled "After Migration to Electronic Journal Collection: Impact of Faculty and Doctoral Students." The survey also identified the need of e-journals for the primary purpose of research, teaching and writing.

And several other studies done by the following researcher, and they concluded about importance of electronic resources for the current scenario; Vakkari P. and Talja, on "Searching for electronic journal articles to support academic tasks, A case study of the use of the Finnish National Electronic Library, Information Research".

Adams, Judith A and Bonk, "Sharon on Electronic information technology and resources: Use by university faculty and faculty preferences for related library services college and research libraries".

Sangowusi, F.O on "Problems of accessing scholarly publications by Nigerian Scientists: A study of the University of Ibadan".

Bonthron, karan on "Trends in use of electronic journals in higher education in the UK-Views of academic staff and students".

## METHODOLOGY

### Data collection

Data was collected for a period of five months from users, particularly management graduates at Dubai international academic city through a structured questionnaire.

## Scope and limitations

The present study is confined to Dubai International Academic City (UAE), which is one of the fast moving academic Sector in the Middle East. The study covered only Graduate students pursuing management disciplines HRM, Finance, Economics etc.

## Sample size

Only 250 respondents were taken for the study.

## Statistical tools and techniques

Chi- Square test was done to find distributions and data validation and also for measuring relationships amongst the respondents. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was utilized to perform chi-square analysis.

## Hypothesis

The following hypotheses have been formulated in accordance with objectives of study.

- There is no significant relationship between the age of the respondents and awareness on e-books.
- There is no significant relationship between age and awareness on e-journals.
- There is no significant relationship between department and research work.
- There is no significant relationship between department and training.

## Analysis of data

The response rate was quite high as the questionnaire was not posted either through online or submitted personally rather we preferred to put forward to them directly. The responses were recorded immediately. Codification was carried out to track the understanding of the e-books use.

We asked a series of questions about awareness and understanding of e-books among the target students. We have classified the awareness into three levels, viz., rich, familiar and never. We define the rich as the users who possess the habit of accessing and using them regularly. The familiar denotes the users know the e-books including the structure, content as well as the technology behind them. However, the awareness is not correlated with the use as these classes of users use them less than average or expected use. The level has also some influence by the following factors such as their education level and productivity as reflected in many forms such as the exam scores. We did not dwell in-depth in to these investigations rather we focus on the rate of the e-books knowledge.

Awareness levels of the e-book format among the studied users stand in total at over 90% which is very positive. The 90% account for rich (46%) and familiar (44%) (Table 1).

We have investigated the impact of age on the levels of awareness. The calculated chi- square value stands at 1.75162. With the level of 5% significance we found that the age has impact on awareness.

We extend this mode of examination to study the E-journals. E-journals are normally accessed by the students who undertake graduation projects and the students who do research. The awareness is recorded as one hundred percent as the studied users either know or access them. The high frequent use or aware-

**Table 2.** Age and awareness of e-journals.

Age group	Opinion			Total
	Rich	Familiar	Never	
20-30	56.00	27.00	0.00	83.00
31-40	9.00	8.00	0.00	17.00
Total	65.00	35.00	0.00	100.00

**Table 3.** Department and undertaking management studies.

S. No	Department	Percentage
1	HRM	13.00
2	Finance and accounting	16.00
3	Economics	15.00
4	Marketing	14.00
5	Project management	15.00
Total		73.00

**Table 4.** Department and requirement of training.

S. No	Department	Network specialist	Information managers	Librarians	Software engineers	Total
1	HRM	8.00	4.00	8.00	0.00	20.00
2	Finance and accounting	9.00	1.00	7.00	3.00	20.00
3	Economics	3.00	3.00	8.00	6.00	20.00
4	Marketing	4.00	4.00	6.00	6.00	20.00
5	Project management	8.00	1.00	11.00	0.00	20.00
Total		32.00	13.00	40.00	15.00	100.00

ness is reported as two thirds of (65%) of them gain understanding of this category of users (Table 2).

The calculated chi-square value stands at 1.30918. With the 0.5 level of significance we found the impact of age on e-journals awareness.

The findings from the above two tables indicate that the age leads to technology use which indicate that the young agers tend to adapt and deploy technology than their seniors. The level of awareness of e-resources among students in the academic settings depends on a few variables such as age. Our finding confirms with Chu (2003) study. On contrast our findings do not correlate with a few recent studies such as those of (Rowlands, 2007; and eBrary, 2008). The reason perhaps is the variations in the place of studies.

Chu, H., 2003, Electronic books: Viewpoints from users and potential users, *Library Hi Tech*, vol. 21, no. 3, pp. 340 - 346.

Rowley, I (2007). What do really faculty and students think about E-books? *Aslib Proceedings New Information Perspectives*, vol. 59, no. 6, pp. 489-51 (Table 3).

The table stated that 73% of the respondents browse e-journals for the purpose of management studies projects and remaining browse for other purposes. The remaining respondents opted for other purposes like lecture notes preparation and article publication. Calculated value of Chi-Square = 5.27924

Table value of 0.5 level of significant = 7.344

Degree of freedom = 8

Since the calculated value (5.27924) has been lesser than table value (7.344), the null hypothesis was accepted. Therefore it is informed that there is no significant relationship between depart-

**Table 5.** Preference for locating articles.

S. No.	Mode of locating	Percentage
1	Websites	32.00
2	Search Engines	54.00
3	With the help of Colleague	8.00
4	With the help of Librarian	6.00
Total		100.00

ment and their corresponding undertaking management studies (Table 4).

The above data shows that 40% of the researchers require training from Librarians to browse e-resources.

Calculated value of Chi-Square = 21.85096

Table value of 0.5 level of significant = 11.340

Degree of freedom = 12

Since the calculated value (21.85096) is higher than the table value (11.340), the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence it is concluded that there is a significant relationship between Department and Undertaking Management Studies (Table 5).

It showed that most of the respondents browse their contents with the help of Search engines and through websites.

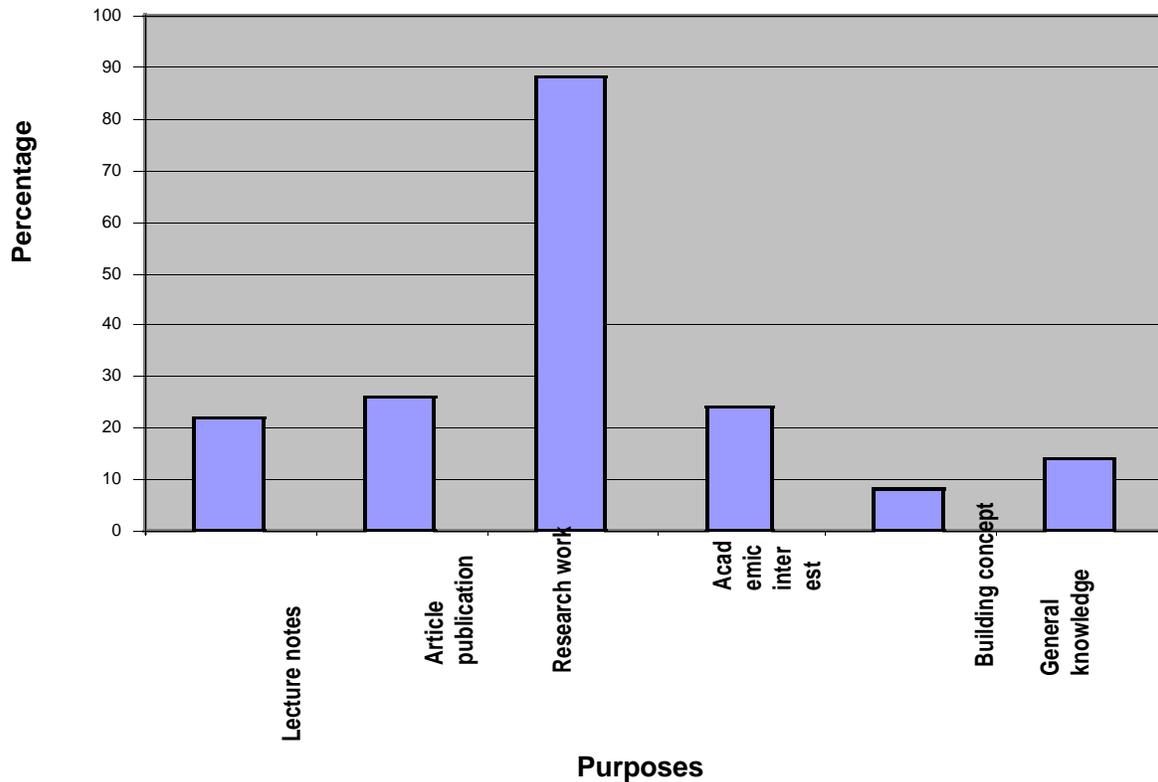


Figure 1. Purpose of accessing e-journals.

Table 6. Purpose of accessing electronic journals.

S. No.	Purpose	Percentage
1	Lecture notes	22.00
2	Article publication	26.00
3	Research work	88.00
4	Academic interest	24.00
5	Building concept/ theory	8.00
6	General knowledge	14.00
Total		100.00

Table 7. Preference of document format.

S. No.	Document format	Percentage
1	.doc files	6.00
2	.pdf files	91.00
3	.html files	1.00
4	.ppt files	2.00
Total		100.00

Therefore Table 6 indicated 88% of respondents used to browse electronic journals for their research work and 26% for their Article publication work and 24% for their academic interest and 22% of scholars browse electronic journals for lecture notes (Figure 1 and Table 7).

Most of the respondents prefer to read the articles in portable document file (pdf) format rather than the other kinds of formats (Figure 2).

Table 8 highlighted majorities of the respondents are familiar with e-resources and among the e-resources; e-journals are most effectively used for data communication and retrieval. This showed that respondents widely dependent on electronic media towards carrying out their studies (Figure 3).

Table 9 figured that most of the respondents (58%) used only basic search functions to locate the required information (Table 10).

It is noteworthy to mention that 41% of respondents opted for training through Librarians and 35% of them need training through Network specialists (Figure 4).

## Summary of findings and Conclusion

1. Eighty three percent of the respondents were in the age group of 20 - 30 years and the remaining in 31 - 40 years.
2. Forty Seven percent of the respondents visit the Library once in a week.
3. Only 50% of them prefer to read digital documents.
4. Only 46% of the respondents obtained rich knowledge about e-books and 65% of them are familiar with e-journals.
5. A overwhelming majority of 93% of the respondents felt that e-learning has been an effective tool
6. Fifty six percent of them claimed that they read a maximum of ten articles per week.

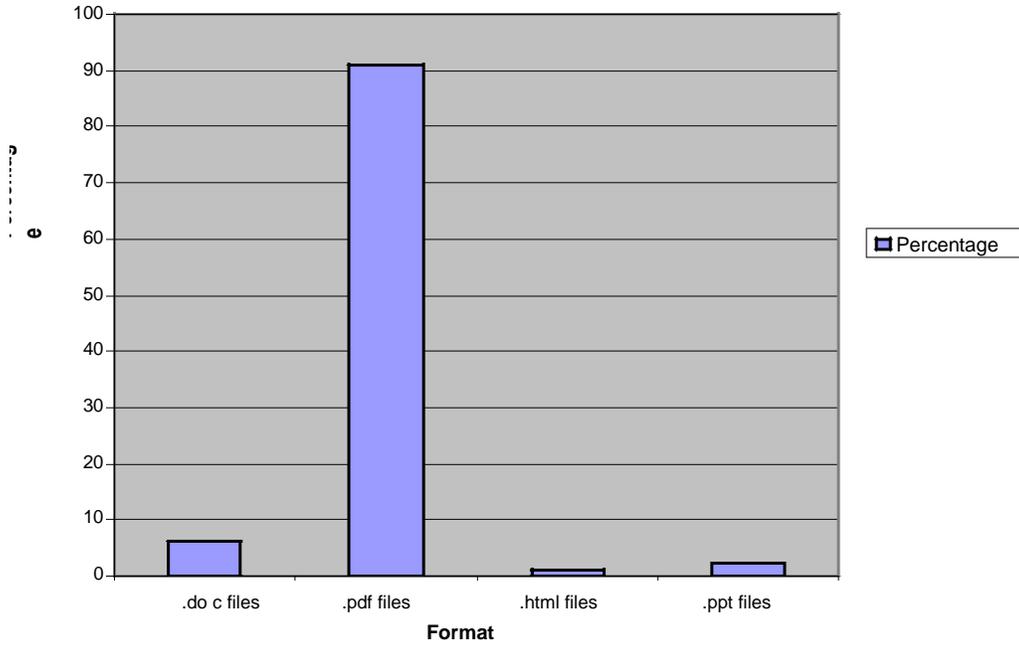


Figure 2. Preference of document format.

Table 8. Awareness of digital products.

S. No.	Digital products	Rich	Familiar	Never	Total
1	e-Books	46	44	10	100.00
2	e-Journals	65	35	0	100.00
3	List Server	3	24	73	100.00
4	Groupware	1	28	71	100.00
5	e-Newsletter	29	44	27	100.00

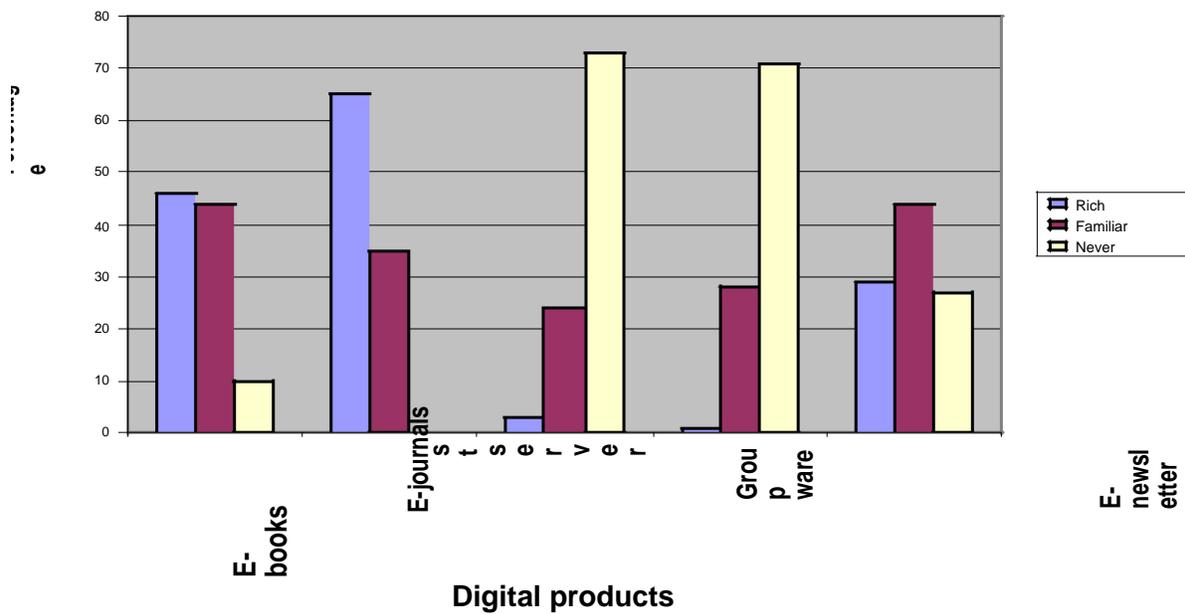


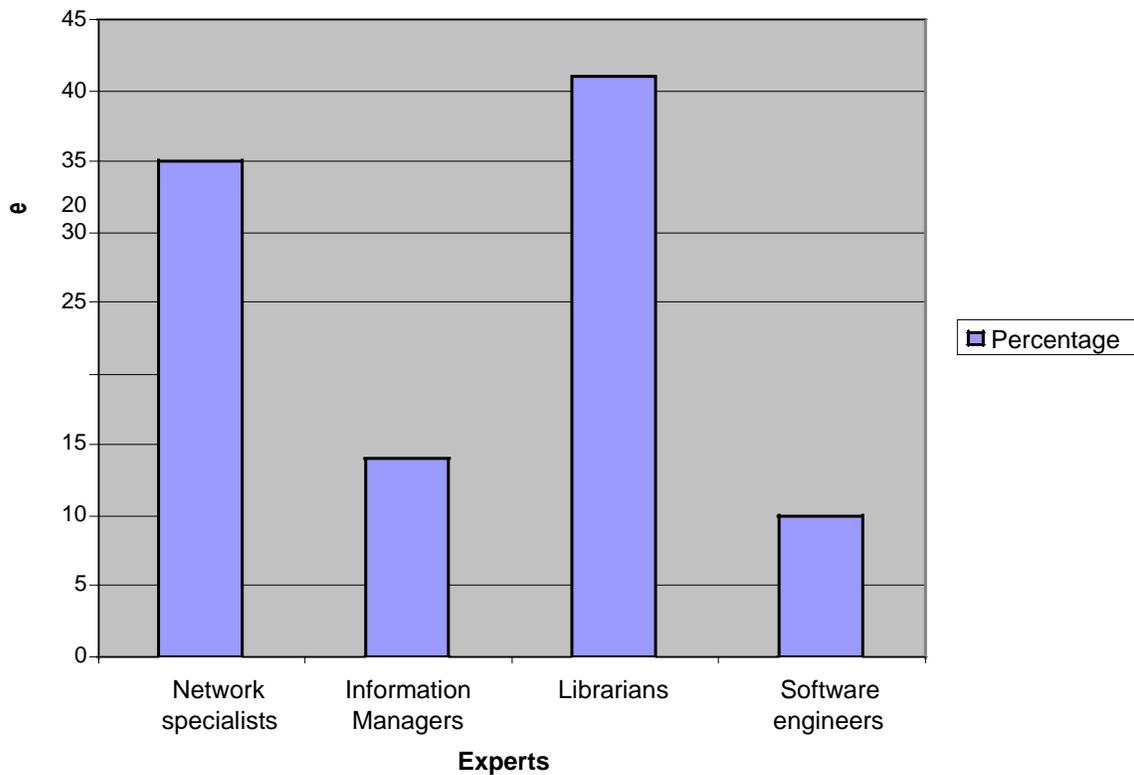
Figure 3. Awareness of digital products.

**Table 9.** Preference of searching pattern.

S. No.	Search type	Percentage
1	Basic or quick search	58.00
2	Advanced search	27.00
3	Browsing table of contents	12.00
4	E-mailed table of contents alerting	3.00
	Total	100.00

**Table 10.** Requirement of training for accessing e-resources.

S. No.	Training by the experts	Percentage
1	Network specialists	35.00
2	Information Managers	14.00
3	Librarians	41.00
4	Software engineers	10.00
	Total	100.00



**Figure 4.** Requirement of training for accessing e-resources.

- 7. Fifty eight percent of the respondents browse e-journals through search engines.
- 8. 77% of the respondents prefer to access e-journals for preparing lecture notes.
- 9. 73% of them opted for publication of papers which is essential for studies.

- 10. It is important to mention that 88% of the respondents use e-journals.
- 11. Ninety one percent of them showed interest in accessing the documents in PDF
- 12. Forty percent of them realized that they require assistance from Librarians to browse the required information.

## Conclusion

In recent times, developing country like UAE invested huge amount of money to make the higher educational institutions more sophisticated in terms of facilities and amenities to compete with established institutions at abroad more preciously US and Europe. The reason being manual information processing or in other words traditional learning system is slowly getting vanished and online learning is growing to a greater extent. Though at all over the world Libraries and information centers cater the needs of almost all users and academic community, it is high time to equip modern devices for life long learning with unlimited access. The ultimate aim of any organization is to achieve the goals on time with complete productivity. The Institutes of international importance and repute, that is, American University of Sharjah, and other universities of national importance have already taken up initiatives to offer e-learning environment. The present study found that most of the students in the Dubai International Academic City, felt that the electronic collections will elevate the level of the usage on certain aspects. It provides an opportunity to refer back volumes at the reference reading lounge. Even at the library it requires computers, Internet connectivity and various softwares, at the same time it is very much faster to transfer knowledge and supplement the users with printed resources.

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