
Pros and Cons of Electronic Databases : User's Perspective

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1. Abstract

Electronic databases are the most used in today's technological era. Electronic databases have many advantages for the users as well as for the library professionals for managing and distributing current information to their users.

The present paper discusses the pros and cons of electronic databases. In this paper, the researcher studies the pros and cons through feedback received from the teaching professionals. Data collected with the help of a Google form and analyzed it, which is given below. Overall findings were discussed below finally it shows that electronic databases were a more effective and useful tool for the users of the library.

2. Introduction

After the incorporation of ICT in the publishing industry, information was produced at a breakneck pace. Literature growth, especially in the field of science and technology, is very rapid. Searching and retrieving information from traditional print resources is not easy as one has to go through the entire collection. But in the case of electronic databases, the information can be retrieved in a single click out of the whole collection. Due to the beauty of getting information without waste of the time of users and fulfilling the increasing demand of the users, libraries are forced to acquire electronic databases.

As a result of the information explosion, a vast amount of information is generated. As a result, the acquisition and subscription of electronic databases became important and unavoidable. These databases have advantages over print format, which encourages the libraries to move towards digital and electronic sources for giving effective and efficient service to their users. The library professionals are well aware of the importance of the potential use of these databases in the age of information technology

3. What is an Electronic Database

Electronic databases contain information from a variety of disciplines and are available and accessible via the internet at any time of day. These databases are collections of information organized to serve a specific purpose and can be searched and retrieved through computers by Encyclopaedia Britannica.

Electronic databases may be available and identified as relevant to scholarly research in universities, but lecturers may not be aware of them and even if they are aware, they may not be able to make use of them effectively for scholarly research.

4. Pros and Cons of Electronic Database

Though the electronic database was a technological-based service to users, it still has some pros and cons, some of which are given below.

4.1 Pros

1. Electronic databases have the facilities like instant and remote access, fast downloading, effective searching, easy retrieval, and sharing by networks;

2. E-resources can be used round the clock and all 365 days even when the library is closed.
3. Online databases provide distinctive, inclusive and in-depth information.
4. An article available in the e-resource can be read, commented on, and amended quickly by users, and also give feedback through the online mode.
5. Digital resources are available to anyone anywhere in the world at minimal cost and cannot be destroyed after multiple uses;
6. Electronic journals can be linked from and to bibliographic databases.
7. These databases provide a powerful method of information retrieval system such as free text, controlled vocabulary searching, and combining of Boolean logic.

4.2 Cons

1. As there is a lot of advancement in computer and internet technology, but still users prefer to print material as compared to electronic.
2. If the URL of the article changes, it will disappear and be difficult to access.
3. As new technologies come every day, as a result, new media related to electronic databases are evolving, so it is difficult for library staff and users to get acquainted with them.
4. Electronic databases require an uninterrupted power supply, which sometimes is not possible, especially in developing countries.
5. Apart from authorized and well-known publishers, the credibility and authority of the source are doubtful.
6. While searching for articles on the internet, recall and precision is very important.

5. Objective of Study

- To identify the advantages of electronic databases
- To identify the disadvantages of electronic databases
- To identify whether electronic databases help teaching faculty
- Frequency of access by the teaching faculty to electronic databases
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6. Scope and Limitation

The present study was carried out with a specific scope, the questionnaire was sent to different WhatsApp groups for the collection of data. The questionnaire was sent only to teaching faculties in different colleges.

7. Data Analysis

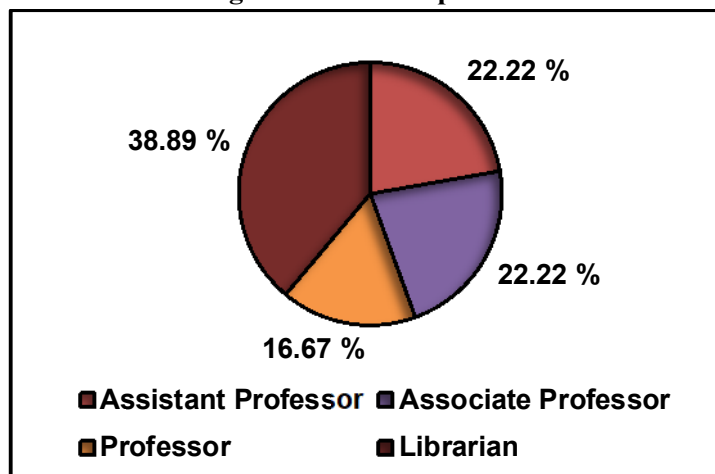
After distribution of the questionnaire with the help of Google Form, the researcher had received 54 responses. The collected data from the different teaching faculties was summarized in the form of a table and a graph, which is shown below

7.1 Post

Table No 1 : Post of Respondent

Sr. No.	Particulars	Responses	Percentage
1	Assistant Professor	12	22.22
2	Associate Professor	12	22.22
3	Professor	9	16.67
4	Librarian	21	38.89
	Total	54	100

Fig. 1 : Post of Respondent



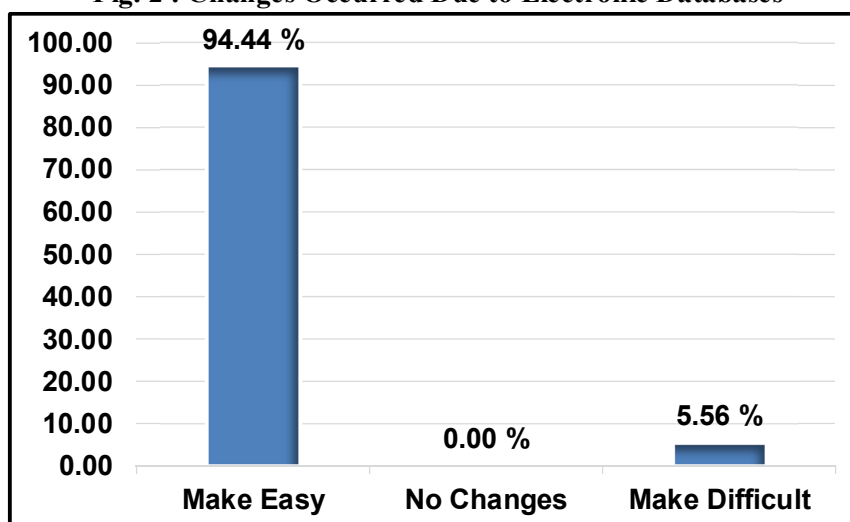
From the above figure, we can see that around 39% of respondents belong to librarians, around 22% of respondents were assistant professors, associate professors, respectively, while around 17% of respondents were professors.

7.2 Changes Occurred Due to Electronic Databases

Table No. 2 : Changes Occurred Due to Electronic Databases

Sr. No.	Particulars	Responses	Percentage
1	Make Easy	51	94.44
2	No Changes	0	0.00
3	Make Difficult	3	5.56
	Total	54	100

Fig. 2 : Changes Occurred Due to Electronic Databases



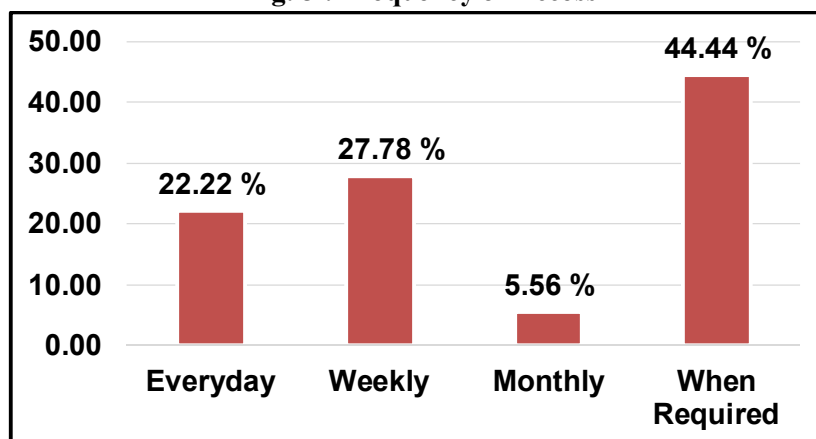
From the above figure, it shows that around 94.44% of respondents replied that due to electronic databases, it was made easy to search and retrieve information as and when required.

7.3 Frequency of Access

Table No. 3 : Frequency of Access

Sr. No.	Particulars	Responses	Percentage
1	Everyday	12	22.22
2	Weekly	15	27.78
3	Monthly	3	5.56
4	When required	24	44.44
	Total	54	100

Fig. 3 : Frequency of Access



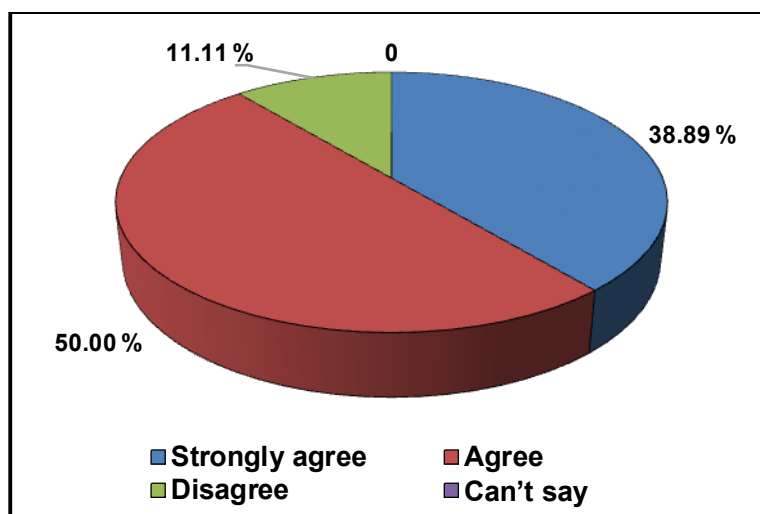
When the researcher asked respondents about the frequency of access to electronic databases, they replied as follows, 44.44% of respondents access electronic databases when required, 27.78% of respondents access weekly, 22.22% of respondents access electronic databases on a daily basis, whereas 5.56% of users access monthly.

7.4 Electronic Databases have More Advantages than Print Material

Table No. 4 : Electronic Databases have More Advantages than Print Material

Sr. No.	Particulars	Responses	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	21	38.89
2	Agree	27	50.00
3	Disagree	6	11.11
4	Can't say	0	0
	Total	54	100

Fig. No. 4 : Electronic Databases have More Advantages than Print Material



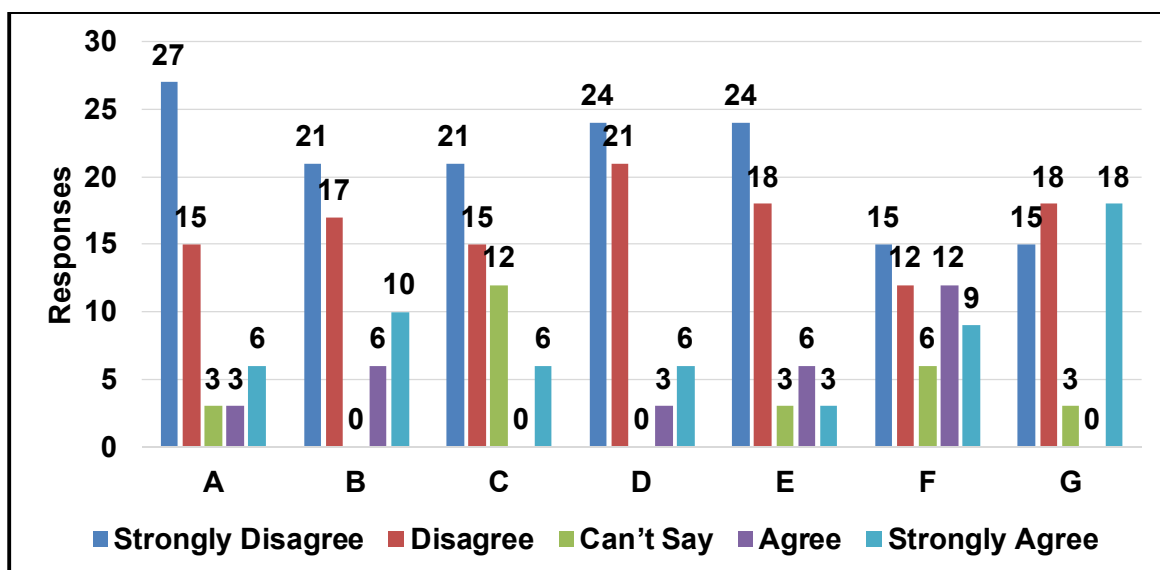
When the researcher asked respondents about which is more advantageous, electronic databases or print material, in response to this question, collectively around 89% of respondents were agreed (50% + 38.89%) that electronic databases are more advantageous as compared to print material.

7.5 Awareness of Electronic Databases but not Using it

Table No. 5 : Reason Behind Not Using Electronic Databases

Sr. No.	Parameters	Parameters Code	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Can't Say	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
1	Insufficient hardware / software for access of Electronic Databases	A	27	15	3	3	6	54
2	E-Databases are less convenient than print resources	B	21	17	0	6	10	54
3	Lack of train library staff to assist	C	21	15	12	0	6	54
4	Lack of awareness about Electronic Databases	D	24	21	0	3	6	54
5	Lack of guidance regarding availability of Electronic Databases	E	24	18	3	6	3	54
6	Lack of computer knowledge to Use	F	15	12	6	12	9	54
7	Language barrier	G	15	18	3	0	18	54

Fig. No. 5 : Reason Behind Not Using Electronic Databases



Note: A - Insufficient hardware / software for access of Electronic Databases
B - E-databases are less convenient than print resources
C - Lack of trained library staff to assist
D - Lack of awareness about Electronic Databases
E - Lack of guidance regarding availability of Electronic Databases
F - Lack of computer knowledge to Use
G - Language barrier

When the researcher asked the question about not using electronic databases, still respondents were aware of it, respondents replied as follows. In this question, the researcher asked 8 reasons for not using the electronic databases, The responses are given bellow.

- ❖ **Insufficient Hardware / Software for Access Electronic Databases :** Out of 54 respondents, 6 were strongly agreed, and 3 were agreed about this statement, but out of 54 respondents (27+15) 42 were disagreed about this statement
- ❖ **Electronic Databases are Less Convenient than Print Resources :** Out of 54 respondents, 6 were strongly agreed about this statement, but out of 54 respondents (21+17) 39 disagreed about electronic databases being less convenient than print resources.
- ❖ **Lack of Train Library Staff to Assist :** Out of 54 respondents, 6 were strongly agreed about this statement, but out of 54 respondents (15+18) 33 disagreed about this statement.
- ❖ **Lack of Awareness about Electronic Databases :** Out of 54 respondents, 6 were strongly agreed, and 3 were agreed about this statement, but out of 54 respondents (24+21) 45 were disagreed about lack of awareness about electronic databases
- ❖ **Lack of Guidance Regarding Availability of Electronic Databases :** Out of 54 respondents, 3 were strongly agreed, and 6 were agreed about this statement, but out of 54 respondents (21+15) 36 were disagreed about this statement, whereas 3 respondents replied that they can't say about it.
- ❖ **Lack of Computer Knowledge to Used :** Out of 54 respondents, 9 were strongly agreed, and 12 were agreed about this statement, but out of 54 respondents (15+12) 27 were disagreed about this statement, whereas 6 respondents replied that they can't say about this statement.

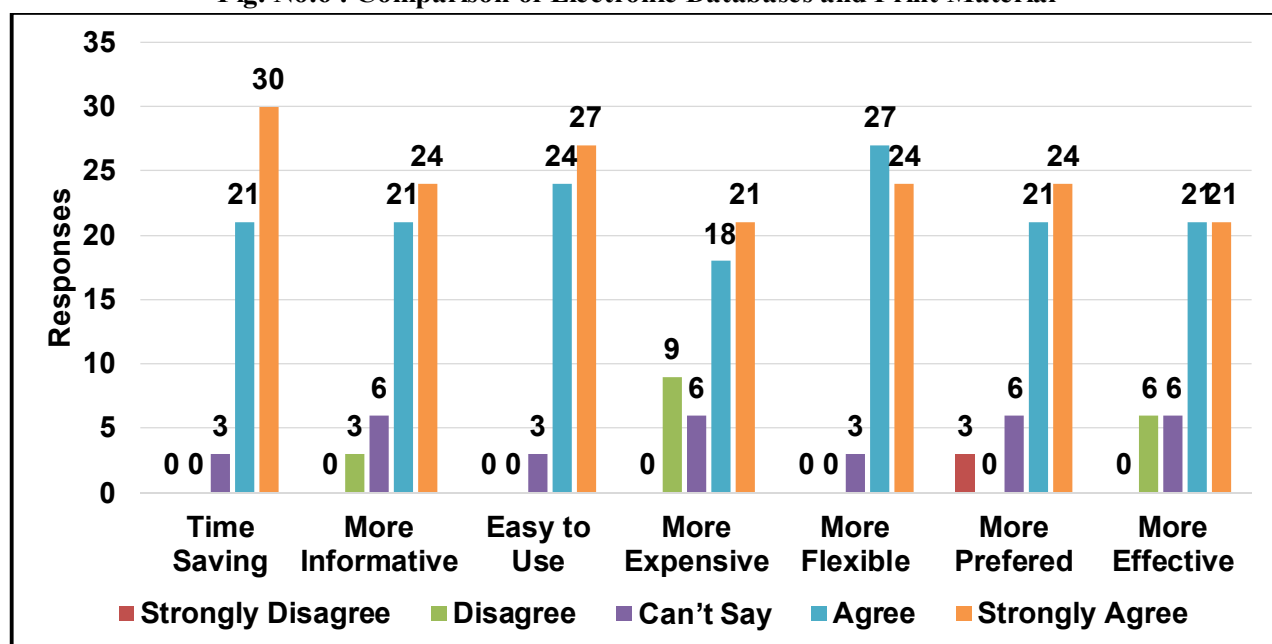
❖ **Language Barrier** : Out of 54 respondents, 18 were strongly agreed about this statement, but out of 54 respondents (15+18) 33disagreed about language as a barrier for accessing electronic databases.

7.6Comparison of Electronic Databases and Print Material

Table No. 6 : Comparison of Electronic Databases and Print Material

Sr. No.	Parameters	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Can't Say	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
1	Time Saving	0	0	3	21	30	54
2	More Informative	0	3	6	21	24	54
3	Easy to Use	0	0	3	24	27	54
4	More Expensive	0	9	6	18	21	54
5	More Flexible	0	0	3	27	24	54
6	More Preferred	3	0	6	21	24	54
7	More Effective	0	6	6	21	21	54

Fig. No.6 : Comparison of Electronic Databases and Print Material



❖ **Time Saving** : Out of 54 respondents (21+30) 51 respondents agreed that electronic databases are time saving, whereas 3 respondents replied that they can't say about this statement.

- ❖ **More Informative :** Out of 54 respondents (21+24) 45 respondents agreed that electronic databases are more informative, 3 respondents disagreed about this statement, whereas 6 respondents replied that they can't say about this statement.
- ❖ **Easy to Use:** Out of 54 respondents (24+27), 51 agreed that electronic databases are easy to use, whereas 3 respondents replied that they couldn't say this.
- ❖ **More Expensive:** Out of 54 respondents (18+21), 39 agreed that electronic databases are more expensive, 9 disagreed, and 6 replied that they couldn't say this statement.
- ❖ **More Flexible :** Out of 54 respondents (27+24) 51 respondents agreed that electronic databases are more flexible, whereas 3 respondents replied that they can't say about this statement.
- ❖ **More Preferred :** Out of 54 respondents (21+24) 45 respondents agreed about electronic databases are more preferred, 3 respondents were strongly disagree about this statement, whereas 6 respondents replied that they can't say about this statement.
- ❖ **More Effective :** Out of 54 respondents (21+21) 42 respondents agreed that electronic databases are more effective, 6 respondents disagreed about this statement, whereas 6 respondents replied that they can't say about this statement.

8. Conclusions

After analyzing the data received from respondents, the researcher came to conclusions, which are below.

- From the analysis, we can see that around 94% of users replied that the electronic databases were more effective, which shows that nearly all respondents were happy with electronic databases
- About 44% of respondents access electronic databases as and when required, whereas 28% and 22% of respondents access electronic databases weekly and daily, which means around 50% of users access electronic databases frequently, and the rest of the respondents access less
- According to 89% of respondents, electronic databases were more advantageous as compared to print material, which means most of the users access electronic databases as compared to print material
- Out of 54 users, 42 users disagreed with the statement of insufficient hardware/software available in the library, it shows that the library has sufficient required infrastructure for access to electronic databases
- According to 39 respondents, electronic databases were more convenient as compared to print resources, but there were 15 respondents also who thought electronic databases were less convenient.
- According to 33 respondents, language was not a barrier for them to access electronic databases
- As per 51 respondents, the electronic databases were easy to use, which shows that they were very well acquainted with the electronic databases.

9. Suggestions

- As we have seen that around 50% of respondents do not access electronic databases frequently, so librarians need to promote electronic databases as well as provide the required information to such users, so that they can access them more frequently.
- As there were 15 users who thought that electronic databases were less convenient as compared to print material, librarians need to provide additional guidance to such users

10. References



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