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The Choice Between EBooks and Printed Books: A Study Among Hospitality and Tourism Educators and Learners

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Abstract

Emergence of electronic books (ebook) changed the position of printed books in the learning space. This study examines the perceptions and preferences of hospitality and tourism educators and learners. Similarities and dissimilarities in the preference, perception and its link with gender, and scope of the degree course what the respondents teach and learn are analyzed. Data was collected from both students and teachers of hospitality, tourism and culinary degree program at a private university located in Karnataka, India. A structure questionnaire was used to collect the data from the respondents. The result of the study shows that printed books are preferred mostly for their easy usage and reading. Both student and teachers of hospitality and tourism feel pleasure in reading printed books. However both hospitality and tourism educators have more intention to use the e-books in the future. The findings obtained will help the educational service providers, publishers and librarians in their decisions related to investment and management of library resource very effectively which facilitate teaching and learning process.

Keywords: E-books, Choice, Educators, Learners, Printed books, Hospitality, Tourism.

Introduction

Reading activity, a basic learning tool for an individual which begins at an early age and continues all through the life. Reading habit is a basic foundation which shapes the personality of an individual. In a constantly changing world, reading helps to acquire knowledge both personally and professionally adapt to the change (Erdem, 2015). Printed textbooks were major source of knowledge for the students and teachers in twentieth century. In past, teachers encouraged students to use printed textbooks as an authoritative source of knowledge in any discipline (Fasso, Knight, & Knight, 2014). Text book is the single most factor that determines learning experience in a class by the students (Embong, Noor, Ali, Bakar, & Amin, 2012). Teachers and textbooks were considered as the main source of knowledge by the students in the past (Knight, 2015). Researchers argues that textbooks has more impact on students' learning than a teacher.

However, the penetration of internet and technology opened a new means in the learning and knowledge acquisition process of individuals. Students of 21st century seeks the knowledge source which are easily available at convenient time and place not essentially from traditional knowledge resources (Butcher & Hoosen, 2012). Today students are not different from the past, but the technology they are been exposed to, makes the difference. The emergence of e-books created a paradigm shift in the acquisition of text book, considering e-book as an alternative to print books.

Hospitality and tourism is a multidisciplinary study in nature. Student will learn about marketing, finance, human resource, economics, ethics, along with the technical skills in their respective operational areas. Indian hospitality teaching institutions mostly rely on books published by western world as the body of knowledge is borrowed from the west. Majority of the textbooks followed by Indian hospitality institutions are authored by European and American professionals, published abroad which are expensive too. Majority of the published printed books are heavy and hard to carry. For instance, "The Professional Chef", a book which is considered as a basic guide and source of reference by the culinary practitioners, has 1232 page with hard cover (amazon.in, 2018; The Culinary Institute of America (CIA), 2011). Portability, reading, storage, handling and the availability are major issues that hinder the use of print books in the hospitality and tourism education. The e-books are the best alternatives that provide solution to the issues associated with print books in the hospitality and tourism education.

Review of Literature

Textbooks are fundamental part of higher education that enables a critical link between teaching and knowledge acquisition (Berry, Cook, Hill, & Stevens, 2011). Printed text books were the major source of knowledge and information till e- books came to existence. Researchers defined e-books or electronic books as digital texts accessed through electronic screen (Amanda, Rockinson, Courduff, Carter, & Bennett, 2013). (Rao, 2001) defined e-book as “*text in digital form or books converted into digital form or digital reading material or book in a computer file format or electronic file of words and images to be displayed on a computer screen or read on a computer through a network or view on a desktop/notebook/dedicated portable device or read on all types of computers or formatted for display on eBook readers*”. E-book is a book in a digital format also known as digital book or an e-edition of printed book (Adeyinka, Dare, Adebisi, & Lawal, 2018). The digital formats are supporting for achieving scale of economies, and to reduce the distribution cost (Daniel, 2012).

An E- book just requires a book reader hardware and a rich text feature software which allows the reader with the same functions which are been performed by a printed book (Önder, 2010). Though initially the reading from a screen appears to be inconvenient, the positives or the advantages such as mobility, reducing physical space, convenience, saving time and money, ease-of-use are the primary motivations in preferring e-books (Rosso, 2009). In 2011, Amazon had reported that the sales of electronic books had surpassed those of printed books. It signaled an important change in the manner how people acquired information (Gibson & Gibb, 2011). It likely seems that, the short term, digital book sales will reach somewhere between 10% and 20% of the total market (Milliot, 2014).

E-textbooks are preferred by the students for its flexibility in searching the content, easy accessibility, enhanced visual appeal, and possible multimedia content. Students also believes that e-books are up to date, any time accessible, and convenient to store (Rowlands, Nocolas, Jmali, & Huntington, 2007; Woody, Daniel, & Baker, 2010). Reading e-books have a lot of advantages for the readers as compared to reading printed books. It is paperless, assist in key word searching, takes up considerably less space, the font size can be changed as desired, helps in viewing animated graphics or video illustrations. It is portable, preservation and protection of the e- book is simple (McFall, 2005; Day, 2001; Snowhill, 2001). Addition to the above features, visual and audio elements which can be added to the e-books can make the reading more enjoyable and optimise

the perpetuity of learning. (Buckley & Johnson, 2013) Found that the students still prefer print versions of textbooks although e-books are usually cheaper to purchase. (Kolowich, 2011) observed that e-textbooks are slowly gaining ground as they still account for a smaller share of all textbook purchases. However, researcher have found that there are some limitation in e-book. E-books are relatively difficult to read, bookmark and annotate (Millar & Schrier, 2015).

Existing literature available on perception, adoption and usage of ebook over printed book is inconclusive. There are contradicting results about the students' preference of printed textbook and e-books among researchers in science, technology and humanities. Results of some studies concluded that students prefer to opt for print books (Cassidy, Martinez, & Shen, 2012; Annand, 2008; Benedetto, Draï-Zerbib, Pedrotti, Tissier, & Baccino, 2013; Millar & Schrier, 2015; Lawson-Body, Willoughby, Lawson-Body, & Tamandja, 2018) and while some studies have favoured towards e-books (Kahn & Underwood, 2015; Nicholas, et al., 2008). Researchers found that a major determinant of choice of format of textbook by the student is their academic discipline (Zhang & Kudva, 2014; Lee, 2011; Savolainen, 2012; Rowlands, Nocolas, Jmali, & Huntington, 2007). However, (Lee, Sun, Law, & A.H, 2016)Observed that there is a scarcity in the research on adoption and perspectives of teachers and learners on new educational technology usage in the hospitality and tourism education. This study mainly examines similarities and dissimilarities in the perceptions and preferences towards ebooks and printed books by hospitality and tourism educators and learners.

Methodology

Students and teachers have different perceptions and preferences in their choice of print and electronic resources. Though studies have focused on the perceptions and preferences of print and electronic resources of students and teachers in various academic disciplines, not much has been done in hospitality and tourism (Lee, Sun, Law, & A.H, 2016). A total 161 questionnaires were distributed among the students and teachers at a hospitality and tourism educational institution located in Karnataka, India who agreed to participate in the study. The respondents were asked about their perception towards eBooks and printed books. A 4 point Likert scale has been used to measure the responses where '1' denote Very low and '4' denotes very high. The data was analyzed using SPSS software.

Demographic Profile of the respondents

The demographic profile of the respondents were presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Demographic Profile of Respondents

Demographic Characteristics	Group of Respondents	
	Student (137)	Teacher (13)
Gender		
Male	77	12
Female	60	01
Course		
Culinary	95	4
Hotel Management	05	5
Tourism	42	4

In the study, the number of male (student) respondents were 77 while teachers were twelve. There were 60 female student and only one female teacher. Majority of the respondents are pursuing their culinary education. Overall 137 students and 13 teachers were responded to the survey.

Result and Discussion

The students and teacher perception on e-books and printed books were analyzed using the paired t –test. The result of paired t-test of students' perception is presented in Table 2 and the results of paired t-test of teacher is presented in Table 3.

Table 2

Result of Paired T –test on Students’ perception towards e-Books and printed Books

Statements Related to Perception	E-book	Printed Books	t-value
<i>Easy to Use</i>	3.17	3.25	0.849
<i>Easy to read</i>	2.90	3.56	6.13**
<i>Easy to store</i>	3.62	2.39	-10.768**
<i>Pleasure of reading</i>	2.61	3.49	7.169**
<i>Trends toward its usage</i>	3.39	2.79	-4.492*
<i>Easy to carry</i>	3.63	2.00	-12.549**
<i>Easy to book mark the text</i>	3.20	3.05	-1.103
<i>Availability in the discipline</i>	2.97	2.90	-0.465
<i>Frequency of Usage</i>	2.95	2.98	-0.84
<i>Pricing</i>	2.65	2.85	1.531
<i>Satisfaction on the usage</i>	2.68	3.37	5.843*
<i>Satisfaction with layout & design</i>	2.69	3.24	1.336
<i>Overall learning experience</i>	2.97	3.38	0.014
<i>Intention to increase the usage</i>	3.04	3.05	0.856
<i>Intention to use in future</i>	3.11	2.87	-1.754
<i>Intention to recommend others</i>	3.06	3.11	0.377

*Significant at 5%. ** Significant at 1%.

On the 16 statements related to the perception of the e –book and printed books among students, the mean varied between 2.65 and 3.69 while in printed book the mean ranged between 2.00 and 3.66 respectively. The students prefer printed books for its easiness to use, and reading. The students perceived that printed books give more pleasure of reading than e-books. Students are also more satisfied with overall learning experience provided by printed books, compared to e-books. Students perceives that e-books are very easy to store and easy to carry. They also have more intention to use the e-books in the future.

Table 3

Result of Paired T –test on Teachers’ perception: E-books versus Printed Books

Statements Related to Perception	E-book	Printed Books	t-value
<i>Easy to Use</i>	2.69	3.53	1.821
<i>Easy to read</i>	2.50	3.61	2.755*
<i>Easy to store</i>	3.30	2.30	-2.208
<i>Pleasure of reading</i>	2.53	3.53	2.082
<i>Trends toward its usage</i>	3.38	2.76	-1.535
<i>Easy to carry</i>	3.69	2.23	-2.992*
<i>Easy to book mark the text</i>	2.38	3.38	1.669
<i>Availability in the discipline</i>	2.53	3.23	1.214
<i>Frequency of Usage</i>	3.07	3.07	0.000
<i>Pricing</i>	2.46	2.69	0.399
<i>Satisfaction on the usage</i>	3.00	3.23	0.454
<i>Satisfaction with layout & design</i>	2.61	3.23	1.336
<i>Overall Learning Experience</i>	3.00	3.53	1.203
<i>Intention to increase the usage</i>	3.23	2.92	-0.510
<i>Intention to use in future</i>	3.38	3.23	-0.353
<i>Intention to recommend others</i>	3.00	3.46	0.970

*Significant at 5%.

The result of paired t-test indicates that the important attributes that induce the preference and perception of printed books by teachers are ‘easy to use’, ‘easy to read’, ‘easy to book mark’, ‘availability of printed books in the trade’, and ‘pleasure in reading’. The teacher are more satisfied on the usage, layout of the printed books and prefer to recommend printed books to others. The teacher perceive high on e-books for the attributes of ‘easy to carry’, and ‘trend towards its usage’. Teacher have more intention to increase the use of e-book and have higher intention to use e-books in the future also.

An analysis on comparison between student and teacher perception on printed books and e-books were analyzed through independent t-test. The result of independent t-test is presented in Table 4.

Table 4

A comparison between Students' and Teachers' perception: E-books versus Printed Books

Statements Related to Perception	E-book		Printed Books	
	Students	Teachers	Students	Teachers
<i>Easy to Use</i>	3.17	2.69	3.25	3.53
<i>Easy to read</i>	2.90	2.50	3.56	3.61
<i>Easy to store</i>	3.62	3.30	2.39	2.30
<i>Pleasure of reading</i>	2.61	2.53	3.49	3.53
<i>Trends toward its usage</i>	3.39	3.38	2.79	2.76
<i>Easy to carry</i>	3.63	3.69	2.00	2.23
<i>Easy to book mark the text</i>	3.20	2.38	3.05	3.38
<i>Availability in the discipline</i>	2.97	2.53	2.90	3.23
<i>Frequency of Usage</i>	2.95	3.07	2.98	3.07
<i>Pricing</i>	2.65	2.46	2.85	2.69
<i>Satisfaction on the usage</i>	2.68	3.00	3.37	3.23
<i>Satisfaction with layout & design</i>	2.69	2.61	3.24	3.23
<i>Overall Learning Experience</i>	2.97	3.00	3.38	3.53
<i>Intention to increase the usage</i>	3.04	3.23	3.05	2.92
<i>Intention to use in future</i>	3.11	3.38	2.87	3.23
<i>Intention to recommend others</i>	3.06	3.00	3.11	3.46

The result in Table 4 reveals that student and teachers have different perception towards the e-books in the attributes name 'easy to use', 'easy to book mark' and 'satisfaction with the layout of e-book'. Students have higher level perception on e-books towards the ease of usage, and book marking' compared to the teachers. It is also inferred that student and teachers have different perception towards the printed books in various attributes such as 'easy to use', and, 'easy to book mark'. Their perceptual different is statistically significant in the above attributes related to e-books. Teachers have higher level perception than students on the ease of usage, reading, book marking.

Discussion and Conclusion

Printed books are preferred mostly for their easy usage and reading. Both student and teachers of hospitality and tourism feel pleasure in reading printed books. Students feel more satisfied with the overall learning experience provided by the printed books. Teachers prefer to use printed books for their convenience of book marking, layout and design of the printed book. Both students and teachers perceives that e-books are very easy to store and easy to carry. Both have more intention to use the e-books in the future. Teachers also believes that it is a trend to use e-books. Teachers have more intention to increase the use the e-book and have higher intention to use e-books in the future also. The result shows that both learners and educators favors printed books over the eBook. The finding of the study are in line with findings of (Cassidy, Martinez, & Shen, 2012; Annand, 2008; Benedetto, Draï-Zerbib, Pedrotti, Tissier, & Baccino, 2013; Millar & Schrier, 2015; Lawson-Body, Willoughby, Lawson-Body, & Tamandja, 2018). However their intention to use printed books in the future is lower among students than educators of hospitality and tourism. The finding denotes that eBook will slowly occupy the place of print book as it allows the user to access their preferred content at any time in any place.

Both print books and e-books have their own merits and demerits. Print books provides better pleasure of reading and great learning experience. Publishers and authors of print book should come up along with digital editions of books also. CD-ROM may be supplied with the print copy of the book. It would facilitates to store and carry book easily. Since students as well as teachers have more intent to increase the usage rate as well as interested to use more e-books in the future, the educators, publishers, librarians and authors should take this implications for their future publications and try to incorporate the experiences of both e-books and print books. As both eBook and print book evolves, in future it may complement each other as it may able to provide the same content in two different mediums.

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