



PREFERRED MODE OF STUDY (HARD COPY/SOFT COPY) AND THEIR EFFECT ON EYES- IN MBBS STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT Learning attitudes are changing as e-reading technology is progressively growing faster [1]. Globally, readers are abandoning printed text in favour of on-screen text reading [2]. It is possible to read a book in either print or digital format, but each reader has a preference for different reasons. Nevertheless, there are persistent factors that most readers have in common that cause them to cling to one of these two versions; some readers do, however, occasionally use both versions for trusted, authentic, and eligible reasons.

KEYWORDS :

INTRODUCTION

In this age, we witness that printed resources have been replaced with electronic resources, and the habits related to newspaper, magazine, course material, and book reading have undergone changes.^[3] But which format of resources do medical students prefer, who have to study large volumes of knowledge? The question of format preference has been investigated before and will be asked again in the coming years when students enter universities who have not only grown up with computers but have also used them during their school years for learning.^[4] In the process of determining which version is suitable, we went through previous articles in which, when readers were asked if they preferred print or e-book, the majority voted for print.^[5] But when multiple detailed questions were asked than answers varied widely. On average, 41% preferred print, 38% preferred e-books, and 26% had no preference, or their preference depended on the situation.^[6] So, to add new insight to the existing literature on reader's choice on reading tools and its health hazards we conducted the following study.

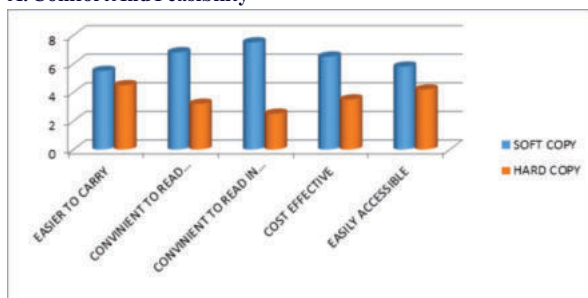
METHODOLOGY

A questionnaire-based study conducted among 489 Undergraduate MBBS students (first year to final year) of SSIMS&RC in April 2023. A pre-tested questionnaire containing 28 questions distributed under 4 categories was designed to conduct the survey. The categories of the questionnaire are as follows- 1) Comfort and feasibility 2) Process of studying 3) Eye strain symptoms 4) Effects of study. It was ensured that Each subject involved in this were explained and had a shared understanding of the purpose of the survey. Questionnaires on paper were handed out in classrooms and were given 30 mins to fill. The collected questionnaires were analyzed for the results.

RESULTS

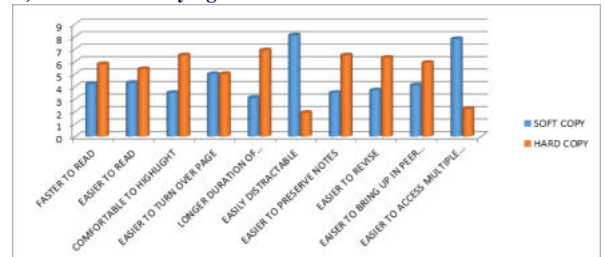
Data collected from 489 undergraduate students are presented in the following analysis. 215 (44%) students were males and 274 (56%) students were females (fig.1), 360 students (74%) preferred hard copy, 114 (23%) students preferred soft copy, and 15(3%) students preferred both as the mode of study (fig 2). In comfort and feasibility heading which includes 5 questions 70% students chose soft copy as preferred mode (fig 3) For process of studying 60% students preferred hard copy (fig 4), and for effects of study 65% preferred hard copy (fig 5), 95% students noticed eye strain symptoms associated with the usage of soft copy as the mode of study (fig 6)

A. Comfort And Feasibility



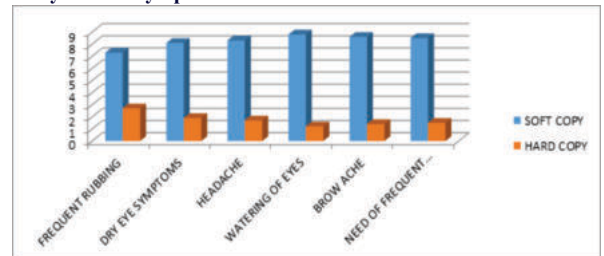
(fig 3)

B) Process Of Studying



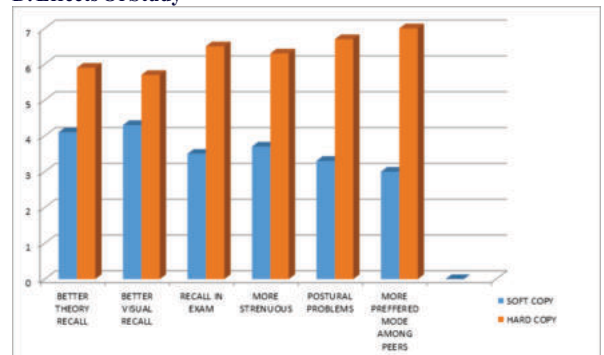
(fig 4)

C. Eye Strain Symptoms



(fig 5)

D. Effects Of Study



(fig 6)

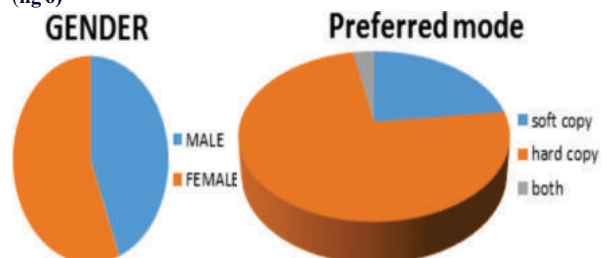
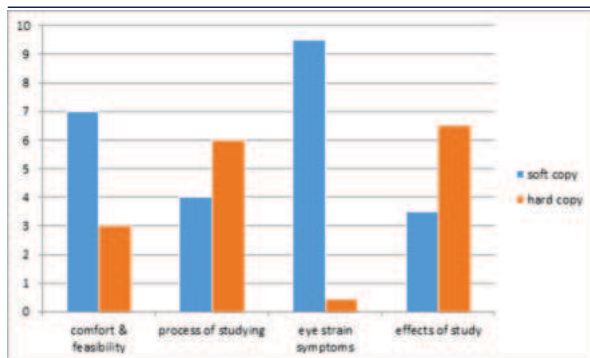


Fig 1

Fig 2



DISCUSSION

Both formats, print and soft copy, were commonly used, according to the medical students who answered our survey. Students preferred print for studying and reading longer texts but liked softcopy enroute and for looking up facts. Students mentioned that they liked to highlight text passages and write them into books and therefore preferred print (although these features are also implemented in many e-books). Ted Nelson^[7] mentioned that the e-text will soon replace paper in a short time of less than 10 years, or so we shall all be reading from screens as a matter of routine. However, our study findings are contrary to it, as hard copy is the preferred mode of study in the context of the effects of the study. For short-term reading and quick access, soft copy has the upper hand. There were not many studies conducted in comparison of hard copy and soft copy in view of eye strain symptoms; hence, we added that category, and as per our study, soft copy has worse effects on eyes than hard copy.

CONCLUSION

Although old things and new things are often antagonists, it is a mistake to think that hard copy and soft copies are at war. This study gave us evidence that most of the students preferred hard copy over soft copy for the purpose of long-term recall and soft copy for the purpose of quick reading but its association with visual exhaustion symptoms like headache, need of frequent breaks and dry eyes is an added baggage.

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