

“No research progress without e-journals”

Brief summary of the results of 2007 SCREAL survey

Standing Committee for Research on Academic Libraries (SCREAL), in cooperation with the Japan Association of National University Libraries (JANUL), Private and Public University Libraries Consortium (PULC) and Japan Atomic Energy Agency, conducted a questionnaire survey in October and November 2007, in order to reveal the current situation of the usage of e-journals and scholarly articles by researchers and graduate students in Japan. 2,890 responses were collected from researchers and graduate students in various subject fields. Followings are the major findings:-

1) *More than half of the respondents indicate the almost daily use of e-journals in chemistry, biology, medicine, dentistry & pharmacy*
 More than 90% of respondents reported that they use e-journals at least 1-2 times a month in natural sciences including chemistry, biology, medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, mathematical & physical sciences, agriculture and engineering. Moreover, more than half of the respondents in chemistry, biology and medicine, dentistry & pharmacy used e-journals almost everyday. (See figure 1)

2) *Users of e-journals in humanities and social sciences are 4 times and more, compared with the 2001 survey*
 E-journals are not heavily used in humanities and social sciences than in natural sciences. However, the proportion of the regular users (i.e. use e-journals at least 1-2 times a month) has gradually increased, such as 16.5%(2001 JANUL survey), 31.0%(2003 JANUL survey) and 68.2%(this 2007 survey). It shows that e-journals have been recognized as essential information resources for research even in humanities and social sciences. (See figure 2)

3) *Younger generation uses e-journals more than older ones, but the difference among age groups is not noteworthy*
 42.1% of respondents in the age of twenties use e-journals almost everyday. This percentage is higher than those in older generations. However, the proportion of users who have access e-journals at least once a week is not so different among age groups, that is, 79.6% in twenties, 76.6% in thirties, 73.9% in forties, 74.3% in fifties and 59.7% in sixties. It shows that the usage frequency tends to decline in accordance with the aging, with exception that the fifties used more than forties.

4) *Bibliographic database searching is the most frequently used way to find out articles in biology, and medicine, dentistry & pharmacy*
 In answering the question on information seeking pattern, or how they found out the articles they read most recently, 45.7% of researchers in biology and 46.4% of those in medicine, dentistry, and pharmacy reported that they found those articles by searching indexing and abstracting databases. The proportion of the users who search any indexing and abstracting databases is not prominent in humanities and social sciences, but they prefer to use CiNII of National Institute of Informatics (NII) to other database services.

5) *Respondents show high expectation to e-books*
 E-book service is not used or unknown by respondents so far. Respondents, however, express their high interests in future use of them. Even in humanities and social sciences, 51.2% of the respondents show the willingness to “definitely” or “generally” use of e-books. It suggests that e-books would be widely used, if they could be available more in university campuses.

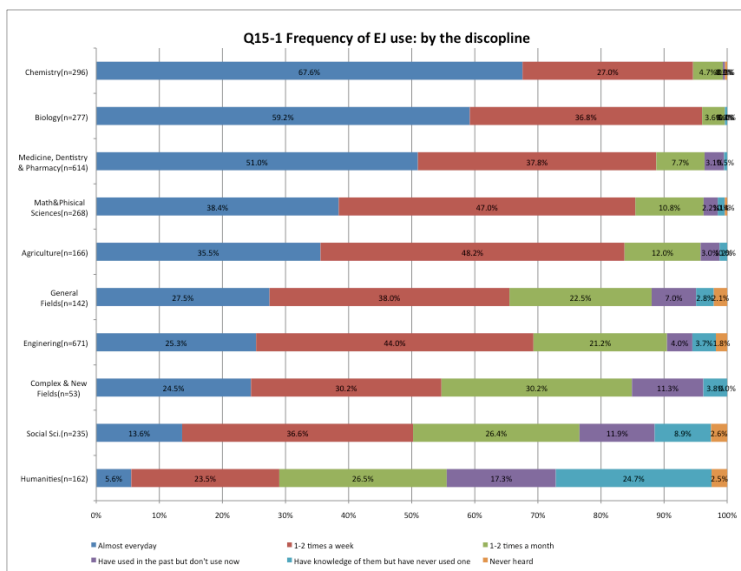


Fig. 1 : Frequency of EJ use by the discipline

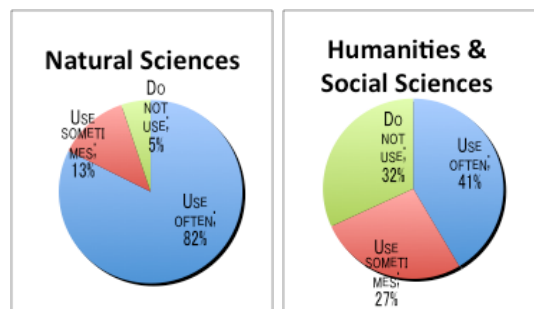


Fig. 2 (1) : E-journal use SCREAL 2007 survey

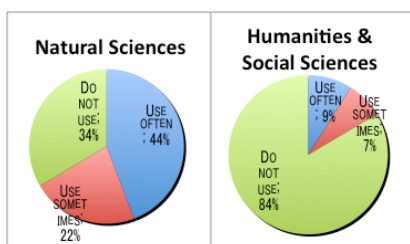


Fig. 2 (2) : E-journal use JANUL 2001 survey

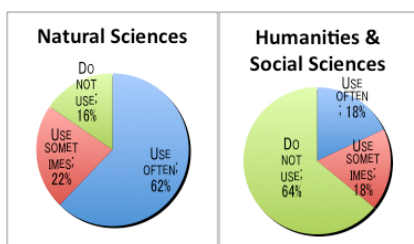


Fig. 2 (3) : E-journal use JANUL 2003 survey

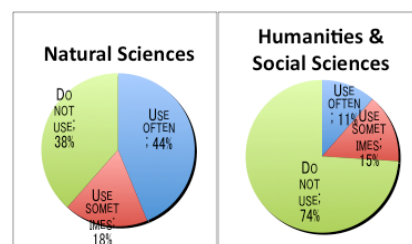


Fig. 2 (4) : E-Journal use PULC 2004 survey

Note: Researchers and graduate students participated in this survey from 24 universities (Hokkaido, Tohoku, Tsukuba, Chiba, Tokyo, Tokyo Institute of Technology, Hitotsubashi, Nagoya, Kyoto, Osaka, Hiroshima, Kyushu, Osaka City, Kansai, Kwansai Gakuin, Keio, Chuo, Tokai, Doshisha, Hosei, Meiji, Yokohama City, Ritsumeikan, and Waseda) and Japan Atomic Energy Agency. They were requested to fill a web-based form to answer the questions.