

Ever since ebooks and Kindle have hovered over the book reading circles, the debate on whether the former will usurp the position of physical books began. The debate still continues. The book shops exist and so do the ebooks. Yes, the number of footfalls to the book stores has gone down, but on their part, the store owners are ensuring that they attract more readers. Here's what the book store owners have to say.

## WORD FROM THE BOOKSTORES

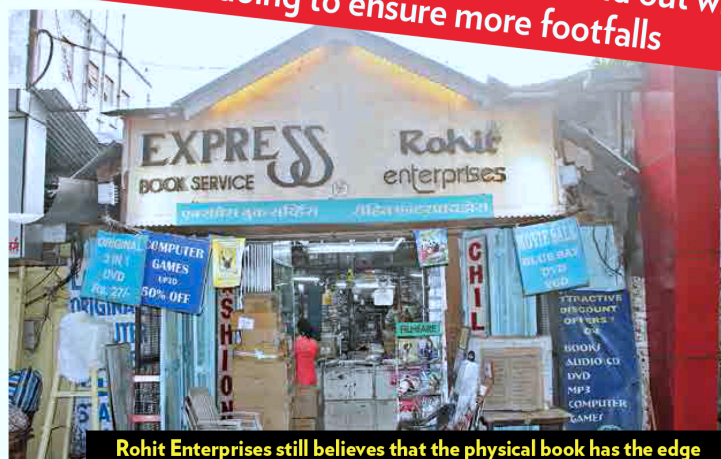
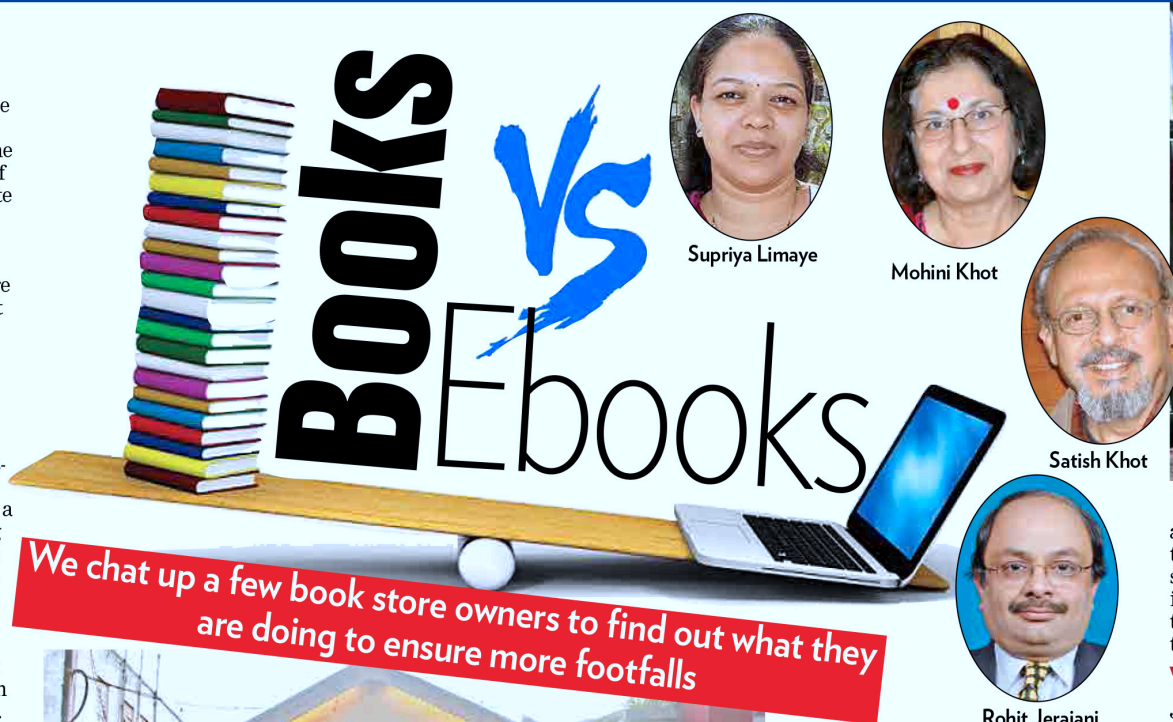
Rohit Jerajani of the Rohit Enterprises, Camp, is optimistic about the scenario. He admits that there has been a decline in number of readers coming to the book store. But Jerajani points out that the sale of Kindle too is stagnant.

Says he, "Only 5 to 10 per cent of the population prefers ebooks these days. It is also not necessary that you will find all the books online and even if you do, you have to purchase them. In fact, in recent times the Kindle sales have become more stagnant as compared to that of the books."

Supriya Limaye from the Book Ganga International Book Service also believes that it's not as if the ebooks are overpowering the existence of the physical books. "The media has changed. It is the new generation that is turning towards the e-books. And, so we have to do something to entice the youngsters," says Limaye.

## A DIFFERENT NOTE

Mohini Khot, who headed the English Department of St Mira's Col-



Rohit Enterprises still believes that the physical book has the edge



Youngsters at Book Ganga International Book Service

Satish adds that the onscreen adaptations of the novels attracts the youngsters more. "The youngsters have moved away from reading. There are many movies made on these books which obviously attracts them more."

## WHAT NEXT

Jerajani feels that the book stores have an edge over the ebooks when it comes to catering to the requests of the customers. This is especially true of old book stores who have close ties with their loyal customer base, as compared to the new and commercial enterprises. Says Jerajani, "We have not seen much decline in our customers because we listen to their requests and whatever is not available with us, we make sure we get that book/s on their request. We also recommend books of other genres to our customers. That means, we have to be good readers ourselves and thus bridge the gap between the readers and the book sellers. We also organise author meets,

book signing and reading sessions. All the book stores can follow a similar pattern."

Limaye feels that it is the youngsters who should be introduced to the charms of books. "This generation wants to read everything, right at this moment. So, it is a great idea to divert their attention to physical books. The schools should organise more and more book campaigns. Book meets is also an interesting and important step to attract more readers."

The book stores need to be more reader friendly, opines Mohini. "It's a myth that if you let people sit back in the store and read, they won't bother buying the books. If a reader wants to buy, he definitely will," says she.

Satish adds that the art of storytelling needs to be revived. "The way of reviving the book stores is by introducing more extracurricular activities in the store like book reading and storytelling sessions. There is no magic wand to bring in sudden changes," he says.

lege, points out that earlier students would sit with books in class, but with the change in technology, they have moved towards finding course material online.

Mohini, who has co-founded, The Book Club Pune, along with her husband, Satish, says, "There has been a definite decline in the sale of the physical books since everyone is more inclined towards reading on their Kindle or even their mobile phones. Book shops are also not stocked like they used to be in the past. There is a high probability of not having a lot of options to choose from."