

A Study on Use of Electronic Information Resources by Dental Science Professionals in Karnataka`

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Abstract

The increase in internet bandwidth, ubiquitous access, tools and technology including explosion of electronic resources is treading faculty and students to depend on more on electronic information landscape than traditional print. Open Access Initiative have further enhanced free access to scholarly peer reviewed publication in electronic media. Now-a-days majority of the dental institution libraries, Including HELINET consortia have extended access to each and every students affiliated to RGUHS through remote access technology, thereby they can access from anywhere, anytime and from any handheld devices. The main aim of this paper was to investigate the use of web resources by the faculty members and postgraduate students in Dental college libraries Karnataka. A questionnaire-based survey of twelve Dental colleges in Karnataka was conducted. Earlier studies found that dental science professional have easy access to web resources.

Keywords: Access to Electronic Information Resources, Dental Science Professionals in Karnataka, web resources and Dental college libraries.

1. INTRODUCTION

There has been a complaint from all the corners in this digital society that ‘Footfall in Libraries is decreasing’ since there are number of options for accessing information from anywhere, anytime and from device like smartphone. User can and do enable innovation in teaching and they increase timeliness in research as well as increase discovery and creation of new fields of inquiry (Henderson, 1997), due to immediate access through Internet. Academic and research community, specifically in health sciences requires to access authoritative, reliable, accurate, and timely. Dental professionals expects the access to high-quality information for their academic and research activity and also to keep their up-to-date in their fields (Schleyer, Spallek.et 1998). It is most essential, specifically, for those work for clinical practice (Chestnutt and Reynolds (2006)

Users prefer increased access to online databases, refereed journals and to the Web which provides information that is up to the minute, international in scope, and sometimes not available elsewhere (Dalglish A, 2000). The Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences has been providing access to e-resources viz e-journals, e-books, learning resources, multimedia interactive materials including question banks through its consortia called HELINET (Health Library and Information Network). The easy and timely access to e-resources, outside the traditional libraries, the visit of users to the library is very less. ,

The ability to use e-resources efficiently depends on basic computer skills, knowledge of what is available and how to use it, and ability to define a research problem (Rehman and Ramzy 2004). The digital information environment expects ICT intensive environment with constant upgradation and updating of the tools and technology. Equally it is required to provide information and technology literacy to enable users to work with the tools, and the network infrastructure that supports rapid and convenient connections (Forsman RB, 1998).

Faculty, due to the nature of their work i.e., teaching, research, and clinical practice should have ready access to health information. Now-a-days, teaching styles and course requirements depends on the use of the digital library's collection and students' perception of the digital resources and technology to integrate information in their activities. Computer-literate faculty may feel more comfortable using electronic information sources and thus gain more from using them (Majid S, Abazova 1998).

The attainment of skills and knowledge requires use of digital information landscape, which again depends on many factors like disciplines of their study, academic status and ranks, age, access (hardware and location) to electronic resources, and training. Factors motivating to the use can be, for example, what level of importance they allocate to e-resources, how useful they have found them, and for which purposes they use e-resources. (Asemi (2005)

The faculty-library relationships and their instructional services such as orientation and training in use of library resources becomes most important. (Kohl (1997). If efficient and effective use is to be made of e-resources, made accessing through libraries, depends on the intensity and coverage user training. It is important to remember that the ability of library staff to keep up-to-date is necessary, and, therefore, training for them is crucial as well (Shimmon 1995, Atton 1996).

1.1 Aim, objective and study design

The present study was designed to understand the use/ utilization of online information resources by dental science professionals. The survey was conducted using a questionnaire, designed after conducting a comprehensive review of the related literature. The study was confined to dental colleges in Karnataka. Totally 1155 questionnaires were administered to the faculty and PG students of dental colleges in Karnataka, out of which 623 were received by the researcher. As the response rate of the study was 71.74 percent. Data were analyzed by using SPSS software version 19.1. Findings were presented with the help of statistical analysis.

2. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE STUDY

The present study was targeted to the effectiveness wherein variables like designation, experience, education, age and sex of the respondents were given major emphasis, as the sample was PG (Post Graduate) Students and the TF (Teaching Faculty). It also deals with a comparison of the responses between the P.G. Students and Teaching Faculty

Table -1: Distribution of the sample by gender and category of respondents

| Gender | % | Category | | Total % |
|--------------|---|----------|------|---------|
| | | PG | TF | |
| Male | % | 52.30 | 60.9 | 58.3 |
| Female | % | 47.7 | 39.1 | 41.7 |
| Total | % | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Note: CC=.080; P=.044; PG=Post graduate students; TF=Teaching faculty

Table -2: Time spent in each session of Internet browsing

| Maximum time spent on the Internet | | Category | | Total |
|------------------------------------|---|----------|------|-------|
| | | PG | TF | |
| Upto one hour | % | 44 | 51.2 | 49 |
| More than one hour | % | 24.9 | 32.1 | 29.9 |
| More than two hours | % | 21.2 | 11.2 | 14.3 |
| More than three hours | % | 9.8 | 5.6 | 6.9 |
| Total | % | 100 | 100 | 100 |

CC= .162; P=.001

The statement “maximum time spent on the Internet” shows with the help of above table, that the most indicated response was towards ‘up to one hour’ (49.00%) followed by ‘more than one hour’ (29.90%). The least response obtained was 6.9 percent for ‘more than three hours’. The Contingency Coefficient value obtained is found to be non-significant (CC= .162; P=.001). From the table it is evident that PG students spend more hours using the Internet than the teaching faculty.

Table -3: Frequency of access to Internet

| Frequency | % | Category | | Total % |
|--------------|---|----------|------|---------|
| | | PG | TF | |
| Always | % | 34.2 | 16.7 | 22.2 |
| Very often | % | 37.8 | 40 | 39.3 |
| Often | % | 21.2 | 33.5 | 29.7 |
| Seldom | % | 6.2 | 9.3 | 8.3 |
| Never | % | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 |
| Total | % | 100 | 100 | 100 |

CC= .203; P=.000

Among 623 dental professionals, 193 PG students and 430 teaching faculty are respondents to the statement “how frequently do you login to the Internet.” The most reflected response was ‘very often’ (39.3%) followed by ‘often’ (29.7%), ‘always’ (22.2%) and ‘never’ (0.50%) was the least response. The Contingency Coefficient value obtained for the association between respondents and their responses was found to be highly significant (CC= .203; P=.000). From the table it is evident that the frequency of usage was more by PG students than the teaching faculty.

Table -4: Access to scholarly literature

| Responses | % | Category | | Total % |
|--------------|---|----------|-----|---------|
| | | PG | TF | |
| Yes | % | 89.1 | 93 | 91.8 |
| No | % | 10.9 | 7 | 8.2 |
| Total | % | 100 | 100 | 100 |

CC= .066; P=.100

The above table reflects that 89.1 percent PG students and 93 percent teaching faculty from dental science professionals indicate ‘yes’ to the statement of “access to scholarly information”. On the whole there was a response rate ‘yes’ of 91.80 percent. The Contingency Coefficient value obtained is found to be non-significant (CC= .066; P=.100) indicating that the pattern of response given by the teaching faculty and PG students is the same.

Table -5: Access to content subscribed, free and open access

| Responses | % | Category | | Total |
|----------------------|---|----------|------|-------|
| | | PG | TF | |
| Free and open access | % | 30.8 | 26.5 | 27.8 |
| Subscribed | % | 37.8 | 39.5 | 39 |
| Both | % | 20.9 | 25 | 23.8 |
| Do not know | % | 10.5 | 9 | 9.4 |
| Total | % | 89.1 | 93 | 91.8 |

CC= .059; P=.571

The above table reflects the response to the statement “library subscribed to free content on Internet” and the most indicated response was towards ‘Subscribed’ (39%) followed by ‘Free Content’ (27.8%). The least response indicated was ‘Do not know’ (9.4%). The Contingency Coefficient value obtained is found to be non- significant (CC= .059; P=.571) indicating that the response pattern given by PG students and teaching faculty was statistically the same leading to a non-significant association.

Table 3.6: Frequency of accessing journals from RGUHS Consortia

| Frequency | % | Category | | Total |
|--------------|---|----------|------|-------|
| | | PG | TF | |
| Regularly | % | 46.6 | 35.3 | 38.8 |
| Weekly | % | 29 | 29.8 | 29.5 |
| Monthly | % | 12.4 | 16.3 | 15.1 |
| Irregularly | % | 11.9 | 18.6 | 16.5 |
| Total | % | 100 | 100 | 100 |

CC=.121; P=.026

From the above table, the researcher observe that out of 623 respondents, 193 PG respondents and 430 teaching faculties responded to the statement “How frequently do you access online journals”. On the whole, 38.8 percent respondents indicated ‘regularly’ followed by 29.5 percent ‘weekly’, 16.5 percent ‘irregularly’ and 15.1 percent ‘monthly’. The Contingency Coefficient tests revealed a significant association with .121 and significant level of .026. From the table it is evident that PG students accessed more online journals than the teaching faculty.

Table -7: Number of journals accessed from RGUHS Consortia

| Responses | % | Journals | | | Print | | | Online | | |
|-----------------|---|-----------------|------|-------|-----------------|------|-------|-----------------|------|-------|
| | | PG | TF | Total | PG | TF | Total | PG | TF | Total |
| 1-20 | % | 50.8 | 57.7 | 55.5 | 2.6 | 2.3 | 2.4 | 48.2 | 54.9 | 52.8 |
| 21-40 | % | 29 | 25.1 | 26.3 | 1.6 | 2.8 | 2.4 | 28 | 25.1 | 26 |
| 41-60 | % | 9.8 | 8.4 | 8.8 | 0.5 | 0.9 | 0.8 | 9.8 | 8.4 | 8.8 |
| Above 60 | % | 6.2 | 5.1 | 5.5 | 2.6 | 1.4 | 1.8 | 5.7 | 4.7 | 5 |
| No Information | % | 4.1 | 3.7 | 3.9 | 92.7 | 92.6 | 92.6 | 8.3 | 7 | 7.4 |
| Total | % | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Test statistics | | CC=.064; P=.628 | | | CC=.060; P=.691 | | | CC=.063; P=.648 | | |

In Table -7 among 623 respondents, 193 PG respondents and 430 teaching faculty responded to the statement “How many journals noticed in your library and RGUHS consortia”. In the case of number of journals, 55.5 percent of the respondents indicated ‘1-20’, followed by 26.3 percent who indicated ‘21-40’. The least response found in ‘no information’ (3.9%). The Contingency Coefficient analysis revealed a non-significant association (CC=.064; P=.628).

Further, for print journals, majority of the respondent indicated “no information” (92.6%) followed by 2.4% each ‘1-20’ and ‘21-40’ for print journals. The least response (.8%) was found for ‘41-60’ (.8%). The Contingency Coefficient analysis revealed a non-significant association (CC=.060; P=.691). On the subject of “online”, majority of the respondents (52.8%) indicated ‘1-20’, followed by 26 percent who opined ‘21-40’ (26%). The least response found in the group of ‘above 60’ (5%). The Contingency Coefficient analysis revealed a non-significant association (CC=.063; P=.648). For all the categories-journals, print and online, non-significant associations were observed indicating a similarity in the response pattern by PG students and teaching faculty.

Table -8: Number of journals accessed from institutional library

| Responses | % | Journals | | | Print | | | Online | | |
|-----------------|---|-----------------|------|-------|-----------------|------|-------|-----------------|------|-------|
| | | PG | TF | Total | PG | TF | Total | PG | TF | Total |
| 1-20 | % | 15 | 19.5 | 18.1 | 13 | 19.5 | 17.5 | 1 | 2.8 | 2.2 |
| 21-40 | % | 14.5 | 14.4 | 14.4 | 14.5 | 14 | 14.1 | 3.1 | 1.9 | 2.2 |
| 41-60 | % | 19.7 | 22.8 | 21.8 | 19.2 | 20.9 | 20.4 | 2.1 | 1.9 | 1.9 |
| Above 60 | % | 49.2 | 38.6 | 41.9 | 44.5 | 36.3 | 38.9 | 9.3 | 4.7 | 6.8 |
| No Information | % | 1.6 | 4.7 | 3.7 | 8.8 | 9.3 | 9.1 | 84.5 | 88.8 | 87.5 |
| Total | % | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Test statistics | | CC=.120; P=.058 | | | CC=.112; P=.164 | | | CC=.112; P=.097 | | |

Among 623 respondents, 193 PG respondents and 430 teaching faculty responded to the statement “How many journals noticed in your library and RGUHS consortia”. In the case of number of journals, 41.9 percent of the respondents indicated ‘above 60’, followed by 19.2 percent of the respondents indicated ‘41-60’. The least response was found in ‘No information’ (8.8%). The table focused on the matter of “Print”, where 38.90 percent of the respondents indicated ‘Above 60’, followed by ‘41.90’ percent. The least response found on ‘no information’ (9.1%). In the subject of “online”, more respondents focused on ‘no information’ (86.7%), followed by ‘above 60’ (6.1%). The least response was found in the group of ‘1-20’ and ‘21-40’ (2.2%). According to the Contingency Coefficient tests it is significant.

3. Finding and discussion.

The present study found that about 49% of the users access the Internet up to one hour per session and they login into the Internet (39.30%) very often. 91.8% percent of the respondents are regularly accessing scholarly e-journals through HELINET consortium and 27.8 % free and open access journals. The status of e-resources appeared to be almost at the same level across all dental institutions in Karnataka, due to HELINET consortia of Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences.

4. Conclusion

That sounds like a significant finding! It suggests that factors such as access to tools, technology, and electronic resources, along with training and ease of access to technology, play a crucial role in determining the extent to which academics or researchers utilize e-resources in their work. Additionally, the increasing availability of Open Access materials appears to further facilitate the use of electronic resources among academia and researchers. This underscores the importance of both infrastructure and policy initiatives in promoting the effective utilization of electronic resources in scholarly work.

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