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PALERMO WORKSHOP 2005

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Reminiscences from the EAHIL Workshop, 2005 Luigina Lazzari Awards



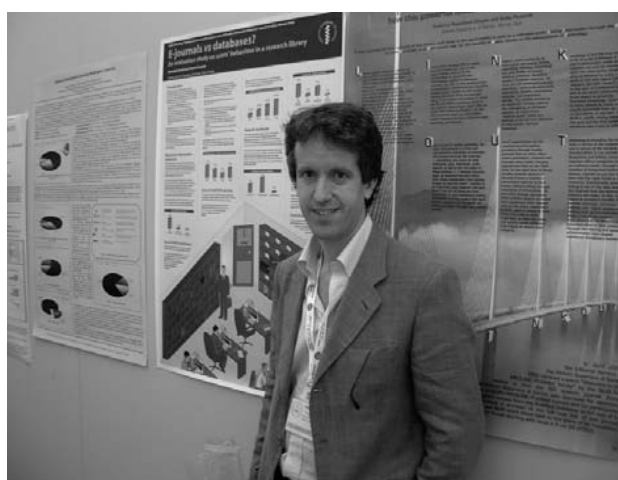
Luigina Lazzari - second from left

The Lombardy Region's Consortium of Health Libraries (SBBL) wishes to keep alive the memory of Luigina Lazzari, who was Head of the library of the Istituto Zooprofilattico in Brescia and played an active role in the creation of SBBL itself, from the beginning. Many of us still remember her smile, her aptitude for listening, her professionalism, her enthusiasm, devotion and zeal.



Anne Brice with her award

Luigina was very interested in the development of new professionals in the field of librarianship and to actively contribute to her initiatives, SBBL decided to award a prize for the best oral communication and the best poster at the Palermo workshop. An International Committee of well-known



Vittorio Ponzani beside his poster

colleagues (L. Cavazza, U. Korwitz, T. McSeán, T. Morcillo, A. Pereira, F. Ribes Cot) coordinated by Idalia Galdana, representative for SBBL, had a difficult job evaluating all the papers.

During the Closing ceremony Professor F. Clementi, President of SBBL presented the award to Anne Brice for the best oral presentation and to Vittorio Ponzani for the best poster. We congratulate the winners and wish them well.

Manuela Colombi
mcolombi@jacit.jnj.com

Fusion or confusion? Challenges in applying critical appraisal methods to the health library literature

ABSTRACT

Background

Like a twenty-first century trinacria, Evidence Based Librarianship seeks to integrate the three complementary perspectives of user-reported, librarian-observed, and research-derived evidence into a unified vision, thereby improving the quality of professional judgements (Booth and Brice, 2004). Minerva-like wisdom is further required in reconciling the disparate heritages of healthcare, librarianship and research methods to develop robust methods for critical appraisal. In considering whether the lessons learnt in the general development of critical appraisal inform our understanding of the challenges that lie ahead for our profession, this paper sets out to ask whether it is possible to apply critical appraisal methods developed within healthcare to the library literature. It also aims to establish whether library research is valid, reliable and applicable enough to stand detailed scrutiny. It will consider whether this innovative experiment has successfully demonstrated a fusion of different perspectives and heritages or whether it has simply imposed an inappropriate model on a research-shy profession.

Setting

Librarians and non-librarians working in health care, appraising health care literature and health library-related literature in English.

Methods

The published healthcare literature on critical appraisal will be systematically surveyed to examine what librarians can

learn from the evidence base for this key technique (research-derived). Key enablers and barriers will be identified following appraisal of the studies identified. In addition the experiences of participants who have shared in the Critical Skills Training in Appraisal for Librarians (CriSTAL) courses since they were first developed in 1999 (user-reported) (Booth and Brice, 2003) will be analysed. Finally the lessons from the authors own experience (librarian-observed) and the implications for further research and for practice will be considered.

Results

Results from the CriSTAL pilot project showed that the project had addressed the need for a tool for appraising library related literature, and supported the use of workshops as an effective educational intervention. The appraisal tool, delivered in a workshop format, helped participants improve their understanding of research methods and their ability to use research to aid their decision making. Further results from the current study will be presented.

References

- Booth, A. & Brice, A. (2003) Clear-cut?: facilitating health librarians to use information research in practice. *Health Information and Libraries Journal* 20 (Suppl 1) 45-52.
- Booth, A and Brice, A (2004) Why evidence-based information practice? In Booth, A & Brice, A (Eds) *Evidence Based Practice for Information Professionals: A handbook*. (pp. 1-13) London: Facet Publishing.

EAHIL Workshop, 2005

Donatella Gentili, Vittorio Ponzani

E-Journals Vs Databases? An Evaluation Study of Users' Behaviour in A Research Library

In the last decade remote access to electronic information resources has deeply affected library use, modifying patrons' behaviour in information retrieval. This study provides an evaluation analysis on the use of electronic resources available on the web site of the Library of the Istituto Superiore di Sanita (ISS):

- a selected list of OVID bibliographic and full-text databases focused on specific subject areas
- electronic journals available through CASPUR (Consorzio interuniversitario per le applicazioni di supercalcolo per universita e ricerca) the consortium service *Emeroteca Virtuale*, which allows access to a wide collection of journals published by several biomedical publishers.

The evaluation study is based on the 2001-2004 statistical usage data of the CASPUR service and OVID databases compared with the results of a survey, carried out by the ISS Library in 2004, about user's information-seeking behaviour and attitudes. The aim of this study was to assess if and how the e-journals have changed usage patterns of other electronic information resources and to measure the impact of e-journals on the use of the ISS Library.

Electronic information resources

The ISS Library allows access to the following bibliographic and full-text databases through the OVID platform:

- Drug Information full-text
- Embase
- Evidence Based Medicine reviews (full set)
- Food Science and Technology Abstracts (FSTA)
- YourJournals@Ovid (selected list of titles)
- Medline
- Medline In-Process
- NTIS.

It subscribes to about 4400 electronic journals, about 3000 of which are from multiple publishers (American Chemical Society, Elsevier Science and Kluwer Academic Publisher) through CASPUR. These journals cover different subject areas with special attention to STM and social science fields. The CASPUR platform offers in addition features such as article alert service and remote access.

The survey carried out in 2004 by the ISS Library reveals that bibliographic databases' usage has significantly decreased following the acquisition of online journals.

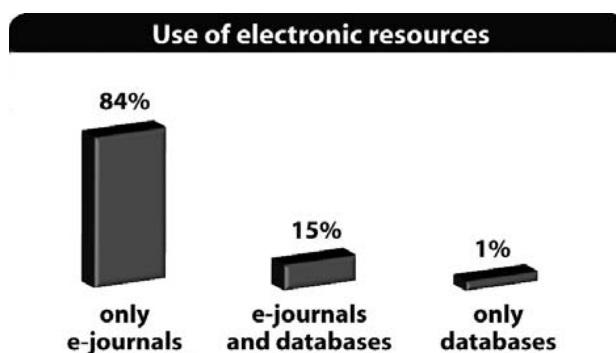


Figure 1 : Use of electronic resources

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E-journals vs. Databases?

Use of OVID databases

The overall use of OVID databases declined in the period 2001-2003 and this could have been due to the introduction of the CASPUR electronic journals library. Users in fact prefer to use the CASPUR platform, which provides full-text documents, instead of the traditional bibliographic databases. It means that the full search potentialities of CASPUR platform are used by ISS users, but it means also that the bibliographic databases are underutilized, even when databases focused on specific subject areas could guarantee a more effective information retrieval.

On the other hand, since 2004, the use of OVID databases has increased and this reversal may depend on two different factors:

- 1) the Library's new policy aimed at accessing an increasing number of OVID bibliographic and full-text databases, with some relevant e-journals.
- 2) the new advanced OVID search features such as:
 - Open Link (linking technology which brings the users directly from database citation to a full-text journal article);
 - Multifile search (selection and search on more than one database);
 - Deduping (removing of duplicates from the resulting search set).

These different aspects have been successful, changing users' behaviour towards a more awareness of OVID databases, even if researchers still prefer the CASPUR platform.

OVID databases: number of research sessions

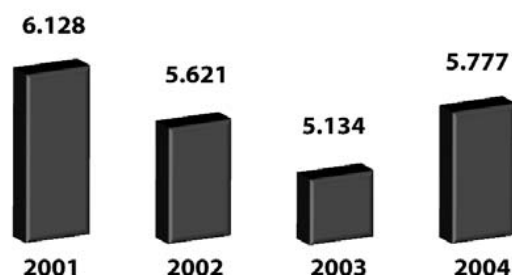


Figure 2: OVID databases: number of research sessions

Use of the CASPUR service

The steady increase of the CASPUR service is due to the availability of a wide collection of e-journals in STM and social science fields and their added value features. At the same time the usage of print journals has decreased significantly with the introduction of online access, which affected journals available only in print form. Library statistics show that fewer users came to the library as more resources became available online and the users gained access from their desktop.

CASPUR: number of articles downloaded

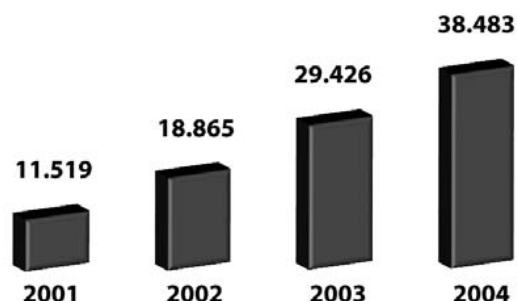


Figure 3: CASPUR: number of articles downloaded

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Search methods

Users seem to prefer the single citation and keyword approach in their searches whether they use OVID bibliographic databases or CASPUR electronic journals, even if more sophisticated tools such as thesauri are available which guarantee a more effective information retrieval. The basic search strategies adopted reveal that users tend to use only what is easily accessible on the Net. As a matter of fact users seem to adopt the same search strategies whether they use an Internet search engine (like Google) or an e-journals platform (like CASPUR) or a specific databases platform (like OVID).

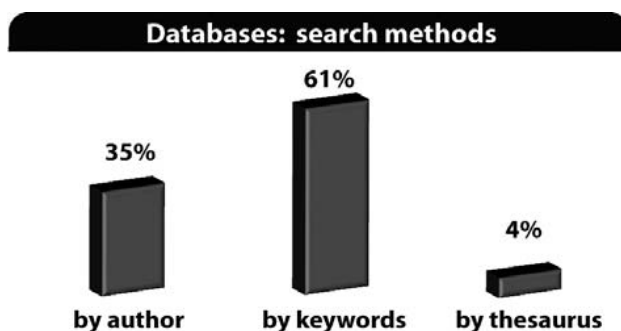


Figure 4: Databases: search methods

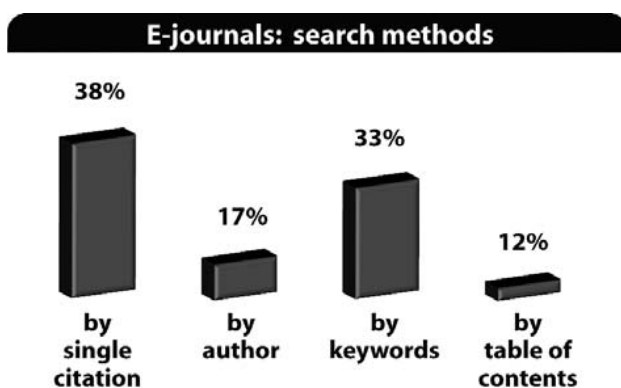


Figure 5: E-journals: search methods

Medline/Pubmed vs Medline/OVID

A users' behaviour analysis revealed that they prefer resources that guarantee full-text access

such as CASPUR, instead of specific disciplinary bibliographic databases that guarantee more effective results with advanced search strategies. The survey has also shown that ISS users prefer Pubmed, the freely available interface to Medline by the National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI) located at the U.S. National Library of Medicine, instead of OVID Medline. Pubmed is popular probably because of its natural language search capabilities and its user friendly interface, while OVID Medline offers a more complex search interface. Patrons use Pubmed because they prefer Internet resources that provide fast and easy access to information through simple interface (e.g. Google). They tend to adopt a relatively unsophisticated approach to searching.

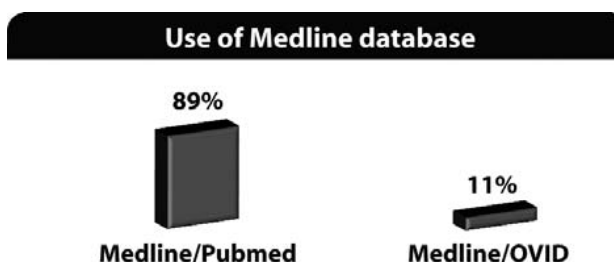


Figure 6 : Use of the Medline database

Conclusions

In this context disciplinary databases appear to be underutilized by users even if they cost a great deal for the Library. Consequently it is important to assess if more resources should be spent in user training in order to assist the adequate use of more sophisticated research tools.

Donatella Gentili and Vittorio Ponzani

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E-journals vs databases?

An evaluation study on users' behaviour in a research library

Donatella Gentili and Vittorio Ponzani

Library, Istituto Superiore di Sanità - Rome (Italy)

Introduction

In the last decade the remote access to electronic information resources has deeply affected the library use, modifying the patrons' behaviour in information retrieval. This study provides an evaluation analysis on the use of the electronic resources available on the web site of the Library of the Istituto Superiore di Sanità (ISS):

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The evaluation study is based on 2001-2004 statistical usage data of CASPUR service and OVID databases compared with the results of a survey, carried out by the ISS Library in 2004, about user's information seeking behaviour and attitudes.

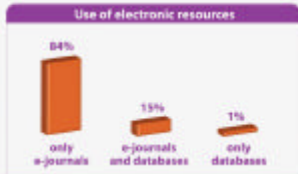
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It is also subscribing about 4400 electronic journals, about 3000 of which from multiple publishers (American Chemical Society, Elsevier Science e Kluwer Academic Publishers) through CASPUR. These journals cover different subject areas with special attention to STM and social science fields. The CASPUR platform offers also features like article alert service and remote access.

The survey carried out in 2004 by the ISS Library reveals that bibliographic databases usage has significantly decreased following the acquisition of online journals.



Use of OVID databases

Overall use of OVID databases declined in the period 2001-2003 while it has been increasing since 2004.

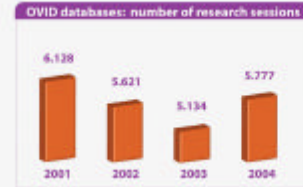
The decrease could be due to the introduction of the CASPUR electronic journals library. Users in fact prefer to use the CASPUR platform, which provides the full-text documents, instead of the traditional bibliographic databases.

It means that the full search potentialities of CASPUR platform are used by ISS users, but it means also that the bibliographic databases are underutilized, even when databases focused on specific subject areas could guarantee a more effective information retrieval.

The reversal of the trend in 2004 may depend on two different factors:

- 1) the new Library's policy aimed to access to an increasing number of OVID bibliographic and full-text databases, among which some relevant e-journals.
- 2) the new advanced OVID search features like:
 - Open Link (linking technology which brings the users directly from database citation to a full-text journal article)
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These different aspects have been revealed successful, changing users behaviour towards a more aware use of OVID databases, even if researchers still prefer CASPUR platform.

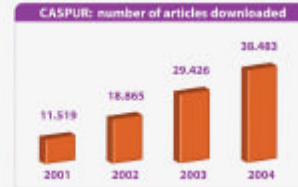


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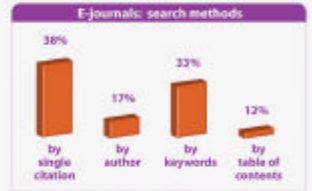
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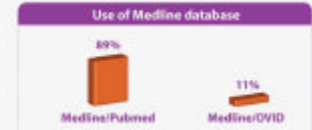
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Conclusions

In this context disciplinary databases appear to be underutilized by users even if they have a great cost for the Library. As a consequence it is important to assess if more resources should be spent in user training in order to help them to use adequately these more sophisticated research tools.

