

Patterns of use of electronic media by medical searchers in Israel for the purpose of locating and disseminating information / Gloria Hemmershlag

ABSTRACT

Israel is considered one of the leading countries in the field of science, Scientific development necessitates large amount of information, and the vast number of scientific articles published, is a testimony to that. Recently, technological advances, such as the internet have facilitated the exchange of information with unprecedented speed.

This study attempts to examine the use of technological mediums for work done by scientists in the medical field. This study will explore different aspects of computer use, some of these aspects are: correspondence between colleagues, exposure to electronic articles, participation in group discussions, and all through the internet.

In addition, this study will consider the effects of the age of the researcher, time spent in the field of research, familiarity and extent of mastery of the internet, all in respect to the work done through and aided by technological mediums.

As background for this study, an extensive account of various types of scientific methods of communication (formal and other wise) is supplied, as well as, electronic articles in the medical field, thier advantages and disadvantages, and an explanation on specific scientific modes of communication through the internet. The development of medical scientific communication from it's historical beginings up until the present day's innovations in information technologies. Serving the medical field, will also be discussed, as well as actual studies and research projects that have already been done all over the world in this field, in attempts to develop means of coping with the problems of the vast growth in information.

A questionnaire that has been designed especially for this study, has been sent to 518 researchers in the medical field, in Israel. The researchers are all employed by one of three universities: Tel-Aviv, Beer-Sheva, and the Technion. They belong to 17 different fields of medical research, and each researcher answered a questionnaire that is specific to his field of study. The final study is based on 169 researchers who responded to the questionnaire.

The results of the study confirmed most of our assumptions. It was found that a negative correlation existed between the researchers time of experience in the field and the amount of time using the internet. In addition, a clear gap was evident between the researchers use of electronic articles, as opposed to articles that are printed, similarity the gap between publishing printed articles as opposed to electronic articles, was great. Positive correlation were

determined between methods of learning internet and total use time, as well as the connections between the researchers' own sense of internet expertise in relation to the amount of time using the internet.

In conclusion, the exponential growth that has occurred in the last few years in specialized literature, presents a challenge: determining information channels for the medical communities, that exhibit superior quality and feasible costs, with an objective that is to deal with the amount of available information. It seems that the study emphasizes the gap between the importance of the internet and the relatively minor use of the internet by researchers themselves. It is possible that the electronic systems available have yet to fulfill all the needs of the researchers themselves, but on the provision that they do become more proficient technologically, the next generation of researchers will be likely to enjoy future technologies more and certainly make wider use of them.

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