## The use electronic databases comparison between the social science an natural sciences students: Judea and Samaria College Pattern / Frida Shor

## **ABSTRACT**

At our modern times of "scientific revolution" and appropriation of solid funds for computerization of libraries at universities and colleges in Israel and their connection to nets, the question arises whether and how do the students use the electronic data banks, which have been actually purchased for their benefit.

In the light of this question a study has been conducted among social sciences and natural sciences students at the Jehuda and Shomron academic college in Israel.

Three advances were set up:

- 1. Natural sciences students more frequently use the electronic data banks in their work because of the nature and amount of subjects.
- 2. The use of electronic data banks depends on the gained skills.
- 3. The use of the electronic data banks depends on the support provided to the student by his teachers.

At present a wide variety of data sources are available to the students. They include data stored on CD ROMs, on-line networks, such as the internet and "Alf". The problems set up in this study are a part of more extensive study of information needs. We can use the study results in order to direct the students in gaining the adequate information skills.

Within the framework of this study questionnaires were distributed among 270 students: 82 natural sciences students and 172 social sciences students (16 students did not note their specialization field). In addition, heads of departments and teachers were invited to participate in open interviews in order to clarify whether they encouraged their students to use the electronic databases.

The two last advances were statistically proved through a T-test of independent samples. Students who have gained skills in computer use were found to make a wider use in the electronic data banks comparing to those lacking these skills. In other words, those students who had early knowledge and those who were adequately trained in using the databases are more frequently applying the electronic databases in comparison to those lacking the required skills. The use of electronic data banks is mostly dependent on the general ability to use computers.

Regarding the third advance, encouragement to use the electronic databases given by teachers has had a direct effect on the students.

Although the first advance was not proved, the social sciences students who have had early knowledge in computers, were found to be more given to the use of electronic data banks than those lacking the this knowledge. Whereas among the natural sciences students the early knowledge in computers have had no effect on the use of electronic data banks. Moreover, the teachers support to use the electronic databases encouraged mostly the natural sciences students, rather than the social sciences students. The study showed that a third of students did not use the electronic data banks at all, or use them only for studies.

Internet is the most popular information source. Less than a fifth were trained in the use of electronic data banks, and over a third of the students were directed by the teachers to use these data sources.

The discussion about the presented study results was based on the literature review dedicated to electronic data banks, the study of information users and information skills and on a many years' experience of the researcher as a library manager.

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