Digital habits and competences of health professionals in the health area of Málaga–Axarquía

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• We are interested in knowing the changes involved in the transition to the consumption and use of digital information among users of health-sciences libraries.

• Objectives: To understand the reading, writing and information management practices of health professionals in the East of Malaga Health Area.

• Method: Using a specific questionnaire, we will gather information on the professional and personal practices of a population sample consisting of 1300 health professionals working in different categories.

• Results: We will establish a diagnosis of the current situation, to design an action plan to enhance digital literacy among healthcare professionals.
PROBLEM STATEMENT

We know that any professional needs to be technologically literate. One of the basic needs of the professionals of health nowadays is to access constantly to updated information, most of it in digital format. Therefore, the management of digital skills is essential for them.
The objective of the current article is to present the preliminary results obtained after analysing the responses to a questionnaire designed to detect the use of e-journals among health professionals, which was distributed and received for a period of 6 months in 2016. This work has enabled the detection of possible mistakes in the questionnaire design and its validation.
The methodological approach to research will be the mixed model, using qualitative and quantitative research techniques at different stages.
The Target group: 1,300 Health professionals of the East Health Management Area of Málaga-Axarquía belonging to all the professional categories. We have studied their digital reading-writing practices in the development of their professional role and in the individual-private field.
The present results have been extracted from a survey designed with the aim to explore the digital reading-writing habits and practices and the use of the Information and Communication Technologies to access electronic information; the way in which information is accessed, processed, saved, generated and disseminated.
DEMOGRAPHIC DATA
(Age range respondents)
Demographic Data

Most of the respondents, 62%, are professionals aged 40 to 60 who know digital books and journals since the mid 90's, the end of the Twentieth Century. Some of them have used these materials in the development of their professional practice just from 2006 onwards, the moment when the Virtual Library of the Andalusian Public Health Service was opened and the journals started being subscribed corporately only in its electronic format.
Professional role

Number of respondents

- Administrative and services Staff
- Family doctor
- Medical Area Specialist
- Nurse
- Other
- Resident Medical Intern
- Resident Nurse Intern

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80
Professional role of respondents

More than the 50% of the respondents were doctors in their training period; family doctors and/or specialist doctors. They are followed by the nurses and the administration workers. Other categories are the upper grade students and the professionals with undergraduate studies.
Reasons not to use e-journal

Number of respondents

- Preferred printed journals: 13
- Don't know where to locate them: 15
- Don't know how to use them: 19
- Don't know where to find them in the library: 2
- They are difficult to find: 3
Reason not to use e-journal

Although most of the professionals use journals, we have to highlight that the 18.5% don't know how to use electronic journals and the reasons why the 36% don't use them is that they don't know how to do it, followed by the 28% who state not to know where they can find them; the 25% prefer printed journals; a smaller percentage doesn't know where to find them in the library or declares that electronic journals are very difficult to use.
Way of Access

search for a specific article.

Number of respondents

Bibliographic database
Library web page
Journal Aggregation
Social or Professional networking web sites
Publisher web site
By searching journal alert
From a general Web search engine
A Society web page

Always  most of the times  Occasionally  Never  DN/DA
Way to Access

About the way to access e-journals, the data show that on finding a specific article, most of the times they do it using bibliographic data bases such as PubMed, EMBASE, Web of science, Scopus, etc. followed by a websearch in google, and other Internet browsers. In the third place, the respondents mention the use of the editorials websites, the use of the social networks and the professional websites.
e-Book management

Information resources used in the professional and/or personal practice
Information resources used in professional practice. Regarding the electronic resources used for the professional and personal practice, the printed books and magazines are the most frequently used. The electronic journals are the most demanded in the professional practice. They don't know the Google Scholar. For their personal use, they prefer the personal websites, the on-line newspapers, the networks and they don't use the podcasts or audio books.
Device used to access the e-books.

Number of respondents

Desktop | Laptop | Tablet | Smartphone | e-Reader

- Blue: Never
- Yellow: Occasionally
- Gray: Sometimes
- Orange: Most of the times
- Blue: Always
Most of the respondents use desktop and laptop computers most of the times, tablets and smartphones are still used in main way by a minority, e-readers are used scarcely.
The respondents declare to find traditional publications, such as journal articles and/or digital or printed books, more reliable than other publishing alternatives like forums, wikis, podcast, wikipedia or publication in other media such as social networks.

The respondents know their lack of ability and competence in the use of digital information. Most of them value their competence as poor or insufficient. They attach a lot of importance to their training for the acquisition of these competences and abilities in order to be competent in the field of Information Literacy.
CONCLUSION

• Digital reality has modified the practices to access information and knowledge. Getting to know this reality will allow us to adopt informed decisions in the knowledge society.

• We are facing the emergence of a new reading and writing ecosystem which is changing the value chain developed since the invention of the printing press. The digital book and journals have broken up the printed book ecosystem that has lasted for five centuries giving way to the concept of book as a net or as a service. These changes have to be explored.
The technological changes in the origin of the current ways to access scientific information and, particularly the way to access digital books and journals, have transformed the way to process, save, generate and transmit knowledge. This situation affects the health science journals, which started the transfer to the digital edition in the year 1996. The emblematic The New England Journal of Medicine has recently published a infographic about the new publication patterns in a monograph which celebrates the first 20 years of the journal in the web.
CONCLUSION

Societies and professional schools are aware of this need, like the Royal College of Nursing in the UK, which has published a document about competencies ALFIN addressed to the nursing professionals “Finding, using and managing information: nursing, midwifery, health and social care information literacy competences”.
"La acción de preguntar supone la aparición de la conciencia".

Maria Zambrano (Vélez-Málaga 1904-Madrid 1991)