



UTILIZATION OF GENERAL ELECTRONIC DATABASES BY UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS OF BESTLINK COLLEGE OF THE PHILIPPINES

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Abstract

Libraries and the internet have been pivotal in disseminating information since the dawn of knowledge acquisition. Both traditional and digital resources are utilized to combat digital information overload, with "General and Scholarly Electronic Databases" offering easy access and online subscriptions to credible published materials. These databases have become increasingly popular among undergraduate researchers, particularly in academic institutions.

However, online research can lead to information overload, as many websites provide unreliable and biased information. Merriam-Webster defines a website as a collection of hyperlinks created by individuals, companies, governments, and institutions. The reliability of these websites varies, with some being authoritative and others prone to misinformation and hoaxes.

Databases and search engines differ significantly in terms of coverage and retrieval quality. Databases are searchable online platforms housing resources like journals, articles, e-books, and data sets. They offer comprehensive searching capabilities and, with the help of librarians, employ techniques like controlled vocabulary to enhance precision and recall. This allows users to find relevant sources more efficiently.

Despite their advantages, databases also present challenges, such as increased reliance on technology, changing study habits, and a lack of awareness about available resources. Users often depend more on online resources than traditional library visits, leading to a shift in study practices. Moreover, the internet may not always meet

users' needs, causing dissatisfaction. Enhancing public awareness of library resources and services is crucial. In summary, electronic databases offer

convenience, efficient searching, and user-friendly navigation, benefiting everyone when used properly and with guidance.

Introduction

In recent years, the utilization of general electronic databases has become a crucial aspect of academic research worldwide. Studies have shown that electronic databases significantly enhance the accessibility and dissemination of scholarly information, facilitating research across various disciplines (Smith, 2020). The global academic community has increasingly relied on these digital resources to overcome challenges related to information overload and to ensure that students and researchers have access to credible and comprehensive data (Jones, 2019).

Nationally, the trend of integrating electronic databases into educational institutions has been on the rise. In the Philippines, the adoption of digital libraries and electronic databases has been instrumental in improving the quality of academic research and education (Reyes, 2021). The government's efforts to promote digital literacy and the integration of advanced information technology in schools and universities have further propelled this development (Cruz, 2022).

Locally, within Bestlink College of the Philippines, the shift towards utilizing electronic databases reflects a broader movement towards enhancing research capabilities and academic performance. Previous studies indicate that students at Bestlink College have increasingly relied on these digital resources to access scholarly articles, journals, and other academic materials necessary for their coursework and research projects (Santos, 2023). This shift underscores the importance of digital literacy and the need for robust electronic resource infrastructures in educational institutions.

This research aims to assess the utilization of general electronic databases by undergraduate students at Bestlink College of the Philippines. It will explore how students navigate and use these databases, their perceptions of the user-friendliness and relevance of the information retrieved, and the overall impact on their academic work. By focusing on the academic year 2023, this study seeks to provide a current snapshot of database usage and its implications for student research and learning.

Theoretical Framework

The theory related to this study is Wilson's Theory of Information Seeking, his model emphasizes the process on how the users use the information they have gathered. As a result, the users only have to endpoints which are Information seeking success and failure but with the right consultation from

librarians may result in a much more precise and established information seeking relationship. With this, the existence of libraries will give an opportunity of providing adequate library services which will prove that libraries are an essential information disseminator to the researchers.

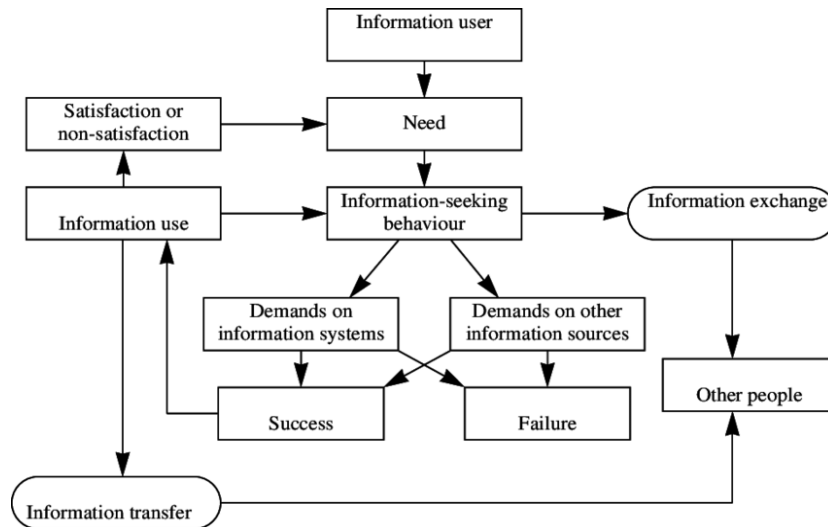


Figure 1. Wilson's Information seeking behavior model (1981)

Statement of the Problem

This study aims to determine the extent of the usability and relevance of general and Scholarly electronic databases by Undergraduate students of Bestlink College of the Philippines.

Specifically, this study includes the following questions that is formulated and stated below:

1. What is the demographic profile of the respondents?
 - 1.1 Age;
 - 1.2 Course/Year; and
 - 1.3 Gender;
2. What are the general available online databases of the Bestlink College of the Philippines?

- 2.1 ERIC
- 2.2 ProQuest
- 2.3 DOAJ
- 2.4 Philippine e-journal
- 2.5 OER Commons

3. What are the problems encountered by the students and using online databases?
 - 3.1 usability;
 - 3.2 awareness;
 - 3.3 relevance
4. How may the findings of the study be used in crafting guidelines on the utilization of the general electronic databases?

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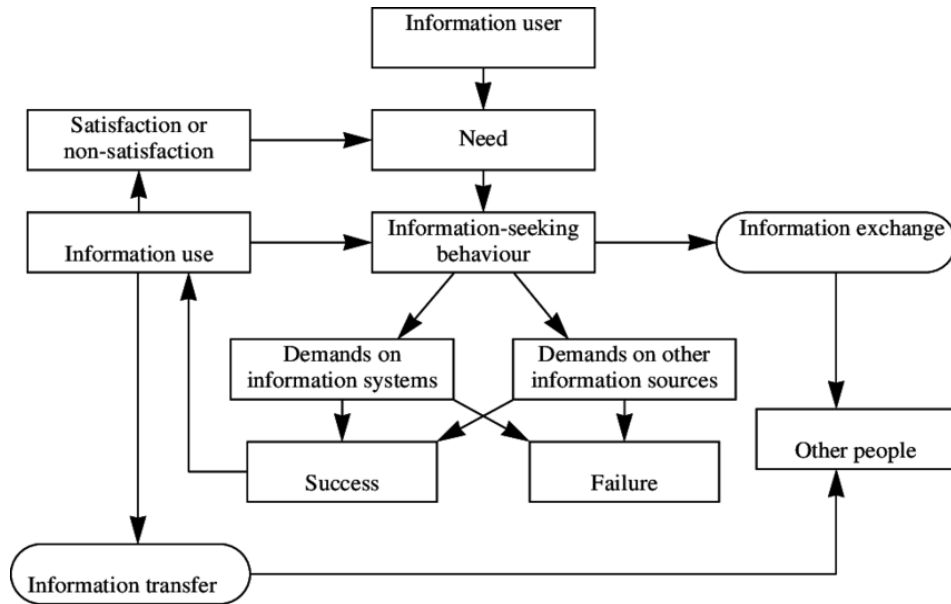


Figure 1. Wilson's Information seeking behavior model (1981)

The Scope and Delimitation

The study took into account various aspects of the students' personal information, including their age, academic course and year, as well as their gender. These demographic factors were essential in understanding the diverse backgrounds and perspectives of the participants, thereby providing a comprehensive analysis of their usage of general electronic databases.

This study will focus on undergraduate students currently enrolled at Bestlink College of the Philippines. The research will assess the utilization of general electronic databases available to these students. It will investigate the ease of use, navigation, and user-friendliness of these

databases. Additionally, it will examine how students perceive the relevance of the information retrieved from these databases for their academic needs. The study will be conducted during the academic year 2023 to capture the current state of database usage among the target population.

The researchers will limit the participants to 350 respondents, both male and female, who are currently enrolled at Bestlink College of the Philippines. Each respondent will be given a questionnaire to answer. Thus, the study is limited to Bestlink College of the Philippines and does not encompass other educational institutions. The focus will be solely on undergraduate

students, excluding graduate students and faculty members. This study will assess a specific set of databases available at Bestlink College, and the findings may not be generalizable to databases offered at other

institutions. The findings will also be based on data collected during the specified academic year, and any changes or developments after that period will not be considered.

Significance of the Study

Students. This may help them discover relevant electronic resources that maybe be incorporated into their research topic. Through this they will be able to filter out irrelevant information provided by these general and scholarly electronic databases.

expertise. Also, this will give them an inspiration to widely promote electronic databases to broaden their scope of services through their library collection.

BLIS Students. This study will become a guide and may help them in crafting their research that may boost further research development in the field of librarianship.

Administrators. This study may help them coordinate, implement and plan an adequate step on improving their institutions' library department.

Librarians. The outcome of this study will help them to incorporate the findings of this research into their field of

Future Researchers. The study will give them a credible source that can be used as a reference for their research study and will lend them an idea to finish their research study.

I. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

**Table 1
Age of the Respondents**

Age	Frequency	Percentage	Rankings
18-19	93	26.57%	2
20-21	141	40.29%	1
22-23	73	20.86%	3
24-25	43	12.29%	4
Total	350	100	

Table 1 refers to the demographic profile of the respondents that is based on

the age bracket shown at the table above. In this tabular form presentation, it is evident

that 20-21 years old students from Bestlink College of the Philippines with a frequency of 141 and has a percentage of 40.29% are the majority respondents of the study. 18-19 years old students came in 2nd rank with a

frequency of 93 and garnered 26.57% while 22-23 years old respondents had a frequency of 73 with 20.86% and 24-25 years old garnered 12.29%.

Table 2
Gender of the Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage	Rankings
Male	164	46.86%	2
Female	186	53.14%	1
Total	350	100	

Table 2 illustrates the demographic profile of the students according to their gender. It shows that females outnumbered males having 186 out of 350 respondents or 53.14%, and the male has 164 frequencies

or 46.86%. This implies that the majority of the taken sample are females since the number of students using the BCP library has more female students than males.

Table 3
Year of the Respondents

Year Level	Frequency	Percentage	Rankings
1st	94	26.86%	2
2nd	116	33.14%	1
3rd	74	21.14%	3
4th	43	18.86%	4
Total	350	100	

Table 3 presented the frequency and percentage above showing the demographic profile of respondents according to their year. As we can see, the 1st year got the 2nd rank with a frequency of 94 and percentage

of 26.86%. 2nd year got the 1 rank with a frequency of 116 and percentage of 33.14%. The 3rd year got the 3rd rank with a frequency of 74 and percentage of 21.14% while the 4th year got the 4th rank with a

frequency of 43 and percentage of 18.86%,
It shows most of the respondents came from
2nd year.

Table 4

Course of the Respondents

Course	Frequency	Percentage	Rankings
BLIS	14	4%	7
BSBA	23	6.57%	6
BSCPE	82	23.43%	2
BSP	64	18.29%	3
BSIT	37	10.57%	5
BSCRIM	90	25.71%	1
BSED	40	11.43%	4
Total	350	100	

Table 4 presented the frequency and percentage of this distribution of respondents as to their course. BSCRIM got the highest frequency of 90 with a percentage of 25.71% BSCPE got a frequency of 82 with a percentage of 23.43%. BSP got a frequency of 64 with a percentage of 18.29%. BSED got a frequency of 40 with a percentage of 11.43%. BSIT got a frequency of 37 with a percentage of 10.57%. BSBA got a frequency of 23 with a percentage of 6.57% and lastly, BLIS got a frequency of 14 with a percentage of 4%. As shown also in the table also shows

that the students of the BSCRIM department are leading the top users of the library and it was followed by the students of the BSCPE department. Information Literacy Behavior and Practice: An Assessment of Undergraduate Students at Ada College of Education, Ghana (Ozor & Toner, 2022) revealed that students from Ada College of Education are an active visitor or user of the library that mainly prioritizes research related works and contents connected to their course work while others visit the library for leisure.

Table 5

General and Scholarly Electronic Search Engines that are promoted by Bestlink Library

Databases	Frequency	Percentage	Rankings
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ProQuest	63	18%	3
ERIC	48	13.71%	4
DOAJ	34	9.71%	5
Philippine e-journal	100	28.57%	2
OER	105	30%	1
Total	350	100	

Table 5 above shows the general and scholarly electronic search engines that are known among the undergraduate students that are promoted by the Bestlink Library. As shown on the table, OER or commonly known as Open Educational Resources came in 1st rank with a frequency of 105 and garnered a 30% and Philippine e-journal came in 2nd rank with a frequency of 100 and

has 28.57% while ProQuest occupied the 3rd rank with a percentage of 18% and has a frequency of 63 followed by ERIC known as Education Resources Information Center gathering a frequency of 48 and obtained a 13.71%. Lastly, taking up the 5th rank which is DOAJ acronym of Directory of Open Access Journals having a frequency of 34 and obtaining a 9.71%.

Table 6

Usability of General Electronic Databases

Usability	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rankings
1. These general and scholarly databases are simple and easy to use.	3.54	Strongly Agree	1
2. It is credible and reliable in giving the information and resources that I need.	3.50	Strongly Agree	2
3. It saves time when I use these search engine databases.	3.06	Agree	5
4. The results obtained from searching using these databases provide a comprehensive coverage of the topics that I need.	3.16	Agree	3
5. These scholarly and general databases were easy to learn and use.	3.07	Agree	4
Composite Mean	3.27	Agree	

Table 6 presents the usability of General and Scholarly electronic databases according to the preference of the BCP students, these general and scholarly databases are simple and easy to use got the ranked number one (1) with the highest computed weighted mean of 3.54 giving a verbal interpretation of Strongly Agree. It is credible and reliable in giving the information and resources got ranked number

two (2) with a weighted mean of 3.50 obtaining the verbal interpretation of Strongly Agree, the results obtained from searching using these databases provide a comprehensive coverage of the topics got ranked number three (3) and has a weighted mean of 3.16 followed by ranked number four (4) with a statement of these scholarly and general databases were easy to learn and use with a weighted mean of 3.07. Lastly,

when using these databases, it saves time when the students use these search engine databases got ranked number five (5) with a weighted mean of 3.06. According to Khan & Khan (2020) undergraduate students need research information like topic selection,

literature review, databases searching, learning of information searching skills, information literacy, citation analysis, and writing of theses for this purpose they visit the library frequently.

Table 7

Awareness of General Electronic Databases

Awareness	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rankings
1. I know that these general and scholarly electronic databases exist.	2.68	Agree	2
2. There is an orientation for the users on the existence of these databases.	2.51	Agree	4
3. I know that these scholarly databases can be found on my BCP SMS account.	2.45	Disagree	5
4. The library utilizes its opportunity to promote the use of electronic resources to the users.	2.80	Agree	1
5. I know that I can access these e-resources at the library.	2.64	Agree	3
Composite Mean	2.62	Agree	

Table 7 shows the awareness of the students of BCP in using these general and scholarly electronic databases. The library utilizes its opportunity to promote the use of electronic resources to the users who got the ranked number (1) with a weighted mean of 2.80 and has a verbal interpretation of Agree. while the statement the respondents know that these databases exist got ranked number two (2) having a weighted mean of 2.68 with a verbal interpretation of agree followed by the statement that the users can access these e-resources at the library got ranked number three (3) with a weighted mean of 2.64 and verbal interpretation of agree. There is an

orientation for the users on the existence of these databases got ranked number four (4) having a weighted mean of 2.51 and obtained a verbal interpretation of agree and lastly, the statement these scholarly databases can be found on BCP SMS account got the ranked number five (5) who has the lowest weighted mean of 2.45 gaining a verbal interpretation of disagree. Lack of knowledge of the existence of general and scholarly electronic databases is a major challenge for undergraduate student’s experience thus hindering effective usability of general and scholarly electronic databases (Oyieke, 2020).

Table 8 above reveals the relevance of these scholarly and general electronic

databases according to the respondents. In these statements, all of them got the same

verbal interpretation of agree. The statement Search tools from these websites were efficient in retrieving relevant results that may help strengthen the study got ranked number one (1) with a weighted mean of 3.05, followed by the database website provides current resources who got ranked number two (2) with a weighted mean of 2.99, These search engine scholarly databases give relevant results with 2.96 weighted mean came in ranked number three (3), the statement After searching, the users now can access related sources and links from one database to another database got

ranked number four (4) having a weighted mean of 2.94, and lastly, the databases help to make research become credible for future researchers got the lowest rank and weighted mean of 2.58. In view of the above results, the (ACRL) observes that academic institution needs to encourage best practices in usability of general and scholarly electronic databases, by ensuring that the databases are designed according to needs of specific users' and by ensuring that competent and professional staff are employed who assist users' access and use library databases.

Table 8

Relevance of General Electronic Databases

Relevance	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rankings
1. These search engine scholarly databases give me results that I expect.	2.96	Agree	3
2. After searching I can now access related sources and links from one database to another database.	2.94	Agree	4
3. The database website provides current resources.	2.99	Agree	2
4. Search tools from these websites were efficient in retrieving relevant results that may help strengthen our study.	3.05	Agree	1
5. The databases help to make our research become credible for future researchers.	2.58	Agree	5
Composite Mean	2.90	Agree	

Summary of Findings

The main purpose of this study is to determine the extent of the usability and relevance of general and Scholarly electronic databases by Undergraduate students of Bestlink College of the Philippines. The

instrument used in this study was survey questionnaires in which it is used to determine the statistical treatment using percentage, frequencies, verbal interpretation, weighted mean and ranking.

1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

1.1 As to Age

Most of the students ranging from 20-21 years old students from Bestlink College of the Philippines got the highest frequency of 141 with a percentage of 40.29

are the majority respondents of the study while ages 24-25 years old got the lowest frequency of 43 and has a percentage of 12.29%.

1.2 As to Gender

Most of the respondents are females with a frequency of 186 and has a weighted mean of 53.14% followed by the males with

a frequency of 164 and weighted mean of 46.86%.

1.3 As to Year

It was shown in the table, it is significant that the 2nd year has the highest frequency 116 that has a percentage of 33.14% was ranked number one (1), followed by 1st year with a frequency of 94 or 26.86% and ranked number two (2), while 3rd year

obtained a frequency of 74 or 21.14% and lastly, 4th year got a frequency of 43 or 18.86%. As shown also in the table, the 2nd year students are the most users of the library with a frequency of 116 over 350.

1.4 As to Course

BSCRIM got the highest frequency of 90 with a percentage of 25.71% BSCPE got a frequency of 82 with a percentage of 14.86%. BSP got a frequency of 64 with a percentage of 18.29%. BSED got a frequency of 40 with a percentage of 11.43%. BSIT got a frequency of 37 with a percentage of 10.57%, BSBA got a frequency of 23 with a

percentage of 6.57%. Lastly, BLIS got a frequency of 14 with a percentage of 4%. As shown also on the table also shows that the students of the BSCRIM department are leading the top users of the library and it was followed by the students of the BSCPE department.

2. General and Scholarly electronic databases promoted by Bestlink library.

2.1 As to Databases

Most of the respondents answered that OER, commonly known as Open Educational Resources, are the most promoted and most used by the respondents

to find the accurate information to support their research development and academic research needs.

3. Issues encountered by the students in using these online databases

3.1 Usability, in terms of usefulness of these databases these general and scholarly electronic databases are simple and easy to use got the highest weighted mean of 3.55 with a verbal interpretation of Strongly agree as reflected on the table. Also, credible and

3.2 Awareness, as reflected at the table the students know that these general and scholarly electronic databases exist with the highest weighted mean of 2.68 gaining Agree as a verbal interpretation, as well as the library utilizes opportunity to promote the use of these electronic databases with a weighted mean of 2.80, that the students also

3.3 Relevance, Search tools from the websites according to the respondents are very efficient in retrieving the relevant results and also shows that it helps on strengthening their study gathered a weighted mean of 3.05 depicted as agree, they also agreed that it provides current resources garnering a weighted mean of 2.99, these search engines that are classified as general and scholarly electronic databases gives the desired result

reliable in giving the information resources presented a mean of 3.50 with the same verbal interpretation of Strongly agree. Ranked three-five (3-5) got the overall verbal interpretation of Agree with a weighted mean of 3.16, 3.07, and 3.06.

know that they can access these e-resources at the library and has a weighted mean of 2.64. However, the students also admitted that they do not know that these databases exist on their LMS accounts gathering a weighted mean of 2.45 and has a verbal interpretation of disagree.

that the students expect when searching obtained a weighted mean of 2.96. The students also agreed that after they search for the information that they need they can also access related sources and links from different databases with a mean of 2.94. and finally, databases help them to make their research become credible for future researchers having a weighted mean of 2.58.

Conclusion

Based on the significant findings of these study, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. As shown on the results of the study, the respondents age, course and gender vary differently in which the ages 18-21 years old frequently visits the library more often than any other age group to use the library resources. Most respondents that used the library to satisfy their information needs are females than males.

2. Bestlink Library promotes Open Educational Resources to its users and readers.

3. These general and scholarly electronic databases are useful according to the respondents.

4. Regarding the awareness of the users, the respondents agreed that most of them are

aware of the existence of these electronic databases.

5. Using the general and scholarly electronic databases is relevant in retrieving reliable

and credible resources that help boost the user's information searching behavior and satisfaction needs.

Recommendations

The researchers recommend the following:

1. The library should utilize the number of visits to the library to promote its library resources.
2. Bestlink Library should also promote the use of other general and scholarly electronic databases especially that these electronic databases can be seen at the learning management services account of the enrolled students of Bestlink College of the Philippines.
3. The library and the institution should focus more on the usage of the library, internet and electronic databases to help aid the students in gathering research related resources.
4. The institution should include the library in terms of orienting the students together with the help of the library department to familiarize the users with the usage of the library as a user.
5. These general and scholarly electronic databases should be optimized especially since it is already present in the student's learning management system that is mainly found on the 'libraries' icon at the top of the LMS Dashboard.
6. Based on the findings of the study, the researchers craft a guideline/manual on how to use these general and scholarly electronic databases that may become useful in seeking relevant information.
