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Corresponding Author:
Dr. Saba Islam
District Head Quarter
Hospital Sahiwal
sabaislam5894@gmail.com

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**USE OF MEDICAL LIBRARY BY MEDICAL
AND DENTAL STUDENTS IN DIFFERENT
MEDICAL COLLEGES**

AUTHORS:

1. DR. MUHAMMAD USMAN GHANNI, DISTRICT
HEAD QUARTER HOSPITAL FAISALABAD
2. DR. USAMA ASGHAR, SHALAMAR HOSPITAL
LAHORE
3. DR. SABA ISLAM DISTRICT HEAD QUARTER
HOSPITAL SAHIWAL

ABSTRACT:

A health or medical library is designed to assist physicians, health professionals, students, patients, consumers, medical researchers, and information specialists in finding health and scientific information to improve, update, assess, or evaluate health care. This survey study was conducted among different medical and dental students. A predefined questionnaire was served. They were asked questions i.e. what knowledge they have about medical library, what are its uses, what training is needed to use these medical libraries, and what are barriers to use these medical libraries effectively. A total of 70 medical and dental students participated in the study. There were 52 males and 28 females. The mean age was 21.89 ± 2.12 years. A total of 36 students had knowledge about medical libraries. They were given access by their universities and that their teachers had given them training about using these libraries.

**Keywords: Medical Libraries, Medical students,
dental students**



INTRODUCTION:

A health or medical library is designed to assist physicians, health professionals, students, patients, consumers, medical researchers, and information specialists in finding health and scientific information to improve, update, assess, or evaluate health care. Medical libraries are typically found in hospitals, medical schools, private industry, and in medical or health associations. A typical health or medical library has access to MEDLINE, a range of electronic resources, print and digital journal collections, and print reference books. The influence of open access (OA) and free searching via Google and PubMed has a major impact on the way medical libraries operate. The United States National Library of Medicine (NLM) is the largest biomedical library in the world, and collects and provides access to some of the best health information in the world (due to its linkage to the National Institutes of Health). The NLM maintains numerous medical and genomic databases, searchable via its Entrez search system, including MEDLINE (PubMed) and OMIM (a genetic trait database). The largest medical library in Europe is the German National Library of Medicine (ZB MED), which also has collections in the fields of nutrition, agriculture, and environmental science. ZB MED operates as the official European supplier of full texts in response to searches conducted in the NLM's bibliographic databases such as PubMed, and also operates its own search portals.

Information and communication technologies have provided opportunities for medical libraries to meet the needs of their users in a much better way. Various online resources such as e-journals, e-books, subject databases, such as HINARI, PubMed and evidence-based tools are now available to increase and ease access to health information. Medical libraries have expanded their collections through acquisition of these electronic resources to build hybrid libraries that are expected to meet the information needs of the digital age users. It is important to note that the value of a library's collection lies in its effective



utilization by the user community. Library use involves the consulting, reading, and borrowing of library resources. It also involves obtaining information from library staff (1-3).

MATERIAL AND METHODS:

This survey study was conducted among different medical and dental students. A predefined questionnaire was served. They were asked questions i.e. what knowledge they have about medical library, what are its uses, what training is needed to use these medical libraries, and what are barriers to use these medical libraries effectively. All the data was analyzed with SPSS Ver. 23.0. Relevant statistical analysis was performed. The qualitative variables were presented as frequency and percentages. The quantitative variables were presented as mean and standard deviation.

RESULTS:

A total of 70 medical and dental students participated in the study. There were 52 males and 28 females. The mean age was 21.89 ± 2.12 years. A total of 36 students had knowledge about medical libraries. They were given access by their universities and that their teachers had given them training about using these libraries. Thirty-four students told that they know about medical libraries but they don't have access to these and that they don't know how to use these libraries. They told that their medical / dental college doesn't have this setup of medical library and that their teachers have not trained them also.

DISCUSSION:

The literature shows a longstanding interest in the differences between disciplines, and how these affect the way students and researchers use the library. A large number of approaches, methodologies, and definitions were used



in order to try to understand the answer to this question. Studies have used surveys, both purpose-built and re-analysis of pre-existing responses, case studies or a combination of the two to try to understand disciplinary differences. The specific definitions of disciplines have been shaped to fit the needs of research methods or of organisational structures. For example, the case-study approach adopted by both Meyer et al. and Bulger et al. demanded an intense focus on very small and tightly-defined groups of researchers, while Housewright et al.'s survey used high-level categories to define disciplines in order to permit statistical analysis. Chrzastowski and Joseph use high-level categories in order to fit with their university's organisational structure, but Whitmire forced to exclude the life scientists at her institution from her analysis, because the theoretical structure of the study does not allow for them. Studies have also looked at different groups of library users: undergraduates, postgraduates and researchers at all stages of their careers. Finally, they have adopted various definitions of what constitutes library use – from gate entries to e-resource usage, book borrowing to searching behaviours – to explore how different groups engage with the library and its services.

Library use can be in form of visit to library to consult the collections or remote access to library digital collections. Various variables used to define library usage pattern include number of items borrowed, number of library visits, hours logged into library PC, hours logged into e-resources, number of PDF downloads, and total number of e-resources accessed. Assessing library usage is important in determining the value of the collection and also to improve services. User study help the library authority determine the extent of use of the collections and measure users' satisfaction with the collections. However as noted by Braude, it is incorrect to measure library services on the size of the collections. The library should be evaluated based on its programs and services, its ability to access and manage information for its clients (4-6).



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