

Final year students' perception on their database searching skills

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1. Introduction – One of the main novelties of the European Higher Education Space (EHES) within the Spanish educational system is that all students need to elaborate a final-year project in order to obtain the degree title, while before the EHES final-year projects were only requested in technical degrees [1]. This new academic task is aimed at assessing specific and transversal degree abilities and requires the students to master different skills that are needed for the elaboration of the final-year project [2], among them database information searching skills, which are particularly relevant for the students' professional development because it will influence their access to knowledge [3]. The aim of this study was to analyze the perception of a group of final year undergraduate students from University of Granada regarding their level of mastery in searching for information in databases and other online resources as well as using reference management software.

2. Experimental - The sample comprised 103 students aged 20 to 31 years old (mean age=22.54, SD=2.07) who were enrolled in the fourth year of different degrees (B.A. in Teacher of Childhood Education, B.S. in Speech and Language Therapy and B.S. in Psychology and B.S. in Physiotherapy) from the University of Granada.

3. Results and Discussion- Results show that only a small percentage (6.3%) of the participants consider they completely master the skill of searching for information in Spanish, 35.2% consider they master this skill to great extent, meanwhile an important percentage of the participants (41.8%) only dominated searching for information in Spanish to a little extent and 16.7% do not master this skill at all. Regarding their skill of searching for information in English almost the majority of the participants (74.8%) considered they have very little skill or no skill at all, while 24.2% considered they master this skill to great extent or completely. Furthermore the majority of the participants (92.3%) consider they are not skilful or have very little knowledge on using reference management software. Final year students who prepare the final-year project need to receive more training and support so they can feel confident in their ability to search for information both in Spanish and in English and for using reference management software

4. Conclusions - To conclude, the present study can help us to better understand university students' training needs regarding database information searching.

5. References

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