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Veterinary Medicine Students' Use of Library Resources and Access to Scientific Papers

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to determine the satisfaction level of DVM students of Benguet State University with the resources of the Veterinary Medicine Library and their usage of these resources. It also aims to determine students' access to and utilization of scientific papers.

A structured survey was adapted to gather data from fifty-seven (57) 2021 graduating DVM students. Data were interpreted using frequency count, percentage, ranking, and mean.

The study confirms that the resources of the Veterinary Medicine library fulfill the academic needs of DVM students of Benguet State University. A strong need to enhance Internet connectivity in the library was also reflected in the results.

Moreover, results show that students tend to read scientific papers for the reason that they are being required. The students' self-assessment result positioned themselves neutral when asked regarding their ability to interpret data from scientific papers and whether they find it easy to read scientific papers.

Keywords: Veterinary Medicine Library, Library usage, Reading scientific papers, Library resources

1. INTRODUCTION

"The Doctor of Veterinary Medicine Program is a professional course involved in the prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and control of diseases of animals, including terrestrial and aquatic animals. The program includes courses on general education, basic science, zootechnics (animal science), and veterinary medical science, as well as on professional skills that the graduates need to be able to carry out the duties of safeguarding animal health, public health, the environment, and to be capable of utilizing the tools of communication in the pursuit of further knowledge and information dissemination of such in both local and international settings effectively." Commission on Higher Education Memorandum Order No. 01, Series of 2018.

The Bachelor of Science in Animal Technology (BSAT) was offered on June 15, 1977 (MSAC Adm. Memo No. 2, s. 1977) in response to the demand for more animal technicians. The program was then under the Department of Animal and Veterinary Science of the College of Agriculture. Seven years later, the integrated ladder-type BSAT-DVM curriculum was approved by the Board of Trustees (Res. No. 7, s. 1982).

In 1984, the Department became the College of Veterinary Medicine (Res. No. 65, s. 1985) and offered BSAT and DVM curricula. In March 1997, BSAT was phased out (Res. no. 764, s. 1997), and only the six-year DVM curriculum remained.

The College has three departments: Basic, Para-clinical, and Clinical Sciences. The program is periodically evaluated by the Professional Regulations Commission

(PRC), Technical Panel for Agricultural Education (TPAE), Commission on Higher Education (CHED), and the Accrediting Agency of Chartered Colleges and Universities in the Philippines, Inc. (AACUP). Benguet State University is currently the only Higher Education Institution offering a six-year Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree in the Cordillera Administrative Region (Calias, n.d.).

Within these premises, the Veterinary Medicine (VetMed) Library exists to support and provide the best information sources and services to DVM students and faculty. The Veterinary Medicine (VetMed) Library is under the University Library and Information Services (Main Library) of the University. It forms part of the different sections of the Main Library where activities and services are directly coordinated with the College Dean, faculty, and staff.

When one user is aware of one resource, it will lead to more use of that resource (Asemi & Riyahiniya, 2007). Any library patrons' use of the library is dependent on the resources and facilities available and provided. Repeat usage of library resources is affected by specific instances where students can not access needed resources due to the limited number of copies, the loaning periods set, searching aids/catalogs, recency, relevance of the resources, etc. These instances directly affect how students are satisfied in using the library resources. Incidentally, these lead to the information-seeking behaviors of students. With the rapid growth of information sources, primarily driven by technology and the Internet, students' insatiable need for information correspondingly explodes. As Tilahun & Natarajan (2016) put it, with the deluge of available information, each person needs information of increasing variety. The rapid advancements in information and communication technology have brought a revolutionary change in the information scenario, giving rise to many options to

handle varied information sources conveniently (Rawat & Vithal, 2013).

Another issue confronting DVM students today is their ability to appreciate and use scientific papers in doing their research. While textbooks are the most accessible resources available, their being condensed and tertiary resources make it a less reliable basis for DVM students to discuss the results of their research works. Provided that access to current subscriptions or open access scientific papers is available, scientific papers offer current and reliable sources of information. While the cost of accessing proprietary scientific papers challenges all types of researchers, the availability of reliable open-access/source scientific papers may help solve this issue to some extent, on the condition that these types of resources be advertised to the researchers accurately. Weerasinghe (2020) said that it is essential that students are equipped with the necessary library skills to advance their knowledge base and complete their academic work. Knowing why DVM students use or do not use scientific papers helps librarians further understand their information-seeking behavior. This, in turn, may shed light on formulating programs that may help improve DVM students' appreciation of Scientific Papers, perhaps a faculty-librarian collaboration.

2. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study are to:

- a) Determine the number of years the respondents spent to finish DVM.
- b) Determine the number of respondents who have used the VetMed Library resources.
- c) Determine the frequency of use of VetMed library resources.
- d) Determine the purpose/s of using the VetMed Library resources.
- e) Determine the frequency of use of VetMed Library resources based on the following purpose: Research, validate/confirm data, information,

new knowledge, etc., work on projects, Personal/Individual or Recreational reading, and Gather information for someone's research or need.

- f) Determine the frequency of use of the VetMed Library resources based on the following types of resources: Book collections, Journals/Magazines/Periodicals, Optical Discs, Digital Collections, and e-resources.
- g) Identify the reasons why DVM students did not get/find what they were looking for in the VetMed library in terms of resources.
- h) Determine the areas of the VetMed Library in which DVM students would like to see technology be improved in terms of library resources.
- i) Determine which areas (subject coverage) of the VetMed Library resources need improvement (Basic, Para-Clinical, and Clinical Sciences).
- j) Determine how DVM students rate the VetMed Library resources in terms of Recency, Relevance/Usefulness and Adequacy.
- k) Determine the level of satisfaction of DVM students towards the VetMed Library resources.
- l) Determine the frequency of use of scientific papers by DVM students.
- m) Determine which sections or parts of a scientific paper do DVM students read.
- n) Determine how DVM students discover scientific papers that they read.
- o) Determine the agreement of DVM students on statements provided regarding reading scientific papers.

3. METHODOLOGY

The study utilized a user survey design. The survey tool was adapted from

Cabfilan & Ricardo (2020) for the library resources usage and satisfaction. On the other hand, the use of scientific papers part of the tool was lifted from Elderemire, et al. (2019). Descriptive statistics was employed in treating the data gathered.

Participants of the study were fifty-seven (57) graduating DVM students of the Academic Year 2021.

4. DATA PRESENTATION AND FINDINGS

One hundred (100%) percent survey response was recorded for this study. Collected data were tabulated and analyzed using frequency count, percentage, ranking, and mean.

4.1 Respondents' Data

Most of the respondents finished their 6-year DVM degree within seven years. On the other hand, 36.84% (21) of the respondents were male, while 63.16% (36) were female.

4.2 Use of the VetMed Library Resources

All the respondents have used the resources of the VetMed library regardless of the resource type. This indicates the relevance of the library in the academic growth of each student. Therefore, a continuous enhancement of library resources should remain unhampered.

4.3 Frequency of Usage of Library Resources

The students' frequency of usage of the library resources is a sign that the resources support them in their academic activities.

Table 1. Frequency of usage of library resources

Extent	#Responses	%Responses
Daily	11	19.64
Weekly	26	46.43
Monthly	16	28.57
Once a Term	2	3.57
Once in a School Year	1	1.79

Table 1 shows that 46.43% of the respondents use the library resources weekly, followed by monthly users at 28.57% and daily users at 19.64%. On the other hand, two respondents said that they only use the library once a term while a solo respondent said he/she uses the library once in a school year. This result implies heavy usage of the VetMed library resources.

4.4 Frequency of usage of library resources based on purpose/s

Purposes of using the library resources may vary from one student to another as library users are considered heterogenous and have other information searching behaviors.

Table 2 presents the purpose/s of DVM students in using the library resources.

Table 2. Purpose/s of using the VetMed library resources

Purpose/s	#Resps.	%Resps.	Rank
Research (for submissions/requirements of reports)	56	23.33	1
To validate/confirm data, information, new knowledge, etc.	49	20.42	3
To work on projects (individual or collaborative)	51	21.25	2
Personal/Individual or Recreational reading	40	16.67	5
Gather information for someone's research or need	44	18.33	4

DVM students primarily use library resources for research as specified by 23.33% of the responses. On the contrary, using the library resources for recreation was the minor purpose DVM students has for using the library resources. This is practically true since the VetMed library only houses professional references in the field of Veterinary Medicine. At the same time, general or fiction resources are found at the Main Library, a kilometer away.

Relative to the purpose of using the library resources is the students' frequency of use based on the purposes enumerated and presented in Table 3.

Based on the results, DVM students often use the library resources found on earlier stated purposes, while DVM students seldom use these resources for recreational reading.

Table 3. Frequency of usage of library resources based on the purpose/s

Purpose/s	Mean	Frequency of Use (DE)
Research (for submissions/requirements of reports)	4.11	Often
To validate/confirm data, information, new knowledge, etc.	3.75	Often
To work on projects (individual or collaborative)	3.88	Often
Personal/Individual or Recreational reading	2.09	Seldom
Gather information for someone's research or need	3.41	Often

4.5 Resources used by DVM students

The variety of resources by type made available in libraries allows library users to choose based on their needs and comfort. Collection development policy always states that multi-media resources should be made available in any library.

Table 4. Types of resources frequently used by DVM students

Types of Resources	#Resps.	%Resps.	Rank	Mean	Frequency of Use (DE)
Book collections	55	28.06	1	4.15	Often
Journals/Magazines/Periodicals	46	23.47	2	3.33	Sometimes
Optical Discs (DVDs/Videos/C D-ROMs)	21	10.71	5	1.70	Never
Digital collections (Access/Local Databases)	33	16.84	4	3.21	Sometimes
E-resources (PlagScan, Grammarly, e-Journals, etc.)	41	20.92	3	3.36	Sometimes

The results show that DVM students use Book collections of the VetMed library over the other available resources. Books were the only type of resources that registered as often used by DVM students, while Optical discs were never used based on the computed mean of 1.70. Serials, Digital collections, and e-resources were sometimes used.

4.6 Locating resources at the VetMed library

The organization of information sources in any type of library helps users find the resources they need at the least possible time.

Fig. 1. During your last visit to the VetMed library did you find what you were looking for?

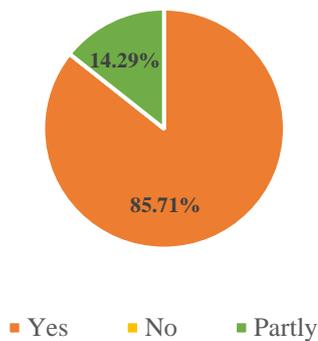
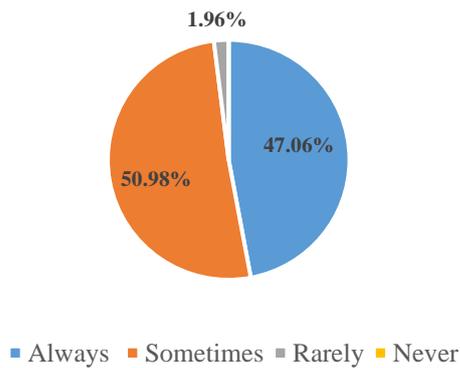


Fig. 2. Do you usually find the resources that you are looking for in the VetMed library?



When asked whether they found what they were looking for in the VetMed library during their last visit, DVM students said *Yes*, while a small percentage said *Partly*, and no one said *No*, as seen in Figure 1. Meanwhile, in Figure 2, 50.98% of the respondents said they *Sometimes* find what they were looking for in the library while 47.06% said they *Always* find what they were looking for. Both results in Figures 1 and 2 indicate that either the library has a good organization of resources

or the collections fit the students' needs. Familiarity with the collections' placements is also a factor.

A follow-up question on why some of the respondents could not find the resources they were looking for is shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Resource availability and retrieval

Reasons	#Resps.	%Resps.	Rank
The resource was checked out	6	37.5	2
VetMed library has no resource/s on the subject	7	43.75	1
I could not find the resource	2	12.5	3
Staff could not find the resource	0	0	
The OPAC stations were not available	0	0	
I do not know how to locate and retrieve library resources	1	6.25	4

4.7 Technology and library resources

It is undeniable that technology caused ease in information organization and access. Thus, the inclusion of technology in all library operations has become a necessity. Table 6 provides technological improvements believed by DVM students as necessary.

Table 6. Resource availability and retrieval

Areas needing tech improvement	#Resps.	%Resps	Rank
More computers to access the collections (OPAC)	24	19.67	3
More Optical Discs (including workstations)	10	8.20	4
More Internet access (Terminals/WiFi)	49	40.16	1
More electronic resources (subscriptions, e-books, etc.)	39	31.97	2

Table 6 emphasizes the constant demand by any library user for the provision of a stable Internet connection. Access to the Internet augments the print resources already available.

4.8 Recency, relevance, and adequacy of library resources

As the focal library users, DVM students ought to know which part or aspect of the library resources they use needs enhancements in terms of relevance, recency, and adequacy.

Table 7 indicates that the three subject classifications of DVM library resources have almost equal percentage results when students were asked which area of the library resources they wished to be improved in terms of subject coverage

Table 7. Resources by subject coverage

Subjects	#Resps.	%Resps.	Rank
Basic Sciences	34	31.78	2
Para-Clinical Sciences	33	30.84	3
Clinical Sciences	40	37.38	1

Table 8 shows how DVM students rated library resources based on recency, relevance, and adequacy. It is quite noticeable that *Book collections* solely had a mean of 4.44 interpreted as *Excellent* in terms of relevance. This specifies that DVM students are book users, given the earlier results that an improved Internet connection remains wanted in the VetMed library.

Table 8. Recency, relevance, and adequacy of resources

Resources	Mean Rating					
	Rec	DE	Rel	DE	Adeq	DE
Book collections	3.80	Good	4.44	Excellent	3.79	Good
Journals/Magazines/Periodicals	3.73	Good	4.11	Good	3.66	Good
Optical Discs (DVDs/Video s/CD-ROMs)	3.57	Good	3.69	Good	3.42	Good
Digital collections (Access/Local Databases)	3.87	Good	3.91	Good	3.74	Good
E-resources (PlagScan, Grammarly, e-Journals, etc.)	3.87	Good	4.02	Good	3.91	Good

4.9 DVM students' satisfaction with the library resources

Table 9 summarizes the level of satisfaction of DVM students towards the library resources of the VetMed library on the facets presented earlier. Overall, DVM students, as indicated by a 57.14% rating, were *Satisfied* with the library resources. On the other hand, 30.36% of the respondents had a *Very Satisfied* rating while the remaining 12.50% had a *moderate* satisfaction with the library resources. It is worth noting that none of the respondents were *Dissatisfied* or *Very Dissatisfied* with the resources.

Table 9. Satisfaction level with the library resources

Level of Satisfaction	#Resps.	%Resps.
Very Satisfied	17	30.36
Satisfied	32	57.14
Moderately Satisfied	7	12.50
Dissatisfied	0	0.00
Very Dissatisfied	0	0.00

4.10 Access to scientific papers

Scientific papers offer updated and reliable sources of information in a specific field of knowledge. While access to these resources entails challenges like subscription fees, format, organization, etc., the demand for its use in academic and professional work continues to be recognized.

Before gathering responses, CVM students were first asked how frequently they use scientific papers in their research or academic works. The results are shown in Table 10.

Table 10. Frequency of access to scientific papers

Frequency	#Resps.	%Resps.	Rank
Daily	2	3.57	4
Weekly	19	33.93	2
Monthly	26	46.43	1
Once a Term	8	14.29	3
Once in a School Year	1	1.79	5

A majority (46.43%) of the respondents access scientific papers every month, while 33.93% access the scientific papers weekly. Then, once a term (14.29%), daily (3.57%), and a respondent said once in a school year.

Table 11 presents which sections of scientific papers are frequented by DVM students. It was revealed that *Results* (13.93%), *Discussion* (13.09%), and *Abstract* (12.81%) were the sections most frequently read by the respondents. On the contrary, *Acknowledgments* (2.23%), *Author/s affiliations* (3.90%), and *Additional materials* (4.74%) were the sections least read by the DVM students.

Table 11. Sections frequently read in a scientific paper

Sections	#Resps.	%Resps.	Rank
Title	40	11.14	6
Methods	43	11.98	4
Additional materials	17	4.74	9
Authors and author affiliations	14	3.90	10
Results	50	13.93	1
Acknowledgments	8	2.23	11
Abstract	46	12.81	3
Discussion	47	13.09	2
References	23	6.41	8
Introduction/Background	29	8.08	7
Conclusions	42	11.70	5

4.11 Discovering scientific papers

Discovering and choosing scientific papers, regardless of format, are done in various ways. Influenced mainly by available technology, by peers, and promotions made by the library.

It is shown in Table 12 that the respondents first discover scientific papers by *directly searching from browsers* (21.13%), followed by *getting recommendations from their classmates, teachers, or adviser* (20.19%). *Subscribing to table of contents alert* (3.29%) and *finding scientific papers via social media sites* (4.69%) were the least ways the respondents discovered scientific papers.

Table 12. How DVM students discover scientific papers

	#Resps.	%Resps.	Rank
Direct search from browsers (Google, Mozilla Firefox, etc.)	45	21.13	1
I read what is recommended from my previous readings	30	14.08	5
I get recommendations from my classmates, teachers, or adviser	43	20.19	2
I search specific databases or website	40	18.78	3
I subscribe to the table of contents alert	7	3.29	7
I browse specific journals	38	17.84	4
I find it via social media sites	10	4.69	6

4.12 On reading scientific papers

Reading scientific papers requires diligence and a broad understanding of the field being worked on. Table 13 presents ideas or reasons why students read or do not read scientific papers.

The result clearly shows that students read scientific papers to complete their academic requirements and gain more knowledge in their field. Meanwhile, DVM students stay neutral in reading scientific papers for recreational purposes. They also stay neutral on the idea that reading scientific papers is very easy and on their ability to interpret data from scientific papers.

Table 13. Reasons why DVM students read or do not read scientific papers

Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following:	#Resps.	Mean	DE
<i>I read scientific papers because it is required for classes that I take (n=57)</i>	137	2.40	SAgree
<i>I read scientific papers for papers/projects that I create (n=57)</i>	144	2.53	SAgree
<i>I read scientific papers to further my scientific knowledge/career (n=56)</i>	132	2.36	SAgree
<i>I read scientific papers for fun (n=51)</i>	97	1.90	Neutral
<i>I love to read scientific papers (n=57)</i>	127	2.23	Neutral
<i>I find reading scientific papers very easy (n=57)</i>	112	1.96	Neutral
<i>I feel confident about my ability to interpret data from scientific papers (n=57)</i>	112	1.96	Neutral

5. CONCLUSIONS

The results indicate that the resources of the Benguet State University Veterinary Medicine library continue to satisfy the academic needs of DVM students. Library resources' quality and quantity must continue to advance or must be maintained. Like any other library, the need for a better and stable Internet connectivity was also emphasized in the results.

The results specify further that students tend to read scientific papers merely because it is required. Anent, students should be reminded to develop a passion or habit of reading scientific papers and its importance to their future profession. It is in this manner that forced reading can be avoided.

While students have a neutral assessment regarding their ability to interpret data from scientific papers, it is recommended that a test or further study be conducted on this aspect.

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