

## **Information-seeking behavior of dental professionals attached to Postgraduate Institute of Medicine, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka**

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This study investigates the information-seeking behaviour (ISB) of dental professionals affiliated with the University of Colombo's Postgraduate Institute of Medicine (PGIM). Despite the availability of electronic resources at PGIM, limited awareness, inconsistent usage, and varying levels of user satisfaction have been observed. Understanding how dental professionals search for, acquire, and use information is critical as Evidence-Based Dentistry (EBD) becomes increasingly important in delivering high quality patient care and maintaining academic excellence. The study aims to analyse their key information sources, identify critical barriers to access such as time constraints and skill deficits and assess their digital literacy training needs. The ultimate objective is to formulate evidence-based recommendations for innovative library services and, institutional strategies that support evidence-based practice and foster an inclusive professional community. A total of 60 individuals, including academics, clinical practitioners, and postgraduate trainees, participated in a quantitative cross-sectional survey. Data were collected using a standardized questionnaire. The results showed that open online resources, particularly Google Scholar (75%) and PubMed (70%), were accessed more frequently than institutional resources such as the PGIM e-library (50%). Barriers to effective information seeking included inadequate time (60%), lack of search skills (50%), and insufficient infrastructural facilities (30%) when accessing resources remotely. The study highlights the necessity of systematic interventions, including digital literacy education, increased awareness of institutional resources, and policy changes to facilitate open-access platforms. The study recommends measures to improve access to resources in order to facilitate Sri Lanka's postgraduate dental education system.

**Keywords:** *Information-seeking behaviour, Digital literacy, Dental education, Postgraduate training, Evidence-based practice*