



ACCESS TO AND USE OF RESEARCH DATABASES

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Insights from the Center for Research Use in Education

In this Data Point, we highlight findings from our *Survey of Evidence in Education* that suggests there is a disconnect between the perceived usefulness of research databases and the actual use of databases as a tool for accessing evidence. Figure 1 shows that most educators who completed this portion of the survey felt that research databases were of some importance for identifying credible sources. However, in Figure 2, we see that only a minority (6%) used a library or research database search to find information (Figure 2).

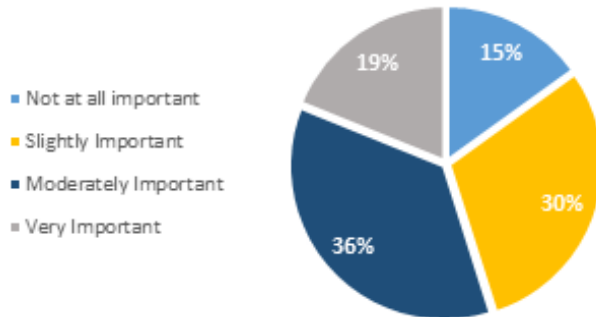


Figure 1. Importance of research databases for identifying credible sources (N=2173)

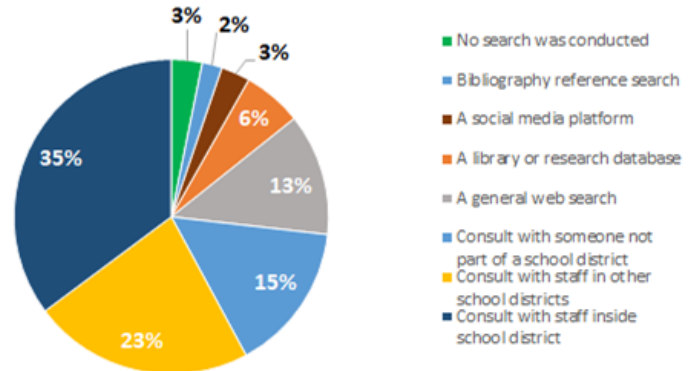


Figure 2. Types of search strategies used to find evidence to inform a school-wide decision (N=497)

Further, most educators reported that they did not have, or did not know, if they had access to research databases (Figure 3). Of those educators who did report having access to a research database, use was idiosyncratic (Figure 4). CRUE acknowledges that research use is about more than access; however, enabling access to research is a necessary pre-condition for informing practice decisions.

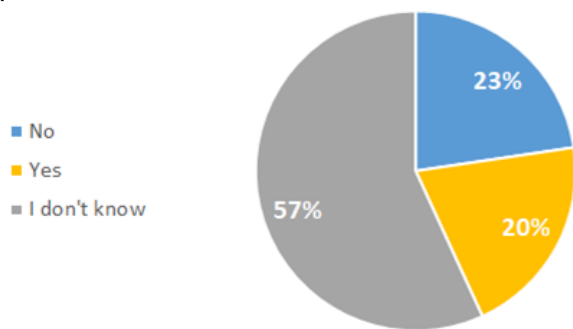


Figure 3. Subscriptions to research databases available in school/district (N=2186)

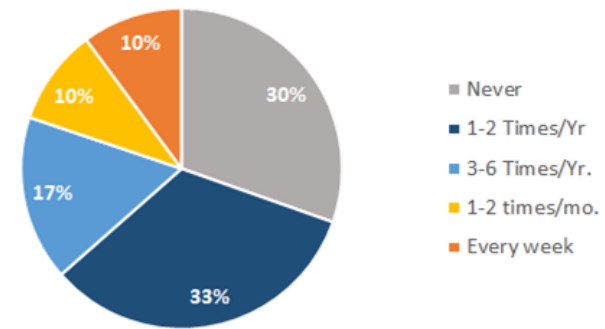


Figure 4. Use of research databases by educators (N=497)

There are opportunities at both the district and state level to increase the consumption of academic research. For example, school districts can increase the visibility and awareness of existing resources available to staff. States can also provide free, online access to research databases that contain full-text articles. For example, Delaware Libraries offers library cardholders access to full-text research articles through [MasterFile Premier](#), an EBSCOhost database. Moreover, the [UDLib/SEARCH](#) program is a state-funded collaboration between the Delaware Department of Education and the University of Delaware Library that provides online access to journals, magazines, encyclopedias, and training for all Delaware K-12 public schools. Another example of a state currently undertaking similar work is Mississippi and its [MAGNOLIA](#) project.

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