Building Data Literacy Training in College Education: A Survey of Current Efforts and Academic Librarian's Perceptions

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ABSTRACT

Data literacy (DL) is increasingly viewed as one of the most important foundational skills in today's professional market (Reinitz et al., 2022). Although DL definitions differ for different settings and disciplines, the core idea centers around an individual's ability to locate, understand and use data (ALA, n.d). Despite the variety of online professional development programs and resources, college students could benefit significantly from DL instructions in school before entering the workforce. Instructions and resources from academic libraries are critical in building up students' knowledge of data concepts and basic data skills. The study thus aims to explore the current landscape of academic libraries' DL instruction and resources, and to gain a better understanding of how librarians perceive their service provisions in supporting the DL initiatives. We examine the following research questions: 1). What DL instructions and resources are provided in academic libraries, and how is DL defined and approached in them? 2). What do academic librarians gauge of students' current DL levels and the effectiveness of existing programs and resources in addressing the needs? We adopted a mixed-method research design to integrate data from a content analysis of academic libraries' DL LibGuides from a random sample of R1, R2, and D/PU universities across 50 states, and quantitative data from an online survey with academic librarians across the US. Insights gained are helpful in identifying gaps in training contents, and may imply effective instructional approaches, creative and cost-effective approaches/strategies for DL training implementation.

ALISE RESEARCH TAXONOMY TOPICS

education; academic libraries; students; information literacy.

AUTHOR KEYWORDS

data literacy; academic libraries; data skills; librarians; training and resources.

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