



EBL 101

Looking to the Literature: Open Access and Free Sources of LIS Evidence

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In the last EBL 101 column, the discussion centered upon assigning your question to one or more domains in order to determine where to look for research evidence. A rule of thumb is to check out the LIS resources first, and then move to other bodies of evidence that may inform your question, such as the business, education, marketing, or management literature, to name a few. One of the barriers to evidence based library and information practice is a lack of access to the research evidence. Some library acquisition budgets do not include a line for professional publications, or if they do, the

funds allocated to such collections can be relatively small.

In light of this barrier, I have compiled a list of open access and free sources of library and information science resources. According to Peter Suber, Open Access literature is “digital, online, free of charge, and free of most copyright and licensing restrictions” (qtd. in Morrison: 46). Anyone can access and utilize open access resources. Stephanie Hall and I compiled the following list for the Evidence Based Librarianship Toolkit for Public Libraries <<http://ebltoolkit.pbworks.com/>>, and have updated it for this column.

Databases

Library, Information Science & Technology Abstracts (LISTA)

<<http://www.libraryresearch.com>>

From Ebsco publishing, this free bibliographic database provides coverage on subjects such as librarianship, classification, cataloging, bibliometrics, online information retrieval, information management and more.

Journals

Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)

<<http://www.doaj.org/>>

Under the Social Sciences heading, there are 96 open access Library and Information Science journals in various languages.

Evidence Based Library and Information Practice

<<http://ejournals.library.ualberta.ca/index.php/EBLIP>>

An open access journal containing research, evidence summaries, and commentary on evidence based library and information practice. Published quarterly. Canadian.

Partnership: the Canadian Journal of Library and Information Practice and Research

<<http://journal.lib.uoguelph.ca/index.php/perj>>

This open access practitioners' journal contains LIS research, conference presentations, profiles, reviews, commentary, and more. Published twice yearly. Canadian.

LIBRES: Library and Information Science Research Electronic Journal <<http://libres.curtin.edu.au/>>

An open access international refereed electronic journal devoted to new research in Library and Information Science. Published twice yearly. Australian.

Ariadne <<http://www.ariadne.ac.uk/>>

This is a Web magazine for information professionals in archives, libraries and museums. Published every three months, beginning in January. UK.

E-JASL: The Electronic Journal of Academic and Special Librarianship

<<http://southernlibrarianship.icaap.org/>>

An independent, professional, refereed electronic journal dedicated first and foremost to advancing knowledge and research in the areas of academic and special librarianship (from website). Open access. Canadian.

Information Research <<http://informationr.net/ir/>>

This open access, international, peer-reviewed, scholarly journal is dedicated to making accessible the results of research across a wide range of information-related disciplines (from website).

Archives

E-LIS: E-prints in Library and Information Science <<http://eprints.rclis.org/>>

An open access archive for scientific or technical documents, published or unpublished, on Librarianship, Information Science and Technology, and related areas (from website). There are more than 9,400 items in the archive.

dLIST: Digital Library of Information Science and Technology <<http://dlist.sir.arizona.edu/>>

An open access archive for the information sciences. The archive has a global advisory board.

OCLC Research Publications Repository

<<http://www.oclc.org/research/publications/search.htm>>

This repository contains works produced, sponsored, or submitted by OCLC Research. In general, the works are research-oriented and are in the subject area of library and information science. Many items describe OCLC Research projects, activities, and programs and were originally published by OCLC, while others are from peer-reviewed scholarly journals. It currently contains links to the full text of 303 items (from website).

OpenDOAR: The Directory of Open Access Repositories <<http://www.openoar.org/>>

An authoritative directory of academic open access repositories, each OpenDOAR repository has been visited by project staff to check the information that is recorded there. This in-depth approach does not rely on automated analysis and gives a quality-controlled list of repositories (from website).

If you lack access to a range of LIS resources, these should get you started. Make sure to check with professional organizations to see if there are resources available to you as part of the membership fee. If you have an open access or free LIS resource to add to the list, please contact me: virginia.wilson@usask.ca. I will make any additions available in future EBL 101 columns.

But what happens if you cannot find any published research evidence to aid in your decision-making process? Next time, Conducting Your Own Research: Something to Consider.

Works Cited

Morrison, Heather. "Evidence Based Librarianship and Open Access." Evidence Based Library and Information Practice 1.2 (2006): 46-50. 6 Aug. 2009 <<http://ejournals.library.ualberta.ca/index.php/EBLIP/article/view/49/117>>.