**Evidence Based Library and Information Practice**

*Editorial*

**Evidence Summary Theme: Information Access & Retrieval**

Fiona Inglis
Associate Editor (Evidence Summaries)
Liaison Librarian, Science
Wilfrid Laurier University
Waterloo, Ontario, Canada
Email: finglis@wlu.ca

The Evidence Summaries in this issue take a very broad view of information access and retrieval. Koufogiannakis et al. (2004) define this domain of librarianship as "Creating better systems and methods for information retrieval and access" (p. 233), but these Evidence Summaries expand the scope a little to include information seeking behavior as an important indicator of how our spaces, services, and systems need to function to enable access.

Barriers to access can have deep roots. Prince reviews a study of a public library system that reveals the impact of historical and ongoing systemic inequities on children's access to library spaces and materials.

Information cannot be accessed if it does not exist. This is an issue highlighted in the study appraised by Shen that explores the challenges of accessing accurate breast cancer information for transgender and gender non-conforming populations.

Understanding information seeking behaviour is essential if we are to improve access. Fena and Jasmin review two different studies on information seeking behaviour, one focused on 2SLGBTQ+ students and the other on older adults.

The layout of both physical and virtual library spaces can also be a barrier to access. Bridgemen discusses a multi-method wayfinding study exploring the experiences of students who speak English as an additional language.

Outside of the library, online communities are creating their own methods for providing access to information. Patterson discusses a study that highlights what libraries and data enthusiasts can learn from each other.

As always, each Evidence Summary includes a discussion of how findings from the research can be applied to other settings. We hope these will inspire you to ask questions and explore ways to reduce barriers within your own context.

**References**

Koufogiannakis, D., Slater, L., & Crumley, E. (2004). A content analysis of librarianship research. *Journal of Information Science, 30*(3), 227–239. https://doi.org/10.1177/0165551504044668