

Current research

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Charbonneau DH. Demystifying survey research: practical suggestions for effective question design. *Evidence Based Library and Information Practice*. 2007;2(4):47–56. Available from <http://ejournals.library.ualberta.ca/index.php/EBLIP/article/view/516/668>.

Objectives: Recent research has yielded several studies helpful for understanding the use of the survey technique in various library environments. Despite this, there has been limited discussion to guide library practitioners preparing survey questions. The aim of this article is to provide practical suggestions for effective questions when designing written surveys. **Methods:** Advice and important considerations to help guide the process of developing survey questions are drawn from a review of the literature and personal experience. **Results:** Basic techniques can be incorporated to improve survey questions, such as choosing appropriate question forms and incorporating the use of scales. Attention should be paid to the flow and ordering of the survey questions. Careful wording choices can also help construct clear, simple questions. **Conclusions:** A well-designed survey questionnaire can be a valuable source of data. By following some basic guidelines when constructing written survey questions, library and information professionals can have useful data collection instruments at their disposal.

Medernach C, Franko J. Assessing the impact of information services in a regionalized health-care organization. *Health Info Libr J*. 2007 Dec;24 Suppl 1:46–56. PMID 18005294.

Objectives: Assessment of the usage of medical library services before and after the implementation of several new services, as well as assessment of the clinical impact of the information provided by the medical library. **Methods:** A sample of employees, residents, and physicians were surveyed using a stratified, random selection process in two surveys 4 years apart. The response rate for the first survey was 52%, and the response rate for the second survey was 35.2%. **Results:** Differences in usage included increased overall use of the librarians and library services, decreased use of the Internet as a source of information, and direct and indirect impacts upon patient care. Information needs of respondents also increased to where 65% of employees and 94% of physicians require information at least once a week. Patient management was the main reason for needing information. The top two specific uses were to find out about a condition and determine a treatment plan. **Conclusions:** These findings parallel some of the findings of other researchers and contradict the findings of others. Possible ex-

planations for these findings and implications for future research are discussed.

Brette A. Evaluating information skills training in health libraries: a systematic review. *Health Info Libr J*. 2007 Dec;24 Suppl 1:18–37. PMID 18005292.

Introduction: Systematic reviews have shown that there is limited evidence to demonstrate that the information literacy training health librarians provide is effective in improving clinicians' information skills or has an impact on patient care. Studies lack measures that demonstrate validity and reliability in evaluating the impact of training. **Aim:** To determine what measures have been used; the extent to which they are valid and reliable; to provide guidance for health librarians who wish to evaluate the impact of their information skills training. **Methods:** *Data sources* – Systematic review methodology involved searching seven databases and personal files. *Study selection* – Studies were included if they were about information skills training, used an objective measure to assess outcomes, and occurred in a health setting. **Results:** Fifty-four studies were included in the review. Most outcome measures used in the studies were not tested for the key criteria of validity and reliability. Three tested for validity and reliability are described in more detail. **Conclusions:** Selecting an appropriate measure to evaluate the impact of training is a key factor in carrying out any evaluation. This systematic review provides guidance to health librarians by highlighting measures used in various circumstances and those that demonstrate validity and reliability.

Marshall JG. Measuring the value and impact of health library and information services: past reflections, future possibilities. *Health Info Libr J*. 2007 Dec;24 Suppl 1:4–17. PMID 18005291.

Objectives: To summarize the context, history, and results of research studies conducted on the value and impact of health library and information services by the author since 1975 and to use this as a basis for examining ongoing developments related to evaluation research. To provide a comprehensive bibliography of library value and impact studies. **Methods:** Literature review and background based on personal involvement in the studies under discussion. **Results:** The author's studies demonstrate an ongoing evolution of value and impact studies since the mid-1970s. In health sciences libraries, the approach taken to measuring value and impact has been strongly influenced by the type of research being conducted in the health sciences field as a whole. As a result, health sciences library researchers have become early

adopters of methods that incorporate outcome and impact measures and rigorous research designs, and the concept of evidence-based library and information practice. The paper recommends that a range of research approaches from various disciplines be used to guide future evaluation research. **Conclusions:** Value and impact studies will continue to be important resources for evidence-based practice as health information professionals deal with evolving user needs and new ways of delivering information to a variety of audiences

Banks DE, Shi R, Timm DF, Christopher KA, Duggar DC, Comegys M, et al. Decreased hospital length of stay associated with presentation of cases at morning report with librarian support. *J Med Libr Assoc.* 2007 Oct;95(4):381–7. PMID 17971885. Available from <http://www.pubmedcentral.nih.gov/articlerender.fcgi?artid=2000787>.

Objective: The research sought to determine whether case discussion at residents' morning report (MR), accompanied by a computerized literature search and librarian support, affects hospital charges, length of stay (LOS), and 30-day readmission rate. **Methods:** This case-control study, conducted from August 2004 to March 2005, compared outcomes for 105 cases presented at MR within 24 h of admission to 19 210 potential matches, including cases presented at MR and cases not presented at MR. With matching criteria of patient age (± 5 years), identical primary diagnosis, and secondary diagnoses (within three additional diagnoses) using International Classification of Diseases (ICD-9) codes, 55 cases were matched to 136 controls. Statistical analyses included Student's *t* tests, χ^2 tests, and nonparametric methods. **Results:** LOS differed significantly between matched MR cases and controls (3 days versus 5 days, $P < 0.024$). Median total hospital charges were \$7045 for the MR group and \$10 663 for the control group. There was no difference in 30-day readmission rate between the two groups. **Discussion/Conclusion:** Presentation of a case at MR, followed by the timely dissemination of the results of an online literature review, resulted in a shortened LOS and lower hospital charges compared with controls. MR, in association with a computerized literature search guided by the librarians, was an effective means for introducing evidence-based medicine into patient care practices.

Kronenfeld M, Stephenson PL, Nail-Chiwetalu B, Tweed EM, Sauers EL, Valovich McLeod TC, et al. Review for librarians of evidence-based practice in nursing and the allied health professions in the United States. *J Med Libr Assoc.* 2007 Oct;95(4):394–407. PMID 17971885. Available from <http://www.pubmedcentral.nih.gov/articlerender.fcgi?tool=pubmed&pubmedid=17971887>.

Objective: This paper provides an overview of the state of evidence-based practice (EBP) in nursing and selected allied health professions and a synopsis of current trends in incorporating EBP into clinical education and practice in these fields. This overview is intended to better equip librarians with a general understanding of the fields and relevant information resources. **Included professions:** Professions are

athletic training, audiology, health education and promotion, nursing, occupational therapy, physical therapy, physician assisting, respiratory care, and speech-language pathology. **Approach:** Each section provides a description of a profession, highlighting changes that increase the importance of clinicians' access to and use of the profession's knowledge base, and a review of each profession's efforts to support EBP. The paper concludes with a discussion of the librarian's role in providing EBP support to the profession. **Conclusions:** EBP is in varying stages of growth among these fields. The evolution of EBP is evidenced by developments in preservice training, growth of the literature and resources, and increased research funding. Obstacles to EBP include competing job tasks, the need for additional training, and prevalent attitudes and behaviors toward research among practitioners. Librarians' skills in searching, organizing, and evaluating information can contribute to furthering the development of EBP in a given profession.

Mi M, Gilbert CM. Needs assessment: prerequisite for service excellence. *Journal of Hospital Librarianship.* 2007;7(4):31–52.

The Helen L. DeRoy Medical Library at Providence Hospital strives to maintain high library standards and to make library service improvement an ongoing process. To maintain and strengthen the library's key role in knowledge-based information management and to align the library's goals and objectives with the mission of its parent organization, the library conducted a needs assessment to identify any existing needs and gaps in library services and resources. A needs assessment survey with 17 items was designed and administered to library clients via e-mail and the library Web site. Data were collected and analyzed for any needs and gaps in library services and resources. The identified needs and gaps presented the library useful information for future strategic and proactive planning and provided opportunities for the library's continuous improvement in its services and resources provision. The results of the needs assessment also produced strong evidence for the library to justify its selection of solutions for reduction and elimination of existing gaps based on data collected from library clients rather than the library staff's own perception and estimation of clients' needs. The needs assessment very well served as a first step for the ongoing process of library service improvement.

Frumento KS, Keating, J. The role of the hospital librarian on an institutional review board. *Journal of Hospital Librarianship.* 2007;7(4):113–20.

Hospital Institutional Review Boards (IRB) are an integral part of the institution's infrastructure. By federal law, any research that involves human subjects is required to seek IRB approval before the research can proceed. Being a member of the institution's IRB affords the hospital librarian with a unique opportunity to have a pivotal role in the multiple facets of the research process. This article reviews the history behind the need for IRBs, the role they play at hospitals, and how librarians at their institutions can increase their services' visibility and value by being a member on the IRB.