Liz Grauel

Research Question Write-Up

RQ 1: Do LIS students prefer print books to e-books for their academic work?

From this question, we hope to learn about how a student's discipline might be related to their preference for the format of reading material in academic work. In other studies, it has been demonstrated that areas in the STEM fields have a preference for e-resources, while fields in the arts have a preference for print materials (Cummings, 2015). Much of this comes down to understanding how students are using materials (for images, for data, etc.), and the availability of the resources they need. We hope to learn if students in MLIS programs prefer print or e-resources, or if they are using one over the other simply because that is what is available. We are also curious about whether the number of credit hours a student has and how they best comprehend reading material factors into this preference, as well as whether print materials are preferred by students with disabilities.

RQ 2: Does proximity to a university library impact LIS students' use of required print materials for research?

This question is intended to address a gap in the literature that does not consider student preferences in relation to their on-campus or off-campus status. Some studies have conducted preference surveys that look at a broad spectrum of university library users, including on-campus and online students, but fail to draw out the nuance in the results. Troy University (Wilson, 2021), conducted a circulation analysis and user survey for multiple campus locations throughout the state and the university system's online students. However, the different needs and preferences that are inherent to distance learners were not specifically addressed in the results of the survey.

From this question we hope to learn how a student's proximity to their campus impacts their use of print books. MLIS students might have a preference for using print books, but their distance from the university library might impact their access to resources. In instances where print materials are required for courses or for projects, students will have to find their own way to acquire what they need, whereas students living close to campus could check out materials from the library. We're also invested in understanding this question because several group members are distance learners who have never used RCL to access print materials due to logistical concerns, and also one group member who has done so.

REFERENCES

Cummings, L. A., Larrivee, A., & Vega, L. (2015). Comparing electronic vs print book preferences between students in the social sciences, the arts and STEM. *Library Hi Tech News*, 32(4), 1–4. https://doi.org/10.1108/lhtn-10-2014-0088

Gregory, C. L. (2008). "but i want a real book" an investigation of undergraduates' usage and attitudes toward electronic books. *Reference & User Services Quarterly*, 47(3), 266–273

Hendrix, D., Lyons, C., & Aronoff, N. (2016). The library as textbook provider: Administering and assessing a student-based e-textbook pilot. *College & Undergraduate Libraries*, 23(3), 265–294. https://web.s.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=10&sid=68a34943-2192-4388-8b9c-e6fb59793795%40redis

Mubofu, C. & Andrew Malekani. (2021). Accessibility of Library Resources and Support Services by Distance Learners, *Journal of Library & Information Services in Distance Learning*, 15:4, 267-279, DOI: 10.1080/1533290X.2021.2021345

Rod-Welch, L. J., Weeg, B. E., Caswell, J. V., & Kessler, T. L. (2013). Relative Preferences for Paper and for Electronic Books: Implications for Reference Services, Library Instruction, and Collection Management. *Internet Reference Services Quarterly*, 18(3-4), 281–303.

Spica, E., & Biddix, J. P. (2021). Prices they pay: Academic achievement and progress to graduation barriers experienced by community college students due to the cost of course materials. *Innovative Higher Education*, 46(6), 643–662. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10755-021-09557-7

Wilson, K. M., R. Hooper, J. Simpson & J. Slay. (2021). Comparing Print and eBook Usage to Meet Patron Needs, *Collection Management*, 46:2, 91-106, DOI: 10.1080/01462679.2020.1833802