

Western University

From the SelectedWorks of Marni R. Harrington

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Reframing "How We Done It Good" Research Publications

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Reframing “How We Done It Good” Research Publications

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Librarians are practitioner-researchers

... that is, we conduct research in our workplaces.^{1,2} Some of that research has been incorporated into the larger body of knowledge in LIS, through publications and conference presentations, but in many cases our research findings are used to inform our practice.

These findings are often disseminated as the colloquially known “How We Done It Good”³ paper. In this type of paper, librarians talk about the conditions that led them to do their study, what they found, and how it affected their practice in their library.

We need to share our local experiences, but we also need to pay more attention to how we can make our findings more relevant to the wider community of librarians.⁴ To illustrate “reframing” research, we use citation data collected from Western’s Migration and Ethnic Relations Program.⁵

What is citation analysis?

Analyzing citation characteristics from a body of scholarly literature can answer key questions about the types of resources researchers use, and can be a useful tool for uncovering patterns and themes in the “literature of” an interdisciplinary field.



How to communicate your research results An example using citation analysis

Sharing research within your library	Considerations ⁶	Sharing research beyond your library										
Age of Publication 	Refocus to more generalizable variables in order to facilitate comparison across institutions. Use standard units of measure to depict variables. 	Citation Age <p>Results for single author, 7 papers and 303 cited references</p>										
Publication Type 	Include information that is likely to be relevant and applicable to other institutions. 	Grey Literature (10%): Wide range of formats and types Most frequently cited <table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td>✓ Government publications (Canada/US/INT/UK)</td> <td>467</td> </tr> <tr> <td>✓ News Resources</td> <td>145</td> </tr> <tr> <td>✓ Think Tank / Policy Institute Research Report</td> <td>120</td> </tr> <tr> <td>✓ Conference proceedings</td> <td>114</td> </tr> <tr> <td>✓ Dissertation or thesis</td> <td>56</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	✓ Government publications (Canada/US/INT/UK)	467	✓ News Resources	145	✓ Think Tank / Policy Institute Research Report	120	✓ Conference proceedings	114	✓ Dissertation or thesis	56
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Library Holdings Western Libraries holdings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 99% of key journals • 83% of monographs 	Omit information that is very specific to your local institution.	Western Libraries holdings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 99% of key journals • 83% of monographs 										

What does this mean for you?^{4,7,8,9}

Planning and conducting your research

- When developing your research questions, ask yourself, ‘So what?’
 - What will you gain from doing this research that you can’t learn from published research?
 - How will your research study contribute new knowledge?
 - How can you build on previous research? (e.g., conduct the ‘further suggested research’ in other studies; use similar methodologies)
- Develop a dissemination plan as part of your research project.
- Choose methodologies and variables that will answer your research questions.

Sharing research beyond your library

- When deciding which aspects of your research to publish, ask yourself, ‘So what?’
 - What will be most valuable and relevant to librarians outside your institution?
 - Focus on information that relates to the bigger picture. Information that is very specific to your institution is not interesting to others - so, don’t include it.
- In your literature review, describe the broader context related to your study.
- Clearly describe your methodology; provide rationale for your choices and explain the study’s limitations.

References

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