

Assessing Our Judgment: Comparing Librarian and Allied Health Professionals' Evaluation of Relevance of Search Results



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Project Background

Temporary & permanent liaisons to
OT, PT, & Rehabilitation Science

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Reference questions on education
strategies for health professions
students, patients, & caregivers

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Which health & education databases
are the most useful?

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How well did librarian and requestor
evaluation of results relevance align?



1. “What are the predictors of success for Occupational Therapy (OT) **students** on fieldwork?”

2. “What is the best method for teaching **patients** to help self-manage their low back pain?”

3. “What evidence are OTs using when educating parents (**caregivers**) of children with physical disabilities on adaptive equipment?”

4. “What are the best practices for teaching clinical reasoning to OT **students**?”

5. “What resources are available to educate **patients** on weight-bearing status post-surgical procedures?”

6. “What materials are available for proxy raters (formal or informal **caregivers**, family, friends) to identify at-risk older drivers?”

Methods

Raters received Excel spreadsheet with relevance criteria based on PICO



Librarians & requestors independently evaluated each title & abstract for relevance according to PICO rubric



A non-evaluating staff member combined all spreadsheets into one master



Averages of librarian responses & requestor responses were calculated and compared

Data Analysis

Age

Sex

Ethnicity

Disease/
Condition

Education
Level

Sample Size

Study
Duration

Qualitative

Quantitative

Intervention
Methods

Assessment
Methods

Outcomes

Country/
State

Urban/
Suburban/
Rural

Inpatient

Outpatient

Data Analysis



Varying term definitions



Unexpressed information needs

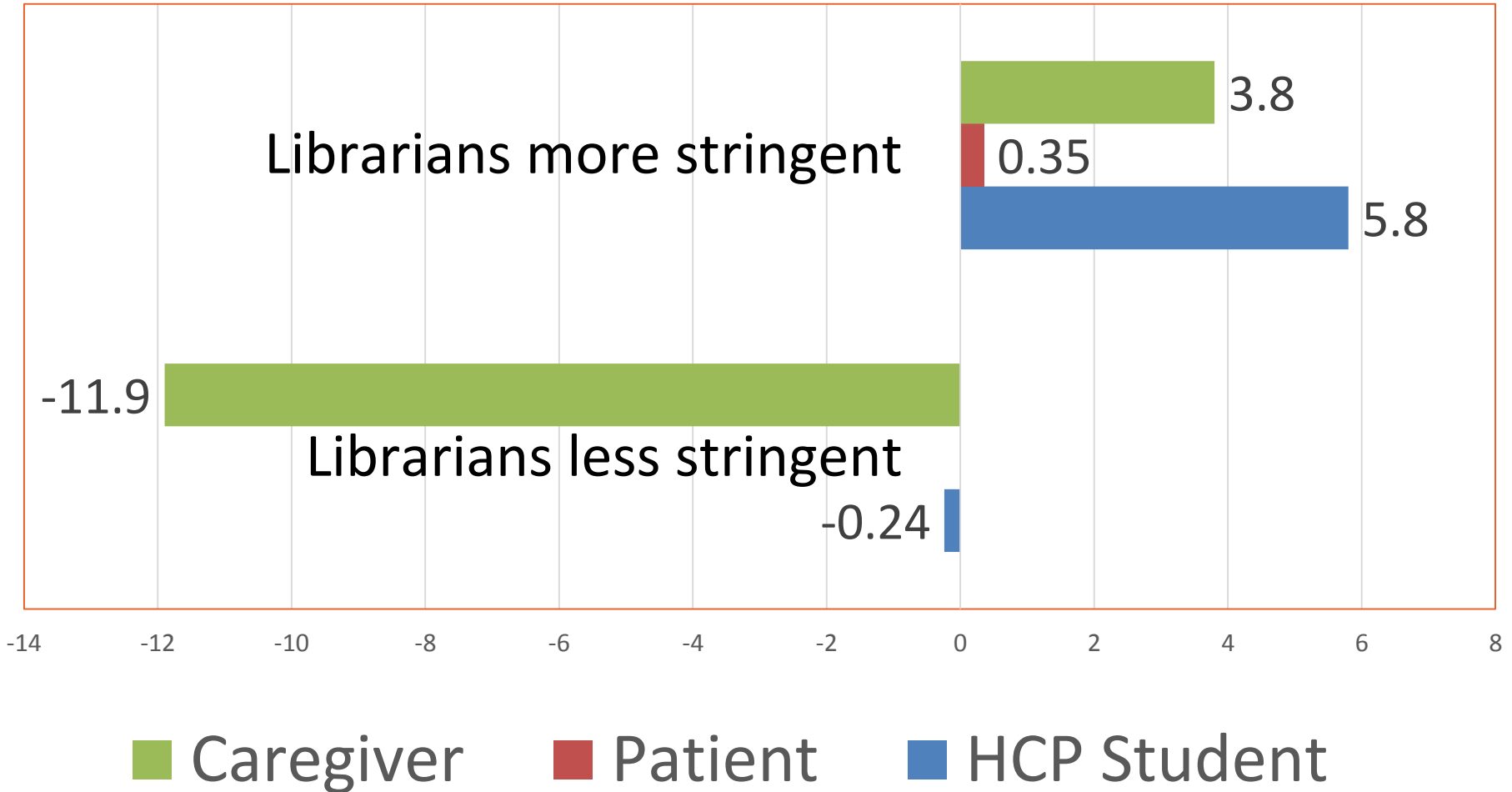


Intended information use



Thematic analysis performed on all comments on spreadsheet. Overarching themes influencing relevance evaluations discerned.

Comparison of librarians and requestors: Alignment of relevance judgments



Discussion:

Overall Relevance Criteria

- No rater selected **sex** or **ethnicity** as relevance criteria for these questions
- Raters only rarely selected **setting** or **study design**

HCP **Student** Education Relevance Criteria

Most frequently selected* criteria:

- Education level
- Intervention methods
- Outcome

*Small sample size limits generalizability

Patient Education Relevance Criteria

Most frequently selected* criteria:

- Intervention methods
- Assessment methods
- Disease/condition
- Outcomes

*Small sample size limits generalizability

Caregiver Education

Relevance Criteria

- Disease and outcome were the most frequently selected criteria for both requestors*

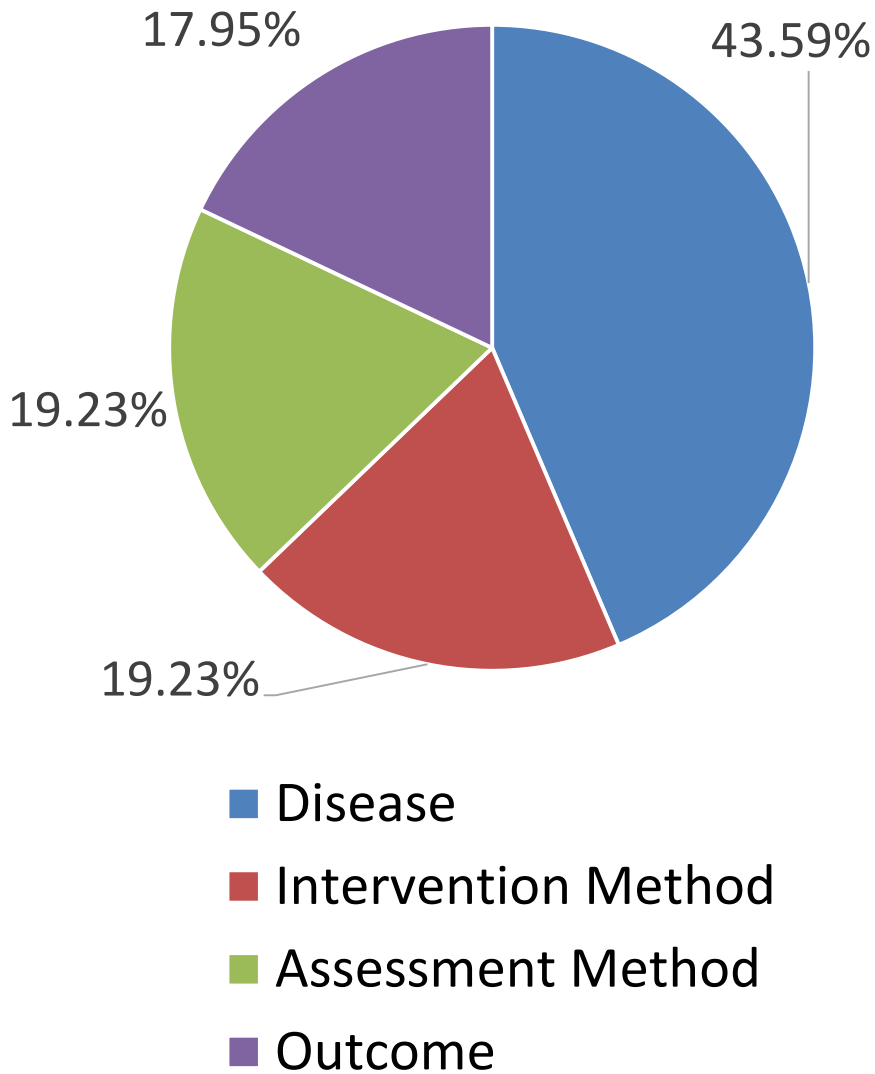
For the Older Drivers question:

- Librarians and requestor showed nearly the same amount of interest in **Disease** and **Outcomes**
- Librarians were more interested in **Intervention** and **Assessment Methods** than requestor

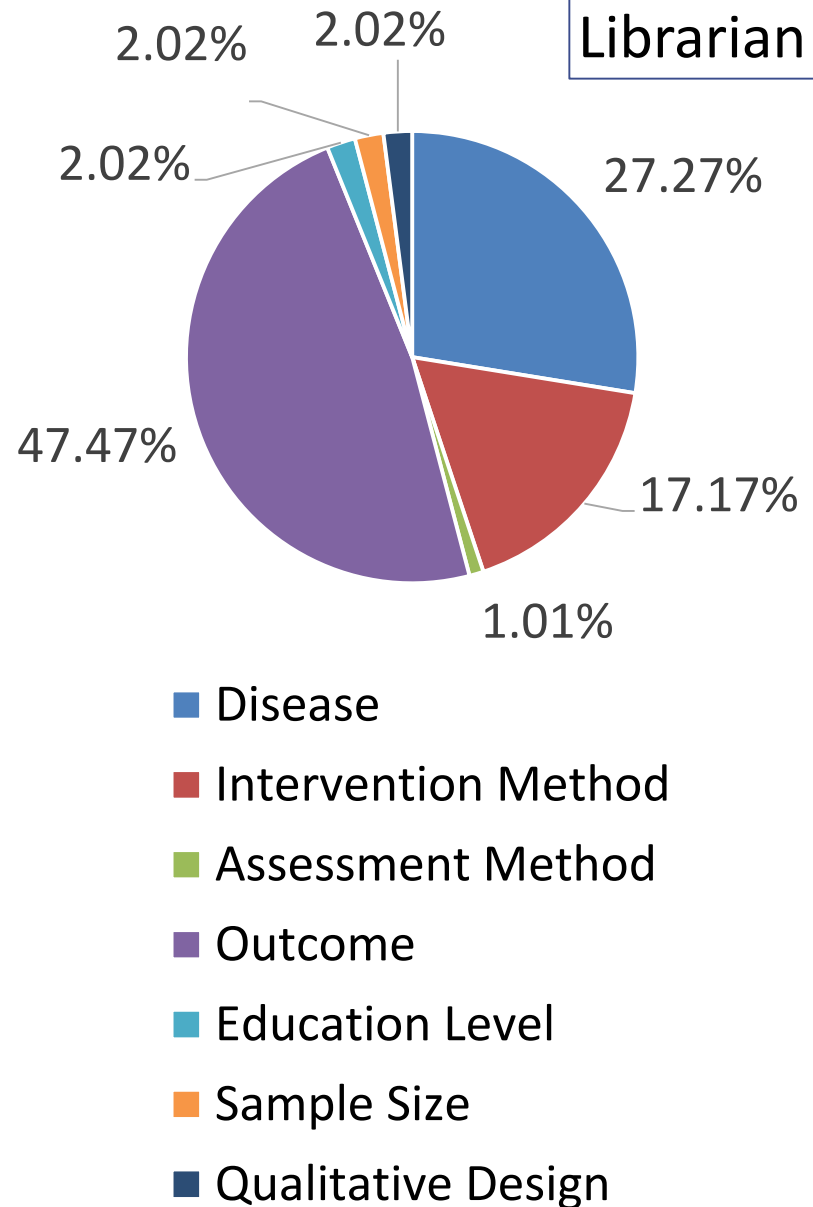
*Small sample size limits generalizability

We are Not Alike

Librarian 1



Librarian 2



Factors influencing relevance evaluations

Varying term definitions

1. Subjectivity of key term definitions
2. Carry-over from librarians' previous search topics
3. Librarians' discipline-specific expertise



Unexpressed information needs

1. Requestor's priorities for elements of research question
2. Intervention group's educational level
3. Type of practitioner delivering intervention
4. Underlying questions



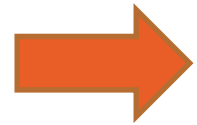
Intended information use

1. Directly applicable to specialization OR transferable
2. Practical OR theoretical
3. Only best practice OR any intervention tried/proposed



Conclusions

Recommendations for practice:



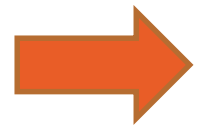
Librarians

1. Reference interviews

- “Confirm, don’t assume”: (term parameters)
- “Prompt and wait”: Underlying search expectations

2. Weeding results

- “Err toward greater inclusion”



Database providers

- Subject heading gaps

Next Steps

- Extend search of the same six questions to additional databases
- Investigate search results on same criteria:
 - yield (# of results)
 - % relevance
 - unique relevance
- Incorporate findings into pertinent LibGuides and orientations/classes



Questions

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