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**Book Review**

## **Review of *Everyday Evidence-Based Practice in Academic Libraries***

Nastasha E. Johnson, *Purdue University*

### **ABSTRACT**

Review of *Everyday Evidence-Based Practice in Academic Libraries*, edited by Claire Walker Wiley, Amanda B. Click, and Meggan Houlihan. Association of College and Research Libraries, 2023. 377 pp. ISBN 9780838939857.

### **KEYWORDS**

academic libraries, evidence-based practice, case studies

### **SUGGESTED CITATION**

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*Everyday Evidence-Based Practice in Academic Libraries*, edited by Claire Walker Wiley, Amanda Click, and Meggan Houlihan, is a compilation of case studies and reflections on how libraries across the country have employed evidence-based library information practices to make sound decisions] to better equip their libraries, serve their users, and meet the ever-changing opportunities for academic libraries. This book has five parts: Understanding Your Users, Leadership and Management, Instruction and Outreach, Collections, and Open Initiatives. The authors present several case studies in each section, built around an evidence-based library and information practice (EBLIP) framework, with lessons learned and appendices. Each case presents recommendations for others who want to do similar things in their libraries.

A major aspect of this book is the diversity of libraries represented. Small academic libraries, libraries at private institutions, library systems at large public institutions, law and medical libraries, and even seminary and military libraries are represented within it. This wide swath of representation will allow many readers to see their libraries reflected within these case studies. There is also diversity within the types of evidence-based case studies, as well as the demonstrated bandwidth of the people performing the evidence-based library assessments, ranging from small committees to large organizational-wide efforts. Most of the case studies include the artifacts of their assessments, including email templates, surveys, and interview/focus group questions, making this a standout reference for those looking for inspiration on how to do evidence-based library assessments at their institutions.

The book's Introduction and Chapter 1 explain what evidence-based library information, practice, and research are and the skills necessary for those who embark on this work. The grounding framework for this book is the Koufogiannakis and Brettle's 5As of EBLIP (Koufogiannakis & Brettle, 2016): articulate, assemble, assess, agree, and adapt. Many of the case studies found in this book are on an organizational level, which poses a need for a sixth step: advocacy. Continuing education and professional development are essential for those who aspire to embark on this work, with a small review of existing learning opportunities shared at the end of the chapter.

The first section of the book presents seven case studies of user assessment. Those who are interested in student workers, faculty research support, library usage by Black and first-generation students, or launching research data management programs will find this first section insightful. The second section, Leadership and Management, has three case studies: one on strategic planning, one on crisis management, and another on reimagining an outdated liaison model. Though this section of the book is one of the smaller ones, it contains a

powerhouse of cases that includes those who are rethinking and re-imagining how their libraries are structured and how they are setting goals. The first example is a multi-site case study of a military and large public libraries. Though the cases are well written, it was somewhat disappointing that the cases are not compared, as it feels like a missed opportunity to see how those different types of libraries could learn from each other.

The second study of this chapter highlights the importance of communication, empathy, and emotional intelligence when embarking on evidence-based decision-making within libraries. The authors note the importance of institutional context, empathy with themselves and their teams, and how this impacts the stress levels of those involved. This notion is essential because data often dominates the conversations about evidence-based library research; however, emotional intelligence helps us understand that data differently.

One of the more robust case studies within this book is found in this section. The authors of this case study on the library liaison model use evidence to evaluate and ideate a new model at their institution. They use the same EBLIP framework to benchmark against peers and gather statistics. Through their investigation, they decided to restructure their librarians into two units: student success and research support. At the end of their case study, they include the timeline of their work, including focus group questions, faculty interview questions, and benchmarking questions when they contact institutions. Benchmarking proved the importance of looking inside and outside typical data channels while doing evidence-based library practice work, especially when considering a new unit or program.

The third section, Instruction and Outreach, includes three cases of librarian instruction assessment, lesson planning workshops, and intersectionality in information literacy instruction. The third case study is another robust case study within the book, not only because of the political and social implications of intersectionality but also because of the theoretical underpinnings of why they were centering intersectionality. For example, the authors introduced me to the TAPUPAS framework, where each piece of evidence is appraised within its knowledge, specific terms, and domains, thereby pre-assessing the proof of suitability. The acronym stands for transparency, accuracy, purpose, utility, proprietary, accessibility, and specificity. There are a couple of other case studies that also use this framework. Still, the author and the editors elevate this body of case study literature because this tells us the why and how of their assessment. There are golden nuggets within this book that make it a wise investment for those who study the field of librarianship.

The fourth section comprises four case studies about how libraries make decisions around selecting and right sizing the collections. A special collections case study describes the

need for intra-organizational process mapping and training to adequately complete the work. Another interesting study is a library in the Midwest that conducted a diversity audit on their collection. To give a sense of the variety within this book, these authors extend the definition of diversity to religious denominations. This particular university library also had a seminary collection, so it was vital for them and their context to look at various religious materials. The last section of the book includes three case studies on evidence-based and data-driven open access initiatives.

The book concludes with a chapter describing how an individual or a culture fit within evidence. The author proposes that authentic evidence-based practices require critical reflection by practitioners and their organizations, including proposing a new way of thinking about the 5As, with critical reflection being an integral component. The definition of critical reflection is extended within evidence space practice to include “any sense-making self-analysis that illuminates EBP practitioner experiences, expertise and professional knowledge and how this personal evidence may inform and frame evidence-based practice and projects.” The author encourages practitioners to adapt their capacity and mindset for learning and change by first determining how their experiences, education, and privilege inform their questions and the practice itself before engaging in evidence practice.

The art and science of evidence-based practice are magnificently captured in this book, and it addresses the nuances within different types of libraries, people working in libraries, and users visiting them. Practitioners must be centered on the who, why, and what impact evidenced-based practices will have on their local institutions. The wide variety of artifacts and approaches shared in this book make it a worthy investment in a library or a personal collection to explore and expound on evidence-based practice within the field of library science, regardless of the library niche.

#### References

Koufogiannakis, D., & Brettle, A. (2016). *Being evidence-based in library and information practice*. Facet Publishing.