Library Public Service Assistants as Instructors: A Survey of Needs

**Poster Objective**

To explore the needs and challenges faced by library support staff in performing scripted group library instruction, the poster presents a survey conducted to gain insights into the effectiveness of such training and the needs of the participants.

**Methods**

Survey design focused on collecting valuable information for training library support staff on scripted information literacy instruction. The survey was pre-tested several times, and later used in focus groups where charts of aggregated results were shared.

**Ethics**

**I: Anonymity/Confidentiality/Informed Consent**

The survey was conducted with an emphasis on confidentiality and informed consent. Participants were assured that their responses would not be linked to their identities and that the data would be disseminated only for internal program use, ensuring participation was voluntary and research ethics board approval was obtained.

**II: Ethics Approval**

Ethics approval may be required for the use of data collected through surveys or focus groups. For example, the UofA REB asked, "In what ways can the findings be disseminated without violating the confidentiality of respondents?" When providing ethics approval, the board requires that researchers adhere to confidentiality protocols and that participants be informed of the nature of the study and the voluntary nature of their participation.

**Ethics Considerations**

- Anonymity/Confidentiality
  - Participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity.
- Informed Consent
  - Participants were informed of the study's purpose, methods, and voluntary nature.
- Voluntary Participation
  - Participation was voluntary, and participants were informed of their right to withdraw at any time.

**Insights**

- **I.** Class Size and Format
  - A small group size (3-4 people) and a workshop style were preferred for tours and teaching success.
  - Participants found it less intimidating to engage in smaller groups.
- **II.** Training Needs
  - Participants identified a need for training in classroom management strategies, library knowledge, and information literacy.
  - Some participants noted a lack of training in how to handle unexpected glitches.
- **III.** Classroom and Tour Instruction
  - Classroom and tour instruction are very different, and participants shared insights on how to improve both.
  - Some participants expressed a need for training in new technologies and effective teaching strategies.

**Conclusions**

Transforming an operational or staff development project into a research project with an ethics committee approval is a necessary framework from which to make recommendations to supervisors and managers in a safe and confidential environment.