

It's Time for an Update: Analysis of Assessment Skills in Library Job Postings

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Introduction

This research project originated with the desire to determine if assessment skills are mentioned more frequently in library job postings in comparison to previous examinations.

Research Methods

This study used the year January 2020 to January 2021 from the ALA JobList ad archive as a data source. With 1594 job postings, each was manually read to determine if assessment skills were mentioned, with the reader deciding on the assessment skill type (instructional, programming, user services, collections, and overall).

RStudio (with packages ggplot2, maps, dplyr, ggthemes and RColorBrewer) and Voyant Tools were used to analyze and visual the collected data.

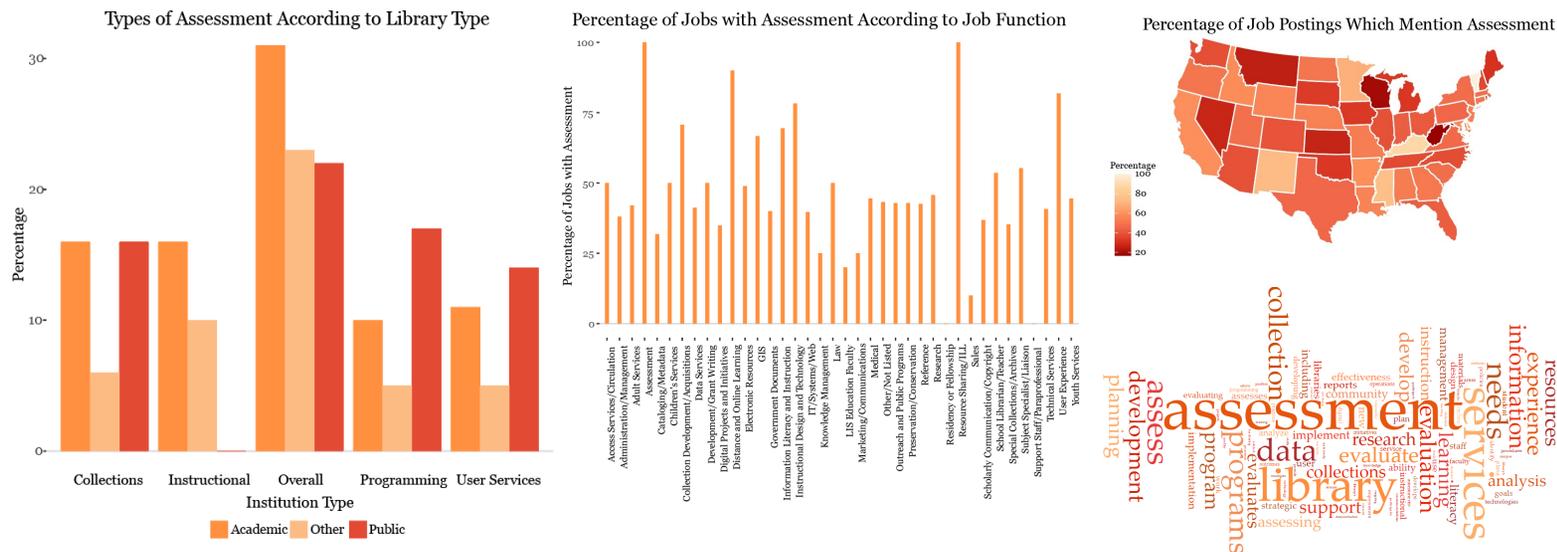
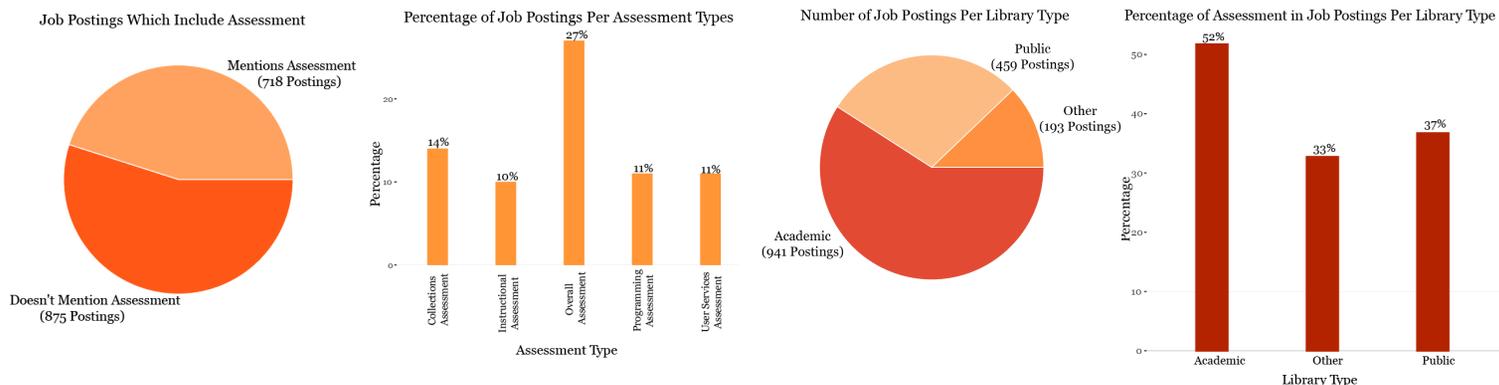
Limitations

- ALA JobList Ad Archive did not always provide the full job description
- The reader decided what assessment skill type the postings included
- Only one year of library job postings were used

Data

ALA was contacted for the data used in this project. ALA gave us their JobList Ad Archive and the data used was from January 2, 2020 to January 29, 2021

Results



Conclusion

Our study shows that assessment is mentioned infrequently within job postings in comparison to the value the library community puts on it. By failing to include these skills within job postings, the library field as a whole is devaluing assessment. Furthermore, our text analysis revealed that assessment skills are usually “tacked” on to other skills, making them easily ignorable. The library community can encourage librarians to develop assessment skills by including these skills within job postings.

References

- Oakleaf, M. & Walter, S. (2010, October). Recruiting for results: Assessment skills and the academic job market. Proceedings of the Library Assessment Conference. Baltimore, MD: Association of Research Libraries.
- Passoneau, S., & Erickson, S. (2014). Core competencies for assessment in libraries: A review and analysis of job postings. *Library Leadership & Management (Online)*, 28(4), 1-19