

ACADEMIC LIBRARY OUTREACH TO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Academic Library Outreach to High School Students:

A Bibliometric Study of Outreach from 2012-2021

Amanda Osborne

amanda.t.osborne@usm.edu

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Abstract

In this bibliometric research paper, academic library outreach to high school students between 2012- 2021 is examined. Using a qualitative research method, articles were identified and analyzed to examine academic library outreach to high school students. The groups of high school students, the motivations of academic librarians, and the types of outreach services are reviewed. The paper will then describe how quantitative research methods were used to acquire numerical data about the articles, publications, and authors included in this study. This will allow users of this bibliometric study to locate current research about the paper's topic and to identify the authors' impact on other scholars' work. The databases used to gather this quantitative data were the Education Resources Information Center (ERIC) and the Library & Information Science Source (LISS), located within the EBSCOhost platform.

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Introduction

The ongoing efforts of academic librarians to bridge the gaps between secondary and post-secondary worlds have been well documented throughout the literature dating back to the mid-twentieth century. Articles about the topic from 2012-2021 have shown that academic library outreach has continued to play a role in preparing high school students for the transition to college and the rigor of academic courses. By doing so, academic libraries have demonstrated their value as educational partners who seek to improve outcomes for entering college freshman.

The purpose of this study was to provide information for librarians and other stakeholders to help them identify and locate the most current research about academic library outreach to high school students. Therefore, only articles published from 2012-2021 that discuss academic library outreach to students are included in this study. The study also sought to identify the authors who have had the greatest impact on the work of other scholars about the topic or related subjects. Librarians and other stakeholders can use this paper to examine the academic library's role in providing outreach to high school students. This study can also be used as a guide for identifying peer-reviewed articles, scholarly journals, and influential authors related to the topic.

Problem Statement

Data collected over the last fifty years has indicated that high school curriculums have not been adequately preparing students to meet the demands of college academic environments. Data has revealed that entering college freshman lack essential college readiness and information literacy skills required for success in college. As a result, the performance and retention of college freshman has declined, especially among underserved and underrepresented students.

To better understand the academic library's role in addressing these problems, this study analyzed peer-reviewed articles published in the last ten years to examine current outreach

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programs for high school students aimed at improving outcomes for college freshman.

Quantitative data was collected for the purpose of providing information to high school and academic librarians as well as other interested stakeholders about the articles and publications that have produced the most research related to the topic. The authors of the articles were also examined to determine the impact of their research on other scholarly works. This paper can help librarians and other stakeholders consider the current roles that academic libraries have played in providing outreach to high school students. This paper can also help to identify the most current articles published about the topic and identify the journals that featured the studies. Finally, this paper can help identify the authors who have had the most influence on other scholarly works.

Research Questions

R.1. How many peer-reviewed journal articles were published in the last 10 years on the topic of academic library outreach to high school students?

R.2. Which journals published the most peer-reviewed articles about the topic of academic library outreach to high school students between 2012-2021?

R.3. Which authors, who published articles on the topic of academic library outreach to high school students between 2012-2021, have had the greatest impact on other scholarly works?

Limitations/Delimitations

The articles found for this study are limited to the Education Resources Information Center (ERIC) and the Library & Information Science Source (LISS) databases located within EBSCOhost's collection of databases. The publication dates for these articles were between 2012-2021. Only those sources that included a link to the full-text article are cited; therefore, no articles with a 2022 copyright appeared in this study. This study focused on the topic of

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academic library outreach to high school students. This study only included information about the topic as it related to groups of high school students, motivations of academic librarians, and types of outreach services. Limited historical and/or educational context was provided about the topic.

Definitions

Buy-in: The degree to which those involved (librarians, educators, and students) feel supportive of and connected to the outreach services (Martin, Garcia, & McPhee, 2012).

College Readiness: A specified set of skills that high school students need to be successful in college (Barry, Snyder, & Matheuws, 2021).

Dual Enrollment, Dual Credit, and Concurrent Enrollment: Pre-college programs that allow high performing, high school juniors and seniors to enroll in college-level courses to earn credits that satisfy requirements for both secondary and post-secondary educational institutions (Barry, Snyder, & Matheuws, 2021).

Information Literacy: The ability to access, evaluate, and utilize information (Angell & Tewell, 2013).

International Baccalaureate (IB) – A rigorous pre-college program for high school juniors and seniors requiring enrolled students to use advanced information literacy skills to complete academic work including extensive research (Angell & Tewell, 2013).

Outreach: Academic library services designed for groups not typically served by librarians and post-secondary institutions such as high school students (Blummer & Kenton, 2019).

Underserved & Underrepresented Groups – Students from minority groups; students from economically, socially, or culturally diverse backgrounds; first-generation college students; immigrant students (Clarke, 2012).

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Assumptions

It was assumed that the articles and the author information from the Education Resources Information Center (ERIC) and the Library & Information Science Source (LISS) located within EBSCOhost's collection of databases were indexed accurately and completely so that the articles retrieved for this specific study were relevant and the listing of authors was accurate.

Literature Review

Student Groups

The articles published about the topic of academic library outreach to high school students revealed that a variety of groups were targeted for services. Pre-college students were one group who received academic library outreach services because they were enrolled in a college-level academic courses that required the application of advanced information literacy skills. Similarly, academic librarians were motivated to outreach for underserved students because they not only lacked essential information literacy skills needed for college success but also “often lack[ed] role models for academic success, expectations, and support systems or encouragement to pursue higher education” (Clarke, 2012). Furthermore, academic libraries recognized that other groups of high school students also benefited from outreach services focused on college and career readiness.

Pre-College Students

Pre-college students were enrolled in special programs with a college preparatory focus. Students enrolled in DC courses or AP programs were the focus of articles about outreach to pre-college high schoolers (Angell & Tewell, 2013; Barry, Snyder, & Matheuws, 2021). Data about pre-college students was collected using qualitative methods (Angell & Tewell, 2013) and

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quantitative methods (Barry, Snyder, & Matheuws, 2021). Even though the data collection methods were different, both articles described the unique features of pre-college student groups that made them a target of academic library outreach initiatives (Angell & Tewell, 2013; Barry, Snyder, & Matheuws, 2021).

Barry, Snyder, & Matheuws (2021) stated, "... [in] dual enrollment (sometimes called dual credit) programs, ... students earn college credit while attending high school." Barry, Snyder, & Matheuws (2021) also report that dual credit programs provide, "...options for student to achieve college credits – on campus, in the high school classroom with a university instructor, online through the university's course management system, or in the classroom with the high school using the university's content and materials." The authors further explained that "... Dual credit students are officially enrolled in institutions of higher education ... [and can] earn enough credit to enter college as juniors."

AP students were another pre-college group discussed in the literature. Angell & Tewell (2013) reported on outreach designed for International Baccalaureate (IB) students, a type of AP program for high school juniors and seniors. Angell & Tewell (2013) described IB as, "a research intensive program..." Furthermore, they explained that the IB program was, "[a] demanding two-year curriculum leading to final examinations and a qualification that is welcomed by leading universities around the world." Additionally, the authors stated, "... students [who] are enrolled in the elite IB program, [signify] they consistently complete academic coursework at a college level."

Underserved Students

In addition to pre-college students, academic library outreach designed for underserved high schoolers was discussed in the literature (Angell & Tewell, 2013; Clarke, 2012; Martin,

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Garcia, & McPhee, 2012). Data about underserved students was collected using qualitative methods and describe the group's unique features that distinguished them from other students. (Angell & Tewell, 2013; Clarke, 2012; Martin, Garcia, & McPhee, 2012). Angell & Tewell (2013) and Martin, Garcia, & McPhee (2012) described outreach for low-income students in large urban high schools. Angell & Tewell (2013) reported on outreach for low income, high performing students in a high performing school. Martin, Garcia, & McPhee (2012) described services at a, "Title I school with compensatory educational programs that provide supplementary services to low-achieving students from low income families and English learner students." Martin, Garcia, & McPhee (2012) provided a demographic breakdown of the students. They reported, "Sixty-seven percent of students are considered Hispanic or Latino ... Thirteen percent are English learners who are not proficient in English and 66 percent receive free or reduced priced meals."

Clarke (2012) wrote about services targeting "economically disadvantaged students" enrolled in the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) at Stony Brook University (SBU). EOP students participated in outreach programming during the summer before entering SBU as a freshman. Even though the author did not specify if the EOP students were still enrolled in high school at the time of their participation, Clarke (2012) described the group using the term "pre-freshman." Since the outreach occurred prior to the beginning of their freshman year, the EOP students were included in this review as an example of underserved students served by academic library outreach.

Clarke (2012) stated,

The purpose of the Stony Brook University's EOP service 'is ... to provide access to higher education for economically disadvantaged students who possessed the potential to

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succeed in college, but whose academic preparation in high school has not fully prepared them to pursue college education successfully. The primary mission of the EOP is to facilitate the recruitment, enrollment, retention, and graduation for these students.

Other Students

Flash, Allen, Mack, & Clement (2017) focused their outreach on students interested in STEM. Data about STEM students was collected using qualitative methods. The authors stated that their outreach program, Big Orange STEM Saturday (BOSS), "...aims to prepare pre-college students for higher education classroom experiences." They also reported that initially, "... the intended audience for this program was high school students." However, after the first year of the program, students in both middle and high school were targeted because feedback, mainly from parents, wanted the younger group included in the event. Even though the authors used the term "pre-college" to describe their target audience, they were referring to, "...students interested in attending colleges and universities, particularly those with an interest in studying one of the STEM areas" (Flash, Allen, Mack, & Clement, 2017). Unlike the articles previously cited, the term "pre-college" in this instance did not refer to high school students enrolled in DC or AP courses. The authors did not target underserved students either even though the article made mention, "...that STEM preparation increases interest in STEM majors for all students, but in particular for underrepresented populations such as minorities and those from low-income backgrounds" (Flash, Allen, Mack, & Clement, 2017).

Rose, Nesbitt, & Galloup (2020) designed their outreach for all high school students. Data collected for their study was done so using qualitative methods. The call for submissions for an art show held at the Cumming campus library at the University of North Georgia (UNG) was directed to students at "five area high schools" as well as those on their college campus. An

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analysis of the participants revealed that that a total of two high school students entered art in the show, and they were enrolled in DC courses offered through the UNG Cumming campus.

Other authors, like Buchansky (2021) and Thorne-Ortiz (2015), described outreach designed for two additional student groups. Using a quantitative method to gather data through an online survey of academic librarians, Buchansky (2021) reported that 2% offered outreach to “senior grades only.” Since classification as a senior did not necessarily indicate that the group was pre-college, this group was considered as “other.” Likewise, the article by Thorne-Ortiz (2015) described academic library outreach to three youth groups. Qualitative methods were used to collect data. Two groups of students were described as middle school youths. However, neither the grade level nor age range for the third group was provided. Nonetheless, the title of the article by Thorne-Ortiz (2015) specifically stated that students through the age of 16 were the target audience. Additionally, the author stated, “This article provides examples of event planning and programming provided for youth groups (middle school or high school students), and offers tips to giving younger students a hands-on education, and entertaining library experience.” Based on article title and the author’s statement, these students were considered as “other.”

Motivations

The articles directly related to the topic of this study discussed the motivations of academic libraries to develop outreach services for high school students (Angell & Tewell, 2013; Barry, Snyder, & Matheuws, 2021; Buchansky, 2021; Clarke, 2012; Flash, Allen, Mack, & Clement, 2017; Martin, Garcia, & McPhee, 2012; Rose, Nesbitt, & Galloup, 2020; Thorne-Ortiz, 2015). Using qualitative (Angell & Tewell, 2013; Clarke, 2012; Flash, Allen, Mack, & Clement, 2017; Martin, Garcia, & McPhee, 2012; Rose, Nesbitt, & Galloup, 2020; Thorne-Ortiz, 2015)

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and quantitative (Barry, Snyder, & Matheuws, 2021; Buchansky, 2021) research methods, the authors consistently reported on three primary motivations for outreach: (1) easing the transition to college; (2) improving literacy skills; and (3) developing college readiness.

Easing the Transition to College

Angell & Tewell (2013); Barry, Snyder, & Matheuws (2021); Buchansky (2021); Clark (2012); Flash, Allen, Mack, & Clement (2017); and Martin, Garcia, & McPhee (2012) reported that easing students transition to college was one of the academic library's motivations for providing outreach to high school students. In the case study by Martin, Garcia, & McPhee (2012), the authors stated, "Academic instructional outreach programs targeting high schools play an instrumental role in preparing students to transition successfully into the academic community." Barry, Snyder, & Matheuws (2021) asserted, "Such programs will no doubt impact the transition to college for participating students ..." Angell & Tewell (2013) reported, "By promoting information literacy and academic success, this partnership [between the academic library and high school] remarkably improves the students' transition to college-level research expectations." Clarke (2012) said, "The librarians ... at Stony Brook University strive to create a positive and welcoming learning environment while reducing students' anxiety about college."

Improving Literacy Skills

The importance of developing the information literacy skills of high schoolers was another primary motivation reported by the authors in the literature. In explaining their motivations for a STEM centered outreach, Flash, Allen, Mack, & Clement (2017) stated, "It has long since been the goal of academic libraires to increase information literacy among students" Their sentiments were echoed by Angell & Tewell in their 2013 case study when the authors remarked, "Effectively imparting information literacy skills to students of all levels

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remains a foremost concern for K-20 librarians.” In the case study by Clarke (2012), the library and IT collaborated to, “create a learning block of information literacy and information technology skills for these students [EOP “pre-freshmen”].

Developing College Readiness

Barry, Snyder & Matheuws (2021) surveyed academic librarians to determine their motivations for providing outreach to high school students. The authors remarked,

Talking about college readiness is in many ways equivalent to talking about the potential for student success, in that it has a direct impact on the academic preparedness, and therefore possible achievement, of each student. In fact, the participants in this study qualified their motivation to work with high school students by talking about their work in preparing students for college-level research and academic expectations....

Angell & Tewell (2013) said, “Overall, the primary goal of these [outreach] partnerships is to improve the information literacy skills of secondary school students, providing them with the research and evaluation techniques necessary for college success.” Clarke (2012) stated, “Insomuch as the academic library is a symbol of the institution of higher education, libraries can take an active role in helping economically disadvantaged students acquire the skills to help them master ... ‘the academic code’.” Flash, Allen, Mack, & Clement (2017) remarked, “Using library spaces to design and facilitate conferences for high school students changes traditional mindsets about how libraries can promote college preparedness.”

Other Motivations

Other motivations discussed in the literature included recruiting future students (Barry, Snyder & Matheuws, 2021; Buchansky, 2021; Clarke, 2012); decreasing library anxiety; increasing self-confidence (Buchansky, 2021; Clarke, 2012); increasing access to college-level

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resources; demonstrating added-value (Angell & Tewell, 2013); and experiencing college life (Barry, Snyder & Matheuws, 2021; Buchansky, 2021; Flash, Allen, Mack, & Clement, 2017).

Types of Outreach Services

Several articles reported that visits to the academic library were one way outreach was provided to high school students (Angell & Tewell, 2013; Barry, Snyder, & Matheuws, 2021; Buchansky, 2021; Clarke, 2012; Flash, Allen, Mack, & Clement, (2017); and Martin, Garcia, & McPhee, 2012; Thorne-Ortiz, 20). Visits included library tours and literacy skill instruction (Buchansky, 2021). Clarke (2012) incorporated digital skills into information literacy instruction. Flash, Allen, Mack, & Clement (2017) used STEM as a basis for instruction. Other forms of outreach included extending borrowing privileges to students (Angell & Tewell, 2013); providing individualized consulting sessions with students (Angell & Tewell, 2013); and creating a scavenger hunt for students (Thorne-Ortiz, 2015).

Similarities of Methodology

The majority of research conducted in these studies were mostly similar as they used qualitative methods such as observations and interviews. A couple of articles used quantitative methods to collect data via online surveys of academic librarians about outreach services.

Methodology

The methodology that was used in this study was a bibliometric analysis that provided numerical data on articles, publications, and authors found while researching the topic of academic library outreach to high school students. Appropriate data was found using keywords related to the topic using the Boolean search mode: “academic library or academic libraries or university library or university libraries or college library or college libraries” AND “outreach programs or outreach services or community outreach” AND “high school students or teenagers

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or secondary schools or adolescents.” The Education Resources Information Center (ERIC) database and the Library & Information Science Source (LISS) database, located within EBSCOhost platform, were searched. The ERIC database contained a listing of sources published in education-related journals. ERIC also included links to full-text articles and links to related “websites or DOIs” on topics within the field of education including high schools (EBSCOhost, n.d.a). The LISS database contained full-text articles on topics within the LIS field including academic libraries and outreach (EBSCOhost, n.d.b). To further ensure the data was accurate and appropriate to the topic, searches in both databases were limited to full-text, peer-reviewed articles from academic journals published between 2012-2022. All of the data collected in the study was stored in this Microsoft Word document. The data included an analysis of the students, motivations, and services discussed in the articles; numerical data about the articles, publications, and authors connected to the study; and the bibliographic details of the supporting sources.

Results

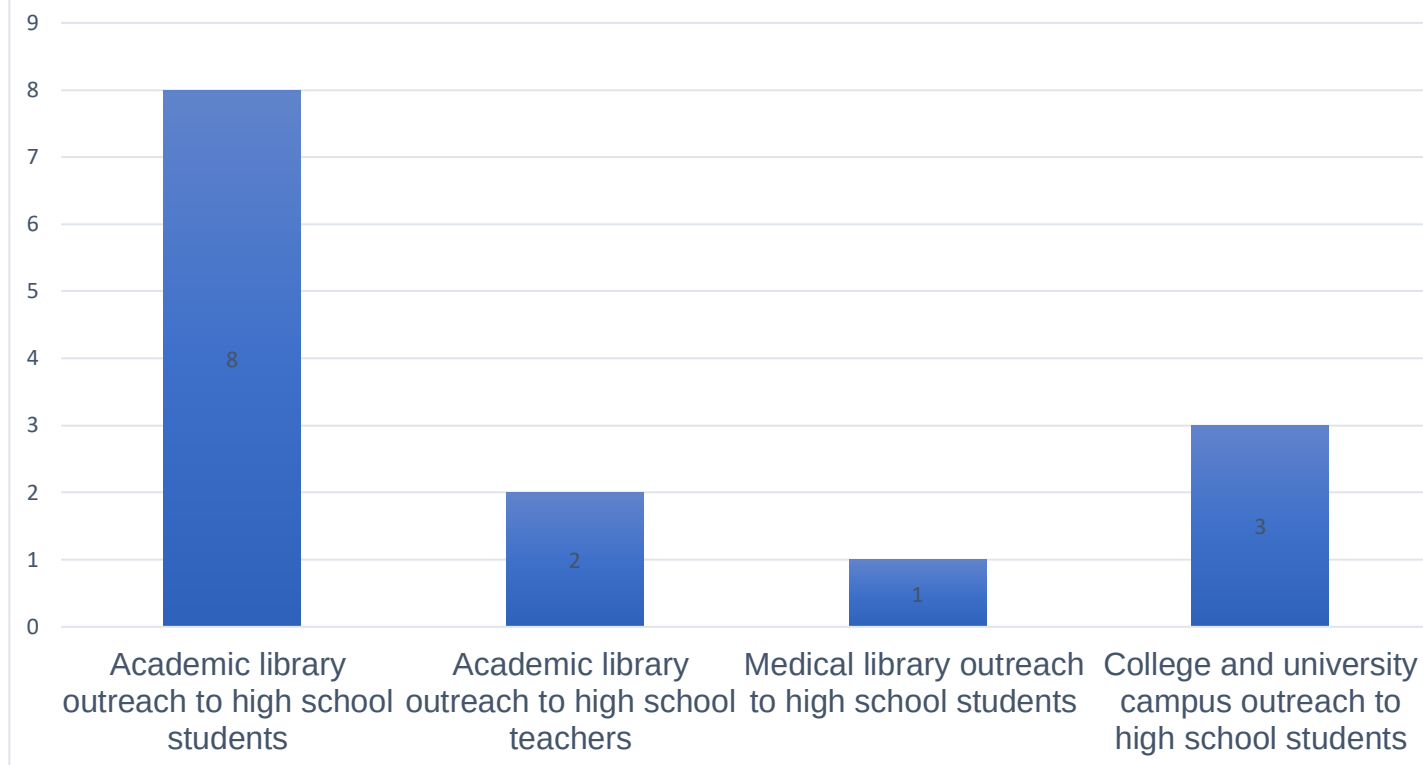
R.1. How many peer-reviewed journal articles were published in the last 10 years on the topic of academic library outreach to high school students?

As illustrated in *Figure 1*, a total of 14 peer-reviewed journal articles were located using the prescribed methodology. A total of eight articles were published about the paper’s main topic. Six articles were published on topics related to but not directly about academic library outreach to high school students.

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Figure 1

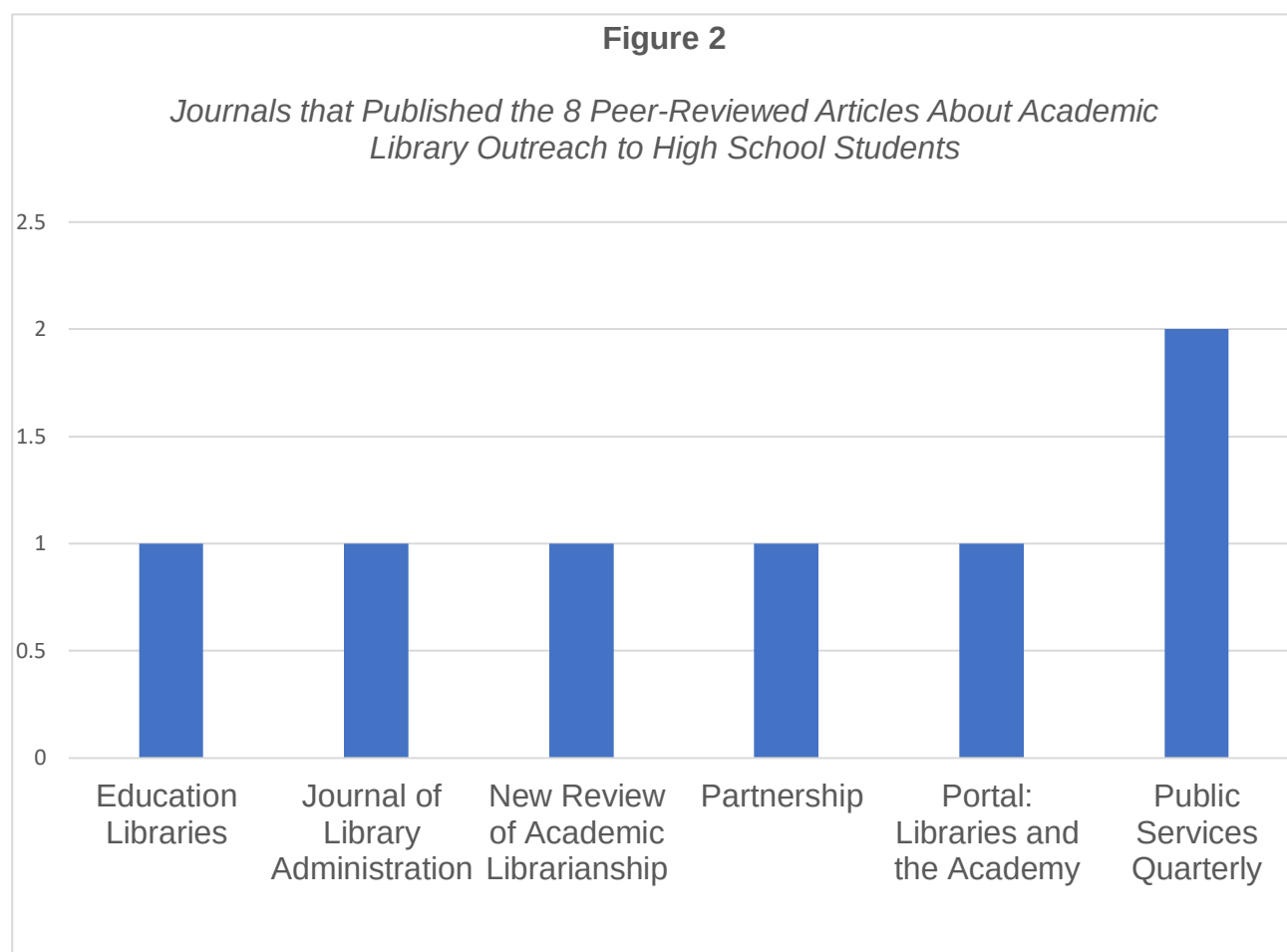
*The Topics of the 14 Articles Located Using the Paper's Methodology
& the Number of Articles About Each Topic*



R.2. Which journals published the most peer-reviewed articles about the topic of academic library outreach to high school students between 2012-2021?

As illustrated in *Figure 2*, the *Public Services Quarterly* published the most peer-reviewed articles about the topic of academic library outreach to high school students between 2012-2021. This academic journal published two of the eight articles identified in *Figure 1*.

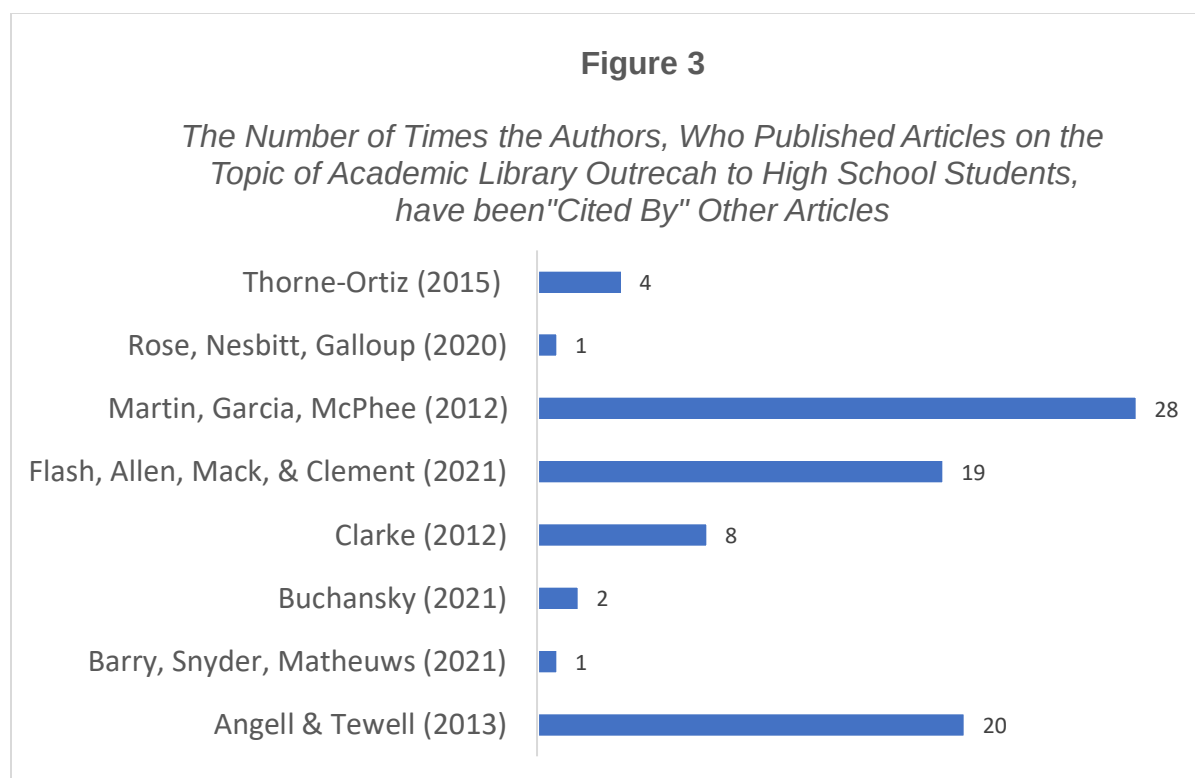
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R.3. Which authors, who published articles on the topic of academic library outreach to high school students between 2012-2021, have had the greatest impact on other scholarly works?

As illustrated in *Figure 3*, Martin, Garcia, & McPhee (2012) have had the greatest impact on other scholarly works. Their article was cited by 28 times by other authors.

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Discussion

Figure 1 illustrated that a total of 14 articles were found using the prescribed methodology. However, six of the articles discussed topics that were similar to the focus of this paper but proved to be different. Four out of these six articles focused on outreach provided by institutions other than an academic library. One of the four articles was about a medical library's outreach to high school students (El-Khayat; 2016). The other three articles described college and university campus outreach to high schools and the wider community but did not include the academic library as part of the discussion (Barney & Williams; 2021; Dodd, Singh, & Micsko, 2021; Zacharias & Mitchell, 2020). The remaining two similar but different articles were about academic library outreach to teachers not students (Cameron, Montgomery, Bauer, Anderson, & Filippelli, 2019; Wrenn & Kohl, 2012). The eight left-over articles were used in the discussion featured in this paper to examine the academic library's role in providing outreach to high school

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students (Angell & Tewell, 2013; Barry, Snyder, & Matheuws, 2021; Buchansky, 2021; Clarke, 2012; Flash, Allen, Mack, & Clement, 2017; Martin, Garcia, & McPhee, 2012; Rose, Nesbitt, & Galloup, 2020; Thorne-Ortiz, 2015).

Figure 2 represented the journals that published each of the eight relevant articles.

Public Services Quarterly was the only journal featured that published two articles on the topic of academic library outreach to high school students. The LISS Database described the purpose of this journal as, “publishes research on public services including reference & research assistance, access & delivery services and other services to patrons” (EBSCOhost, n.d.b). The two articles that appeared in this journal were by Angell & Tewell (2013) and Clarke (2012). Both of these articles discussed outreach to underserved students in case studies about how academic librarians addressed the college readiness skills of this group of high school students. *Figure 3* showed that Angell & Tewell (2013) were cited by 20 other authors for their work and ranked second in the list of most influential authors. Therefore, the determination can be made that the *Public Services Quarterly* journal has published authors whose work has impacted the research efforts of other scholars.

Figure 3 showed that several authors have made an impact on the work of other scholars. The first and second ranked most influential authors have already been identified and discussed in this paper. The third ranked set of authors, Flash, Allen, Mack, & Clement (2017), were cited by 19 other scholarly works. In total, the articles of the top three ranked sets of authors have been cited by 67 other sources. This numerical data showed that the work of the authors in the top three positions has impacted the scholarly contributions to the field of Library and Information Science.

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In conclusion, the study of academic library outreach to high school students was limited by the small number of articles available in the ERIC and LISS databases. Other databases would have needed to be included to understand the topic more fully. Further research on the role of the academic library in providing outreach to high school students is needed to fully understand the impact it has had on the college readiness of entering college freshman.

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