Expanding the role of the librarian as knowledge synthesis methodologist: A case study in teaching Rayyan

**Background**

Health librarians who help research teams with knowledge synthesis projects often find themselves answering questions about methodology and managing the screening process.

The literature screening stage of knowledge syntheses is time consuming and difficult to track, and researchers often ask for advice on ways to make this stage quicker and more efficient. This poster describes how we developed a workshop and associated online guide for Rayyan, a tool which facilitates the screening process.

**The Librarian Methodologist**

Since librarians support various KS projects, we have a good understanding of the knowledge synthesis research and process. We also have a good knowledge of the factors that contribute to the successful project management of knowledge synthesis studies.

Therefore, librarians are well positioned to contribute to knowledge synthesis research beyond creation of search strategies. This is only one example of how librarians can contribute more to knowledge synthesis research. By sharing our experience, we hope to help other librarians looking for an open access tool that will assist researchers in the screening process.

**Workshop Development**

Using feedback from researchers and librarians working on knowledge syntheses, we worked together to create a lesson plan that adapted the use of the tool to their needs.

We invited librarian colleagues to our first workshop, and asked them to ask questions and make suggestions throughout the session to help improve our lesson plan. We improved the order of the lesson plan and added more detail to certain sections based on feedback in this session.

We worked with McGill Teaching and Learning Services to allow for students to receive co-curricular credits for attending our workshops.

**Evaluation**

The workshop and online guide have been popular, and we regularly receive international help requests. The only significant complaint is that some find the workshop too slow.

Most appreciated new skills:
- Blinding of screening
- Working with multiple collaborators
- Importing from Endnote and PubMed

Suggested workshop improvements are:
- More help with exporting results
- Greater clarification on switching from title/abstract to full text screen stage.

**Limitations of Rayyan**

Rayyan is a robust tool for screening articles in knowledge synthesis studies. However, there are some limitations that users should be aware of:

- Duplicate management is hard to use.
- We suggest using EndNote software to remove duplicates before exporting to Rayyan.
- It does not offer PDF annotation capability.
- You cannot edit or delete any citation within a review.
- It does not support quality assessment/appraisal or data extraction.
- Only English-language interface is available.
- PDFs must be uploaded one at a time for review, and there are copyright concerns with this function.

**Suggested Workflow**

We researched and compared the available online screening tools. We chose to work with Rayyan for three main reasons:

- under active development (therefore, constantly improving),
- free to use with no restrictions,
- meets most of the researchers’ needs.

We replaced paper handouts with an online guide to mirror the content of the lesson plan. Participants were also emailed materials before the workshop.

Lesson Plan
- Creating an account
- Creating a new review
- Importing records
- Using the screening platform for including, excluding articles
- Inviting collaborators
- Using the blinding switch and resolving conflicts

We also discuss the limitations of Rayyan, particularly for the full text screening stage, and offer solutions.

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http://libraryguides.mcgill.ca/rayyan