A DEIA Look at a Statewide Online Library Database Collection: Process, Results, and Recommendations

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Executive Summary

In today's increasingly interconnected and diverse world, the need for readily accessible information representing a multitude of perspectives and voices has become more critical than ever. This white paper argues that database providers have a responsibility to actively integrate more diverse content into their aggregated databases from various backgrounds, disciplines, and geographic regions. By doing so, they can ensure their platforms remain relevant and valuable for a wider audience, contribute to a more inclusive information landscape, and empower individuals to engage with a richer range of perspectives.

Introduction/Background

Minitex

Minitex is a state-funded library organization located at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities. Our mission is to strengthen libraries, cultural institutions, and the communities they serve. We connect libraries and individuals with information, ideas, and experiences to enrich lives and strengthen communities.

We believe in the growing importance of libraries, and we are dedicated to supporting the library community in Minnesota. We support libraries in South Dakota and North Dakota as well.

eLibrary Minnesota

eLibrary Minnesota (ELM) is a collection of research and information databases to be used by Minnesota residents through their school, public, academic, and state government libraries or the ELM Portal.

The databases in ELM were recommended by the Minitex Shared E-Resources (SER) Task Force and are licensed through June 30, 2025.

ELM is funded by Minitex, State Library Services, Minnesota's state library agency, with state appropriations to the Minnesota Office of Higher Education and the Minnesota Department of Education.

The legislative intent is to provide Minnesotans with the best possible access to information resources across the educational spectrum, including K-12, higher education, state government, and public libraries.

DEIA Goals for Minitex and ELM

As described in the Minitex Strategic Plan 2020-2023, one of the prime objectives for Minitex to fulfill its mission was objective *3. Build upon e-resource and digital collections for sustainability, equity of access, and inclusion.*

As a large part of this objective, Minitex's statewide database program is meant to serve the full spectrum of library users – from students in K-12 schools to learners in post-secondary institutions, to lifelong learners in public and special libraries. The collection is intended to support the diverse educational services offered by all types of libraries and support our diverse communities. A statewide collection ensures equity of access to information in communities no matter geography or economic status.

It is an important part of the work of the eLibrary Minnesota team to continually monitor the statewide collection to ensure that it is meeting the needs of an ever-changing population. To this end, the team chose to audit the collection as a whole to identify the representation of journals with subjects focused on people of color in the statewide collection.

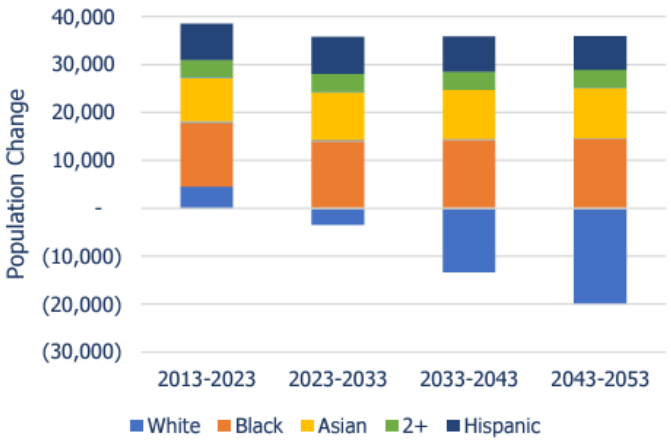
Minnesota's Changing Demographics

According to the Minnesota State Demographic Center:

- Minnesota's population is currently 78 percent non-Hispanic White
- Minnesota's non-Hispanic White population has begun declining.
- Populations of Color are expected to grow rapidly by more than one million residents between 2020 and 2050
- These projections indicate that people of color will be approximately 37 percent of the total population by 2050
- All of the population growth in Minnesota in the next twenty years will come from people of color.

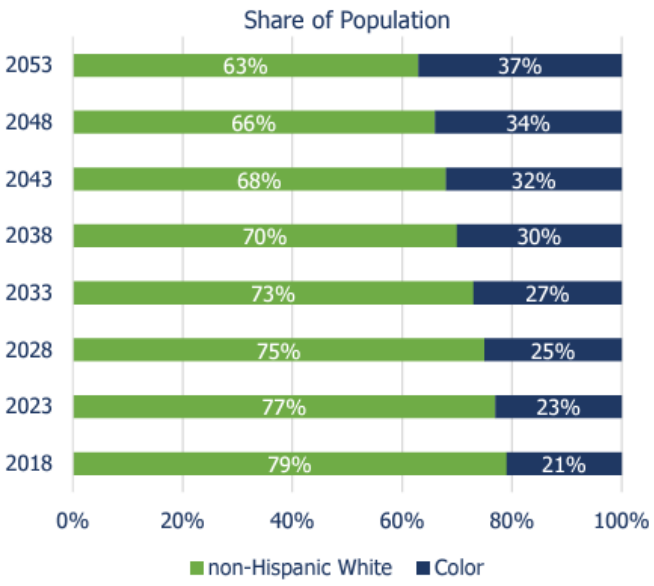
Racial and Ethnic Diversification

Figure 12: Average annual projected population change per decade, by race



'Communities of Color are driving our state's population growth and, as such, addressing these disparities will become imperative for the prosperity and quality of life for all Minnesotans' ("Long-Term Population Projections for Minnesota," Minnesota State Demographic Center, 2020)

Figure 13: Share of the population among non-Hispanic Whites and populations of Color in Minnesota, 2018 to 2053



Minnesota's K12 State Standards

While ELM serves the entire population of Minnesota, one of its prime user groups is K12 students and educators. To that end, ELM holdings should be reflective and supportive of the curriculum that is being taught and the state standards that guide that curriculum.

The 2020 Minnesota Academic Standards in English Language Arts were adopted in 2023, and are scheduled for full implementation in the 2025-26 school year, and the Minnesota Department of Education is in the process of reviewing and revising the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in Social Studies. The 2021 Minnesota K-12 Social Studies Standards (Commissioner Approved Draft) is now available. If adopted, they will be implemented in the 2026-27 school year. The anchor standards that focus on the grade level benchmarks are an important guide to the types of content support that ELM should provide.

Here is a requirement from the ELA anchor standard for Reading related to the sources used for the benchmarks:

> R2 Read and comprehend independently A) both self-selected and teacher-directed texts, B) complex literary and informational texts, and ***C) from multiple sources representing perspectives***

and identities like and unlike their own from dominant, non-dominant and marginalized social groups.

And here are several source-related entries from the draft social studies anchor standards:

History

18. Change, Continuity, and Context: Ask historical questions about context, change, and continuity to ***identify and analyze dominant and non-dominant narratives about the past.***
19. Historical perspectives: ***Identify diverse points of view and describe how one's frame of reference influences historical perspective.***
20. ***Historical Sources and Evidence: Investigate a variety of historical sources by: a) analyzing primary and secondary sources***, b) identifying perspectives and narratives that are absent from the available sources and c) interpreting the historical context, intended audience, purpose and author's point of view of these sources.
21. Causation and Argumentation: Integrate ***evidence from multiple historical sources and interpretations*** into a reasoned argument and/or compelling narrative about the past.
22. Connecting Past and Present: Use historical methods and sources to identify and analyze the roots of a contemporary issue. Design a plan to address it.

Ethnic Studies

23. Identity: ***Analyze the ways power and language construct the social identities of race, religion, geography, ethnicity, and gender. Apply these understandings to one's own social identities and other groups living in Minnesota, centering those whose stories and histories have been marginalized, erased, or ignored.***
24. Resistance: Describe how individuals and communities have fought for freedom and liberation against systemic and coordinated exercises of power locally and globally. Identify strategies or times that have resulted in lasting change. Organize with others to engage in activities that could further the rights and dignity of all.
25. Ways of Knowing/Methodologies: ***Use ethnic and Indigenous studies methods and sources in order to understand the roots of contemporary systems of oppression and apply lessons from the past in order to eliminate historical and contemporary injustices.***

If Minitex's institutional goals and the changing demographics of Minnesota were not enough to inspire a reexamination of ELM holdings, these emerging curriculum standards confirm that this work is essential. To remain relevant in supporting Minnesota schools' efforts around curriculum, research, and reading, we must ensure that ELM databases provide a wide range of diverse perspectives.

Literature Review

At the beginning of the diversity audit, our team sought insights into the experiences and methodologies of those who had previously reviewed their collections. Many libraries had audited collections of books or subscribed journals, yet the literature regarding the audit of entire database collections was sparse. The literature review proved beneficial in guiding the establishment of search terms and the organization of our findings, though it offered limited insight into evaluating aggregated databases for content diversity.

Addressing how to approach a collections audit of this nature was a primary concern. Emerson and Lehman (2022), Bledsoe et al. (n.d.), and Walters (2023) provide a comprehensive overview of two critical decisions to be made from the start: focus and methodology.

Focus

A collections audit may target specific LC subject headings, keywords, titles, publication locations, or authors. The process of selecting these elements is inherently complex. As a statewide library database provider, our unique position added complexity to determining a starting point, given our reliance on aggregated databases rather than individual title selections. Although much of the literature addresses more traditional library collections, there's a noted necessity for a DEIA (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility) assessment framework for state-funded database collections designed to be representative of and relevant to all residents. Hence, we were keen to derive insights from the literature while devising our approach. Phelps (2021) acknowledges the lack of reliable tools and limited precedent for assessing multidisciplinary topics within consortium collections.

Initially, we aimed to focus on all underrepresented groups within the DEIA spectrum, categorizing these into BIPOC, LGBTQIA, Gender Issues, Disabilities, and Religion, with associated keywords for searching. This approach evolved as we delved deeper into the complex nature of the task.

Methodology

Exploring various methodologies for diversity audits was our next step. The diversity of approaches, each context-specific, vague, inaccurate, and challenging to replicate, suggests that seeking alternative, more future-oriented methods for developing diverse collections might be more fruitful (Koob et al.). Nevertheless, we proceeded with the Diversity Audit approach, inspired by the precedents set by previous librarians. We considered whether to emulate the method employed by Loyola University Libraries, which involved searching aggregated databases for articles related to DEIA topics (Conner-Gaten et al., 2018), or to conduct a more conventional holdings audit examining journal titles and themes in isolation (Ciszek & Young, 2010).

After reviewing various methodologies, including the catalog/knowledge base search and the checklist method outlined by Walters (2023), we opted for keyword searching of our knowledge base of journal titles and their corresponding subject headings, aiming to compile a list of titles across several categories to share with Minnesota residents.

The works of Ciszek and Young (2010), Conner-Gaten et al. (2018), and the Ithaka/EBSCO guide (Bledsoe et al., n.d.) were instrumental in establishing search categories, terms, and keywords. Our initial use of the eLibrary MN instance of the EBSCO publication finder quickly revealed the limitations of this tool, underscoring the importance of our familiarity with varied subject headings and large data sets for the project's success.

Our approach to keyword searching, incorporating both titles and LC subject headings, highlighted the issue of outdated or inadequate terminology. Backowski and Morton (2020) critique the use of "obsolete and colonial language" in LC subject headings. Pedersen (2022) discusses the challenge users face when sparse holdings or unhelpful metadata hinder their research, suggesting different strategies might be required to address these issues. The problem of intersecting subject terms led to an overwhelming amount of data, causing duplication across categories and project scope creep. While this paper does not delve into the subject headings issue, it is a well-documented problem being addressed by the library community.

eLibrary Minnesota DEIA Audit Process

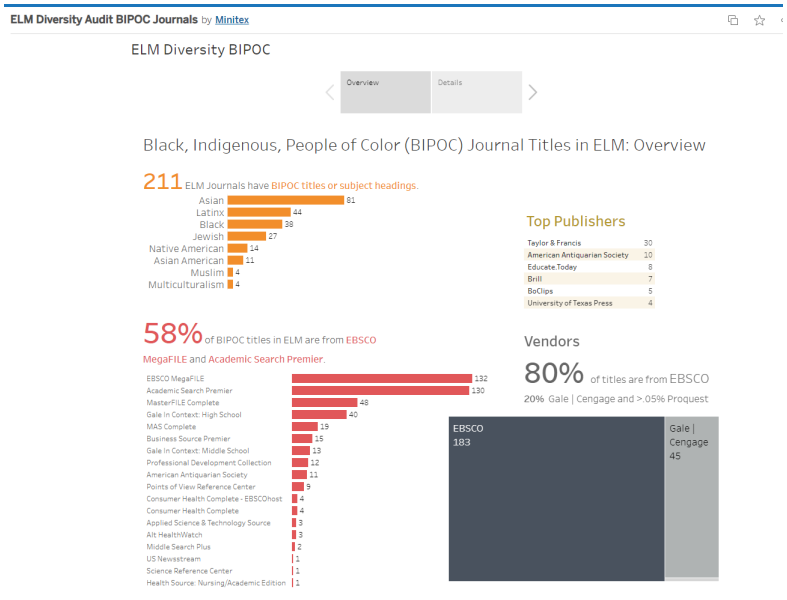
After reviewing the literature and identifying our goals, focus, and methods, here were the steps that we took to audit the collection:

- Identified keywords for the following categories: BIPOC, Disability/Accessibility, Gender, Sexuality, Religion
- Downloaded all eLibrary Minnesota holdings from the EBSCO A-Z publication finder
- Uploaded to Open Refine
- Removed all publication types except JOURNAL
- Added a field to the data to label each finding with its corresponding DEIA category
- Queried the title field and the subject heading field for the keywords that we had established
- Added a label to the new field for ‘hits’ in each category
- Downloaded each category’s list
- Edited lists to exclude unrelated titles that used overlapping keywords. For example, the journal “Black Belt”, which covers issues around martial arts, comes up with the same search as “Black American Scholar”, and confuses the results.
- Uploaded to Tableau for visualization

- Data remained murky due to overlapping subject headings and title duplication. For example, LGBTQIA topics blended into Gender/Women's studies topics, neurocognitive disorders blended into Psychology journals of all types, and Religion topics blended into BIPOC topics.
- In the end, we decided to focus on only BIPOC topics to gain a clear picture of our data. Although this was a small subset of our original intent, we decided it was better to do one category well than all of them inaccurately.
- Uploaded the finished product to Tableau
- Shared with the library community at the Minnesota Library Association conference 2023

Audit Findings

In the end, we found 211 out of 30,159 unique and distinct journals that have a particular focus on topics specific to black, indigenous, and people of color. While this number was lower than we had hoped for, we realized that we needed to compare the results against lists of recommended BIPOC titles in some way. At this point, we returned to our literature review and decided to use another method often used in diversity audits: Title list comparisons in which we would compare the 211 titles that we can access to lists of recommended titles in these fields.



ELM Diversity Audit BIPOC Journals
https://public.tableau.com/views/ELMDiversityAuditBIPOCJournals/ELMDiversityBIPOC?:language=en-US&:display_count=n&:origin=viz_share_link

Our second key takeaway from our work was the challenge of findability. Although our team was composed of librarians very familiar with the data and the collection, we were challenged to produce a list of titles in which we could be confident. The lack of search tools in the publication finder and the

databases specific to these topics made it difficult to target these searches in the way that we had hoped.

Finally, the challenge of subject headings and intersectionality of concepts became apparent. Spending time with subject headings in this way provided us with a new understanding of how our historical lens influences and intersects behind the scenes. If the only way to find what you need is through subject headings, and the very environment in which those subject headings were created was colonialist and racist at worst, and unaware and isolationist at best, the subject headings limit what the user can find in the most subtle of ways.

Our group discussed our findings and decided that we would move forward with two of our three takeaways. First, we would keep working on the title list angle; we needed to find authoritative lists of titles that are considered essential within their fields of interest. Secondly, we would address the need for improved findability of DEIA topics within the databases and the publication finder. We decided that if we as librarians were having challenges in uncovering the content, our users would encounter similar barriers. The third finding, the issue of outmoded, blurred, and outdated subject headings, we leave to the many groups of experts in the library community who are bravely and gamely addressing this issue.

Current Landscape/BIPOC Title Lists:

As we became curious about how the BIPOC titles in eLibrary Minnesota stacked up against the most important titles in their fields, our first thought was to the many marketing emails that we receive from vendors about their niche BIPOC database products. While we understood that these products contained important holdings in their respective fields, we also wondered why vendors are segregating the content out from the aggregated search databases. The vendors that supply the content that we analyzed in our research are Gale, ProQuest, and EBSCO. We essentially eliminated ProQuest from our search because we focused on academic journal holdings, and the ProQuest content we subscribe to and provide via eLibrary Minnesota is primarily newspaper and periodicals. Our Gale products are geared toward middle and high school students, and while they contained many results that were helpful in our DEIA Audit, in looking for an 'apples to apples' scenario, we found that comparing EBSCO's Academic Search Premier product holdings with their Ethnic Diversity Source, was a good way for us to have an accurate analysis of how the separation of diverse titles relates to an aggregated database holdings.

Title list comparisons

In order to uncover the differences in coverage between vendors' specialized DEIA databases and their larger aggregated products, we ran data comparisons on the full-text publication holdings. We sought to

compare each vendor's flagship aggregated product to a broad DEIA type of database offering. It came as no surprise to find that there is very little overlap between these products.

PROQUEST: Ethnic News Watch and US Newsstream/One Academic
There is no overlap between the 553 titles in Ethnic News Watch and the 1,103 titles in U.S. Newsstream. There are 65 titles from Ethnic News Watch in One Academic. That is 12% of the titles in Ethnic News Watch.

EBSCO: Ethnic Diversity Source and Academic Search Premier
58 titles in Ethnic Diversity Source are also in Academic Search Premier. That is 1% of Academic Search Premier's 6,022 titles matching 12% of Ethnic Diversity Source's 501 titles

GALE: OneFile Diversity Studies and Academic One File
22 titles in OneFile Diversity Studies are also in Academic OneFile. That is 6% of the 367 Academic OneFile titles and 7% of 299 OneFile Diversity Studies titles.

Original datasets:
ProQuest Ethnic News Watch
ProQuest US Newsstream
ProQuest One Academic (dataset too large; available upon request)
EBSCO Ethnic Diversity Source
EBSCO Academic Search Premier
GALE OneFile Diversity Studies
GALE Academic OneFile

Conversations with Vendors

Minitex met with the three vendors from whom the majority of eLibrary Minnesota content is purchased: EBSCO, ProQuest/Clarivate, and Gale. We wanted to share audit findings with representatives from these institutions and learn about the landscape from their perspectives. Our primary goal for these conversations was to foster a collaborative approach to improving DEIA representation and findability while maintaining affordability across academic research database products. We wanted to discuss how we can increase representation and improve discoverability in our holdings given the constraints of a statewide contract/budget. This discussion was underscored by our awareness of an increasing number of standalone products that are being marketed to librarians around these themes.

After we shared the work that we had done to identify BIPOC content within our eLibrary Minnesota holdings, we invited the vendors to comment and share the 'behind the scenes' view of how titles are

chosen for different database packages and how search functionality and subject terms are operating within their database environments.

We found that all three vendors had the addition of DEIA content and improving the discoverability of this content as a very active priority for their organizations. While their approaches to product packaging and creation were somewhat different from one another, here were some of the things that seemed common across all involved:

Overlap Data

In discussions with the vendors about our comparison/overlap efforts, it became clear that while the numbers that we discovered were accurate, we were not necessarily comparing apples to apples. The lesson to share is that it is important to discuss your needs with your account representative. Straight package-by-package comparisons may not include optional sub-collections that could be included or open-access content that the vendor provides. One difference in perspective arose during our discussions: vendors are looking at library customers' needs holistically and will try to customize a response to meet those needs. Shopping on the vendor website by comparing title lists is not the only way to find what they have to offer.

Title Selection for Packages:

The creation of specialized, topical databases is motivated by market demand, reflecting a targeted approach towards research programs with interests in an array of DEIA subjects and organizations needing to segregate academic research sources according to political mandates and specific financial allocations. The aim of these curated collections is to meet the specific needs of academic and research fields, facilitating more efficient and targeted research within a focused subset of materials. This approach enables researchers to more quickly identify material relevant to their specific topics of interest compared to searching through larger, more generalized resources. The vendors shared that these focused products have been well-received and popular.

Additionally, they acknowledged the importance of integrating DEIA-focused content into their broader aggregated databases. They strive to address this need while facing challenges such as publisher restrictions, financial constraints, and the complexities associated with content selection decisions—specifically, the trade-offs involved in adding and removing titles to maintain a consistent price point while ensuring content relevancy and diversity.

The introduction of new titles within the specialized databases is contingent upon the licensing of new content, which spans a broad spectrum of diversity in terms of authors, topics, publications, and products. The selection policy employed typically involves categorizing titles into the disciplines they

best align with, allowing for some degree of overlap to accommodate the multidisciplinary nature of certain topics. The vendors varied in the degree to which they shared the niche database titles with their broader indexed databases.

Findability/Taxonomies:

Regarding the issue of taxonomy development and the management of content categorization and subject headings, each vendor had a dedicated staff and response. Two themes emerged: there is difficulty in determining broadly accepted definitions of what is considered DEIA content, and the fluidity of language and its impact on taxonomies and subject headings requires ongoing work.

What is considered DEIA Content in taxonomy work?

The continuous refinement of taxonomies enhances the accessibility and discoverability of content. The vendors shared that they work to identify trends to ensure the timely inclusion of relevant terms. This process underpins both title-level and article-level taxonomies, each serving distinct roles in content discovery. We realized in the course of our discussion that the fact that journal-title taxonomies work apart from those at the article level influenced and complicated the outcome of our DEIA audit findings. Since we had focused on title-level searching, we were utilizing a less robust subject heading schema than that used at the article level.

Another complex topic that arose in the discussion of labeling and taxonomies was the challenge of addressing how to work with the multiple lenses through which diverse content can be seen. Authorship, topical theme, culture of focus, geographic location, perspective, and more can be ways of identifying DEIA scholarship, but applying search terms to these categories can be incredibly complicated. Elevating the presence of diverse authors can be seen as an important aspect in the creation of a more equitable scholarly communications ecosystem, but identifying authors by their race or background is a very challenging proposition. The creation and management of author identity metadata involves both ethical and practical considerations. Questions quickly start to arise concerning the benefits and drawbacks of establishing such metadata, the question of its ownership and maintenance, and the risks associated with its misuse.

How to keep up with Language?

The fluidity of language necessitates a dynamic approach to taxonomy development. The IT staff and librarians with whom we spoke track linguistic changes over time and include new terms as they arise in

the cultural zeitgeist to maintain subject-heading relevance. This involves not only recognizing the emergence of new colloquial expressions but also connecting new terminology with historical concepts to ensure the continuity of scholarly discourse. While there are universal sources for subject headings that the vendors employ such as Library of Congress Subject Headings, each vendor has its own staff working to make its search functionality operate smoothly using subject heading and keyword terminology as it changes.

What positive steps are vendors taking to improve coverage and findability?

In summary, here are the strategies that vendors are currently using to capture a wider array of perspectives and improve content discoverability.

- The active recruitment of new content that reflects a diverse group of authors, content types, and focal points
- The continued incorporation of evolving language into search taxonomies
- The continued monitoring of outdated subject headings and the work being done in the library community on this issue
- The continued work of merging old and new terms to maintain continuity
- The increasing utilization of "browse" experiences on digital platforms, allows users to start with a subject and drill down into content
- The creation of no-cost products, from full databases to libguides, to assist users in locating the content they seek

Discussion

Aggregated databases play an essential role in scholarly research and information access, and provide an efficient and cost-effective method for large organizations to provide access to a wide swath of academic research. The quality of eLibrary Minnesota's academic journal holdings is reliant on the aggregated database model to be able to provide representative and authoritative content to the residents of the state. As the projected demographic shifts discussed earlier in this paper show, the eLibrary Minnesota team will need to continually monitor holdings to ensure that they remain relevant and representative of the people of the state. The current content landscape within the aggregated databases is not complete without the voices of DEIA representation, and the lack of findability of the content that exists as well as the continued expansion and marketing of separate database products is concerning to us as we look forward.

Diverse content: Focused databases vs aggregated collections

From our research and discussion, we recognize that there are reasons that publishers may want to segregate diverse content from the aggregated collections. Here are some of the reasons that vendors separate these products:

Marketing

Focused databases that feature the voices of underrepresented groups can make the vendor appear to be socially aware and responsible. When featured in marketing materials, the concept can seem progressive and promotes a publisher's commitment to diversity and inclusion. This can improve a vendor's brand reputation among publishers of diverse content and researchers in these fields.

Cost and Transparency

Maintaining databases of topical content can keep vendor and buyer costs predictable and manageable and can be scaled up or down as the market dictates. The cost of the database can be somewhat more transparent to the buyer when the title list is smaller and the subscription costs for each journal can be more easily compared to the whole.

Control

Providing separate databases for DEIA topics allows for flexibility and ease of purchase for organizations whose political and social climate is such that content needs to be separated to appease funding policies and requirements. A separate database can be used to restrict access to certain resources when such restriction is deemed necessary for legal or ethical reasons.

RESPONSE

While we recognize that these may be valid arguments, we would advocate that there are compelling counter arguments for prioritizing the integration of more diverse content in aggregated databases rather than segregating content:

Cost to Libraries

Libraries, and the organizations that provide broad library collections to their constituents, are often funded by taxpayers and need to respond to the needs of those who fund them. When working with diverse audiences, the library must have resources that reflect those that they serve, without preference or segregation. Individually focused DEIA resources are a cost prohibitive mechanism and segregate DEIA content into database silos. How could a state library, or organization such as Minitex working with eLibraryMN which has only limited funds and has to represent all of the diverse interests of the taxpayers who support it, choose which identity groups to represent with small database purchases?

The model puts organizations such as ours in an untenable position of having to choose who to represent in the collection or settle for a less diverse collection.

Ethical stance:

While one reason vendors create DEIA-focused databases is to highlight their commitment to and focus on diversity, in fact, the opposite can end up being true. Conceding to the pressure of conservative interest groups by changing product offerings is to accept that DEIA content is not appropriate for some audiences. This may show a commitment to 'separate but equal', but not equality and justice. Vendors should stand up to the idea that barriers should be put in place to prevent some users from encountering diverse academically focused voices.

True commitment to diversity

It is our stance that a vendor's true commitment to diversity would be illustrated by a demonstrated effort to increase the number of titles that populate bespoke DEIA databases into the aggregated databases. This will allow for an affordable mechanism for a wider array of users to access this important content. This will also meet our society's evolving realization that traditional primary and secondary research sources often feature the perspective of the dominant culture at the cost of excluding everyone else. As a culture, we are growing in our understanding that this incomplete picture is insufficient to truly understand culture and history.

Findability

How to find these titles?

Libraries have been working on diversity audits of their collections for many years. A review of the literature reveals the amount of work that this has been done, with each library trying to invent an effective means of getting to an accurate picture of the landscape of their holdings. Librarians have tried to find search terms that can encapsulate the concepts that they are hoping to uncover and have had varying levels of success at doing so. By searching for keywords in the title and subject heading fields, the auditor is able to cobble together lists of results around themes, but this is not necessarily efficient or entirely accurate.

There is extensive research and work on decolonizing and updating subject headings in the library literature, and our discussions with vendors underscored the importance of this work within their own organizations. At the same time, advancements in artificial intelligence and the use of linked data will improve search functionality across all technology domains, and we hope that this will someday carry

over to library databases. While we acknowledge all of the complexities involved, it would have been helpful if we had been able to obtain the lists of titles from the institutions themselves instead of needing to generate our own terms, use our own data analysis tools, and publish on our own platform. Improving the ability of database users to use advanced search functions to find and search within subject-specific groups of titles could be an excellent feature for libraries to request as an enhancement request.

Recommendations

We have identified a need for a deeper level of indexing and metadata tagging that is specific to diversity, which can improve the searchability and discoverability of relevant resources. The fact that so many libraries have done the time-consuming work to cherry-pick and curate results from databases is frustrating. Database search interfaces should more easily allow this type of data to be searchable. Title lists around a particular theme within the databases should be readily available to the user.

Vendors Should:

- Continue to invest in better findability of diverse content at the journal title level
- Improve advanced search functions to include the ability to identify and search within subject-specific groups of titles
- Set clear goals and targets for increasing diversity in aggregated databases
- Integrate diverse content from underrepresented voices and regions into the existing aggregated databases.
- Reduce content in aggregated databases that is redundant or outdated to balance the overall representation of multiple perspectives

Statewide and Consortial Library Organizations that purchase database collections should:

- Advocate for increased representation in multidisciplinary databases
- Consider collaborating to request modified packages for aggregated databases that meet the broadest needs of large and diverse communities
- Be aware of the contradictions and conflicts involved in the marketplace for DEIA topic-specific resources
- Support the work of decolonizing subject headings and improving metadata to make finding DEIA content more accessible

Conclusion

The decision to create separate databases for diverse topics can lead to the marginalization of diverse resources and make them less accessible to users. Additionally, it can reinforce the notion that diversity is a separate and distinct area of study, rather than being an integral part of all disciplines. As the population of Minnesota evolves and the curriculum taught in our schools reflects a deeper understanding of the need for multiple perspectives, the holdings for a statewide collection of databases need to evolve as well. State libraries, consortia, and other statewide organizations cannot afford to choose which underrepresented groups for which they will buy topical databases. Should they choose Jewish Studies Source or Arab World Research Source ? Black Studies or Indigenous Peoples Collections? Contemporary Women's Issues or Gender Studies Collection? It would be an unfortunate situation to have to exclude any of these resources from a statewide collection. We hope, through sharing our thoughts and experiences, that we have reiterated the importance of integrating titles from these diverse areas of study into the multidisciplinary databases. These aggregated resources are the most cost-effective and impactful method that we have to provide a wide array of content in an accessible, searchable format, and we need them to be reflective of all voices and perspectives.

We hope that this paper serves as an accurate representation of the current situation with DEIA database collection product sales. We would like to encourage other organizations that serve a broad swath of patrons via state libraries, consortia, or other broad-based library resource programs to consider the following:

- Reach out to Minitex at mtxref@umn.edu to share your experiences with diversity audit and collections work
- Bring up the topic of diverse representation in aggregated databases to your own vendors
- Bring intentionality to how representation fits into purchasing decisions
- Advocate for improved findability functionality within subscribed databases to make this work more accessible for the average patron.

Through collective action, we can share our unified attention to these topics with vendors. The impact that database collection and taxonomy decisions have on organizational subscribers has a ripple effect that will be experienced over time, moving collections toward ensuring that everyone is seen, heard, and represented in the research literature.

We would also like to very much thank ProQuest, EBSCO, and Gale for their time and attention to this matter. Our meetings with the vendors were informative and helpful in understanding the reasons behind collection and product decisions as well as the ongoing work that they do to continue to improve DEIA representation in their content offerings and their database functionality.

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Appendix

MLA 2023 Presentation: DEIA Audit of eLibraryMN and EbooksMN
ARLD Forging New Paths of Discoverability: A DEIA Audit of Aggregated Databases
Tableau visualization of Audit Data
Tableau visualization of title comparisons