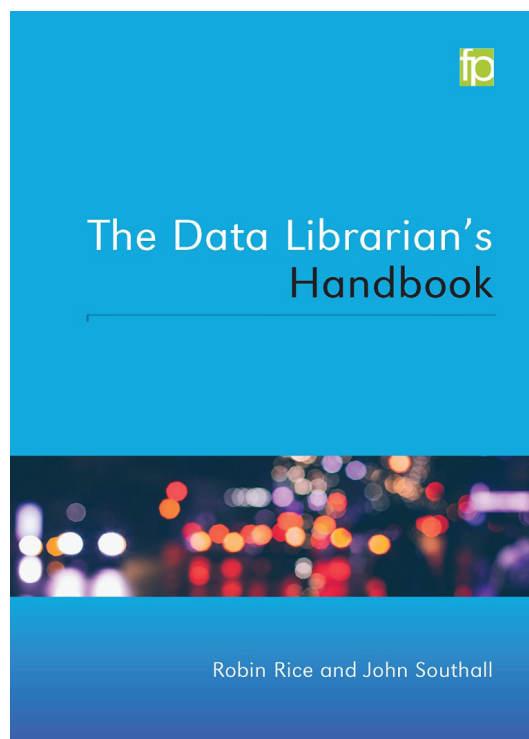# Data Librarianship and Data Stewardship in A Nutshell

*Book Review*

**The Data Librarian's Handbook**, by **Robin Rice,** and **John Southall**; Facet Publishing, London, 2016, ISBN: 9781783300471, Paperback, 177 pages Price: £54.95.

A data librarian facilitates the researchers to understand the processes of managing, storing, transferring, sharing and publishing their research data to strengthen the dissemination of their research findings. The book "The Data Librarian's Handbook", written by Robin Rice, and John Southall, is a brief handbook for the budding data librarians or data stewards to know the nuances of data librarianship, while one is expected to engage in advocating, managing, archiving, transferring, sharing, and publishing research data in an ICT-enabled environment. This book gives an outlook of data related activities any data librarian is supposed to undertake for facilitating institutional research studies and the academic researchers as well as managing data resources available within an organization. This book is written by data professionals working with the United Kingdom-based institutions, namely, Edina at University of Edinburgh (Robin Rice) and Bodleian Libraries at University of Oxford (John Southall).

The book is organized into ten chapters for logically exploring every aspect of data librarianship and research data management. The authors begin the book by introducing transformation of academic librarianship into data librarianship. Many of the academic librarians are now engaged with the academic researchers at the micro level to deal with researchers' datasets and other kinds of data resources. While the cultural norms related to research funding and institutional expectations led to the creation of a band of data academic librarians in many universities and R&D institutions, data librarians gradually get involved as co-investigators or co-researchers in the research ecosystem for the better management of data resources originated or consumed in the research projects. Chapter titled "Data Librarianship: Responding to Research Innovation", points out how an institutional research innovation ecosystem embraces the data librarians.

The second chapter titled "What is different about data" makes the readers understand the concepts associated with research data, namely, metadata schema, data citation, data curation, data creation, and data reuse. To qualify as 'big data,' a dataset needs to confirm at least three distinct dimensions or 'three Vs', namely, volume, velocity, and variety. Other two dimensions added later variability and value to make big data characterized by Five Vs.

Librarians traditionally impart orientation training to the library patrons to make the users understand how to retrieve a physical or digital document from a large collection. Imparting information and digital literacy training to the end users has become an extension of modern library services to improve the skills and competencies of researchers or learners. Imparting data literacy training is a new service from the academic data librarians to improve access to data resources and the preservation or sharing of ones' research data. Chapter "Supporting Data Literacy"

briefly describes the processes of data literacy in a scientific library.

Chapter titled "Research data management service and policy: Working across your institution" makes the readers aware about an extensive research data management (RDM) policy and strategy at the institutional and funder's level. Data librarians are often called RDM Service Coordinators in the UK institutions. Conformity to funder's RDM policy leads to the development of a data management plan (DMP) and RDM strategy before the conception of a research project. The authors of this book sum up the different models of RDM and DMP. A combination of key top-down and bottom-up drivers are responsible for the creation of institutional RDM policy in a modern institution. RDM policy, driven by the funder's mandates, follows the top-down approach. There is also the pressure of the global open access movement that necessitates publicly funded research be made publicly available. On the other hand, many journal publishers also insist their authors share their research data on open data sharing platforms to achieve transparency and reusability of published research that necessitate an open research data mandate by different stakeholders. These externalities are called top-down drivers for ignition of institutional RDM policy. The bottom-up drivers include other key institutional policies, such as information security, records management, and research integrity. The authors then present a case study on how data audit led to university-level RDM policy. The chapter then highlights available toolkits for measuring intuitional preparedness for RDM. The inclusion of RDM and DMP in the research workflow emphasizes the greater role of data librarians in the academic and research institutions.

In the subsequent chapters, the authors elaborate how data librarians can contribute to open scholarship and open science, which include building a data collection (Chapter 4) initiating research data management service, preparing research data management policy (Chapter 5), building institutional open data repositories (Chapter 7), dealing with sensitive or confidential data (Chapter 8), and nurturing open data sharing culture (Chapter 9).

Although primarily focuses a particular country situation, viz., the United Kingdom, the book offers a universal appeal to the budding data librarians. This book would also be useful to the scholars and participants of iSchools and short-term courses to understand a domain of an emerging professional role.

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