

Characteristics of Agricultural Literacy Database Users

Amelia J. Miller, M.S. & Debra M. Spielmaker, Ph.D.

Introduction

Launched in 2014, the National Agriculture in the Classroom Curriculum Matrix database includes a free MyBinder feature, where users may set up a profile to save favorite lessons for future use (Spielmaker, 2015). When creating this voluntary account, a user is required to provide their name, state, email, educational role, and grade/content area affiliation. Knowing more about the users and their binder content will assist program leaders with information about the characteristics and types of agricultural literacy lessons educators selected for future use.

Theoretical Framework

This was exploratory descriptive research.

Objectives

1. Describe the characteristics of the MyBinder users based upon their educational role.
2. Identify the curricular areas of interest among Matrix users.
3. Identify and explore patterns regarding the resources educators were saving.

Methods

- Organize MyBinder data collected by National Agriculture in the Classroom on the agclassroom.org for analysis of the voluntary sign-up by:
 - Name, email, geographical location.
 - Educator role (Administrator/Curriculum Professional, Elementary Teacher, Middle School Teacher, High School Teacher, Post-Secondary Teacher, Volunteer or Other).
 - Curricular area of interest: Elementary (Pre-K-2), Elementary (3-5), Middle School (6-8) Science, Middle School (6-8) Career and Technical Education, Middle School (6-8) History and Geography, High School (9-12) Science, High School (9-12) Career and Technical Education, High School (9-12) History and Geography or Other.
- Identify and descriptively analyze the lesson plan titles saved by each user.

References

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91% of elementary teachers use websites to find or share lesson plans

(Scholastic & Gates Foundation, 2013)

5,054 MyBinder users

agclassroom.org/matrix

302 unique lessons saved



Results

Objective One

- 5,054 accounts created since 2014
- 50 states and 6 Canadian provinces represented
- 27% elementary, 28% high school, 22% middle school educators
- Largest growth in number of users in 2018, 2019, 2020
- 5,038 (99%) users were one day logins

Objective Two

- 320 unique lessons were saved 3,0007 times
- High School Science (28%), CTE (27%) and Middle School Science (16%) most desired lessons
- Top Ten Lessons Saved
 - Six for grades K-2
 - Two for grades 6-8
 - Two for grades 9-12

Objective Three

- Iowa, Minnesota, Georgia, Utah and New Mexico had highest number of elementary users
- New York, California, Texas and Illinois had highest number of high school users
- Elementary users saved elementary lessons
- High school users saved lessons across all grade levels
- Volunteer users saved more elementary lessons

Conclusions

Initial descriptive data demonstrates increased use and therefore success of NAITC's Curriculum Matrix MyBinder. The target audience, number of users, diversity of states represented, grade/content affiliation, and top lessons downloaded all support the MyBinder as a means to achieve NAITC's mission.

However, the extremely high percent of one day only logins cause for concern and signifies the need for greater promotion of the feature.

Future research could address this question and answer more questions about the actual use of the instruction in classrooms, along with student agricultural literacy gains. It could be concluded the current users had a positive attitude toward and intention to use the MyBinder feature when created, meeting the first two of six criteria of the Theory of Planned Behavior (LaMorte, 2019). Clarification could explain why the intended behavior is not happening thus influencing NAITC decision makers as to the future of the MyBinder feature.