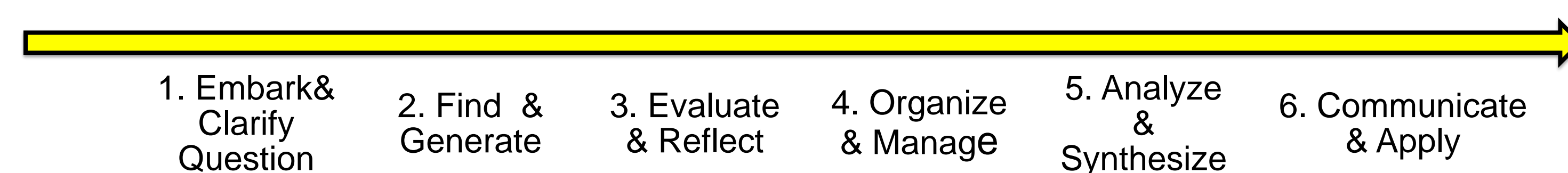


# RESEARCH SKILLS AND THE REAL WORLD

Florence Daddey and Marjory Jardine

## INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

The JIBC Student Research Skills Development Framework [SRSDF](2015) provides guidelines to help ensure that students effectively develop research skills appropriate to their academic level and course outcomes (p.16). The SRSDF(2015) identifies six facets of the research process that students must develop. The development of these skills occurs through repeated and differentiated exposure to research experiences (including JIBC Library involvement).

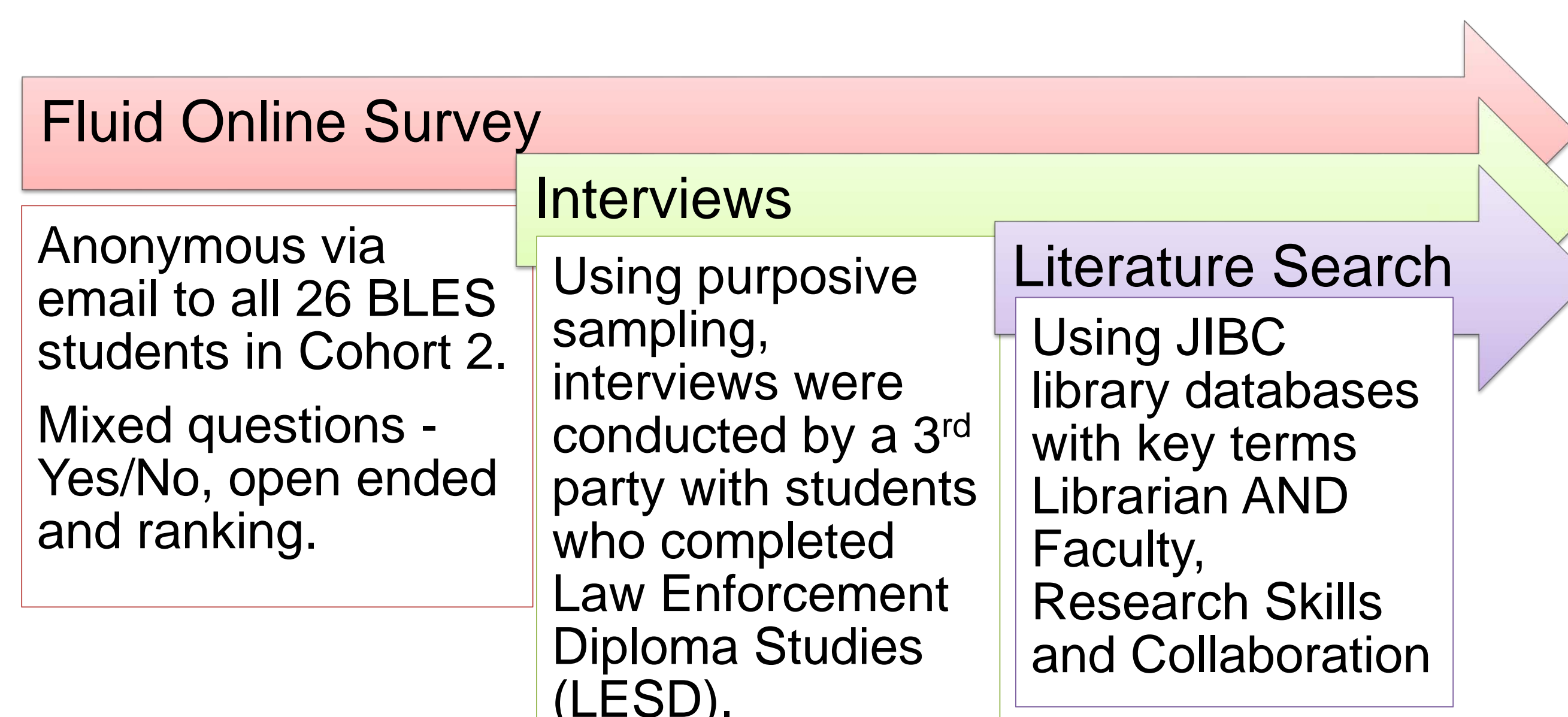


The purpose of this study was to establish a baseline for future years and to:

1. Determine if the JIBC Bachelor of Law Enforcement Studies (BLES) Program students feel they are graduating with the research skills necessary to succeed in their chosen profession.
2. Examine students' perceptions of how they develop research skills.
3. Inform faculty on the extent to which the JIBC SRSDF has clarified research expectations.
4. Determine the role that students felt the Library has played in developing their research skills.

## METHODS

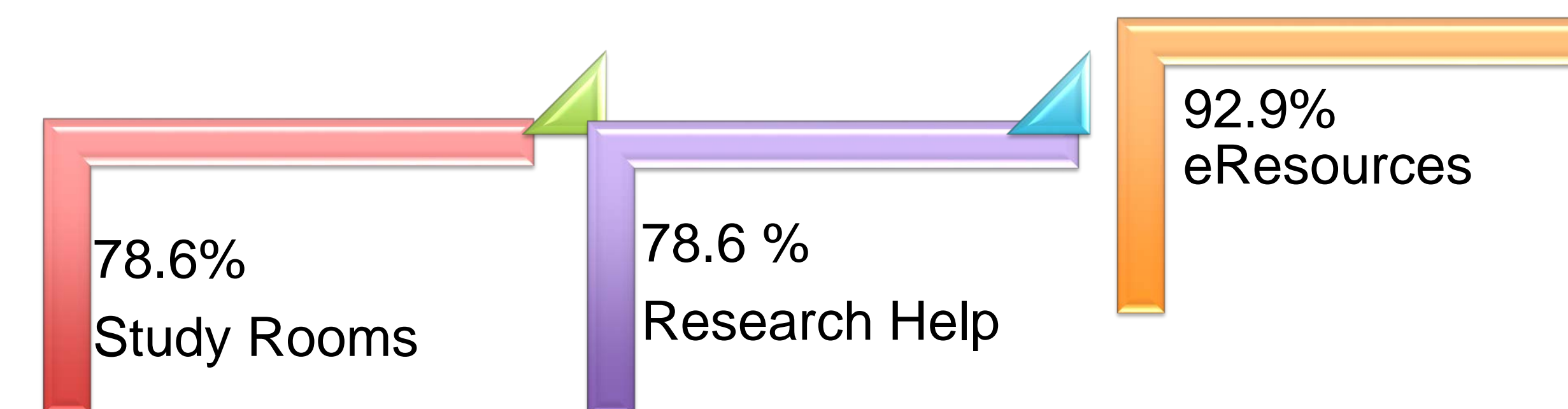
This study utilized mixed methods. After receiving ethics approval from the JIBC Research Ethics Board the following data collection methods were used.



## RESULTS

14 out of 26 students responded to survey (54% return rate). 7 students responded to the invitation to attend the interview however only 5 students participated. Students identified research intensive courses that were significant in contributing to the development of their research skills and the positive role that the collaboration between faculty and librarian played in their research skills development.

### Top 3 Library Services that Helped with Research:



### Responses showed Somewhat to Definitely True THAT:



### 70% of students identified this course as being important in helping improve and develop their research skills:

	Semester	Course	Title
LESD	1	ENGL1100	Academic Writing
	2	LAWS1204	Intro to Canadian Criminal Law
	3	RESM2100	Research Methods
	4	LAWS2206	Contemporary Issues in Law Enforcement
BLES	5	LAWS3001	Criminal and Deviant Behaviour
	6	BUSN3110 BUSN3115	Project Management Data and Research Management
	7	LAWS4000	Applied Research
	8	SOCI4400	Organized Crime and Society

## DISCUSSION

BLES curriculum provides many opportunities to develop research skills. All the students interviewed commented on their increased levels of confidence in navigating library resources from LESD to BLES. They commented on how over the course of their program they developed critical thinking skills and learned to access information and evaluate sources. Their increased ability to turn information into knowledge has helped to cultivate traits of a lifelong learner which will be useful in the workplace.

In terms of engagement with the librarians, student comments were extremely positive. The main emphasis was on the helpfulness of Library staff and the great eResources. The only negative comments were around noise levels and lack of study space.

The research was limited by the fact that students had to reflect on their experience in the program over 8 semesters and self reporting could contain bias due to memory of past events.

## RECOMMENDATION

1. To enhance the promotion of the SRSDF.
2. Introduce research processes in semester 1 and 2 of LESD in a fun and non threatening way.
3. Include a mini capstone in LESD Year 2.
4. Stretch the capstone over 2 semesters; remove group projects.
5. Explore the possibility of: adding library hours at certain times of the semester; emphasis on Library as a QUIET place; explore unused classrooms for extra study space; add extra tables in atrium to expand Library space for collaborative group work.

## CONCLUSION

JIBC BLES students vary in their knowledge/application of the SRSDF. BLES students are keen Library users and commented on the opportunities and multiple encounters with librarians both in the Library and in class. Faculty and Library staff working together impacts student research skills development. According to Campbell (2010), faculty provide the source material and librarians provide the "hyperlink" as to how to locate the material. Future surveys could (anonymously) link students' responses to their GPA. This would indicate if SRSDF & Library use influence grades.

## KEY REFERENCES

- Campbell, M. (2010). Collaborations between librarians and faculty in a digital age. *Education Digest*, 75(6), 30-33. Retrieved from <http://www.eddigest.com/>
- Murray, A., Ireland, A., & Hackathorn, J. (2016). The value of academic libraries: Library services as a predictor of student retention. *College & Research Libraries*, 77(5), 631-642. doi:10.5860/crl.77.5.631