**Study Population**
- Trainers of assistance dogs performing the following functions:
  - Guide dogs (for visual impairment)
  - Hearing dogs (for hearing impairment)
  - Service dogs (for people with other diseases (e.g. diabetes or epilepsy), disabilities (e.g. limited mobility, autism, or Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder)
  - Facility dogs (to work in educational or healthcare settings)
- Employing organization accredited by, or a candidate for accreditation by, Assistance Dogs International, as of August 2013
- Located in North America

**Assistance Dogs International (ADI) Standards**
ADI-accredited organizations must meet or exceed ADI standards. These include minimum requirements for:
- Ethical treatment of dogs
- Ethical treatment of partners
- Trainer knowledge and practice
- Behavioural standards for service dogs, including:
  - General behavioural requirements
  - Function-specific behavioural requirements

**Research Questions**
1. What are the work tasks of assistance dog trainers?
2. What is the relationship between work tasks and information consultation, selection & use?
3. What challenges do assistance dog trainers face in information consultation, selection & use?

**Methodology**
- Recruitment by purposive sampling
- Demographic questionnaire
- Semi-structured interview (~45 minutes)
- Open coding of responses

**Results**

**Work Task Categories**
- T: Assistance Dog Trainer
- P: Assistance Dog Partner (Recipient)

**Selection Factors**
Three factors emerged as determining whether a trainer would select information for future use. These were:
- Alignment with individual or organizational philosophy
- Prior positive experience with the source
- Peer opinion of the source or content

**Information use**
In deciding how to train the dog, participants emphasized that the decision to apply selected information to a work task is situation-specific:
- “Every dog is different ... They’re like people. Everybody learns differently. So if your normal, general way of teaching a retrieve isn’t working with this dog, you’ve got to really think about how you can get the information across.”
- “I work with each individual dog, I train with them, according to the method they need, that will help them learn best.”

**Implications for academic librarians**
This population shares the following characteristics with distance learners:
- Geographically disparate individuals
- Continuous learning
- Need for access to specialized resources
- Prevalence of online information-sharing
- Need for sources to accommodate various learning styles (e.g. text, audiovisual)

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