

The Creation and Management of Research Data Sets and Laboratory Notebooks in University Laboratories of South Korea

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Abstract: This study investigates how research data sets and laboratory (lab) notebooks were created, managed, and utilized by the graduate students who work for the university laboratories in South Korea and the professors in charge of managing the laboratories. Specifically relating to the lab notebooks, the Ministry of Science and Technology in South Korea established a decree in 2008 to provide guidelines for managing lab notebooks produced from government-funded research projects. All research institutes and universities conducting such projects are recommended to adhere to the decree. Despite the decree and the perceived significance of documenting research processes, research data sets and lab notebooks have not been properly administered, especially in university settings. To understand recordkeeping practices regarding those two types of records, I conducted pilot study interviews with three professors and four graduate students at three laboratories of a private university in Seoul, Korea. The laboratories include one in physics, one in chemistry, and one in biological science. The findings show (1) diverse types of research data sets; (2) how the data sets are organized, stored, and utilized; (3) in what ways graduate students create their lab notebooks; (4) how they have learned to create lab notebooks; (5) for what purposes they make use of the lab notebooks; and (6) how the research data is integrated into the lab notebooks. I will discuss the practical implications of this study, concerning the role of the university archives currently being developed in South Korea, in managing research data sets and lab notebooks created on campus.

About the author:

Jihyun Kim is a full-time lecturer at Ewha Womans University in South Korea. She received a BA in Library and Information Science from Ewha, and earned MSI (Archives and Records Management specialization) and Ph.D. at the University of Michigan School of Information. Her research interests relate to the management of research data and other records created from scientists' research activities, the creation and preservation of web blogs of archival institutions, and electronic records management of Korean government agencies. She teaches courses on introduction to archives, records and information management, and electronic records management.