

NEW / FIRST YEAR LIBRARIAN SURVEY

Part 1

How long have you been a librarian?

What is the position you currently hold? In what department do you primarily work?

Where did you earn your Master's Degree in Library Science?

If you left librarianship, what career would you pursue?

What is the one thing you would change at your library to make your position/situation improve?

Part 2

(Scale for the following questions is 1-7, with 7 suggesting that you strongly agree with the statements and 1 indicating strong disagreement)

* I feel my library science classes prepared me well for my job in the public sphere.

(1 2 3 4 5 6 7)

What specific classes do you wish had been offered?

* I feel that my library science program taught me practical skills that I now use as a librarian.

(1 2 3 4 5 6 7)

What specific skills do you wish you had been taught?

* I feel happy in my workplace.

(1 2 3 4 5 6 7)

What are the most and least satisfying aspects of your position?

* I feel that I will spend my career as a public librarian.

(1 2 3 4 5 6 7)

Would you pursue a position in another field of librarianship (academic or otherwise) or would you search for a non-librarian position?

* Libraries are an open and affirming place for new librarians.

(1 2 3 4 5 6 7)

What is the one most important thing your library does to support this statement? One way in which it does not?

Part 3: Demographics

This information is strictly optional. However, we are hoping to ascertain some demographic details about new librarians.

Age:

Race/Ethnicity:

Gender:

Salary Range:

Our survey was distributed to a variety of webpages and electronic listservs, including Nex-Gen, RefLIB, and PUBYAC. Ideally, respondents were new to the field of librarianship (typically having less than 3 years post graduate school experience). The responses we received and our own anecdotal experiences formed the basis of this presentation.

Key Survey Results

(Results retrieved using Statistical Programming for Social Sciences)

<u>QUESTION 1</u>	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT	CUMULATIVE PERCENT
STRONG DISAGREEMENT	10	7.9	8.1	8.1
2.00	8	6.3	6.5	14.6
3.00	16	12.7	13	27.6
4.00	17	13.5	13.8	41.5
5.00	36	28.6	29.3	70.7
6.00	31	24.6	25.2	95.9
STRONG AGREEMENT	5	4	4.1	100
TOTAL	126	97.6		

<u>QUESTION 2</u>	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT	CUMULATIVE PERCENT
STRONG DISAGREEMENT	5	4	4.1	4.1
2.00	11	8.7	8.9	13
3.00	16	12.7	13	26
4.00	22	17.5	17.9	43.9
5.00	28	22.2	22.8	66.7
6.00	30	23.8	24.4	91.1
STRONG AGREEMENT	11	8.7	8.9	100
TOTAL	126	97.6		

<u>QUESTION 3</u>	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT	CUMULATIVE PERCENT
STRONG DISAGREEMENT	7	5.6	5.6	5.6
2.00	6	4.8	4.8	10.5
3.00	10	7.9	8.1	18.5
4.00	10	7.9	8.1	26.6
5.00	19	15.1	15.3	41.9
6.00	34	27	27.4	69.4
STRONG AGREEMENT	38	30.2	30.6	100
TOTAL	126	98.4		

<u>QUESTION 4</u>	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT	CUMULATIVE PERCENT
STRONG DISAGREEMENT	10	7.9	8.1	8.1
2.00	11	8.7	8.9	16.9
3.00	8	6.3	6.5	23.4
4.00	18	14.3	14.5	37.9
5.00	20	15.9	16.1	54
6.00	27	21.4	21.8	75.8
STRONG AGREEMENT	30	23.8	24.2	100
TOTAL	126	98.4		

<u>QUESTION 5</u>	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT	CUMULATIVE PERCENT
STRONG DISAGREEMENT	4	3.2	3.3	3.3
2.00	8	6.3	6.5	9.8
3.00	16	12.7	13	22.8
4.00	22	17.5	17.9	40.7
5.00	30	23.8	24.4	65
6.00	28	22.2	22.8	87.8
STRONG AGREEMENT	15	11.9	12.2	100
TOTAL	123	97.6		

<u>CROSSTAB</u>	AGE RECODE	AGE RECODE	TOTAL
<u>QUESTION 4</u>	30 or Younger	Older than 30	
STRONG DISAGREEMENT	6.5	8.9	7.4
2.00	11.7	2.2	8.2
3.00	9.1	2.2	6.6
4.00	20.8	4.4	14.8
5.00	18.2	13.3	16.4
6.00	16.9	31.1	22.1
STRONG AGREEMENT	16.9	37.8	24.6
TOTAL	100	100	100

CORRELATIONS	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	SCHLAVG
Q1 PEARSON CORRELATION Number	1 123	.804 123	.130 123	.179 123	.249 122	.950 123
Q2 PEARSON CORRELATION Number	.804 123	1 123	.119 123	.136 123	.239 122	.949 123
Q3 PEARSON CORRELATION Number	.130 123	.119 123	1 124	.483 124	.442 123	.131 123
Q4 PEARSON CORRELATION Number	.179 123	.136 123	.483 124	1 124	.481 123	.166 123
Q5 PEARSON CORRELATION Number	.249 122	.239 122	.442 123	.481 123	1 123	.257 122
SCHLAVG PEARSON CORRELATION Number	.950 123	.949 123	.131 123	.166 122	.257 122	1 123

These results represent a sample of what we were able to retrieve using SPSS. We did not have a random sample and 126 respondents is not statistically valid for any true quantitative conclusions to come from our research. However, these results were perfect to match with our own experiences, research, and the qualitative answers to our survey.

The first five tables represent the responses for each of our five qualitative statements, and include valid and cumulative percentages.

Table 6 is a crosstab of question four, "I feel that I will spend my career as a public librarian," and a recoding of our age categories. We were interested to see if "young" new librarians (i.e. under 30) would have the same response to this question as individuals over 30. Our theory was that our second category may be entering librarianship as a second career or would have additional life experiences that would allow them to have more reasonable expectations about the field. The results were not as dramatic as we may have expected but they certainly added to debates about the general differences between "Boomers" and "Generation Xers" about career expectations.

Table 7 indicates correlations between the questions. Obviously, questions one and two would have a high correlation because if respondents felt their library science program was successful, they would agree that the program prepared them well. There are a few interesting correlations; we saw a high correlation between current employment (Q3) and an outlook on librarianship as a career path (Q4) as well as a statistically significant high correlation between Q3 and Q5. This made sense to us, a happy worker who felt welcomed in their position would have a rosier view of the profession. We were concerned, however, that other aspects of librarianship (professional memberships, conferences, larger career outlooks) could not seem to help balance a lousy job.

Notes from the Underground...

What new librarians are saying

"I wish all of my classes had been more practical and less theoretical. I am disgusted with my SLIS program and the lack of solid preparation I had for the workforce."

"I love going to schools and seeing students get excited about the books I've brought with me and beg to check them out right away. Those are the experiences that leave me thinking I have the greatest job in the world."

"There is no encouragement or support for innovation."

"I had very little experience upon completing library school, yet my library still hired me and encourages my 'new eyes' perspectives on policies and procedures that have been in place for years. Other new librarians within the building also provide a kind of support network that is assuring."

"They hear what I have to say. They don't really listen to what I have to say."

"I have run into the quandary of 'provide new services/innovate' followed up with 'that won't work/we've never done that before.'"

"As a single, childless woman, our 'corporate culture' is one of grandmas and mothers of teenagers. I worked for Barnes and Noble for seven years where most people were single and in their 20's to early 30's. I feel like I used to be on the cutting edge and now I'm collecting dust."

"It's hard to maintain the enthusiasm I had coming out of school."

"At the rate ALA is going it will be lucky if *anyone* will be able to call themselves a fulltime working librarian by 2020."

"If you want to keep churning out librarians to replace the directors, you need to give them something to do until you retire."

"Next Gen has to start an end run around ALA."

"I am sick of talking about problems – let's find WORKABLE solutions."

"[ALA needs to] pinpoint exactly where they think the shortfalls are going to be in the next few years due to the 'graying' factor and set up real professional tracks at every conference to encourage qualified people to get the needed expertise to fill these vacancies."

"Really, being a garden variety reference or tech services librarian is a pretty agreeable job, so what *would* most people want to do all the hard, thankless, grossly underpaid stuff that demands long hours, public appearances, and having your personal life scrutinized like poor Lady Jane?"

"We have to bring Next Gen and our passion and our fire into the real world."

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