

Retirement, Retention, and Recruitment: The Future of Librarianship in Colorado

September 2004

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Adopted June 2002

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Acknowledgements

The data on retirement, retention, and recruitment of Colorado librarians would not exist except for the voluntary participation of over 1,200 Colorado library workers in the survey on which this report is based.

The survey explored a large number of complex and inter-related issues. The successful development of the questionnaire may be attributed substantially to input provided by the “3Rs” advisory panel. Panel members were:

- Betty Bankhead, Project Director, Power Libraries;
- Chris Brown, Reference Librarian, Penrose Library, University of Denver;
- Patricia Froehlich, Public Library Senior Consultant;
- Deborah Grealy, Director, Library and Information Science Program, College of Education, University of Denver;
- Rochelle Logan, Associate Director for Support Services, Douglas County Libraries;
- Sharon Morris, AskColorado Coordinator and Emporia State University representative;
- Nance Nassar, School Library Senior Consultant;
- Paul Paladino, Director, Montrose Library District, and President, Colorado Association of Libraries;
- Roberta Ponis, retired Director, Library Media Services, Jefferson County Schools; and
- Jeanie Straub, Library & New Media, Rocky Mountain News.

Useful input was also received from the Colorado Council for Library Development (CCLD)—the precursor of the Colorado Library Advisory Board (CoLAB)—which recommended support of the project by the Colorado State Library using Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funds.

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The success of this project may also be attributed, in large part, to the enthusiastic support of the Colorado Association of Libraries (CAL). CAL's Management and Administration Division (MADCAL) sponsored the project, and the survey was promoted via the CAL website. In addition, individual libraries also encouraged staff participation via their own website links, interoffice e-mail, and other means.

To "all of the above," we say a very sincere thank you.

Executive Summary

There is much discussion in the library community—nationwide and in Colorado—about a large wave of “baby boomer” retirements that has already begun, and that will be changing the face of librarianship—literally—over the next five to ten years. During the last quarter of 2003, 1,241 Colorado librarians and other library workers responded to a voluntary statewide survey asking them about retirement, retention, and recruitment issues. Respondents to the survey came from every type of library and every corner of the state. A statewide public relations campaign accompanied the administration of the online survey, which branched to questions on one of the “R” issues after respondents identified themselves sufficiently. Because the survey dealt with a variety of issues related to the status of librarianship, the returns are not limited to those planning for imminent retirements. Respondents include library and information science (LIS) students, library paraprofessionals, and librarians—both those who plan to retire within the next five years and those who do not. While the size of the special library workforce is unknown, it is probable that this sector is under-represented, while workers in public libraries are certainly somewhat over-represented relative to academic and school libraries.

Key Retirement Findings

- More than 20 percent of responding Colorado librarians expect to retire within the next five years. Of all responding school librarians, about half indicate plans to retire within five years—more than three times the proportion for public librarians and almost five times the proportion for academic librarians.
- Many librarians who responded to this survey are not waiting until age 65 to retire. Almost 30 percent of those who expect to retire within the next five years are ages 45 to 54.

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- Retiring librarians will take with them substantial administrative skills. Of responding librarians planning to retire within five years, three out of four are supervisors, two out of five are generalists, and one out of five is an administrator.
- Of these prospective retirees, one out of five expects their job to be combined with another or eliminated. Almost one out of five expects to be succeeded by someone with less education.

Key Retention Findings

The future of librarianship in Colorado depends not only on recruiting new librarians, but also on retaining incumbent ones, or at least their positions.

- Respondents without immediate retirement plans, especially in non-metro areas and among school librarians, expect their successors to have less education. Librarians responding from the Eastern Plains are more likely than their counterparts in other regions to expect their jobs will be eliminated altogether when they leave.
- Of all library types, responding academic librarians are least likely to limit themselves to jobs in Colorado, when considering their futures. The comparatively small number of academic librarian positions in the state and the severe state funding cuts being experienced by higher education institutions must contribute to this fact.
- Responding librarians ages 30 to 44 are more likely than other age groups to choose to leave librarianship. So, the introduction of new, younger librarians into the field's work force is no guarantee for the future.

Key Recruitment Findings

- Of responding library and information science (LIS) students, four out of five are ages 30 to 54, indicating that for many librarianship is a second career.

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- Library paraprofessionals who responded from the Mountains/Western Slope region are more likely to consider pursuing library degrees than their Front Range counterparts.
- Responding paraprofessionals say they would be encouraged to pursue an LIS degree or credential, if financial aid was available, class locations and schedules were convenient, online classes were available, and their work schedules were more flexible. Non-metro residents among these paraprofessional respondents are more than twice as likely to be discouraged by inconveniently located educational institutions as their metro counterparts (45% v. 20% respectively). Online courses may be part of the solution. Non-metro paraprofessionals were half again as likely to be encouraged by access to online classes as their metro counterparts (74% v. 49% respectively).

Recommendations for Action

State Leadership Organizations

Much can be done to shape the future of Colorado librarianship by the profession's state leadership organizations, including the Colorado State Library (CSL), the Colorado Library Consortium (CLiC), the Colorado Library Advisory Board (CoLAB), and a variety of library professional organizations, including, but not limited to, the Colorado Association of Libraries and the Rocky Mountain Chapter of the Special Libraries Association. Advocacy, leadership development, and human resources support should be provided by CSL and CLiC. Library professional organizations can pursue legislative action, produce conferences, workshops, and publications, and confer awards.

Library Decision-Makers & Individual Libraries

School boards, public library trustees, higher education regents, local government officials, and agency and corporate executives should make it a matter of policy to recruit, hire, and support credentialed librarians; provide incentives for those seeking library credentials; provide compensation and other incentives sufficient to retain incumbent librarians; and encourage librarians to serve as state and national library leaders. Administrators for individual libraries should counsel promising employees about their career plans, cultivate the next generation of library leaders, promote librarianship as a career choice, support LIS students with flexible work schedules, and provide work environments that help to retain incumbent librarians.

Library Educators, Librarians, and Library Job Seekers

Recruitment of new librarians is an obvious priority for library and information science programs in Colorado, specifically the newly-accredited program at the University of Denver, the school librarian programs at the University of Colorado, Denver and the University of Northern Colorado, and Emporia in the Rockies. These programs should also work to make LIS education available statewide through the development of extension and online courses. Special attention should be given to developing the expertise of new librarians, especially school librarians, in information technology and digital resources.

Librarians and other library job-seekers should pursue appropriate credentials, join and participate in professional organizations, pursue other continuing education opportunities, and, as they feel ready, volunteer for leadership roles.

Librarianship in Colorado depends on all of these players doing something to contribute to its future.

Introduction and Methodology

What is the future of librarianship as a profession in Colorado? That was the big question to be answered by the “3Rs” study. The study was sponsored by MADCAL—the Management and Administration Division of the Colorado Association of Libraries—and funded by the Colorado State Library.

At the national level, there is considerable discussion of the fact that, due to the aging of the profession, an unusually large wave of librarian retirements has already begun to build and will not crest for several years. To what extent is this true for Colorado? The issue of librarian retirements raises related issues of recruitment and retention. If extraordinary numbers of this graying profession are reaching the traditional retirement age of 65—or even taking early retirements—who is going to take their places? Or, indeed, will those positions exist to require replacements? If positions vacated by retirees require replacements, who will those people be, where will they be found, and what will persuade them to choose librarianship as a career? For that matter, what of librarians who either do not choose to retire or are not yet in a position to do so? How can these incumbents be persuaded to remain in a field whose losses to retirement would only be exacerbated by further losses to other fields?

The demographics of potential recruits—library and information science (LIS) students and current library paraprofessionals considering graduate library education—suggest that librarianship is often, if not usually, a second career. The ages of potential recruits indicate that few undergraduates enter LIS programs immediately after completing bachelor’s degrees. That being the case, how can potential recruits to the profession be identified once they have left academia and begun working in, or studying, other fields? Which other fields should librarianship look to for future recruits? While surveying such individuals

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was not possible, this study did explore with current LIS students and library paraprofessionals what attracted them to the field, what discouraged them from pursuing it, and what other fields interest them.

Incumbent librarians cannot be taken for granted. Other professions with interests in the skills acquired in LIS programs are not sitting on the sidelines. The skills associated with managing, and facilitating access to, information, knowledge, and technology are highly valued by business and industry as well as the non-profit sector. With incumbent librarians, this study explored the field's outdated stereotype, much of the public's lack of comprehension of what the profession does, and the usually sub-standard compensation of librarian positions. As with LIS students and paraprofessionals considering graduate library education, the study explored other lines of work that offer better compensation and more hopeful opportunities for advancement and recognition.

This is the first comprehensive statewide study of “the three R’s”—retirement, recruitment, and retention—that may help to shape the future of librarianship in a state. This report begins with a review of the extant literature on each of these topics. Most of the studies are national, and most deal with only one of the “R’s.” While taking many of the previous national studies as points of departure, this study sought to examine all three “R’s” in a more integrated fashion, with the intent of generating actionable findings about how to influence the future of the library profession in the state.

The questionnaire was developed on the basis of a comprehensive literature review, which will be presented in the next chapter. The draft questionnaire was reviewed by an advisory panel representing all types of libraries and LIS students. Panel members were:

- Betty Bankhead, Project Director, Power Libraries;
- Chris Brown, Reference Librarian, Penrose Library, University of Denver;

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- Patricia Froehlich, Public Library Senior Consultant;
- Deborah Grealy, Director, Library and Information Science Program, College of Education, University of Denver;
- Rochelle Logan, Associate Director for Support Services, Douglas County Libraries;
- Sharon Morris, AskColorado Coordinator, and Emporia State University representative;
- Nance Nassar, School Library Senior Consultant;
- Paul Paladino, Director, Montrose Library District, and President, Colorado Association of Libraries;
- Roberta Ponis, retired Director, Library Media Services, Jefferson County Schools; and
- Jeanie Straub, Library & New Media, Rocky Mountain News.

Library Research Service (LRS) staff participating in the advisory panel meeting included:

- Keith Curry Lance, Director;
- Nicolle Steffen, Associate Director and 3Rs Project Director;
- Becky Russell, Senior Research Analyst;
- Zeth Lietzau, Senior Research Analyst; and
- Stephanie Kean, Administrative Assistant.

A statewide online survey of library workers was conducted between October 15 and November 30, 2003. In preparation for the survey's launch, a statewide public relations campaign was mounted in October 2003 to encourage the largest possible response rate from all parts of the field. The "It's All About You" campaign included: an LRS-sponsored reception for attendees of the 2003 Colorado Association of Libraries conference, "It's All About You" sticky-note pads and stickers in CAL conference bags, "It's All About You" postcards to all library directors, and postings to the following library mailing lists:

- Libnet (statewide library list);

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- CPLD (Colorado Public Library Directors);
- CoSLL (Colorado School Library Leaders);
- CALC (Colorado Academic Library Consortium members);
- Rocky Mountain Chapter of the Special Library Association (RMSLA);
- Emporia State University's distribution list for Colorado LIS students; and
- University of Denver's Library and Information Science Students and Alumni Association, (LISSAA).

A link to the survey was also posted on the CAL website as well as the websites of some local libraries, other professional organizations, and LRS.

The online survey was administered via subsequent postings to the same mailing lists. Of the estimated 4,520 workers employed by Colorado's academic, public, and school libraries, 1,159 (26%) responded to the survey. Several cohorts are represented in the responses: librarians, library paraprofessionals, and library and information science (LIS) students from

- all types of libraries (academic, public, school, and special);
- a variety of specialty areas (administration, public services, technical services, etc.);
- all regions of the state (Eastern Plains, Front Range, Mountains, and Western Slope); and
- metropolitan (cities and suburbs) as well as non-metropolitan areas.

Because the size of the special library worker universe is unknown, the response rate for that sector is unknown. The total number of survey responses, including those from special library workers and LIS students not already working in libraries, was 1,241.

Response rates varied considerably by library type and credential status. (See Table 1.) The highest response rate, 57 percent, was for public librarians. Approximately three out of every ten academic librarians (29%) and public (29%) and school (30%) library paraprofessionals participated in the survey. The lowest

response rates, 13 and 14 percent, respectively, were for academic library paraprofessionals and school librarians. (Again, it is impossible to know the response rate for the special library sector.)

Table 1
Survey Response Rates by
Library Type (Academic, Public, and School) and Credential Status

Response Rate by Library Type				
Credential status	Academic	Public	School	Total for academic, public, and school
Credentialed librarians	29%	57%	14%	29%
Paraprofessionals	13%	29%	30%	25%
Total	18%	35%	19%	26%

The sample for this study was self-selected, making it a non-probability sample. A probability sample was not possible for several reasons. The lack of appropriate sampling frames (e.g., lists of all Colorado library workers and all Colorado residents enrolled in library education programs) prevented either random or systematic sampling. Even if such sampling frames had been available, the personal nature of many of the questions precluded administering the survey via library administrations or asking respondents to identify themselves with their responses in ways that would permit follow-up with non-respondents.

The estimated overall response rate of 26 percent (academic, public, and school libraries only) was the result of multiple appeals for participants extending to all sectors and levels of library personnel. After completing the survey, participants were invited to follow a link to a separate form that enabled them to register for a drawing for an Amazon gift certificate. The provision of a separate form for this purpose guaranteed that contact information for entrants could not be linked to their survey responses.

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The sample and universe distributions of respondents by credential status and library type were explored. Due to the absence of data on the size of the special library workforce, numbers of respondents for academic, public, and school libraries only were compared with their actual totals. For these three library types, the sample breakdown of 45 percent credentialed librarians / 55 percent paraprofessional library workers was reasonably close to the actual breakdown of 41 percent credentialed librarians / 59 percent paraprofessionals. The number of respondents by library type was another matter. Paraprofessionals academic library workers comprise only 8 percent of the study's academic, public, and school respondents (hereafter, the sample), but 16 percent of all academic, public, and school library workers (hereafter, the universe). Credentialed public librarians comprise 25 percent of the sample, but only 11 percent of the universe. Conversely, credentialed school librarians comprise 11 percent of the sample, but 21 percent of the universe. As a result, public library workers overall are somewhat over-represented (63% of the sample, 47% of universe) compared with their academic (17% v. 25%) and school (20% v. 29%) library counterparts.

The minor discrepancies between the proportions of credentialed and paraprofessional respondents in the sample and the universe are addressed in this report, to the extent possible, by presenting results for these two groups separately. However, readers should be aware that findings reported for credentialed librarians will tend to over-represent public librarians at the expense of school librarians. Similarly, findings for paraprofessional library workers will under-represent the academic library sector. If the size of the special library worker universe had been known, the results of this study could have been weighted to represent all four library types in their proper proportions; but, in the absence of complete universe data, such an adjustment was impossible. Instead, to address this library type bias, one or more future issues of FAST FACTS

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(available at LRS.org) will examine the results of this study by library type as appropriate.

A set of questions was asked about each “R” issue—retirement, recruitment, and retention—in addition to general questions covering individual characteristics and opinions.

Questions about individual characteristics included: county of residence, gender, age, racial/ethnic group(s), library type, years of experience in a library or related organization, highest level of education, selected credentials, previous experience—if any—with libraries prior to employment, and professional leadership roles in the library community. Questions about individual opinions included factors contributing to making librarianship an attractive profession and factors discouraging the pursuit of a career in librarianship. Respondents were also asked if they had made any changes to their career plans because of the recent economic downturn, and about any on-the-job changes they had experienced in the past year.

Respondents to the survey identified themselves as imminent retirees (i.e., librarians or paraprofessionals planning to retire within the next five years), current LIS students, paraprofessionals currently working in libraries or related settings, or librarians currently working in libraries or related settings, but not planning to retire soon. The individual respondent’s answer to this question determined which set of “R” questions he or she received—retirement, recruitment (paraprofessionals and LIS students), and retention, respectively.

Those who indicated plans to retire within five years were asked about their supervisory responsibilities and their primary area of responsibility (e.g., generalist, administration, public services, technical services). Retirees were also asked if their primary responsibilities fall in any of several selected areas, such

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as cataloging, digital/electronic resources, and youth services. They were asked for their opinions about what is likely to happen to their positions after they retire and factors that influenced their decision to retire. Those who indicated plans to remain involved in the library community after retirement were asked how they wish or expect to remain involved (e.g., serve on library boards/commissions, volunteer at a library, work part-time or on-call as a librarian).

Incumbent librarians (i.e., those with librarian credentials and no plans to retire within five years) were also asked about supervisory roles, primary responsibilities, selected specialties, and the anticipated fate of their positions if they left them. Because one of the issues in retaining incumbent librarians is mobility, they were asked where they expect to live and work, particularly whether they might consider out-of-state jobs. The central questions for this cohort included factors influencing them to remain in an organization, if they have any foreseeable plans to leave librarianship, and, if so, for what other fields.

Current LIS students were asked to identify the LIS program in which they are enrolled as well as the type of library and specialty area in which they anticipate working. Like incumbent librarians, they were also asked about the role of geography in their thinking about job opportunities, the other fields they considered besides librarianship, and their salary expectations.

Library paraprofessionals who have not chosen to pursue LIS credentials were asked to identify their reasons for that decision. Those who are considering pursuing a library degree were asked what features of an LIS program most encouraged them to pursue a degree (e.g., access to online courses, availability of financial aid, flexible work schedules). Both sets of paraprofessionals were asked what other fields they considered or were considering.

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This report focuses on three central issues: retirement, retention, and recruitment. It also explores differences between credentialed librarians, paraprofessionals, and LIS students. For these reasons, and because a relatively small number of respondents were persons of color (98—or 8.2%—of the 1,194 respondents who responded to the race/ethnicity item), no meaningful differences in responses could be attributed to race/ethnicity.

In the following chapters, findings related to retirement, recruitment, and retention are reported in turn. The final chapter identifies major findings, discusses their interaction, and offers conclusions and recommendations for action.

The questionnaire is presented in Appendix A. The answers received to all questions are tabulated in Appendix B.

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Review of Literature

Focusing on Colorado, this study expands on previous studies about expected retirements in the profession of librarianship and on the recruitment and retention of librarians. Literature on the issues of retirement, retention, and recruitment in various types of libraries in the United States is extensive, but no study has focused specifically on Colorado and looked at personnel in all types of libraries. This literature review concentrates on recent studies that collected or analyzed data to quantify the issues and provide background for “The Future of Librarianship in Colorado.”

Retirement

Previous studies on librarians and retirement have used census data and Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Current Population Surveys (CPS) to analyze the ages of librarians and to predict when librarians might retire. The studies cited in this section address retirement as a function of age, showing the number of librarians that will reach age 65 during given time periods. While they cannot show motivations or plans of individuals, these studies do give a broad picture of the aging of the profession.

Stanley J. Wilder (1995) published a profile of academic librarians based on data from the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) and CPS. Analysis of the data showed that academic librarians as a group were older than other professionals in BLS’s “Professional Specialty Occupations.” These occupations include engineers, architects, scientists, doctors, lawyers, and teachers. Librarians as a group have been older relative to other comparable professionals since at least 1970, according to the BLS 1975 study, *Library Manpower: A Study of Demand and Supply*. Between 1990 and 1994, the percentage of ARL librarians aged 45 and over rose from 48 percent to 58 percent. In a 2002 analysis based on CPS data, Wilder found that 52,000 ARL librarians were aged 55 and over. Factors

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that contribute to the aging trend for the profession include: the rising age of library and information science students, the hiring boom in ARL libraries in the 1960s, the baby boom, and low rates of hire between 1990 and 1994.

James Matazarro (2000) also analyzed census and CPS data. His analysis was built on his previous work that calculated all of the library education programs in the country could not produce enough graduates to replace the number of librarians who would reach retirement age between 1980 and 2000. It also projects significant retirements by librarians between 2000 and 2010 using 1990 census data. Matazarro notes the higher average age of students currently enrolled in LIS programs is a factor that contributes to the aging of the librarian profession.

The Medical Library Association (MLA) conducts a triennial salary survey. In 1998 this survey identified an aging trend in members of the association, a trend confirmed in 2001. The 2001 MLA survey found that over 40 percent of respondents in 2001 were between 50-59 years of age.

ALA worked with Decision Demographics to estimate the number of librarians who will reach age 65 over the next 35 years. They analyzed census files to calculate the number of MLS degree holders in the United States and their ages. Their results show the highest number turning 65 (18,469) in the 5-year period from 2010-2014.

Retention

Studies on retention in the librarian profession have focused on salary, working conditions, changing job requirements, and job satisfaction as factors influencing retention of librarians. Many of these issues overlap with recruitment issues. In a 2002 White Paper, ARL's Ad Hoc Task Force on Recruitment and Retention

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Issues points out that statistics are not available about how many librarians leave the profession, at what point, and why.

Olivia Crosby (2001) analyzed BLS projections and salary survey data for an article about librarians in *Occupational Outlook Quarterly*. The article points out that librarian jobs have been altered by technological advances. The effect of technology on job growth is mixed. Technology allows more work to be accomplished by fewer people and sometimes by technicians rather than librarians. It also enables some researchers to use library resources without the aid of a librarian. Conversely, librarians' technological skills improve their employment prospects and libraries sometimes have to compete with technology firms for jobseekers. For example, some librarians with technological skills leave librarianship for jobs as database administrators or webmasters. BLS projects percent of librarian employment growth for 1998-2008 will be faster in business services than in public libraries, schools, and colleges, although most librarian jobs will continue to be in traditional library settings. Crosby cites *Library Journal's* "Placements and Salaries Survey, 1998" to show that librarians' average starting salaries for 1998 were about 11 percent higher for nontraditional information jobs, like information consultant, than for traditional jobs in public libraries.

Marian P. Lewis (2002) examined position advertisements over a twenty-year period from 1970 to 1990 to investigate technology competency requirements and to see if mid-career librarians who earned degrees prior to the changes in MLS curriculum that emphasize technology are successful in the job market. The study looked at a total of 5,169 ads from the sample years 1970, 1975, 1980, 1985, and 1990 for all types of libraries. Concluding with 1990, the study assumed librarians seeking initial jobs after that time would have received technology training in formal MLS coursework. Lewis found "technology" qualifications began to be required for some administration and many traditional

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technical services jobs in the 1970s when libraries began implementing automated systems and converting card catalogs, but expanded to be required in all types of library positions by the mid-1980s. Mid-career librarians often assume administrative roles and Lewis found that position advertisements linking “administration” and “technology” qualifications also increased in number over the period of analysis. Lewis contends mid-career librarians learned about technology on the job, in formal courses, or learned to rely on others in the organization to organize and implement the technology. As a result, they successfully filled the advertised jobs as effective librarians despite lack of technology education in their MLS programs. Technological developments have changed what is expected of mid-career librarians.

Marie B. Landry (2000) surveyed 285 reference librarians in Florida public libraries to learn about their job satisfaction and life satisfaction. Analysis of the data collected found a positive correlation between life and job satisfaction. The study found the job facets causing the greatest dissatisfaction for librarians were pay, promotional opportunities, contingent rewards, operating conditions, and communication within the library.

Joyce K. Thornton (2000) analyzed 136 survey responses from librarians of African descent in ARL libraries to learn about their job satisfaction and other issues that affect their recruitment and retention. In her study “job satisfaction” was defined from previous literature as a:

...dynamic, changing idea; the feeling an employee has about his pay, work, promotion opportunities, coworkers, and supervisor; the feelings and emotional aspects of individual’s experiences toward their jobs, as different from intellectual or rational aspects. (Thornton, Review of the Literature)

At least half of respondents were “satisfied” with job duties, working conditions, variety of occupational tasks, work assignment and workload, interaction with peers, and interaction with patrons. The highest percent of “very dissatisfied” responses came to questions about the proportion of faculty of African descent at the university and the proportion of faculty of African descent at the library, followed by salary.

Recruitment

Studies on recruitment to the profession of librarianship focus on the changing skills required for the job, professional education, recruitment methods, and compensation.

Wilder (2002) analyzed hiring in academic research libraries. He found 1,079 new hires in 2000, up 35 percent from two years before. However, 20 percent of the new hires to professional positions in ARL libraries in 2000 had no library degree as compared to just 7 percent in 1985 who had no library degree. Wilder links this to the trend of hiring more “functional specialists,” a category that includes IT-related specialists and experts in management fields. In 2000, 48 percent of functional specialists had no library degree. The analysis also found that 44 percent of functional specialists are male, as compared to 28 percent of other professional library job categories.

ARL surveyed 55 libraries in January 1999 and analyzed almost 900 position descriptions from them for the period 1996-1999 to learn about changing job requirements, responsibilities, and roles for librarians in these institutions. The study concluded that the roles of librarians and other professionals in ARL libraries are changing as the consequence of new technologies and organizational development. Many positions have been redesigned to integrate technological competencies as a part of the overall requirements and desired characteristics of the positions. Position descriptions list the MLS as the terminal

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degree requirement, but also focus on demonstrated expertise or experience with hardware or software, web-based activities, staff training and development, classroom teaching, or administration. New technology has led to different types of positions working with networked environments, information systems, and digital libraries.

The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Ad Hoc Task Force on Recruitment and Retention Issues White Paper (2002) looked at both print and electronic methods of recruiting librarians. *The Bowker Annual Guide to Employment Sources in Library and Information Science* has a comprehensive list of library employment sources in print. There is steady growth in job hotlines, job boards, LISTSERVs, and other announcement services for library jobs. All types of libraries are successfully using the Internet for job recruitment in some manner. But the White Paper points out efforts to attract people to degree programs are also critical to the future of the profession. The last formal survey on library school recruitment methods and strategies was published in 1986.

In an article about how professional organizations are dealing with the aging of the librarian profession, Lenzini (2002) says “The theory, naturally, is that young women who traditionally supported the low-paying careers represented by nursing, teaching, and librarianship now have other options and are exercising them” (p. 89). To back up her theory she cites one of Wilder’s studies that found the number of young women under the age of 30 choosing librarianship declined by 9 percent between 1970 and 1990, while, overall, the profession grew by 62 percent. Other traditional careers for women like nursing and elementary teaching also showed declines in the number of young women under 30 choosing them. In contrast, the data showed growth in the number of women choosing careers in law and medicine over the same 20-year period.

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The Public Library Association (PLA) (2000) analyzed salary data from the annual *Public Library Data Service Statistical Report*, the annual fiscal year report of the National Center for Education Statistics on *Public Libraries in the United States*, and information from the US Census Bureau to show that staff allocations as a percentage of total public library budgets went down between 1994 and 1996 and that the trend may have continued through 1998. A study of 1990 Census data about persons with master's degrees who were employed by local government in New York City showed that a higher percentage of those in the library field fell into lower salary ranges than their comparably credentialed colleagues in education. While acknowledging the study is limited by the age of the data and the narrowness of the area of analysis, PLA cites this as more evidence that low salaries are a deterrent to attracting and retaining librarians in the public library.

ALA's November 2001 survey on recruitment and retirement for the Human Resources Section of the Library Administration and Management Association found that the major recruitment problems were perceived by respondents to stem from lack of dollars for salaries and lack of degree-holders with needed specialties. Respondents said retention of staff is a problem, high-tech firms are major competitors, finding experienced staff for middle and top management positions is a problem, and children's librarians and diverse candidates are hard to find.

The ALA added Supplementary Questions to its 2002 ALA Survey of Librarian Salaries to gather information about vacancies in libraries. The salary survey is sent to a random sample of medium and large public, two-year and four-year college, and university libraries. Recipients were asked whether they had any vacancies in funded full-time MLS positions and, if so, how many. Analyzing responses by type of library revealed that 10.1 percent of four-year college libraries report one or more vacancies. Other types of libraries had even larger

percentages, with 52.0 percent of large public libraries reporting one or more vacancies. University libraries reported the highest vacancy rate among the five types—7.8 percent of positions vacant. Large public libraries had 5.6 percent of their positions vacant. The survey also learned that 53.4 percent of vacancies reported had been vacant for six months or more. The reasons given most often to explain why positions remained vacant were: a shortage of people with a particular specialty” (23.1%), low salaries at an institution (16.2%), and a lack of MLS degree holders generally (16.2%).

Literature Review Summary

The studies cited here explore different aspects of the changing profession of librarianship. Naturally, they suggest that many current librarians will reach retirement age in the next decade. The high expected retirement rates make retention and recruitment of librarians pressing issues. The loss of experience and manpower to retirement will be compounded when mid-career librarians choose to leave the profession for better-paying jobs and new library and information science graduates are lured by better salaries into technology jobs based outside traditional libraries.

Technology has changed librarians’ jobs as well as job opportunities. Some libraries do not require a master’s degree for employment at a professional level, but they do require technological skills. Job requirements and duties, job satisfaction, and compensation issues affect both the retention of mid-career librarians and the recruitment of new people to the profession.

Retirement

What does “retirement” mean today? Traditionally, people retired when they were “too old” to be either able or willing to work. Today, the concept of retirement is broader and more flexible. Some “retirees” leave one job to prepare for a career in another field. Others leave the work force temporarily to care for young children or older parents. And, as for being “too old” to be able or willing to work; for some, “retirement age” is dropping into the 50’s or even the 40’s, while, for others, it is rising into the 70’s. Because the conception of retirement has become so broad and flexible, respondents were allowed to define it for themselves.

Of the 1,241 respondents to the survey, 216—or 17 percent—indicated that they plan to retire in the next five years. The retiring respondents include two groups: credentialed librarians and paraprofessionals (i.e., those without advanced library degrees or related credentials). Of the 571 credentialed librarians, 122—or 21 percent—plan to retire within five years. (Findings about paraprofessionals planning to retire are addressed later.)

Retirement – Credentialed Librarians

Metropolitan Status and Geography

Expected librarian retirements are distributed predictably among metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas and by geographic location – Front Range, Eastern Plains, and Mountains and Western Slope. Like the population of Colorado as a whole, more than four out of five responding librarians who plan to retire live in a metropolitan area (86%). Eighty-four percent of these retiring librarians reside along the Front Range, 14 percent in the Mountains or on the Western Slope, and only 2 percent on the Eastern Plains. (See Table 2.)

Table 2
Retirement Respondents – Credentialed Librarians:
Metropolitan Status and Geographic Distribution

Metropolitan Status	
Metropolitan area	86%
Non-metropolitan area	14%
Total	100%

Geographic Area	
Front Range	84%
Eastern Plains	2%
Mountains & Western Slope	14%
Total	100%

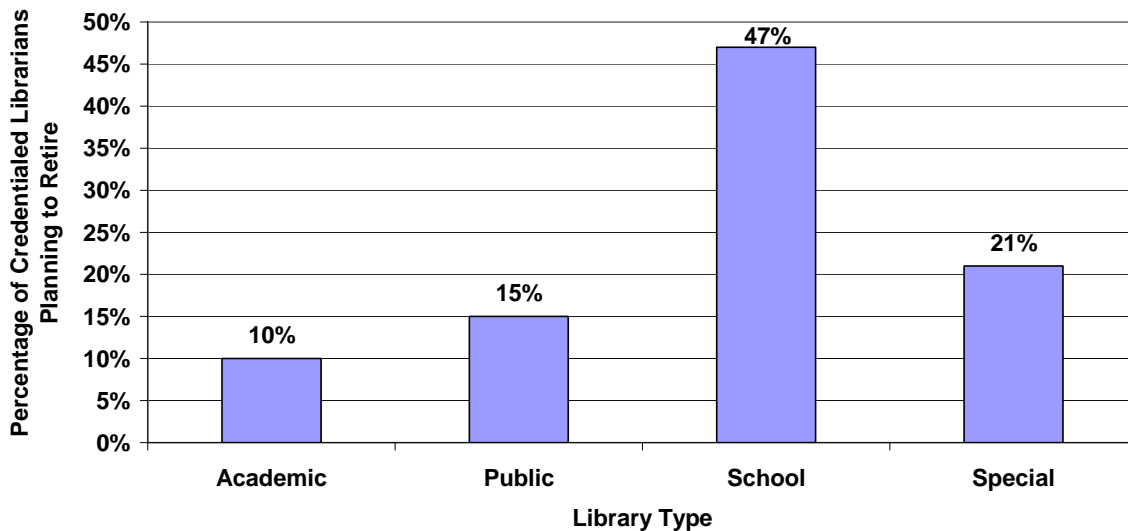
Age

Many Colorado librarians will not wait until age 65 to retire, a trend that may create even more openings than foreseen in Census Bureau analyses based on that traditional retirement age (Lynch 2002). Almost three-quarters (71%) of librarians who reported planning to retire within five years were age 55 or older. Remaining librarian retirees were between ages 45 and 54 (29%) and none were younger than age 45.

Library Type

Most types of libraries will be losing large numbers of librarians in the next five years, but the ranks of school librarians will be depleted most by retirements. According to these survey results, the library type that can expect to be most impacted by imminent retirements is school libraries. (See Chart 1.) Of school librarians who participated in this study, almost half (47%) report planning to retire within five years. That is more than twice the percentage of imminent retirements reported by special librarians (21%), more than three times the percentage reported by public librarians (15%), and almost five times the rate for academic librarians (10%).

Chart 1
Credentialed Librarians:
Percentage Planning to Retire In the Next 5 Years
Within Each Library Type



This dramatically high percentage of imminent retirements reported by school librarians is probably largely explained by the age demographics of school vs. other types of librarians who participated in this study. (See Table 3.) Overall, three out of ten responding librarians are age 55 or over; but, there are significant differences by library type. Of school librarian respondents to the survey, more than two out of five (42%) are age 55 or over. Only one out of three special librarians (32%), a quarter of public librarians (26%), and one out of five academic librarians (21%) belong to the most senior group of respondents. As a result, the percentage of school librarians ages 30 to 44 (11%) is only about a third of the percentage of other librarians in that age group (30% each academic and public, 27% special).

It should be noted that the response rate from credentialed school librarians (14%) was lower than the response rates for academic (29%) and public librarians (57%). Perhaps, some unknown response bias explains the dramatically higher percentages of imminent retirees, or older librarians (i.e., age

55 and over), among this study’s school library respondents. Based on a straw poll of school library leaders, however, these findings reflect an intuitively perceived reality.

Table 3
All Credentialed Librarians:
Age Group and Library Type

Age Group	Library Type				Total
	Academic	Public	School	Special	
Under 30	6 7%	8 4%	2 2%	1 1%	17 3%
30-44	27 30%	68 30%	11 11%	27 27%	133 26%
45-54	38 42%	93 41%	45 45%	39 39%	215 42%
55 & over	19 21%	58 26%	42 42%	32 32%	151 29%
Total	90 100%	227 100%	100 100%	99 100%	516 100%

Years of Experience

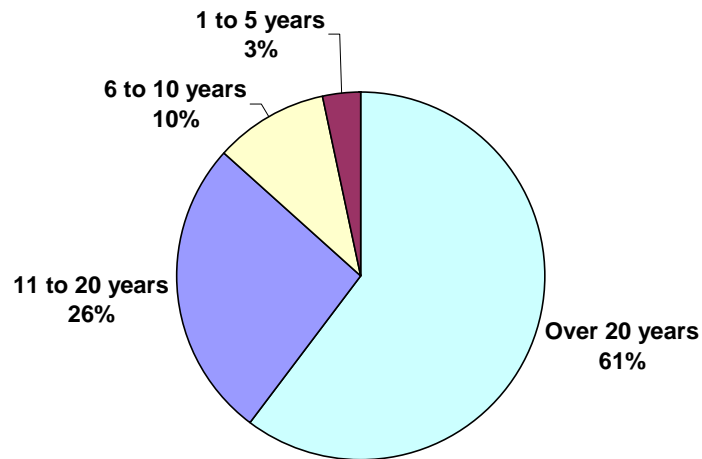
Retiring librarians will take with them a decade or more of library experience. Of librarians reporting imminent retirement plans, three out of five (61%) have worked in libraries for over 20 years and another quarter (26%) for 11 to 20 years. Put another way, nearly nine out of ten (87%) likely retirees have more than 10 years of experience.

Consequently, when they retire they will take with them professional and institutional memory that will be missed by library boards, directors, and patrons. (See Chart 2.)

“I see a dismaying trend in public libraries of minimizing the significance of an MLS... The powers that be should be creating career paths and opportunities for MLS's that encourages more people to seek the advanced degree. Instead, they seem to be responding to the rising retirement rate by replacing degreed librarians with paraprofessionals. If we don't value the degree from within our own ranks, why should anyone else? We can't demand higher salaries if we don't preserve our professionalism.”

– Public Librarian

Chart 2
Retirement Respondents – Credentialed Librarians:
Distribution by Years of Library Employment

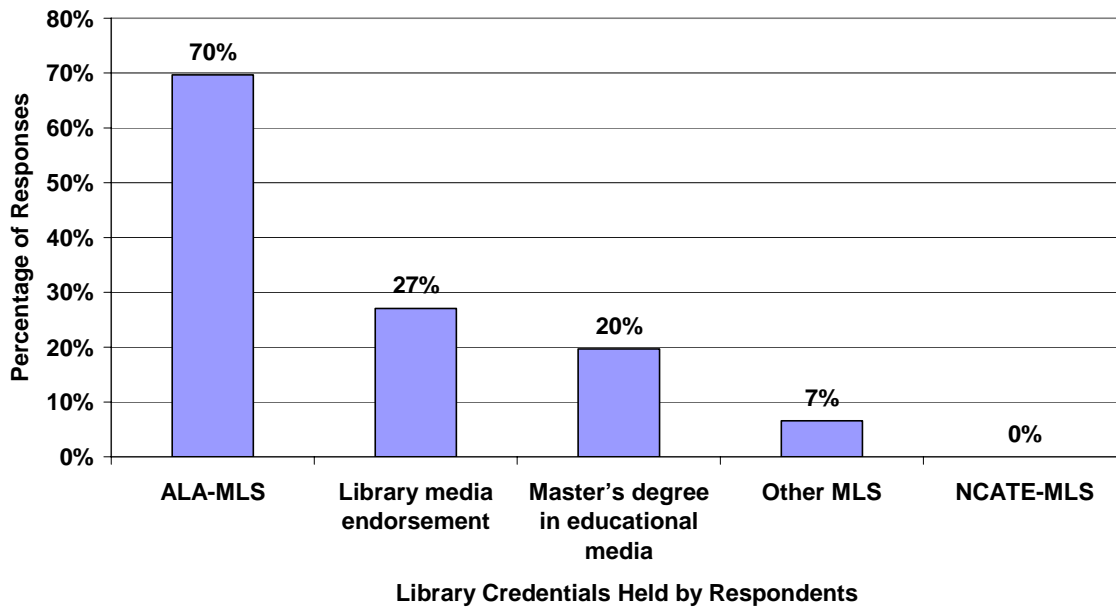


Librarian Credentials

Almost four out of five responding librarians who report planning to retire in the next five years have an ALA-accredited or other MLS degree (70% and 7%, respectively).

Substantial minorities of retiring librarians have credentials suited to working in school libraries. Of retiring librarians, more than a quarter (27%) have a library media endorsement, and one out of five (20%) has a Master's degree in educational media. (See Chart 3.)

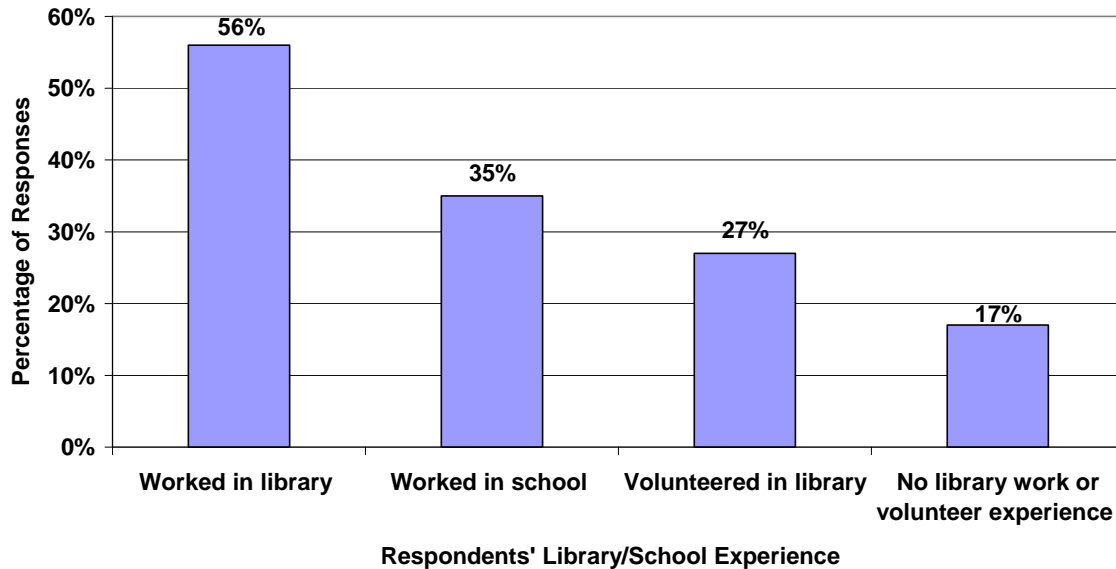
Chart 3
Retirement Respondents – Credentialed Librarians:
Professional Library Degrees



Previous Library or School Experience

Current paraprofessionals, teachers, and volunteers may be a good pool from which to recruit future librarians. More than half of librarians who report planning to retire in the next five years (56%) had worked and/or volunteered in a library before deciding to pursue a professional library degree. In addition, over a third of respondents had worked in a school (35%). Fewer than one in five librarian retirees (17%) reported no previous library experience before earning a professional library degree. (See Chart 4.)

Chart 4
Retirement Respondents – Credentialed Librarians:
Library Experience Prior to Pursuing a Graduate Degree
in Library Science or a School Library Media Endorsement



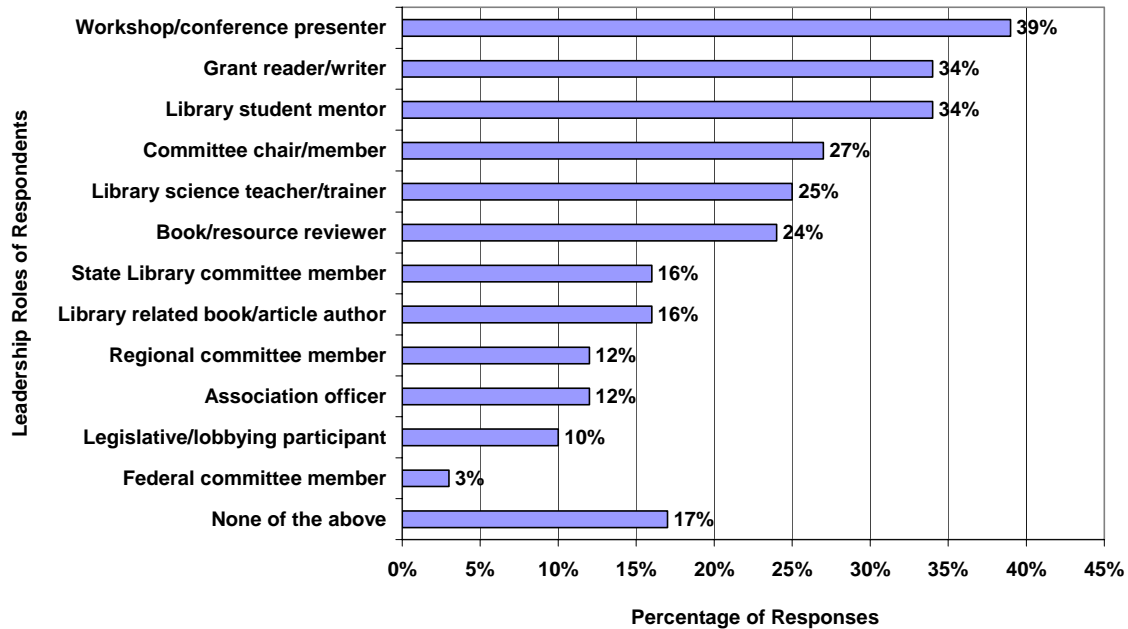
Library Community Leadership

The Colorado library community is at risk of losing many active leaders to retirement. More than four out of five (83%) retiring librarians report being involved in the professional library community beyond their job roles in the past five years. Many of those planning to retire identify themselves as presenters of programs at library conferences (39%), writers or readers of library-related grant proposals (34%), mentors of library school students (34%), officers or members of library association committees (27%), and teachers or trainers of library workers (25%). Less than one retiring librarian in five (17%) reports no activity in the professional library community in the past five years. (See Chart 5.)

“If it weren't for the high quality of leadership in the Colorado library community, I would be pessimistic about the future of librarianship in this state. However, after reading on Libnet so many of the upbeat, creative, and well-thought-out ideas for surviving the current economic downturn, I feel strongly that the future outlook for librarians here will be bright. Perhaps we will emerge a more powerful force than before.”

– Librarian
Special Library

Chart 5
Retirement Respondents – Credentialed Librarians:
Library Community Leadership Roles



What Makes Librarianship an Attractive Profession

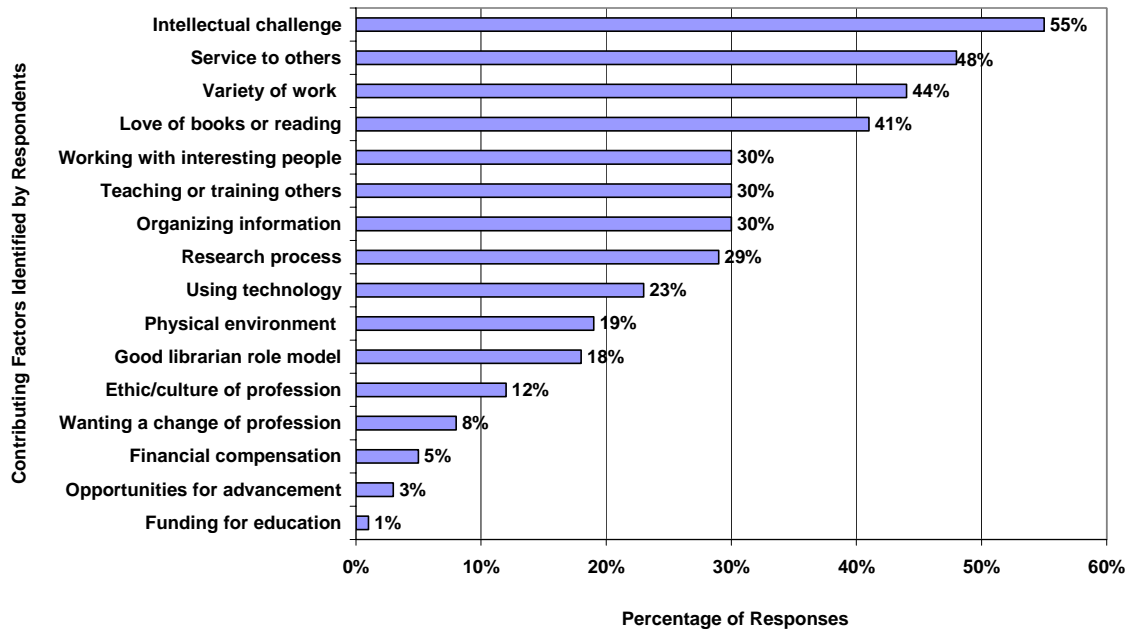
For retiring librarians who replied to this survey, the three highest-ranking factors that make librarianship an attractive profession are: intellectual challenge (55%), service to others (48%), and variety of work (44%). These imminent retirees challenged their profession's stereotype by ranking love of books and reading (41%) fourth after these other factors.

Factors that they felt contributed least to making the profession attractive were financial compensation (5%), opportunities for advancement (3%), and availability of funding for training or education (1%). That these factors were at the

"I am thrilled to be a Library Media Specialist and I love every day that I work. I encourage other people [to] become a librarian hoping that they too will love it as much as I."
– School Librarian

bottom of the list suggests that money issues are a source of discontent for librarians even at the end of their careers. (See Chart 6.)

Chart 6
Retirement Respondents – Credentialed Librarians:
Factors That Make Librarianship an Attractive Profession



What Discourages Choosing Librarianship as a Profession

When asked to identify factors that most discourage people from pursuing a career in librarianship, almost two-thirds of retiring librarians who answered the question chose low compensation (66%) and misconceptions about what librarians do (63%). In addition to the latter, more than a third of them feel that librarians are stereotyped negatively (38%) and that the profession receives low prestige (34%). Together, these responses indicate that retiring librarians feel that they and their profession are both

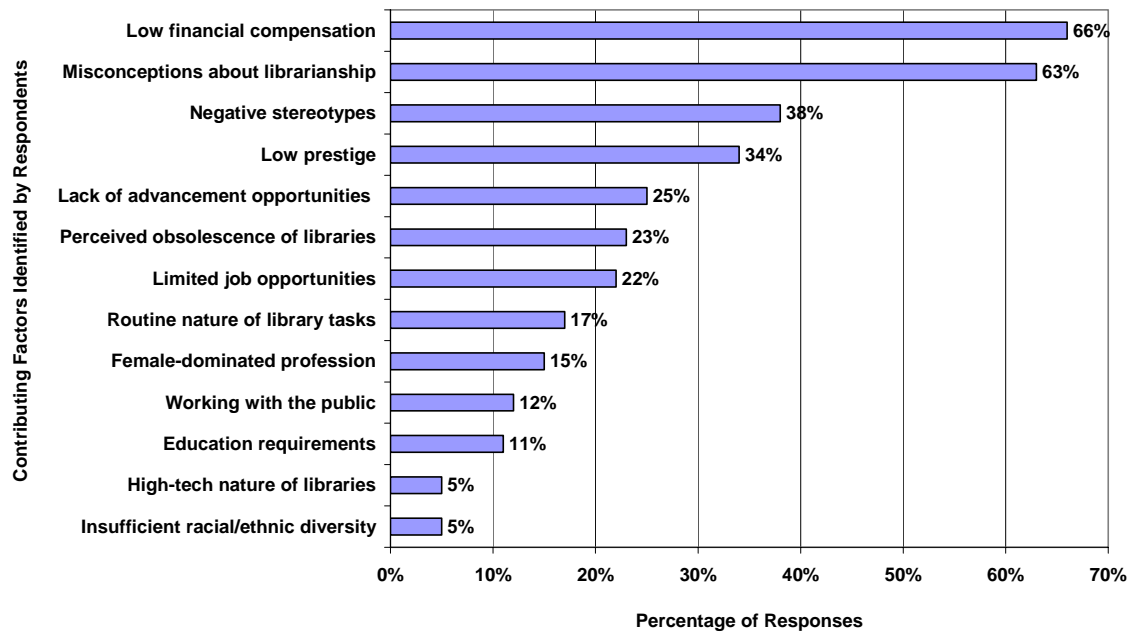
“Many administrative/management-level staff will be retiring in the next ten to fifteen years and it will be a challenge to replace them. When we have school visits, students are reluctant to pursue library degrees due to the length of the educational process compared to the salary they might hope to receive in their first job. Our jobs are not as attractive as those in other fields of study which pay more for an advanced degree.”

– Public Librarian

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under-compensated and misunderstood. At just five percent each, the high-tech nature of libraries and insufficient racial/ethnic diversity were considered by this group to be the least influential factors in discouraging potential librarians. (See Chart 7.)

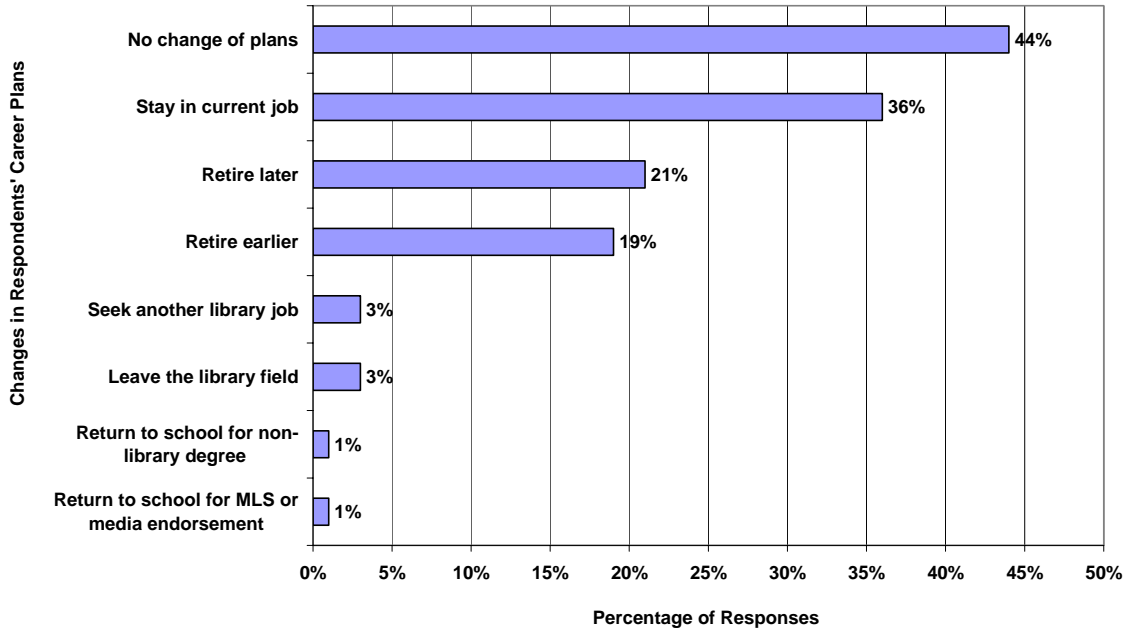
Chart 7
Retirement Respondents – Credentialed Librarians:
Factors that Discourage a Career in Librarianship



Impact of Economic Downturn on Retirement Plans

The recent economic downturn has affected the retirement plans of many librarians about to retire, although in a variety of ways. While 44 percent of responding librarians planning to retire indicated the current economic downturn has not changed their career plans, 21 percent indicated they will retire later than originally planned and 19 percent will retire earlier than originally planned. Considerably fewer members of this group plan to leave the library field (3%) or return to school for degrees either in or outside the library field (1% each). (See Chart 8.)

Chart 8
Retirement Respondents – Credentialed Librarians:
Effects of the Economic Downturn on Career Plans



Changes at Place of Employment

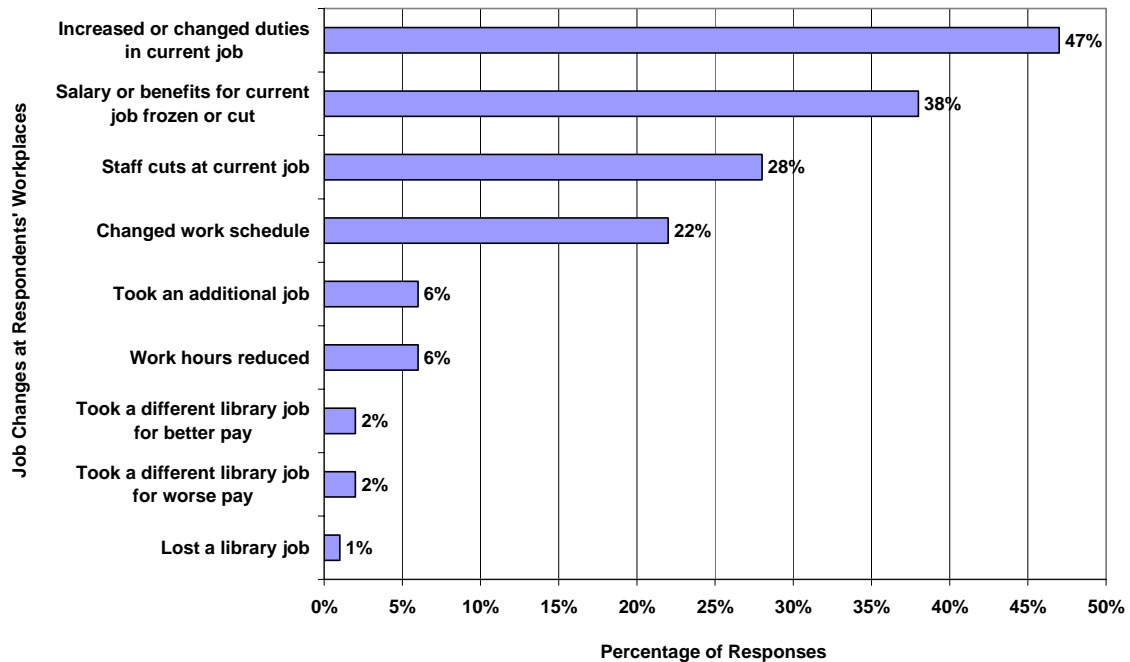
Seventy percent of responding librarians who plan to retire have experienced one or more negative changes in their workplaces: Of these retiring librarians, almost half (47%) have increased or changed duties in their current jobs, more than a third (38%) have had their salaries or benefits frozen or cut, and more than a quarter (28%) have seen co-workers lose their jobs; but, only 1 percent report losing a job themselves. These findings suggest that librarians have felt a variety of consequences from the recent economic downturn.

(See Chart 9.)

"I plan to retire within 10-12 years, and I don't see a great influx of bright, young people entering the profession because of poor pay, difficult schedules, and lack of public support. I'd like to see that change, but I'm not sure how librarians can change the situation in the current economic climate in Colorado."

– Public Librarian

Chart 9
Retirement Respondents – Credentialed Librarians:
Changes at Their Workplaces in the Last Year

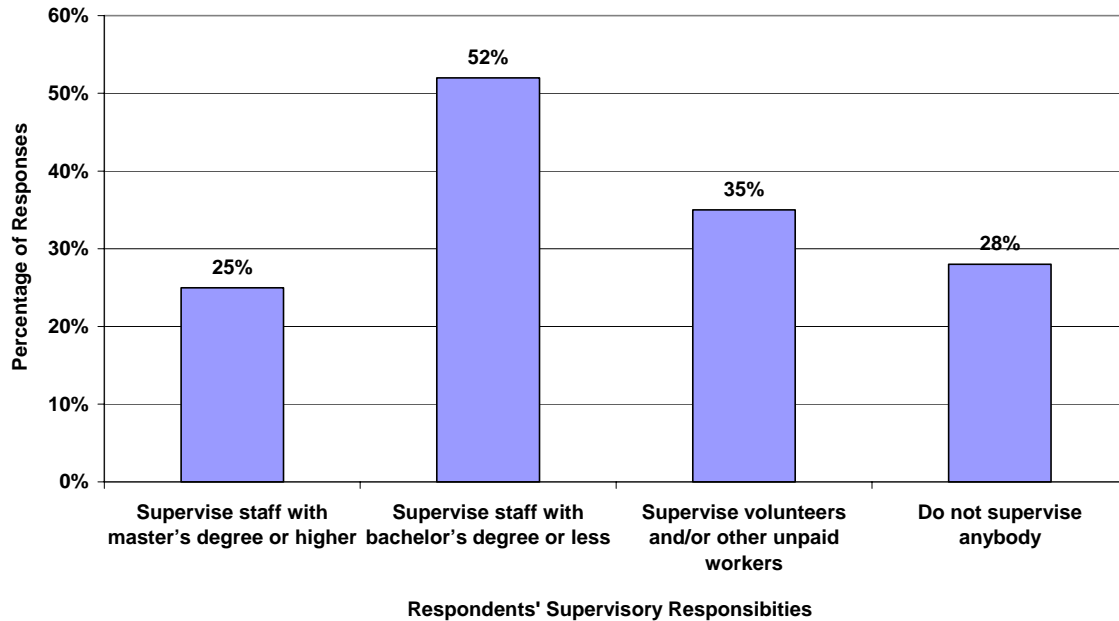


Supervisory Experience

Over the next five years, Colorado libraries will lose librarians with considerable supervisory experience. Almost three-fourths (72%) of respondents from the retiring librarians' group have supervisory experience (28% do not supervise anybody). More than half (52%) supervise staff with bachelor's degrees or less. A quarter (25%) of the librarians who plan to retire currently supervise other staff members with master's degrees or higher. As one would expect, these are higher percentages than the respondent group as a whole, another reflection of the seniority and management experience that will soon be lost to retirement. Directors, boards, and public officials need to start taking actions that will encourage the recruitment and training of workers to replace these experienced staff members.

Only 28 percent of librarians who report planning to retire are not supervisors; but, many of these may be solo librarians, whose expertise will also be difficult to replace. (See Chart 10.)

Chart 10
Retirement Respondents – Credentialed Librarians:
Supervisory Responsibilities



Primary Area of Responsibility

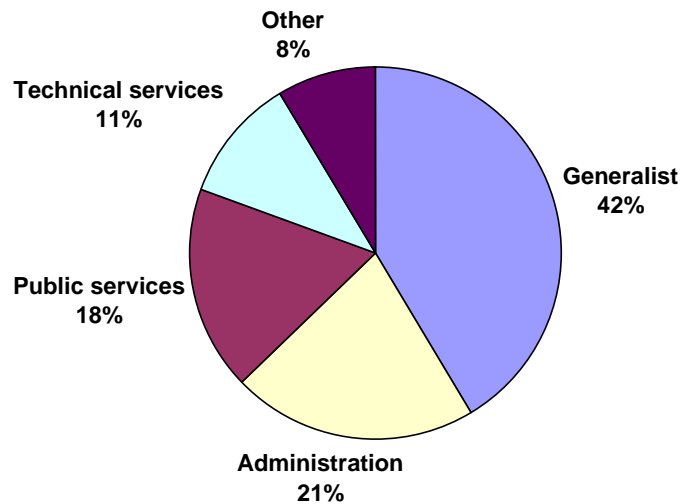
Two out of five (42%) retiring librarians who participated in this study identify themselves as “generalists” (lone librarians or one of a small staff) —the largest group among those planning to retire within the next five years. One out of five (21%) of the librarians planning to retire is in administration, compared to one out of six (18%) librarians without foreseeable retirement plans. Less than one out of five (18%) imminent retirees work in public services, compared to over a third (35%) of non-retiring librarians. This may reflect the fact that more senior librarians tend to have fewer day-to-day public services

“The term ‘librarian’ is very outdated. I think that the stereotype that goes along with the term is also outdated and stale ...the title ‘Information Specialist’ reflects this trend toward the future with a new view on library science and professional work.”

–LIS Student and
Paraprofessional, Academic Library

responsibilities. Fewer than one in ten retiring librarians (8%) claimed primary responsibilities other than those listed. When asked to identify those other responsibilities, they most frequently listed: teaching, information literacy instruction, adult literacy and English language services, and archives. (See Chart 11.)

Chart 11
Retirement Respondents – Credentialed Librarians:
Area of Primary Responsibility in Current Position

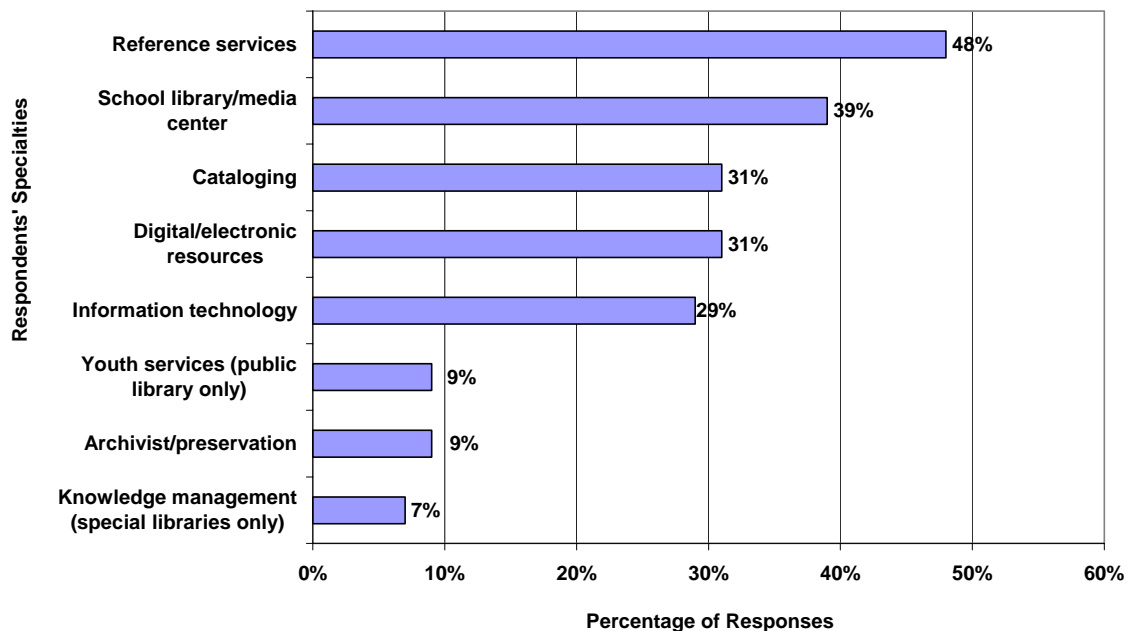


Selected Specialties

Specialties from which the most retiring librarians will be lost are reference services, school libraries, cataloging, digital/electronic resources, and information technology. Of retiring librarian respondents, almost half (48%) specialize in reference services, and two out of five (39%) in school library media. Cataloging (31%), digital/electronic resources (31%), and information technology (29%) were each identified as the specialty of three out of ten retiring librarians. Youth services in public libraries (9%), archives/preservation (9%), and knowledge management in special libraries (7%) were each identified as the specialty of less than one in ten retiring librarians. The specialties listed in the question were

chosen based on the literature review which showed particular concern about looming shortages (e.g., youth services) or because they are relatively new and growing areas for the profession (e.g., knowledge management and IT). (See Chart 12.)

Chart 12
Retirement Respondents – Credentialed Librarians:
Selected Specialty Areas



Supply and Demand Issues for Selected Specialties

A major library workforce issue underlying this study is a concern about the supply and demand for librarians generally and certain specialties in particular. Are we educating enough new librarians to take the places of those who will be retiring during the next five years? The discrepancy between the sample numbers of current library science students and retiring

“Not all school districts require endorsed librarians or even certified teachers in their libraries, especially at the elementary level. With budget cuts, these jobs are not at all secure. But the educational requirements are huge. How can we ask people to pursue the education and not guarantee them positions?”

– School Librarian

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librarians in selected specialties indicates that Colorado’s greatest need during the next five years is going to be for new school librarians. Of those responding to the survey, 48 are school librarians planning to retire, but only 18 are students studying to fill such positions. Based on this comparison of student and retiree responses, the state is also likely to experience shortages of those with expertise in:

- information technology (17 more retirees than students),
- cataloging (15 more retirees than students),
- digital/electronic resources (9 more retirees than students), and
- reference (12 more retirees than students).

Only for archives/preservation, knowledge management, and youth services are there more current library science students than retiring librarians. (See Table 4.)

Table 4
Retirement Respondents – Credentialed Librarians: Comparing Retirees and Library Science Students in Selected Library Specialty Areas

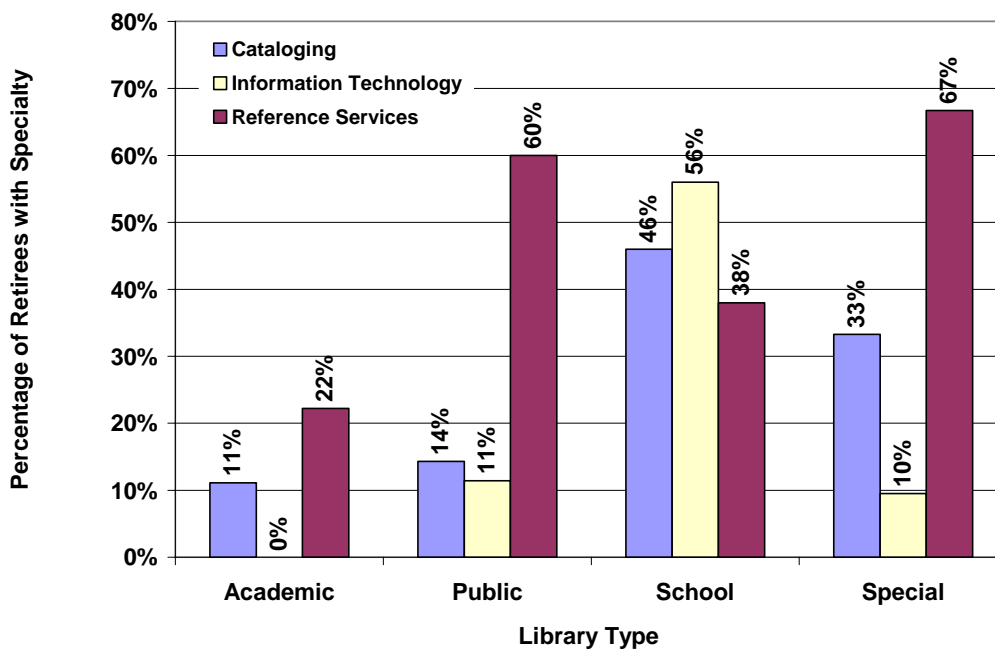
Library Specialty Area	Current Library Science Students	Retiring Librarians	Difference
Archivist/preservation	13	11	2
Cataloging	23	38	-15
Digital/electronic resources	29	38	-9
Information technology	18	35	-17
Knowledge management (special libraries only)	16	8	8
Reference	46	58	-12
School library/media center	18	48	-30
Youth services (public library only)	18	11	7

Selected Specialties by Library Type

Librarian retirements for certain specialties will hit some library types more than others. Of responding retirees from school libraries, over half report responsibility for information technology (56%), almost half for cataloging (46%), and more than a third for reference services (38%). Of retiring special librarian respondents, two-thirds report responsibility for reference services (67%), and a

third for cataloging (33%). Of respondents retiring from public libraries, three out of five report responsibility for reference services (60%). Retiring academic library respondents were far less likely to identify responsibilities for cataloging, information technology, or reference services. Of the three, the most prevalent was reference services at about one out of five (22%). (See Chart 13.)

Chart 13
Retirement Respondents - Credentialed Librarians:
Selected Specialty Areas by Library Type



Future of Current Position

Half of Colorado librarians (50%) who report planning to retire in the next five years do not assume their positions will be filled by someone who meets similar or higher education requirements. Of these retiring librarians, one out of five (19%) expects their job will be reorganized, combined with another position, or eliminated. One out of six (17%) is concerned that their position

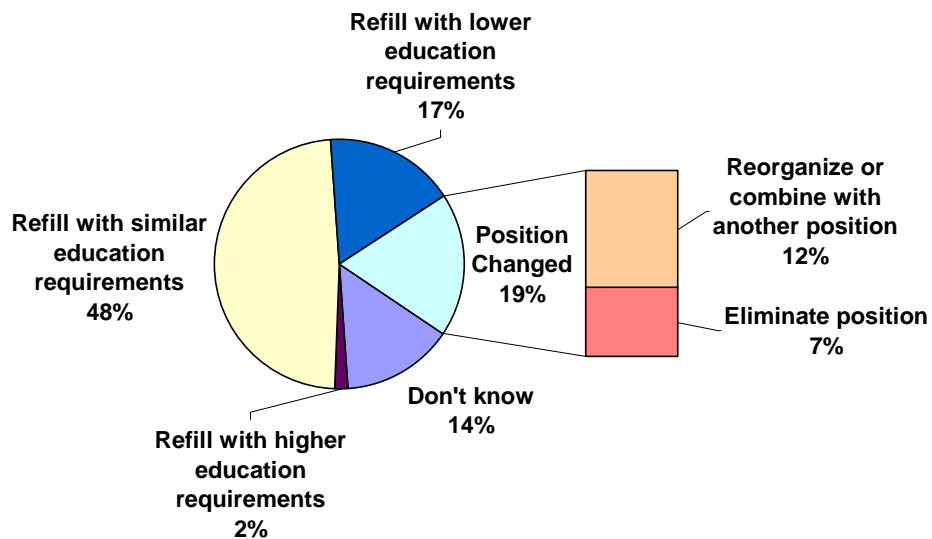
“There are no jobs for librarians or newly graduated librarians. The only jobs are for paraprofessionals, and once you have an MLS, you are over qualified to apply for paraprofessional positions. This applies to both Colorado and the rest of the U.S.”

– LIS Student

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may be “de-professionalized”—that is, refilled after they retire, but by someone meeting lower minimum educational requirements. One out of seven (14%) does not know what to expect to happen to their position after they retire. The remaining half of imminent retirees who participated in this study expect their successors to be librarians who meet similar (48%) or higher (2%) educational requirements. While these are only the assumptions of survey respondents, their long service in the profession and their institutions gives them the background to make educated projections. To the extent that librarian positions are being reorganized, combined, and eliminated, it is not clear whether this is due to economic pressures, lack of qualified candidates, or other reasons. (See Chart 14.)

Chart 14
Retirement Respondents – Credentialed Librarians:
Perception of the Future of Current Staff Positions



Respondents from all types of libraries forecast “de-professionalization” of positions. A quarter of retiring school (24%) and public (23%) librarians expect their positions to be refilled by someone meeting lower minimum educational requirements. Special (13%) and academic (11%) librarians were less likely to

expect education requirements for their successors to be lowered; but, the number of retiring librarians responding from these library types was small. Even more troubling, one-fifth (19%) of public librarian retirees expect their jobs to be eliminated after they retire. A similar proportion of retiring school librarians expect their positions to be de-professionalized rather than eliminated. The small number of special librarian retirees shared the concern of their public librarian counterparts that their positions might be eliminated; anticipating that their jobs might be reorganized or combined with other positions, or de-professionalized. (See Table 5.)

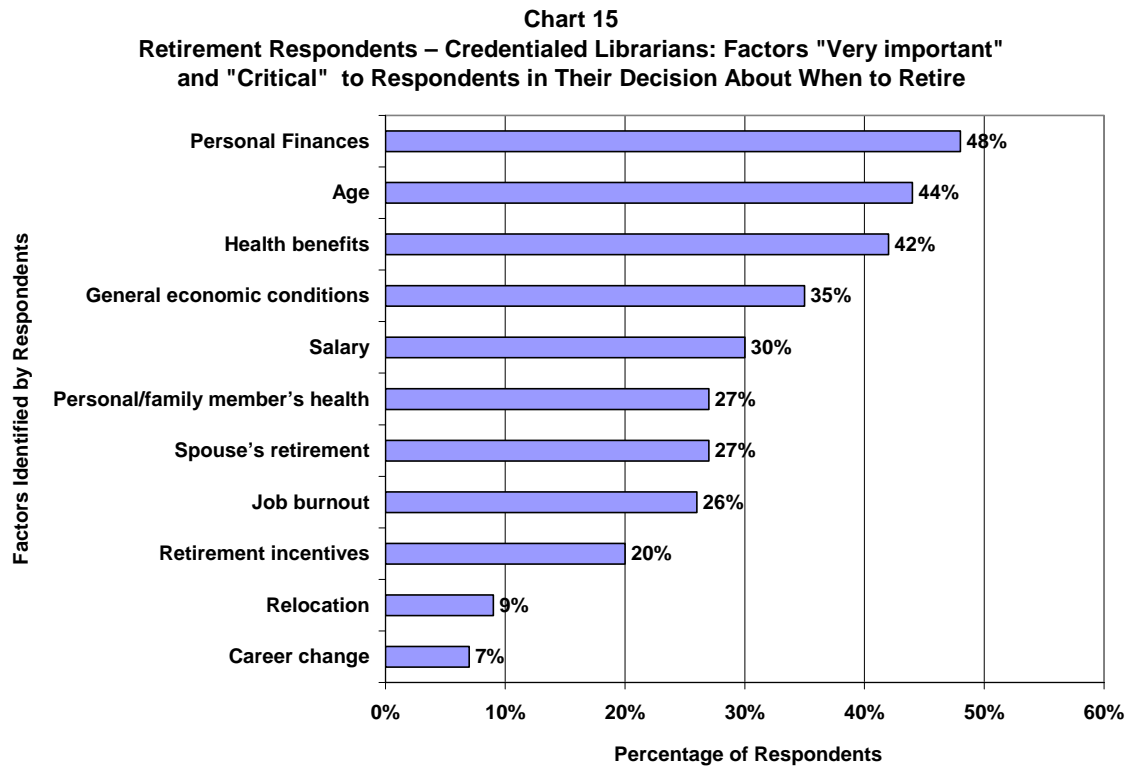
Table 5
Retirement – Credentialed Librarians:
Perception of the Future of Current Staff Positions by Library Type

Type of Library	Refill with higher educational requirements	Refill with similar educational requirements	Refill with lower educational requirements	Reorganize or combine with other position	Eliminate position
Academic	22% (2)	56% (5)	11% (1)	11% (1)	0% (0)
Public	0% (0)	46% (12)	23% (6)	12% (3)	19% (5)
School	0% (0)	67% (31)	24% (11)	9% (4)	0% (0)
Special	0% (0)	50% (8)	13% (2)	19% (3)	19% (3)

Factors in Decision About When to Retire

Most, and especially older, librarians report deciding when to retire based on predictable life cycle issues, but burnout is the leading factor for younger librarian retirees. Understandably, personal finances (48%), age (44%), and health benefits (42%) weigh most heavily for retiring librarians in deciding when to retire. Over a third (39%) of retiring librarians in the younger age group (45-54) cited job burnout as a very important or critical factor in choosing to retire early. It is unclear if younger “burnout” retirements are attributable to increased job responsibilities, management problems, public service duties, or other factors. (See Chart 15.)

Retirement, Retention, and Recruitment: The Future of Librarianship in Colorado

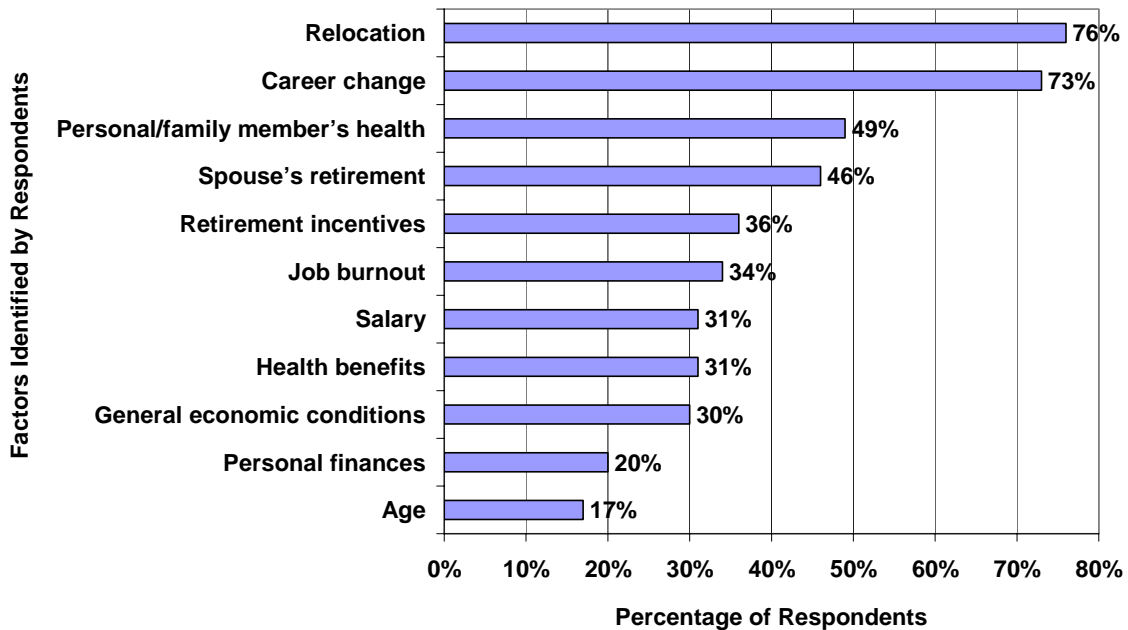


Few Colorado librarians report planning to retire in the next five years in order to relocate or make career changes, although the retirement decisions of many are affected by a spouse's retirement or their own or a family member's health. Three out of four retiring librarians said that relocation (76%) and career change (73%) are either not at all or not very important in deciding when to retire.

Approximately half of retiring librarian respondents indicated that their plans were not affected by their own or a family member's health (49%) or the timing of a spouse's retirement (46%). (See Chart 16.)

Retirement, Retention, and Recruitment: The Future of Librarianship in Colorado

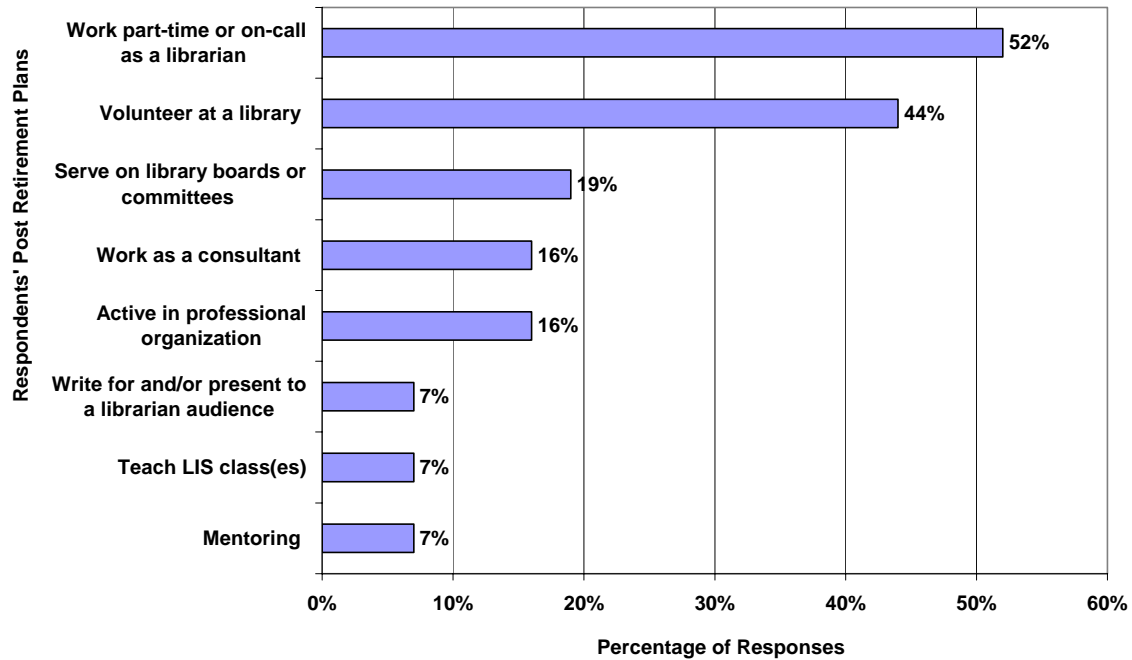
Chart 16
Retirement Respondents – Credentialed Librarians: Factors "Not at all" or "Not very" Important to Respondents in Their Decision About When to Retire



Plans for Involvement in Library Field After Retirement

Although Colorado will be losing many librarians to retirement in the next five years, most (77%) will remain active in the field in one or more ways. A lot of librarians planning to retire report that they expect to continue working, whether for pay or not, on more limited schedules. Half (52%) hope to work part-time or on-call, and more than two out of five (44%) plan to volunteer at a library. Important, but more peripheral professional activities were less likely to be identified as ways to stay involved in the profession after retiring: One out of five (19%) plans to serve on library boards or committees, one out of six (16%) plans to work as a consultant, and a similar proportion (16%) foresees participating in professional library organizations. (See Chart 17.)

Chart 17
Retirement Respondents – Credentialed Librarians:
Plans for Involvement in the Library Field after Retirement



Retirement – Paraprofessionals

Credentialed librarians are not the only library workers who are planning to retire during the next five years. Of the 1,241 respondents to the survey, 216—or 17%—indicated that they plan to retire in that time frame. The 94 paraprofessionals (i.e., those without advanced library degrees or related credentials) comprise more than two out of five (44%) respondents planning to retire from library positions. Their retirement patterns often differ, sometimes dramatically, from those of credentialed librarians.

One out of every seven paraprofessionals (15%) who participated in this study reports planning to retire in the next five years. These library workers are currently working in all types of libraries in locations throughout the state.

Metropolitan Status and Geography

Paraprofessionals from non-metropolitan and non-Front Range areas who returned surveys are more likely to be planning retirements than their librarian counterparts in other areas. (See Table 6.) More than a quarter (27%) of these retiring paraprofessionals work in non-metropolitan libraries, and a third (34%) work in libraries outside the Front Range. This suggests that Colorado’s rural libraries may be facing not only a lack of credentialed librarians, but will experience a shortage of paraprofessionals. This proportion also reflects rural areas’ greater dependence on paraprofessionals and lack of credentialed librarians. Two-thirds of library workers responding from non-metropolitan areas were paraprofessionals (67%), compared to just less than half of metropolitan respondents (49%).

Table 6
Retirement Respondents – Paraprofessionals:
Metropolitan Status and Geographic Distribution

Metropolitan Status	
Metropolitan area	73%
Non-metropolitan area	27%

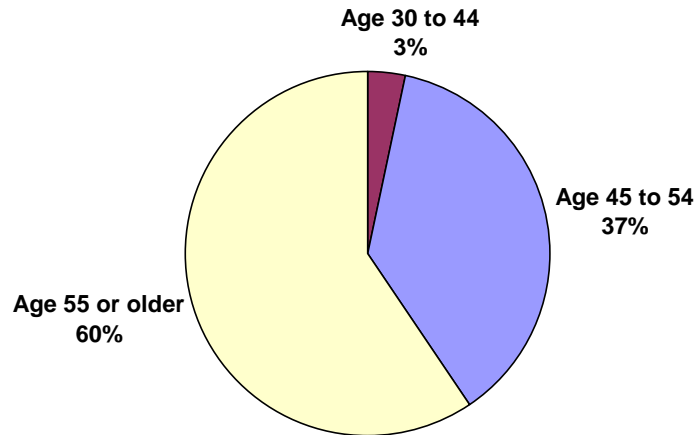
Geographic Area	
Front Range	66%
Eastern Plains	4%
Mountains & Western Slope	30%

Age

Paraprofessionals are more likely to report plans to retire at younger ages than their professional colleagues. Two out of five (40%) responding paraprofessionals planning to retire in the next five years are under 55, compared to 29 percent of credentialed librarians. (See Chart 18.) Many of these retiring paraprofessionals have a decade or more of working years behind them, and their experience will be missed by libraries across Colorado. Ten percent of retiring paraprofessional respondents indicated they plan to leave the library field.

Only 2 percent said they will pursue a professional library degree and 3 percent indicated they will return to school for other types of degrees.

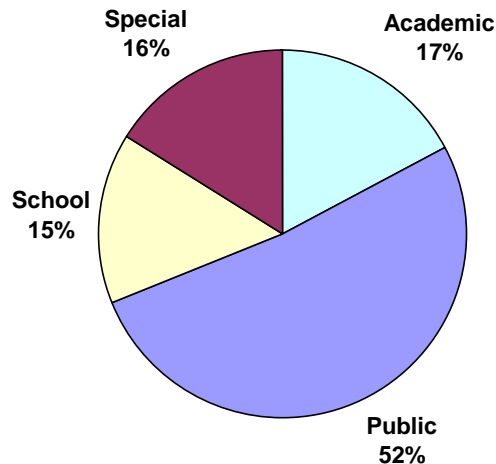
Chart 18
Retirement Respondents - Paraprofessionals:
Age Distribution



Library Type

Of respondents in the retiring paraprofessional group, over half (52%) work in public libraries. Remaining paraprofessional retirees are almost equally split between academic, special, and school libraries (17%, 16%, and 15%, respectively). School library losses of retiring paraprofessionals (15%) are considerably smaller than the anticipated loss of school librarians (44%); but this difference is almost certainly explained by the fact that many school libraries employ only a librarian and no paraprofessional. (See Chart 19.)

Chart 19
Retirement Respondents - Paraprofessionals:
Distribution by Library Type



Years of Experience

Many paraprofessionals who report planning to retire are highly experienced. Of retiring paraprofessional respondents, almost two-thirds (63%) will take more than ten years of experience with them when they leave, and more than a quarter (28%) have over 20 years of library experience.

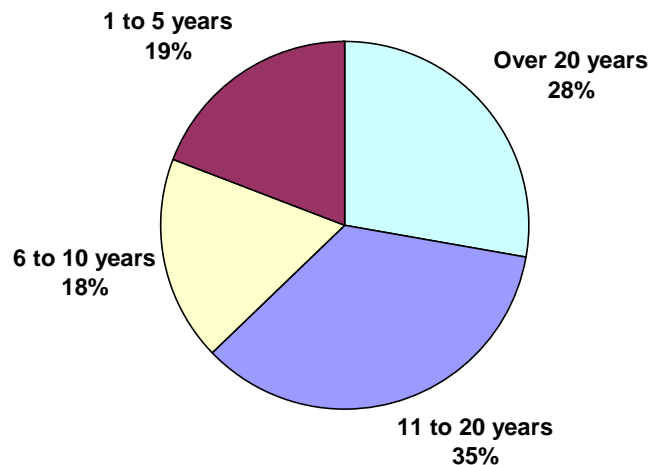
Although retiring librarians take with them more years of experience, the loss of experienced paraprofessionals to retirement is substantial enough to be of concern to library administrators. Some, but too few, paraprofessionals stay in the field for many years, and return to school to earn professional librarian credentials. Given the retirement rates of both librarians and paraprofessionals, those who seek to

“Professionals and paraprofessionals need to work together, realizing that many of us without MLS degrees have a lot to offer.”

–Paraprofessional
Academic Library

replace credentialed librarians with experienced paraprofessionals will likely find that strategy difficult to pursue. (See Chart 20.)

Chart 20
Retirement Respondents - Paraprofessionals:
Distribution by Years of Library Employment



Educational Attainment

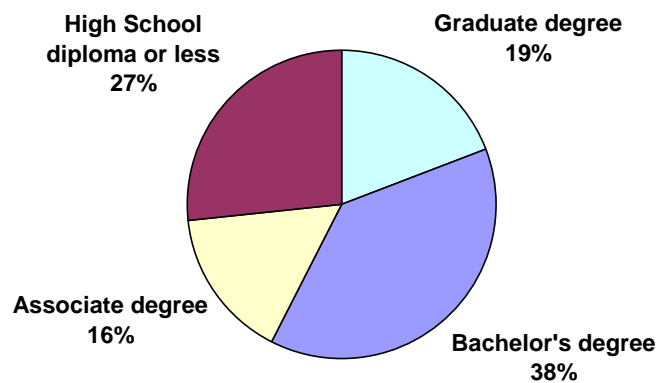
Though paraprofessionals who report planning to retire within the next 5 years lack librarian credentials, they are not poorly educated; three-quarters of them (73%) attained some level of higher education (i.e., beyond high school). Of these retiring paraprofessionals, more than a third (38%) have a bachelor's degree, and almost one out of five (19%) has a graduate degree. Like their

"I feel that the MLS management is making it harder and harder for the BA/BS front line staff to do a job with many years of experience, by trying to over emphasize the importance of an MLS to do the every day reference desk job. I feel that experience and a connection to your community are more important in local public libraries than an advanced degree."

—Paraprofessional
Public Library

librarian counterparts, retiring paraprofessionals undoubtedly include individuals with a variety of degrees in other fields, such as education, management, marketing, and information technology. (See Chart 21.)

Chart 21
Retirement Respondents - Paraprofessionals:
Educational Attainment



Library Community Leadership

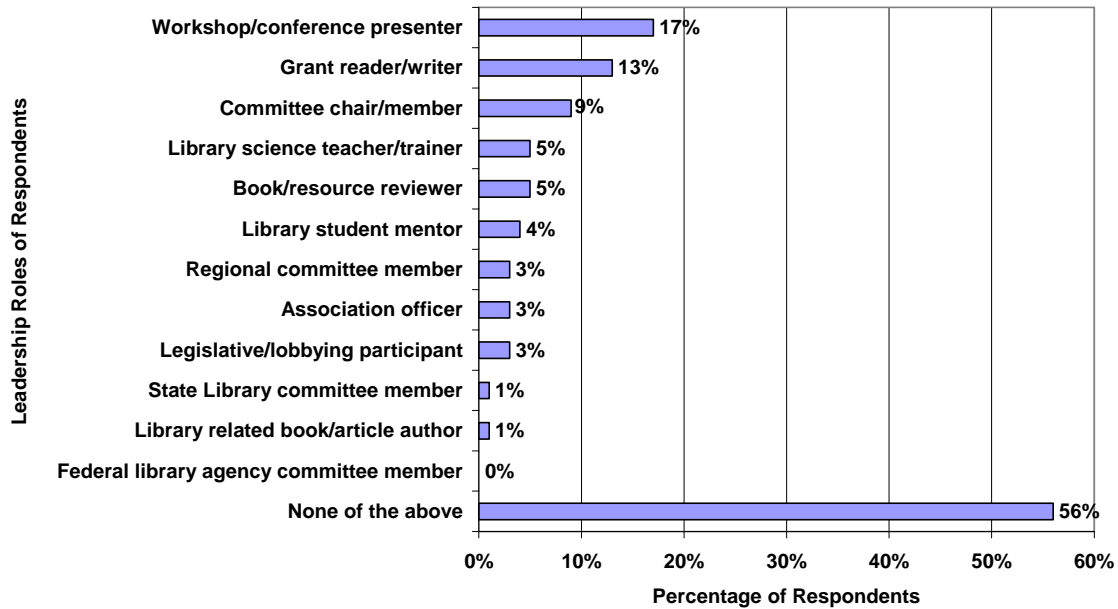
More than two out of five retiring paraprofessionals (44%) reported participating in one or more leadership roles outside of their jobs during the past five years. Of retiring paraprofessional respondents, almost one out of five (17%) presented programs at conferences, nearly one out of eight (13%) authored or reviewed grant proposals, and approximately one out of ten (9%) chaired or served as a member of a library association committee. (See Chart 22.)

"I am a paraprofessional librarian with 35 years of library experience. I believe libraries are critical to a democracy & to people's civil liberties. I think librarianship is critical to our country having a democratic form of government. I have really enjoyed working in libraries and I hope to be able to be involved in some way, after I am retired, which will be within the next year."

—Paraprofessional
Special Library

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Chart 22
Retirement Respondents - Paraprofessionals:
Library Community Leadership Roles



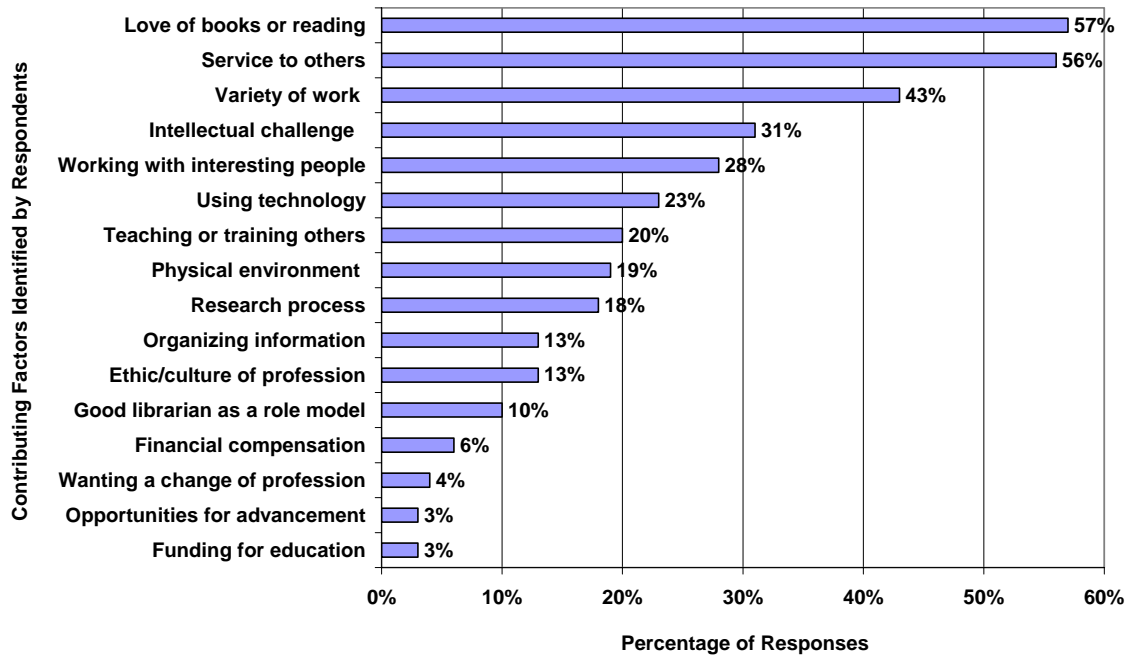
What Makes Librarianship an Attractive Profession

For the majority of responding paraprofessionals who plan to retire, factors that made librarianship an attractive profession were love of books and reading (57%), and service to others (56%). Other factors that attracted substantial minorities of them to library jobs included variety of work (43%), intellectual challenge (31%), and working with interesting people (28%). (See Chart 23.)

“I have worked in the public library for 25 years and still enjoy my work and helping customers. I have many duties, which keep me abreast of new technologies and fads.”

– Paraprofessional
Public Library

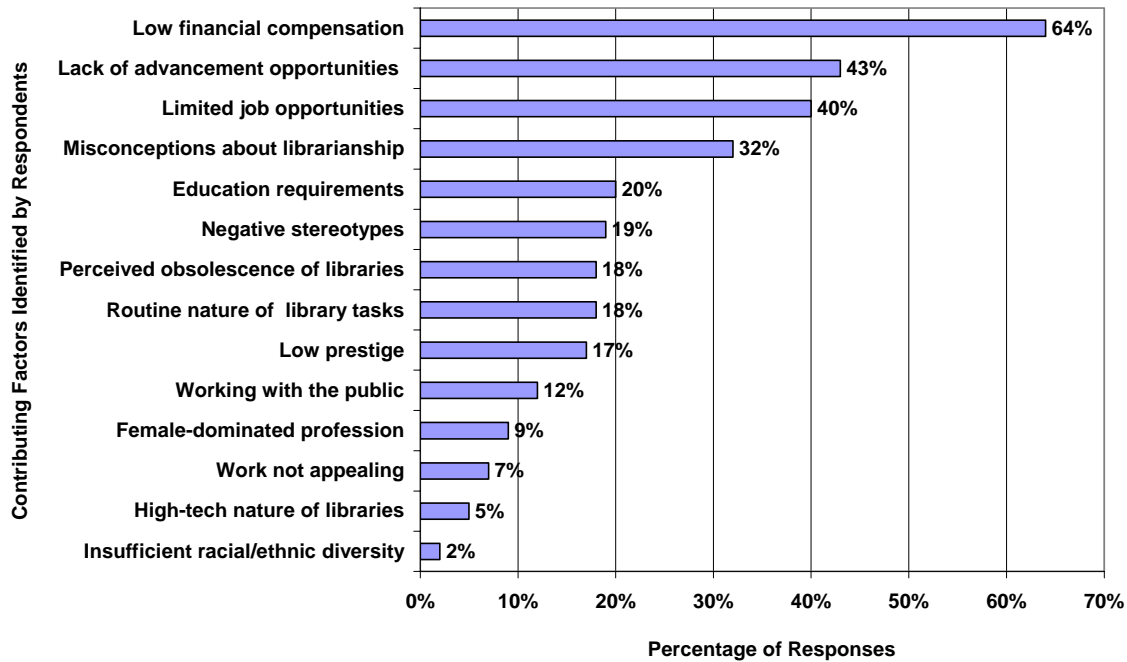
Chart 23
Retirement Respondents - Paraprofessionals:
Factors Contributing to Making Librarianship an Attractive Profession



What Discourages Choosing a Career in Librarianship

Most retiring paraprofessionals who replied to this survey (64%) agree with retiring librarians that low compensation is the single factor that most discourages people from choosing librarianship as a profession. These paraprofessional retirees disagreed with their librarian counterparts about how discouraging other factors are. Interestingly, retiring paraprofessionals identified several discouraging factors—misconceptions about what librarians do (32%), low prestige (17%), and negative stereotypes of librarians (19%)—half as often as retiring librarians. Instead, more paraprofessionals planning to retire considered lack of opportunities for advancement (43%) and limited job opportunities (40%) more discouraging factors. (See Chart 24.)

Chart 24
Retirement Respondents - Paraprofessionals:
Factors that Discourage a Career in Librarianship



Impact of Economic Downturn on Career Plans

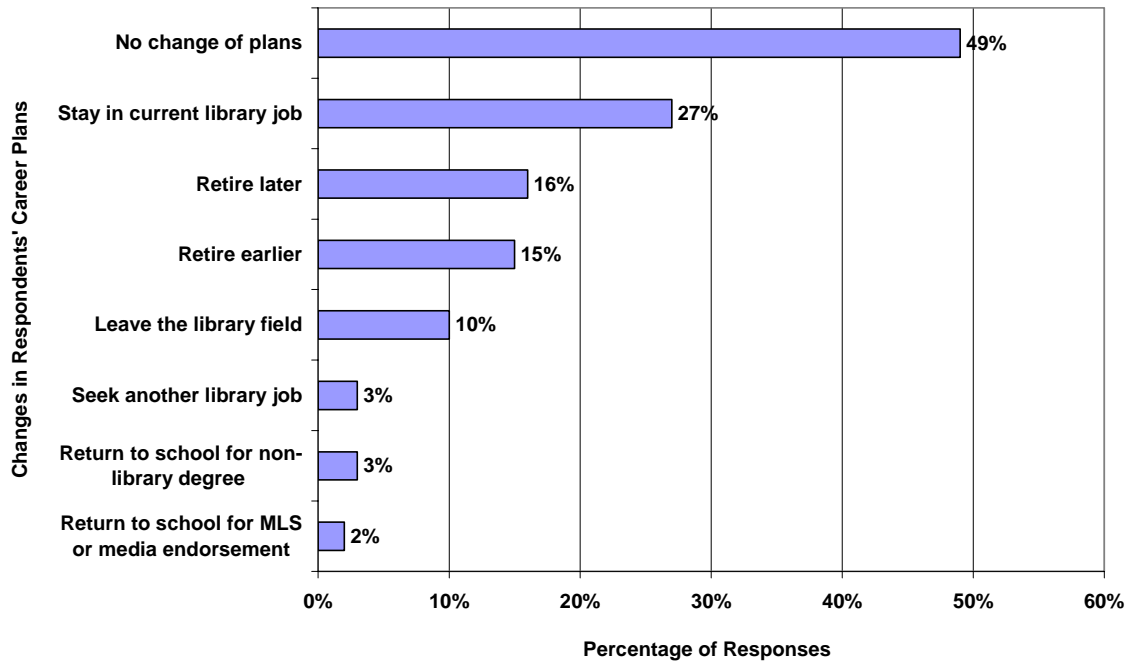
Like their librarian counterparts, over half of responding paraprofessional retirees (51%) changed their career plans due to the recent economic downturn. Of this group, more than a quarter (27%) will stay in their current jobs. One out of seven (16%) plans to retire later, while one out of six (15%) plans to retire earlier, and one in ten (10%) will leave the library field. This final figure may explain the

surprising presence of younger respondents in this group. A few younger paraprofessionals planning to change careers responded that they are planning to “retire” from the library field within five years. (See Chart 25.)

“I do think that libraries in Western Colorado are not being considered important enough for decent funding which is diminishing the size and quality of staff and collections. Therefore, these will not remain “the great good community places” that they have been in the past. And, the health of communities will suffer as a result. We need to continue to work on the public’s perception of the importance of libraries in their town.”

– Paraprofessional
Public Library

Chart 25
Retirement Respondents - Paraprofessionals:
Effects of the Economic Downturn on Career Plans

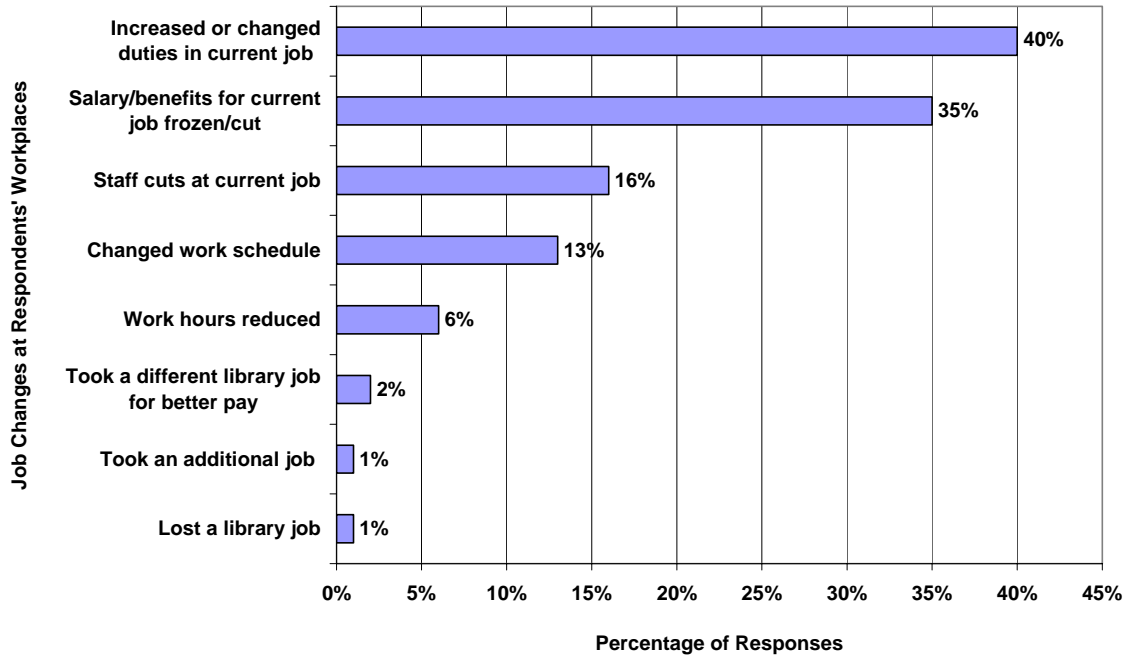


Changes at Place of Employment

Almost three-quarters (70%) of paraprofessionals planning to retire within 5 years report some change in their jobs in the last 12 months. Of retiring paraprofessional respondents, two out of five (40%) increased or changed duties in their current positions and more than a third (35%) experienced salary or benefit cuts. (See Chart 26.)

In smaller proportions than their librarian colleagues, retiring paraprofessionals said they and their colleagues had witnessed staff cuts (16%), changed work schedules (13%), or reduced work hours (6%). Only 30 percent of this group indicated they had not observed or experienced any of the listed effects.

Chart 26
Retirement Respondents - Paraprofessionals:
Changes at Their Workplaces in the Last Year



Future of Current Position

Respondents speculated about what will happen to their positions after they retire. Almost two-thirds (64%) of retiring paraprofessionals thought their successors would be required to meet similar or higher education requirements. Of paraprofessional retirees, half (50%) expect their successors to meet similar education requirements. One out of seven (14%) anticipate that their positions will have higher education requirements. Undoubtedly, some of these positions will require a professional librarian credential where it was not required in the past. A similar percentage (13%) expect their positions to be changed, either being reorganized or combined with another position (9%), or

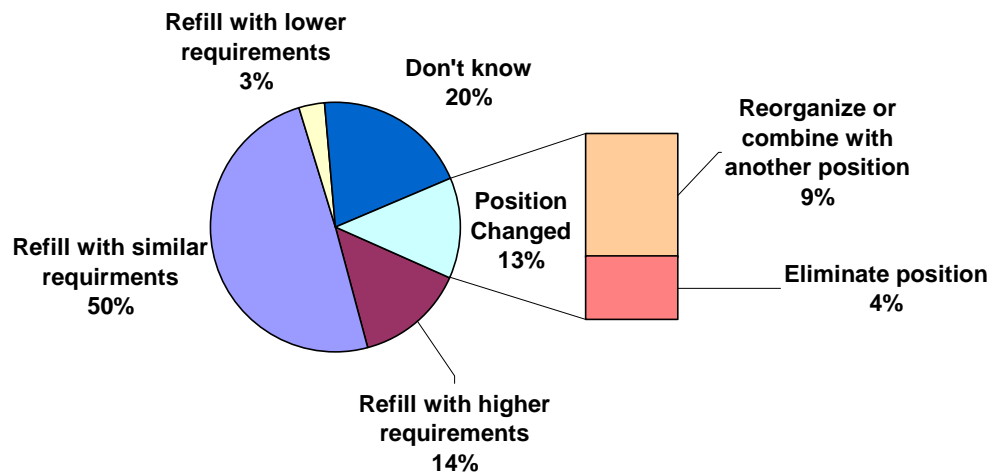
“As a library technician, not a librarian, I have found that the majority of the jobs in dealing with public services can be done without a MLS. Reference is just a matter of learning where things can be found. I do not see the advantage to going to school for 3 years to learn how to do reference interviews or research. Library skills would be far more valuable in management. I see no reason why trained technicians could not take the place of librarians.”

– Paraprofessional
Public Library

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eliminated altogether (4%). (See Chart 27.) Not surprisingly, retiring librarians were more likely (12%) to anticipate negative changes in their positions after they retire. Only 3 percent of responding paraprofessional retirees anticipate that their positions will be filled by someone meeting lower education requirements. Retiring librarians were more than five times as likely (17%) to expect the education requirements of their positions to be downgraded.

Chart 27
Retirement Respondents - Paraprofessionals:
Future of Current Staff Positions



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Retention

Of the 1,241 survey respondents, 525 (42%) were what will be called incumbent librarians. These are individuals who do not plan to retire in the next five years and who have a graduate degree in librarianship or an allied field or a school library media endorsement.

Metropolitan Status and Geography

Predictably, most incumbent librarians responding to the survey are found in metropolitan areas (84%) and along the Front Range (85%). (See Table 7.)

Table 7
Retention Respondents – Credentialed Librarians:
Metropolitan Status and Geographic Distribution

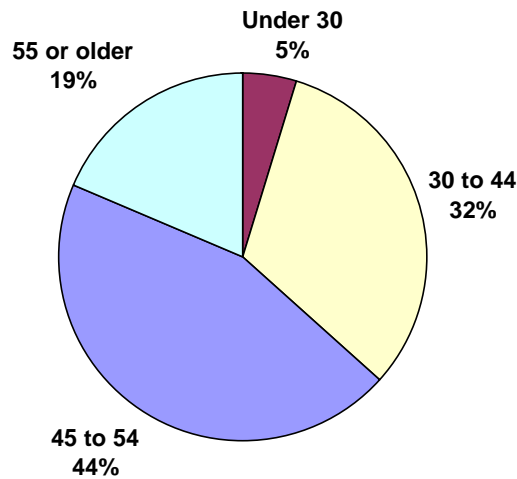
Metropolitan Status	
Metropolitan area	84%
Non-metropolitan area	16%

Geographic Area	
Front Range	85%
Eastern Plains	3%
Mountains & Western Slope	15%

Age

The distribution of age also follows a logical pattern with the majority of respondents between ages 30 and 55. (See Chart 28.) As predicted by library watchers, there are fewer librarians in younger generations, which is dramatically illustrated by the dearth of responding librarians under 30—a mere five percent—and a 12 percent drop from the ages 45 to 54 (44%) to the ages 30 to 44 (32%). This could indicate a potential shortage of librarians in the future, as those age 45 to 54 reach traditional retirement age (i.e., age 65) or retire early (between ages 45 and 54). Those ages 55 or over make up less than 20 percent of the retention group because many of them plan to retire within the next five years.

Chart 28
Retention Respondents – Credentialed Librarians:
Distribution by Age



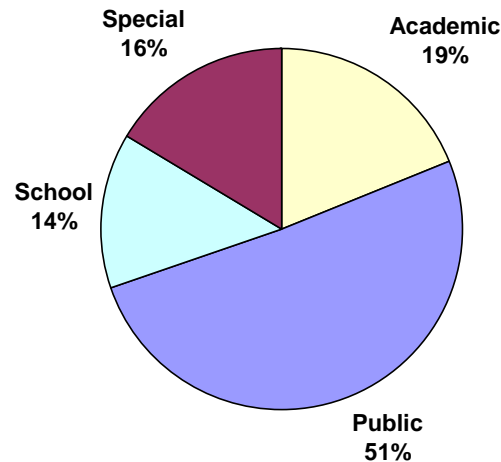
Library Type

Like other survey respondents, over half of incumbent librarians (51%) work in public libraries. (See Chart 29.) Other respondents are distributed almost evenly among the other three library types: academic (19%), special (16%), and school (14%).

“I think being a librarian in the state of Colorado is an exciting position to be in. From an academic standpoint the future is all about technology and online education.”

– Academic Librarian

Chart 29
Retention Respondents – Credentialed Librarians:
Distribution by Library Type



Education Level

Education was not a significant factor in this group, as incumbent librarians, by definition, have a graduate degree or school library media endorsement.

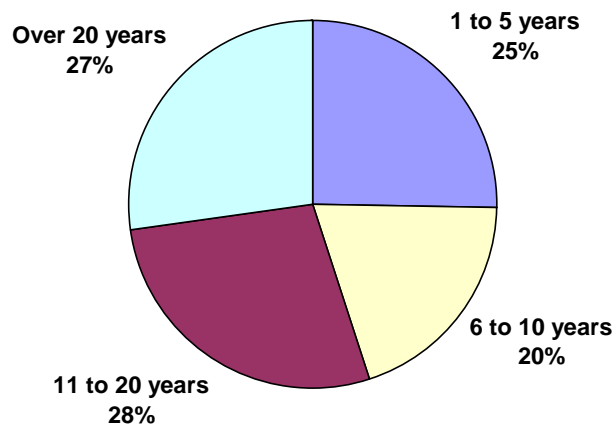
Also in this group of mostly librarians, there are professional-level personnel who are not, strictly speaking, credentialed as librarians. This minority (16%) of incumbent librarians have graduate degrees in allied fields other than library and information science or education media. This is an important group of highly educated professionals that support libraries with expertise in research, technology, and other specialties.

Years of Experience

Experience working in a library was split in almost even quarters between the four ranges of experience. More than a quarter (27%) of incumbent librarians who returned the survey have more than 20 years of experience. More than half (55%) have more than 10 years of experience. The smallest experience cohort

(20%) was those with 6 to 10 years of experience. A quarter have five or fewer years of experience in library settings. (See Chart 30.) Although this bodes well for the near future of libraries, giving organizations both new blood and experience to call on, in the long term there could be a shortage of librarians, particularly if two trends—the aging of the profession and early retirements—continue.

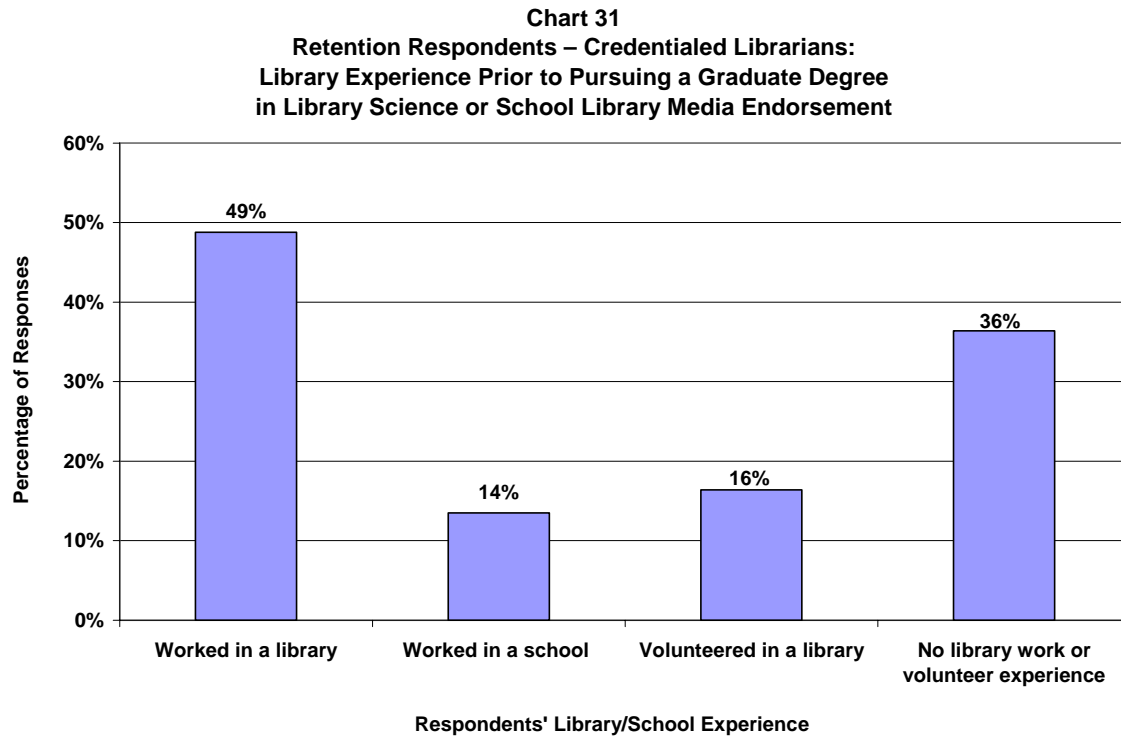
Chart 30
Retention Respondents – Credentialed Librarians:
Distribution by Years of Library Employment



Previous Library Experience

Half of incumbent librarians who replied to the survey (49%) worked in a library before earning a graduate degree or library media endorsement. Additionally, 14 percent—predominantly school librarians—worked in a school (elsewhere than in the library) and 16 percent were library volunteers. Approximately one-third of incumbent librarians (36%) had no previous experience as an employee or volunteer in a library or school before pursuing their professional credentials, leaving a substantial two-thirds who had some previous library experience. This

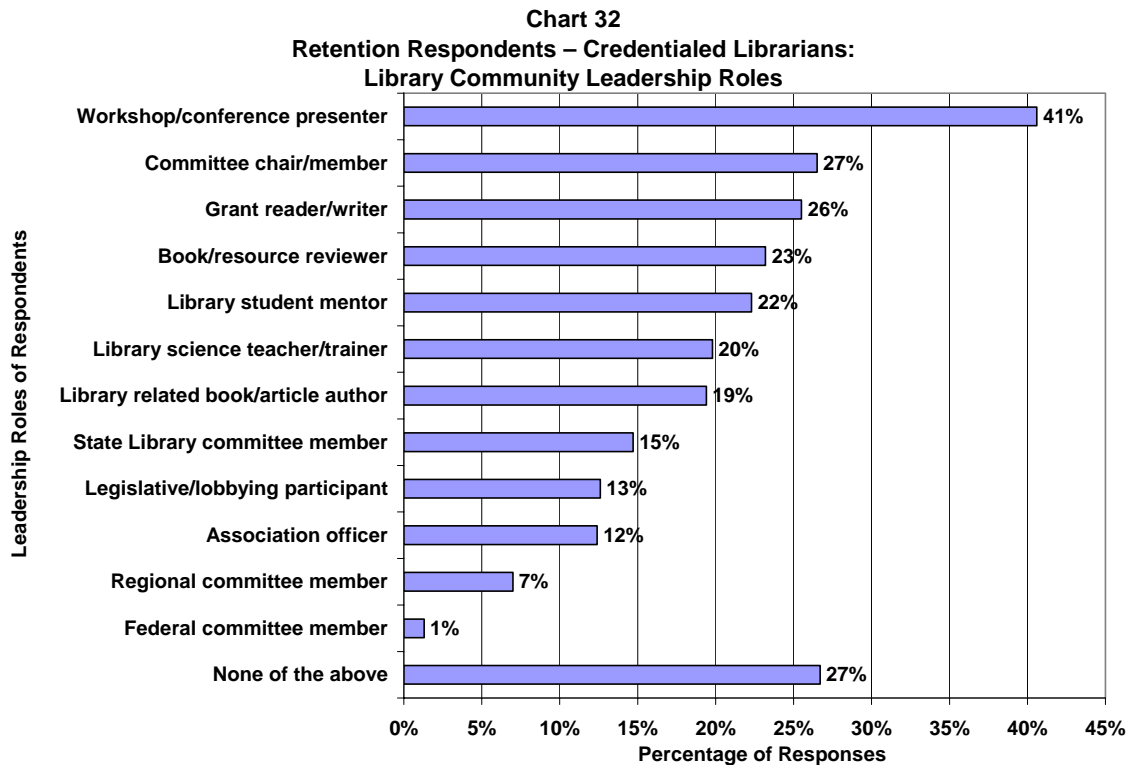
fact suggests that a prime source of new recruits into the library profession is the current staff of libraries and schools. (See Chart 31.)



Professional Leadership Roles

As one would expect, incumbent librarians were more likely than all respondents to participate in professional leadership roles. Approximately three out of four of these librarians (73%) indicated they had filled one or more leadership roles (i.e., 27 percent marked “none of the above”). The top responses include presenting workshops or conference sessions (41%), serving as a library association committee chair or member (27%), and reading or writing grant proposals (26%). At the bottom of the list are federal library agency committee member (1%) and regional library system board or committee member (7%). Given the limited number of federal library agency committees and the demise of the seven regional systems in Colorado, the low response for these roles is expected. (See Chart 32.)

Retirement, Retention, and Recruitment: The Future of Librarianship in Colorado



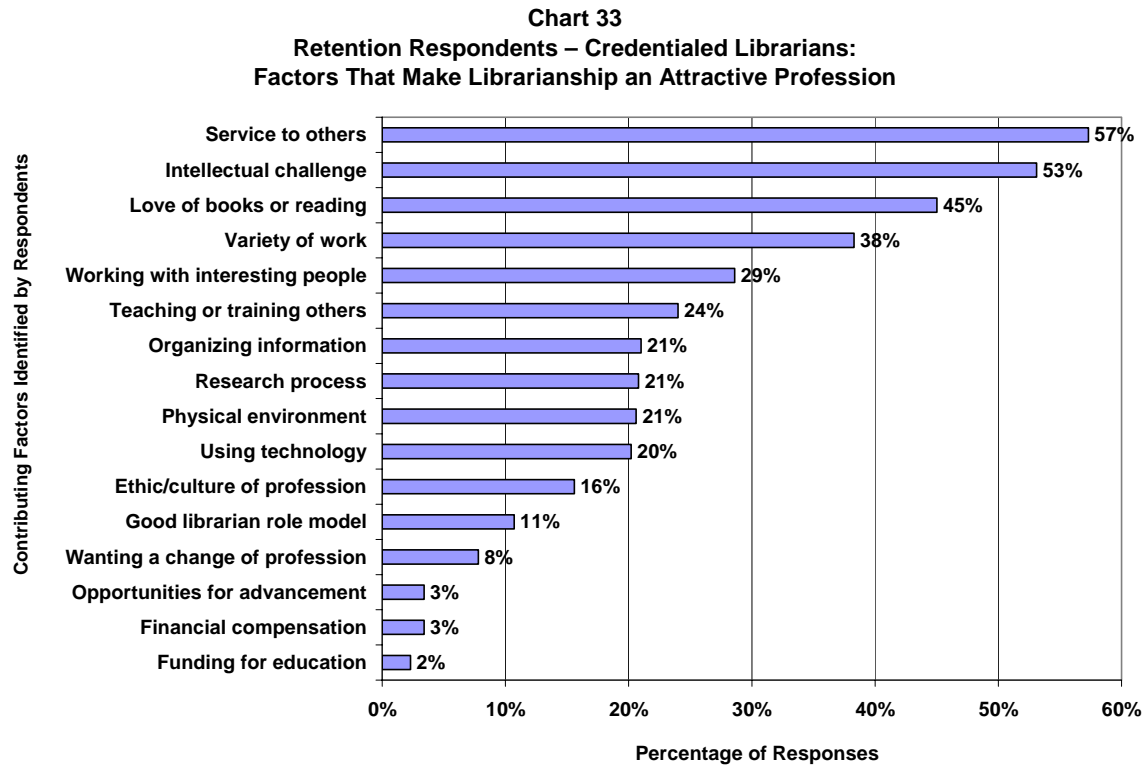
Factors That Make Librarianship an Attractive Profession

Responding incumbent librarians find their field attractive for the same reasons as their colleagues, though they are somewhat less inclined to identify themselves as bibliophiles. Their top five responses included service to others (57%), intellectual challenge (53%), love of books or reading (45%), variety of work experiences (38 %) and working with interesting people (29%). This followed the general trend of all respondents, except that love of books and reading (45%) ranked third instead of first or second. This slight, but

“I’m optimistic! I see a continued role for libraries in some form or other. The profession is keeping me because it’s ever-changing and challenging. People still love their library! Even though most folks get into the profession because of love of books or other misguided preconceptions (we do NOT ‘get to read books all day’), we all end up staying because it’s just good work to get to do.”

– Public Librarian

noteworthy, difference may indicate that professional librarians deal with books somewhat less often than other groups or that they perceive differently—and perhaps more accurately—a librarian’s actual work duties. (See Chart 33.)



Factors That Discourage Choosing a Career in Librarianship

Overwhelmingly, almost four out of five incumbent librarians (78%) indicated that low financial compensation was a negative for librarianship – an even higher proportion than that for respondents as a whole (69%). The next four highest responses all related to the perception of librarians and the profession of librarianship. Over half of respondents (58%) indicated misconceptions about librarianship, a third (33%) said negative stereotypes, and over a quarter felt perceived obsolescence of libraries (29%) and low prestige (28%) were discouraging factors. One in five respondents

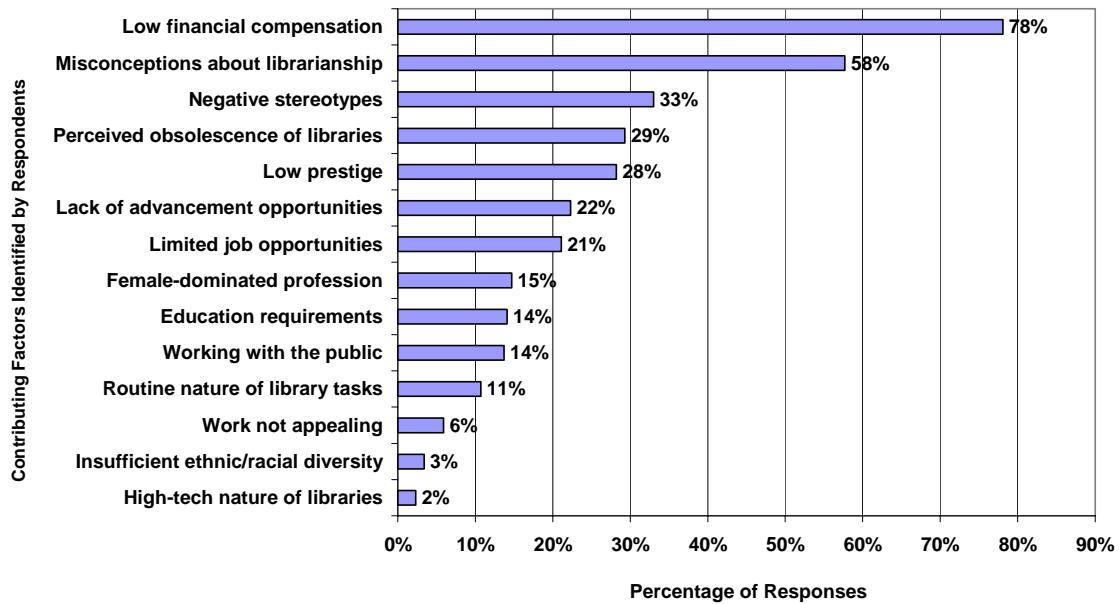
“Our district does not currently pay high enough salaries to attract bright young people just coming out of library school... I feel that diversity issues and pay equity are the most important challenges to Colorado libraries at the present time.”

– Public Librarian

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felt that a lack of opportunities for advancement (22%) and limited job opportunities (21%) discouraged potential librarians. It is interesting to note that the top factors for this group fall into two major categories: practical career considerations (including pay, employment, and advancement) and negative or uninformed views of librarianship. (See Chart 34.)

Chart 34
Retention Respondents – Credentialed Librarians:
Factors That Discourage a Career in Librarianship



Effects of the Economic Downturn on Career Plans

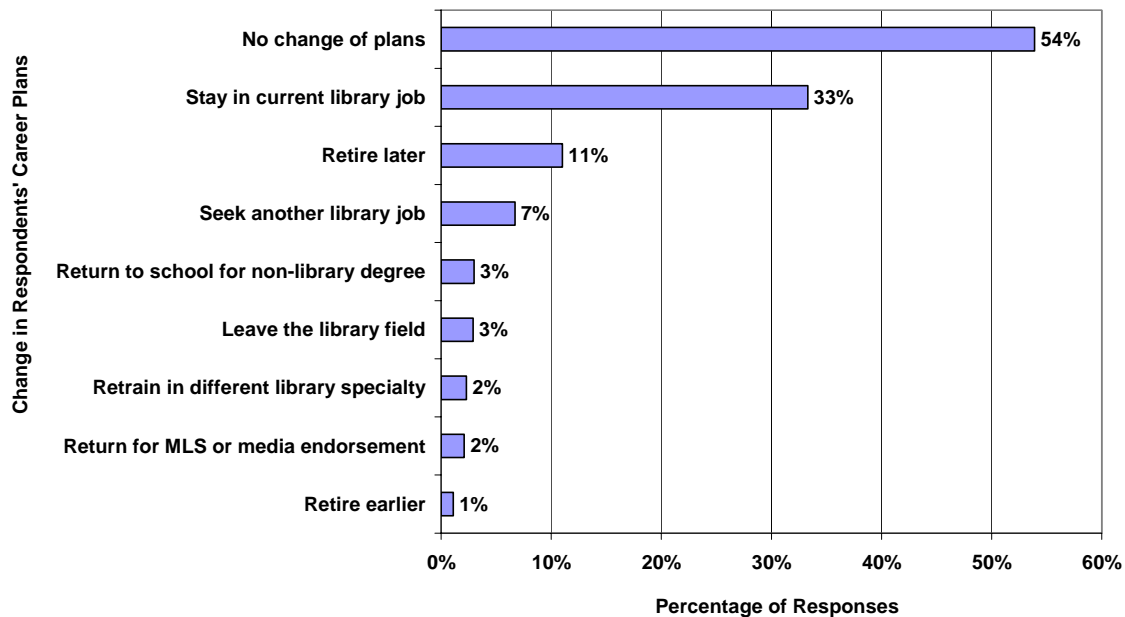
More than half of the incumbent librarian respondents (54%) did not change their career plans because of the recent downturn in the economy. This is slightly more than the survey respondents as a whole (48%). In addition, one-third (33%) chose to stay in their current job, and one in ten (11%) said they plan to retire later than originally planned. Other responses were chosen less often, each making up less than 10 percent of responses. This group felt

“I believe librarianship is alive and well, despite the economy and the hit libraries themselves have taken. I believe we’re in for more pain, but all things are cyclical. We’ve survived other bad times; we’ll survive these...”

– Public Librarian

less mobile in their careers, but generally, the downturn in the economy had little effect on their jobs. (See Chart 35.)

Chart 35
Retention Respondents – Credentialed Librarians:
Effects of the Economic Downturn on Career Plans



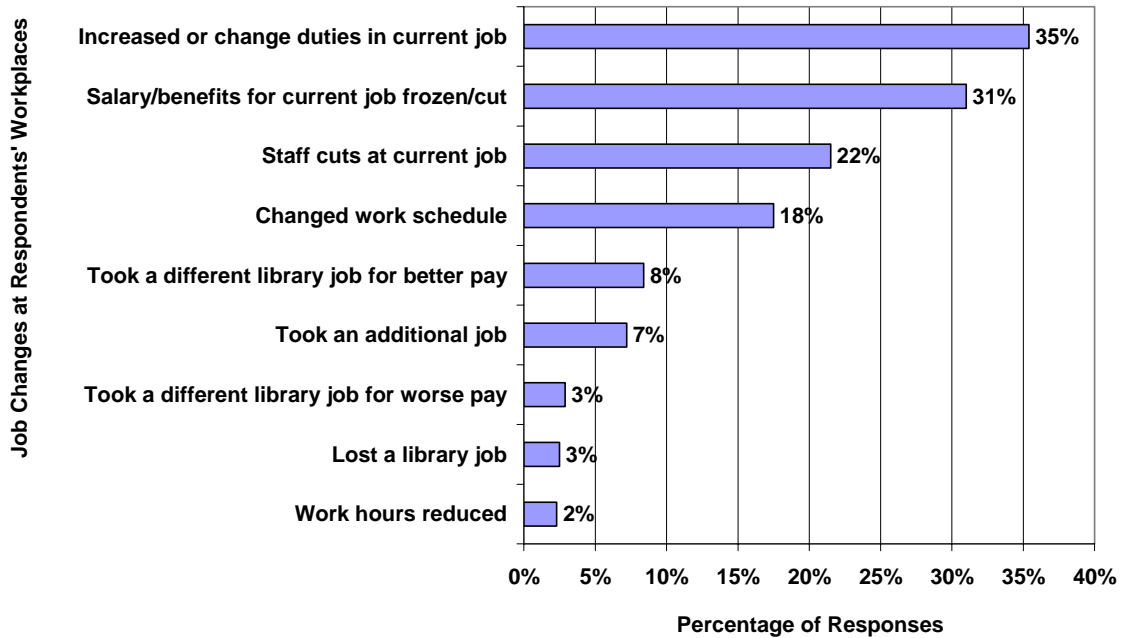
Recent Changes at Place of Employment

When asked what changes had occurred in their workplaces in the past year, approximately one-third of incumbent librarians reported increasing or changing duties in their current jobs (35%), or having their salary or benefits frozen or cut (31%). One in five respondents (22%) witnessed staff cuts at their current workplaces, and almost as many (18%) had a change of work schedule. (See Chart 36.) Although the retention group is not losing jobs in large numbers, they are doing more, for less money. Only a third (34%) of this group reported no negative changes in the workplace.

“As the Director of a public library that is governed by a municipality, I am seeing how crucial it is to be part of a District. Next year, our library may be closed one day/week due to citywide budget cuts. This will put additional demands on my time, as I will need to perform the duties of missing staff. Salary is frozen, while health insurance costs continue to rise. Because of this phenomenon, I bring home less now than I did when I started at this position three years ago. As a public librarian, I am looking at positions within Districts only.”

– Public Librarian

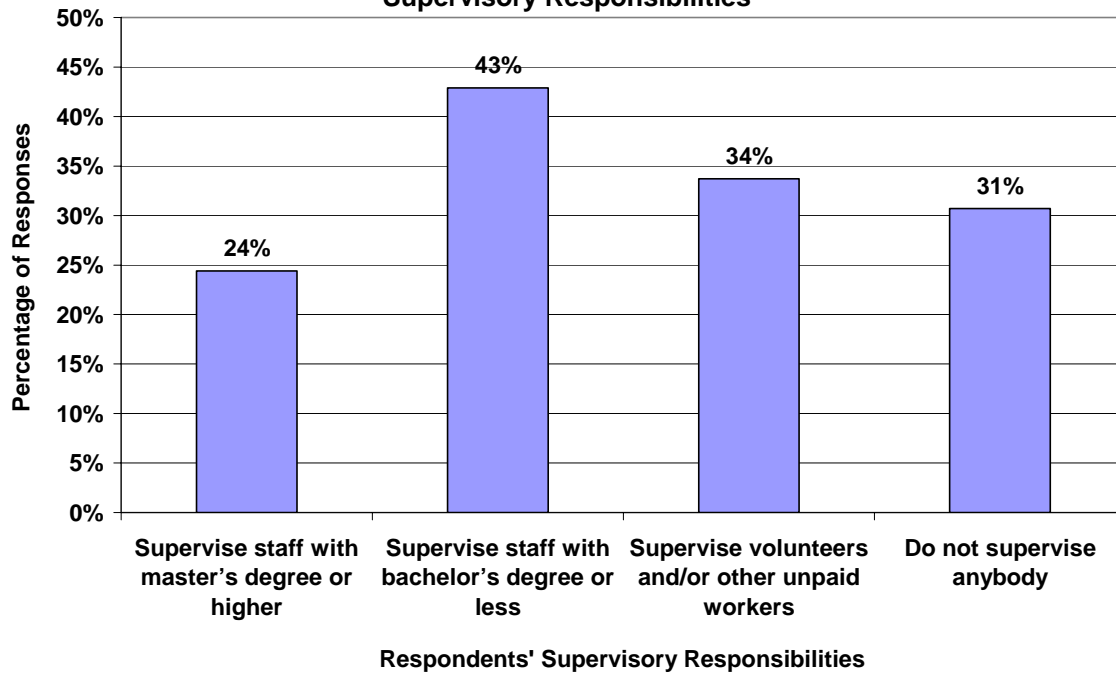
Chart 36
Retention Respondents – Credentialed Librarians:
Changes at Their Workplaces in the Last Year



Supervisory Responsibilities

Overall, seven out of ten incumbent librarians report having supervisory duties (i.e., 31 percent do not supervise anybody). One in four responding librarians (24%) supervise professional staff, and two out of five (43%) supervise paraprofessionals. Additionally, about a third (34%) supervise volunteers. For the near future anyway, it seem there will be experienced supervisors in libraries – good news for Colorado library patrons. (See Chart 37.)

Chart 37
Retention Respondents – Credentialed Librarians:
Supervisory Responsibilities



Areas of Primary Responsibility

Seven out of ten (72%) incumbent librarians have primary responsibilities that are either general or in public services. Generalists—lone librarians and those who are one of a small staff (37%)—and public services librarians (35%) each make up more than a third

of this group. Not surprisingly, less than one in five librarians (18%) works in library administration.

Technical services is an area of primary responsibility for fewer than one in ten of these librarians (9%) and may indicate either a potential shortage of

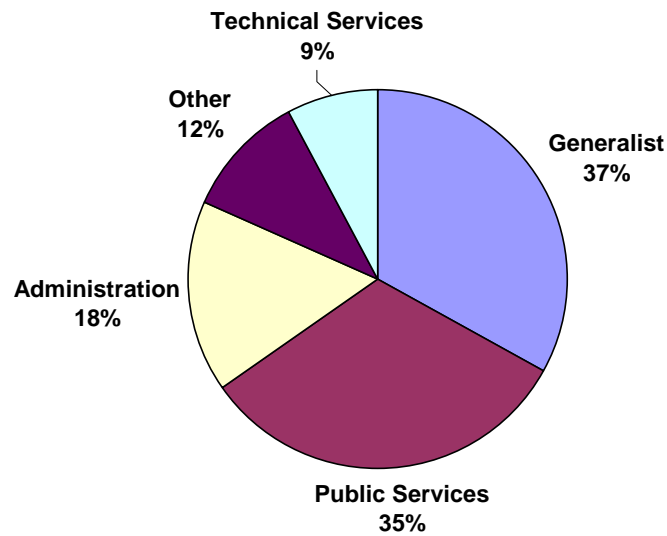
“...flexibility is the most important attribute to the future of librarianship. Flexibility by being open to constant technological change, flexibility around job duties and continuous learning, flexibility in accepting job titles not in the lexicon 10 or 20 years ago, and flexibility in proving and cultivating our worth by just doing it and not creating an atmosphere of self-doubt and defensiveness... our profession is always going to have a place in a world where folks are drowning in information and need a life preserver. But that place is going to look way different than it did 10 years ago, and will look very different in 10 years than it does now... We just have to be prepared to reach that place in a number of creative ways.”

– Librarian
Special Library

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qualified professionals or a trend toward centralizing and/or contracting out these functions. (See Chart 38.) Other areas of responsibility identified by respondents included information technology, archivist, collection development, subject specialist, and teacher.

Chart 38
Retention Respondents – Credentialed Librarians:
Area of Primary Responsibility in Current Position

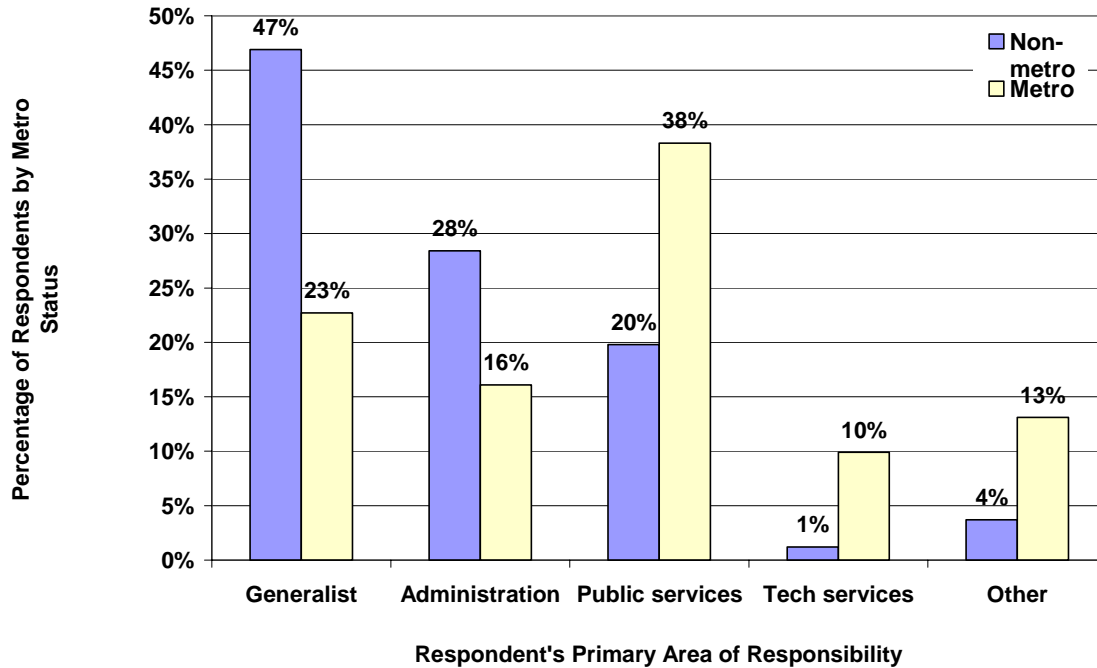


Primary Responsibility by Metropolitan Status

Three out of four incumbent librarians from outside of metropolitan areas were generalists (47%) or administrators (28%). The low response for technical services (1%) may be a consequence of the large generalist response or the aforementioned trends toward centralizing and contracting out these functions. Generalists may do everything from cataloging to collection development. Ideally, there might be more technical services positions in rural areas, but given the size of non-metro libraries and the current budget crisis, the lack of librarians specializing in this area likely reflects the realities of rural and resort libraries. Incumbent librarians from metropolitan areas were more likely to indicate working in “public services” (38%) and administration (16%). Technical services

accounted for 10 percent of metro respondents' primary responsibilities. Metro respondents were more likely to report other specialties, such as technology manager, webmaster, and archivist—duties that might be included in those of their generalist colleagues. (See Chart 39.)

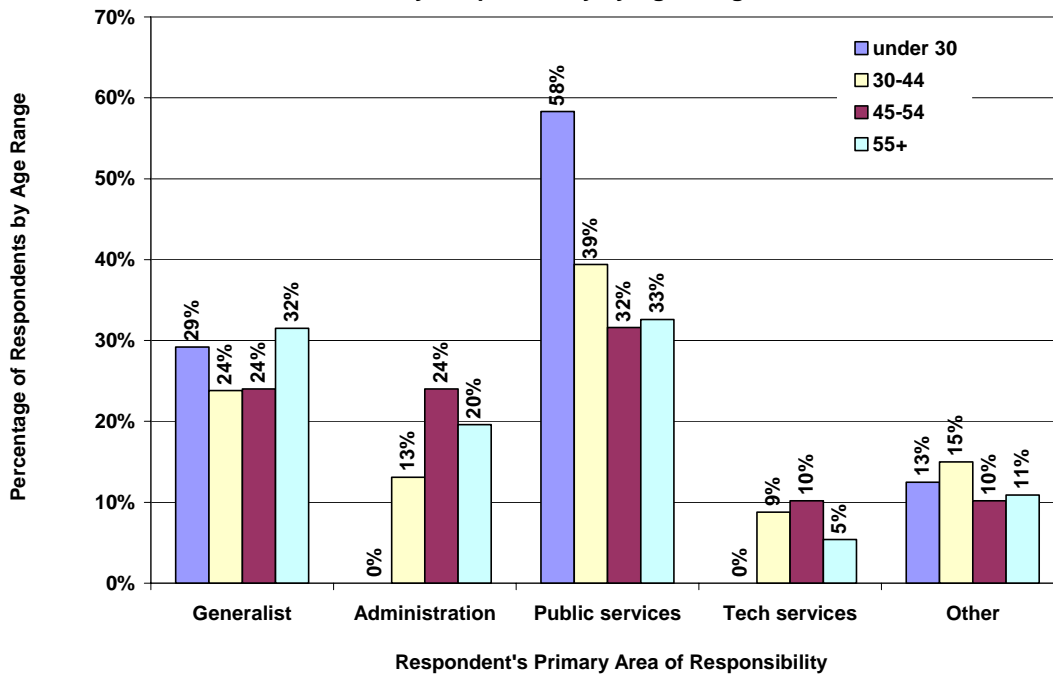
Chart 39
Retention Respondents – Credentialed Librarians:
Primary Responsibility by Metropolitan Status



Primary Responsibility by Age

The youngest age group, under 30, most frequently said their primary responsibility was in “public services” (58%). Predictably, the under-30 age group was not represented in administration (0%), however, less obviously, they were also not a presence in technical services (0%). Presumably, as the under-30 respondents gain more library experience they will move into administrative positions. While lack of experience explains why younger personnel are not in administration, the lack of technical services specialists in this age group seems less clear and could be an indicator of a potential shortage in the future. (See Chart 40.)

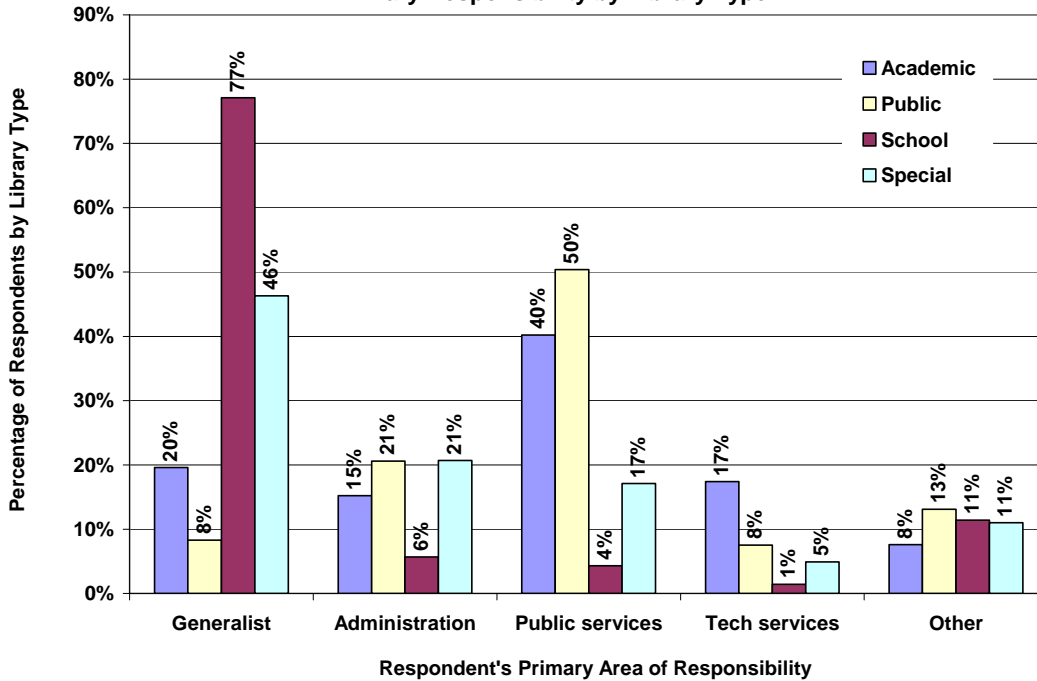
Chart 40
Retention Respondents – Credentialed Librarians:
Primary Responsibility by Age Range



Primary Responsibility by Library Type

Over three-quarters of school librarians responding to the survey (77%) are generalists, as are almost half of special librarians (46%). Academic and public librarians (40% and 50%, respectively) are more likely to work in public services than their special and school librarian counterparts (17% and 4%, respectively). Technical services is also a more prevalent specialty in academic and public libraries (17% and 8%, respectively) than in special and school libraries (5% and 1%, respectively). These variations reflect basic organizational, size, and patron base differences among library types. (See Chart 41.)

Chart 41
Retention Respondents – Credentialed Librarians:
Primary Responsibility by Library Type



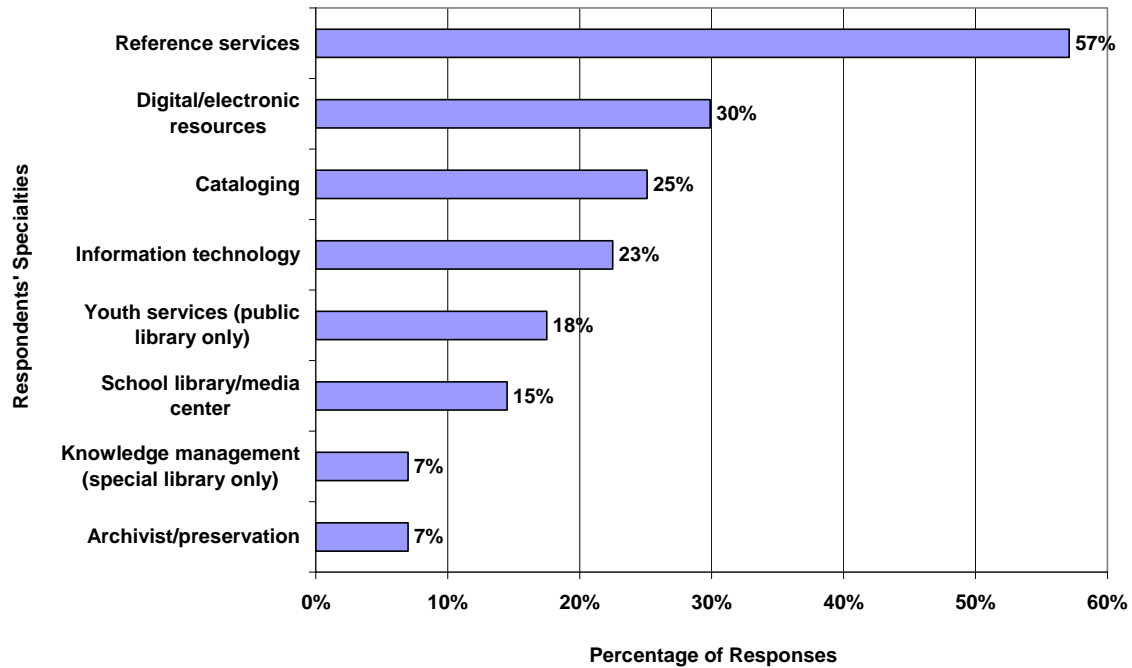
Selected Specialty Areas

The most frequent specialties reported by incumbent librarians are reference (57%), followed, somewhat distantly, by digital/electronic resources (30%), cataloging (25%), and information technology (23%). Few respondents (only 7%) specialize in archives or knowledge management. (See Chart 42.) Nearly one in ten respondents (9%) indicated they did not specialize in one of the selected areas.

“I have been demoralized by low public perceptions of librarianship, and feel that librarians need to be state-certified to gain recognition and professional salaries... As a result of our professional leniency, many in the general public have no idea that real librarians have master’s degrees and are highly skilled information specialists.”

– Public Librarian

Chart 42
Retention Respondents – Credentialed Librarians:
Selected Specialty Areas

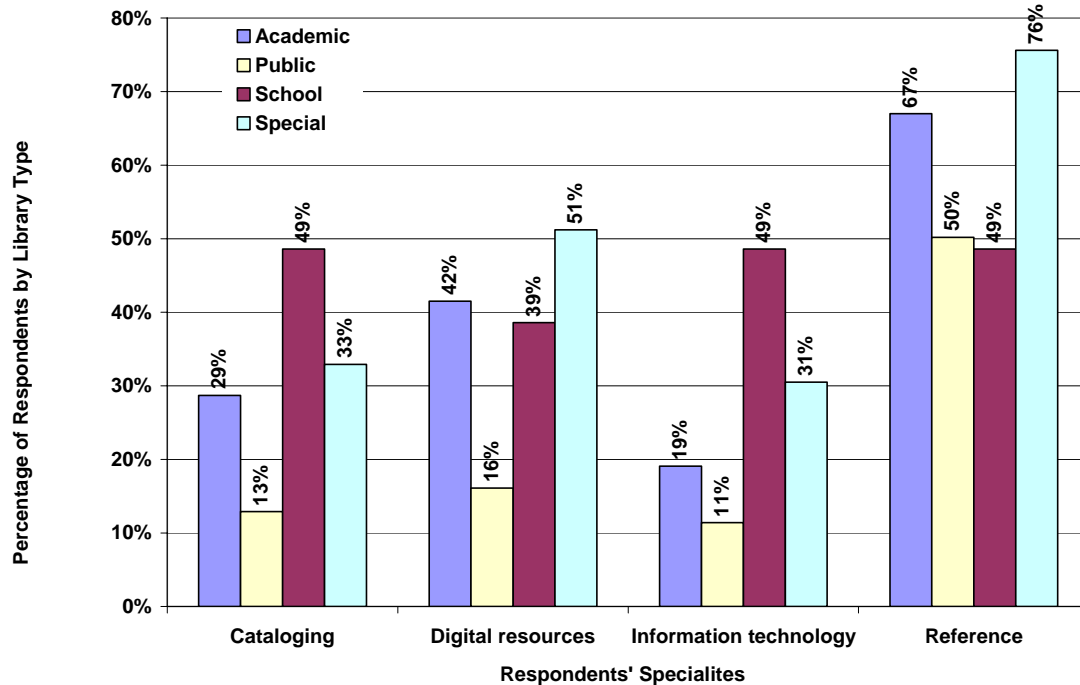


Selected Specialty Areas by Library Type

Three out of four incumbent special librarians (76%) and two out of three academic librarians (67%) report primary responsibility for reference services, compared with only about half of their public (50%) and school (49%) counterparts. Once again illustrating the generalist nature of school librarianship, half of responding incumbent school librarians claimed responsibility for cataloging and information technology, as well as reference service (49% each). (See Chart 43.)

Retirement, Retention, and Recruitment: The Future of Librarianship in Colorado

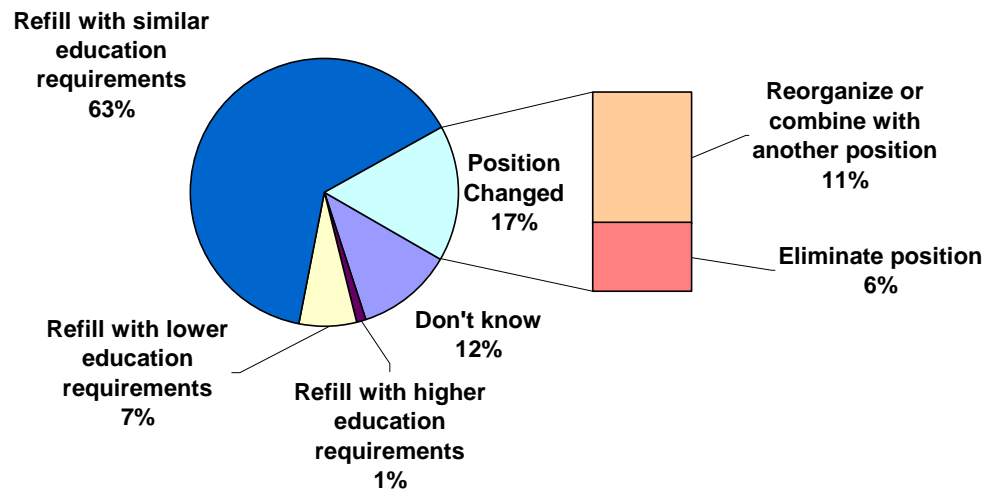
Chart 43
Retention Respondents – Credentialed Librarians:
Selected Specialty Area by Library Type



Future of Current Staff Positions

Seven out of ten incumbent librarians who participated in this study expect their successors to meet similar (63%) or higher (7%) educational requirements. One in every eight respondents (12%) do not know what the educational requirements for their successors will be. A quarter anticipate their positions will undergo significant changes—being reorganized or combined with another position (11%), downgraded in terms of educational requirements (7%), or eliminated completely (6%) when they leave. This is not an encouraging omen for future librarians, library administrators, or ultimately library patrons. (See Chart 44.)

Chart 44
Retention Respondents – Credentialed Librarians:
Perception of the Future of Current Staff Positions



Future of Current Staff Positions by Metropolitan Status

Nearly two out of three incumbent librarians who replied to questions about the future (64% metro, 63% non-metro) expect their positions to be filled by someone who meets similar educational requirements. But, for the remaining third, metro and non-metro librarians have different, if any, expectations. Responding non-metro librarians are almost four times more likely than their metro counterparts

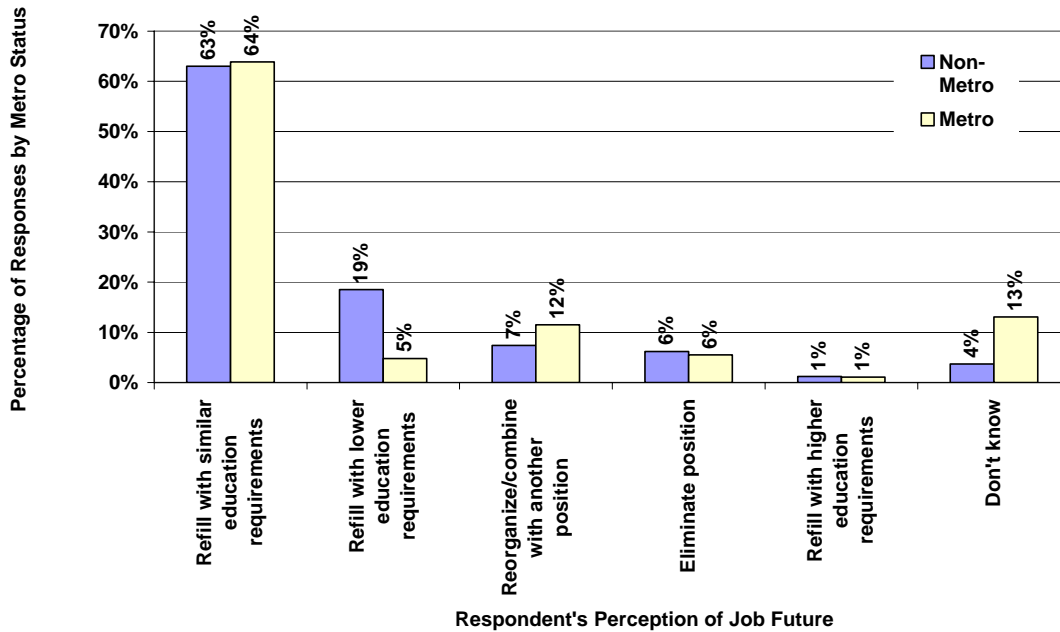
(19% vs. 5%) to anticipate that their successors will meet lower educational requirements. By contrast, however, non-metro librarians are only about half as likely as their metro counterparts (7% vs. 12%) to assume their positions will be reorganized

“...I am concerned, though, that small or rural or other libraries outside of metro areas will be neglected. I see more and more libraries filling professional positions with paraprofessional positions and am concerned that the profession will be undermined by this. While I am aware that paraprofessionals are quite competent, I also believe that professional librarians have a larger view of librarianship and are more likely and able to participate in and contribute to political activities, library administration and management, and professional development. I believe it is a disservice to patrons, librarianship, and the community at large to allow the view that just anyone can run a library and provide equal service to our users.”

– Public Librarian

or combined with other positions. Compared to non-metro respondents, metro librarians were three times more likely (13% vs. 4%) not to know what will happen to their current position after they leave. (See Chart 45.)

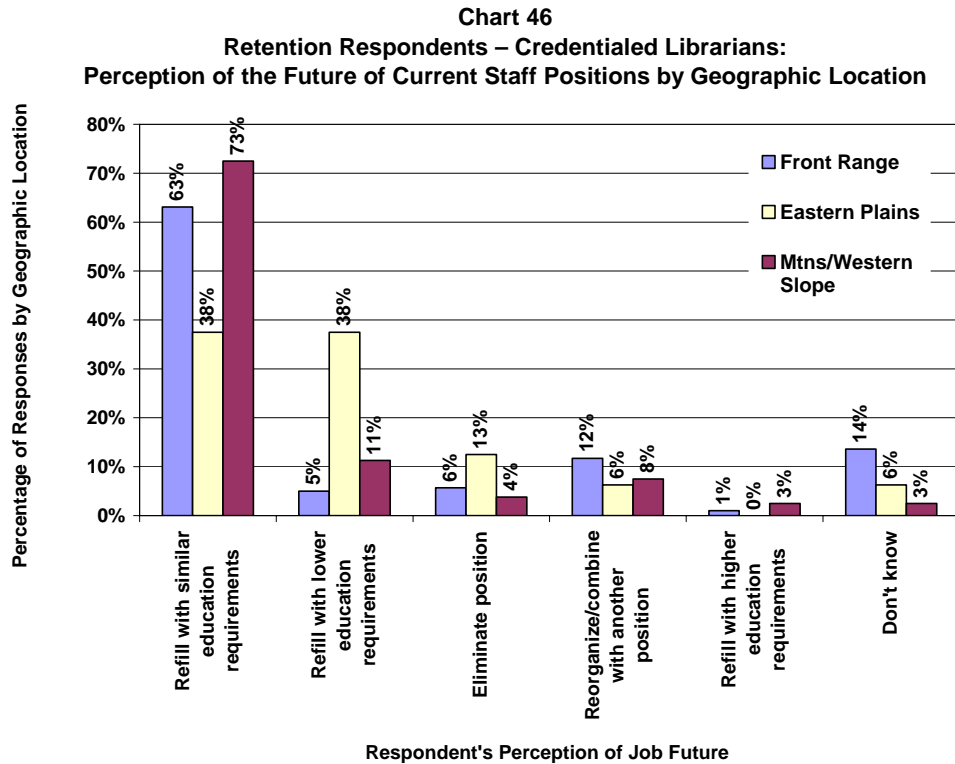
Chart 45
Retention Respondents – Credentialed Librarians:
Perception of the Future of Current Staff Positions by Metropolitan Status



Future of Current Staff Positions by Geographic Location

Mountains and Western Slope incumbents have a slightly more positive outlook about the future of their positions. Approximately three out of four of librarians responding from that region (73%) expect their positions to be refilled at a similar education level. However, they were also more than twice as likely as their Front Range counterparts to anticipate a lowering of educational requirements (5% vs. 11%). Front Range respondents (14%) were far more likely than those from other regions to indicate they “don’t know” what the fate of their positions will be after they leave. Incumbents responding from the Eastern Plains painted a bleak picture for librarianship in their region. One in every eight (13%) expects their position to be eliminated in the future—more than double the proportion for their Front Range peers (6%) and three times the proportion for their

Mountains/Western Slope peers (4%). They were equally likely to indicate their position would be refilled with similar or *lower* education requirements (38%). In addition, no Eastern Plains respondent thought the educational requirements would be higher for their position in the future. (See Chart 46.)



Future of Current Position by Library Type

School librarians were more than three times as likely as other respondents to expect the educational

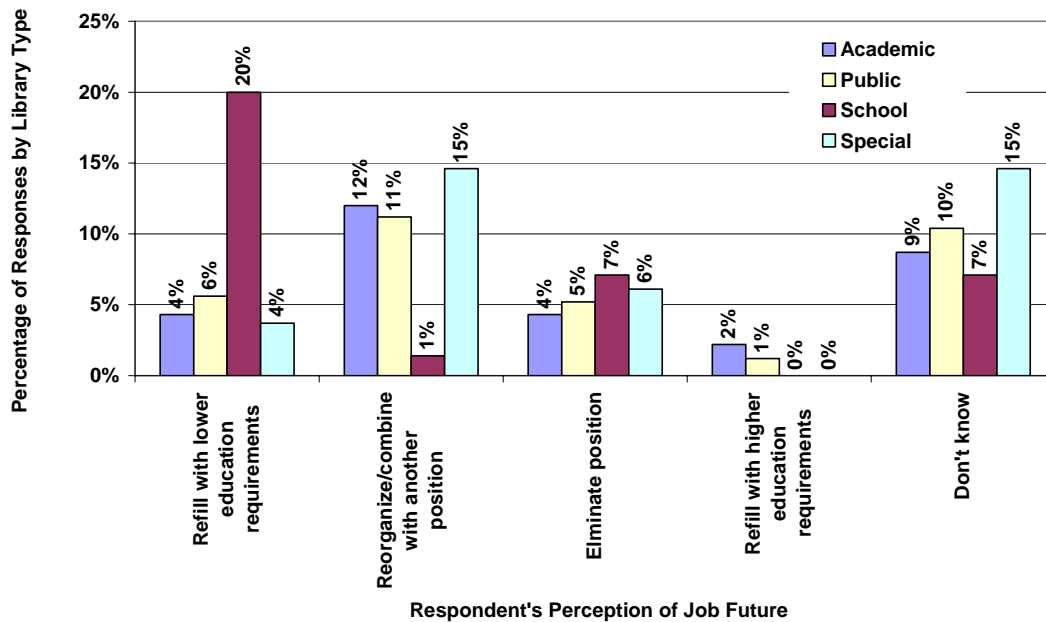
"I am concerned with schools not replacing retiring media specialist with another specialist. They should be looking for the same qualifications and knowledge/training instead of accepting less. I fear that students and teachers are being short changed."

– School Librarian

requirements for their positions to be lowered when they leave (20% vs. 4-6%). It is alarming that one in five school librarians anticipate being replaced by someone with less education. Few (1%) expect their positions to be reorganized or combined with another position. Respondents working in special libraries were the most likely (15% vs. 0-10%) to confess to not knowing what will happen to

their position in the future. This could be due to the unique circumstances in which many librarians and information professionals in special libraries function. They frequently have no other position to compare their position to within their organization. (See Chart 47.)

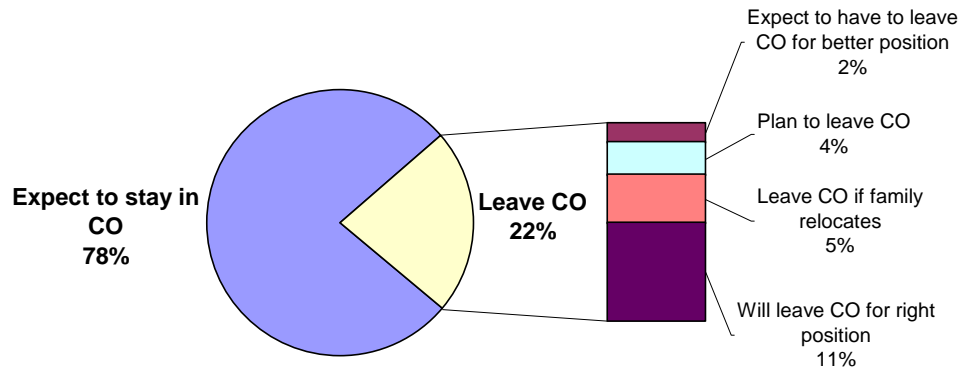
Chart 47
Retention Respondents – Credentialed Librarians:
Perception of the Future of Current Staff Positions by Library Type



Anticipated Colorado Residency Status

More than three-fourths of incumbent librarians (78%) expect to stay in Colorado. But, more than a fifth (22%) would leave Colorado for various reasons, either because there was a better job elsewhere or for family reasons. Losing more than one-fifth of the incumbent librarians in Colorado could be very bad news for libraries. (See Chart 48.)

Chart 48
Retention Respondents – Credentialed Librarians:
Anticipated Colorado Residency Status



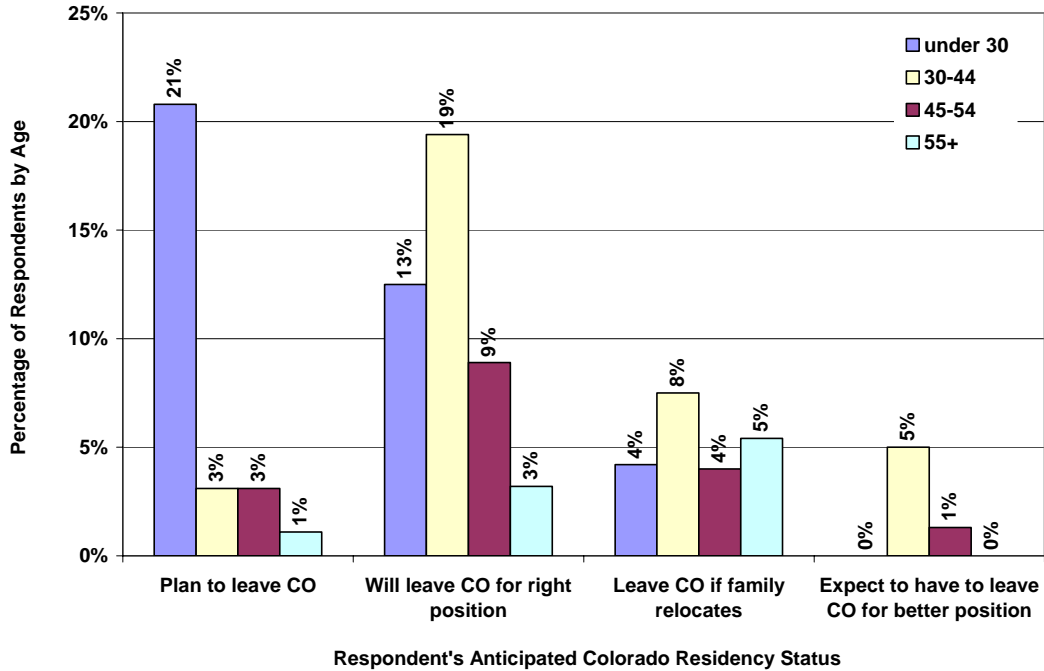
Anticipated Colorado Residency Status by Age

Predictably, younger respondents said they were more mobile. While most older incumbents (90%) expect to remain in Colorado, a third of respondents in the two younger age groups—those under age 45—would leave the state for a better job or personal reasons. Moreover, one in five of those under 30 (21%) plan to leave Colorado. (See Chart 49.)

“I think it will be harder to recruit librarians from out of state given the long term effects of Tabor and Gallagher. Librarians looking for advancement will look outside the state for opportunities.”

– Public Librarian

Chart 49
Retention Respondents – Credentialed Librarians:
Anticipated Colorado Residency Status by Age



Anticipated Colorado Residency Status by Library Type

Almost a third of incumbent academic librarians participating in the survey (32%) indicated they are likely to leave Colorado—some to get the “right” position (16%), some who are actively planning to leave (7%), and some in search of a better position (6%). Undoubtedly, these facts reflect the limited number of positions available at Colorado’s universities and colleges. Special library personnel are almost as likely as their academic counterparts (15% and 16%, respectively) to consider leaving the state for the right position. (See Chart 50.)

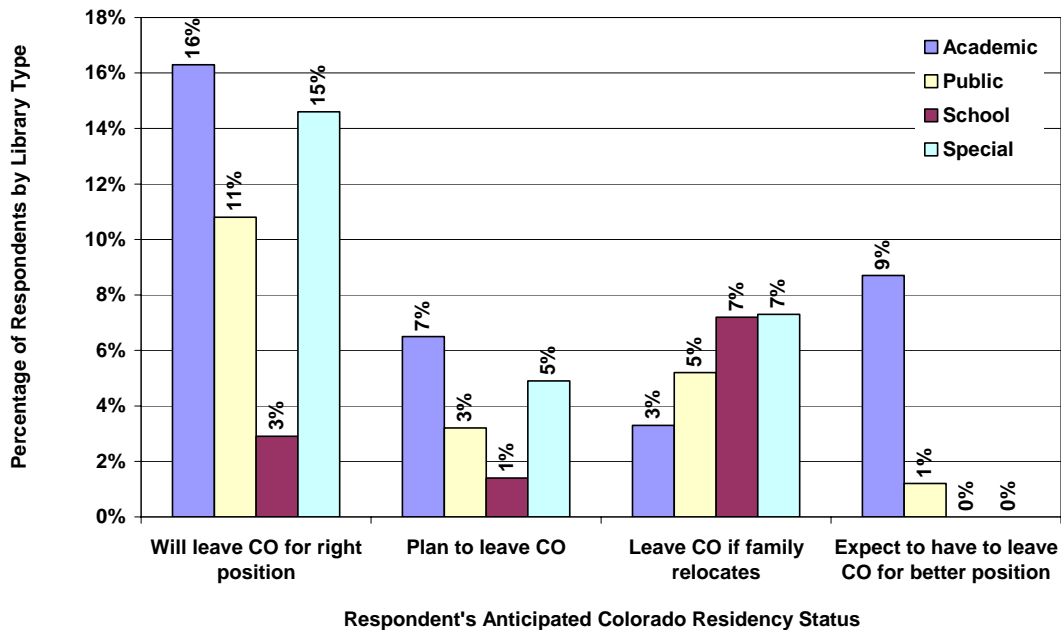
School librarians are least jeopardized by the temptation of life in other states. Nearly nine out of 10 school librarians (88%) expect to stay in Colorado, despite current bleak

“My experience has been that it is very difficult to advance in libraries without being willing to relocate within or out of state, which I have not been willing to do...I have long felt frustrated not being able to grow into a professional cataloging position locally.”

– Librarian
Special Library

realities for this sector, and despite concerns that the job market could get a lot worse before it gets better.

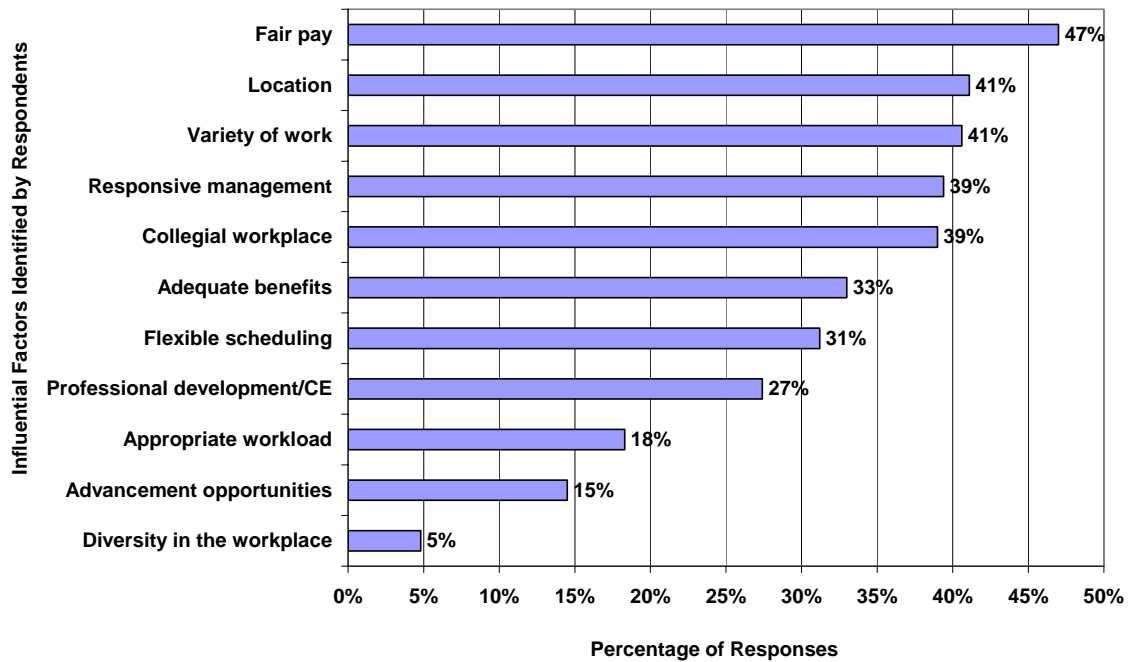
Chart 50
Retention Respondents – Credentialed Librarians:
Anticipated Colorado Residency Status by Library Type



Factors Influencing Decision to Remain with Organization

Once again, financial compensation is the biggest issue for incumbent librarians. Close to half of respondents (47%) indicated that “fair pay” was the highest ranking factor in deciding to remain with an organization. In addition, one-third (33%) identified “adequate benefits” as a factor. Location (41%), variety of work (41%), responsive management (39%), and a collegial workplace (39%) were important to two out of five respondents. Perhaps reflecting the oft-lamented demographic homogeneity of the library profession, the least influential factor was “diversity in the workplace” (5%). (See Chart 51.)

Chart 51
Retention Respondents – Credentialed Librarians:
Factors Influencing Decision to Remain with an Organization



Factors Influencing Decision to Remain with Organization by Geographic Location

Incumbent librarians agree that compensation, including salary and benefits, is the most important factor influencing their decision to remain with an organization; but, they differ about the weight of other factors depending on their location, library type, and age.

Advancement opportunities and a collegial workplace are more important to respondents along the Front Range in decisions about remaining with an organization. In fact, advancement opportunities were three times as likely to be important to Front Range incumbents (17%) as to their counterparts on the Eastern Plains (6%) or in Mountains/Western Slope areas (5%). A collegial workplace was cited twice as often by Front Rangers (42%) as by those on the Eastern Plains (19%) and a third more often than by Mountain/Western Slope respondents (28%).

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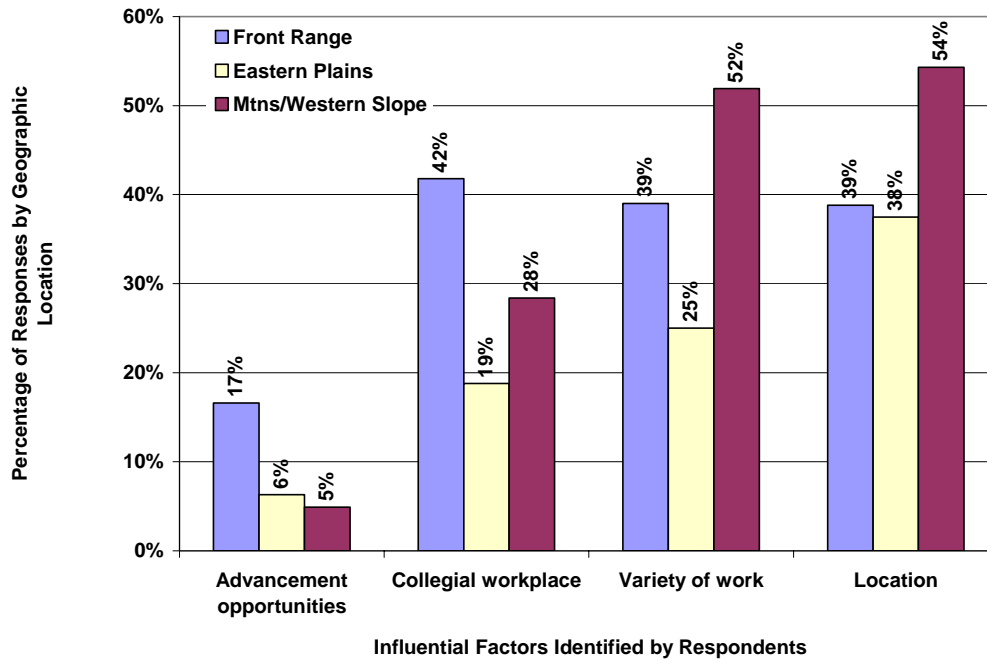
Many, if not all, of these differences might be explained by the wider variety of jobs available along the Front Range compared to the more sparsely populated regions of the Eastern Plains, Mountains, and Western Slope. Where there are more jobs it seems logical that there will be a greater opportunity for advancement, as well as the luxury of choosing a collegial workplace. It might also be true that with a priority on advancement or collegial workplace, some respondents have moved to where there are more job opportunities to accommodate those priorities.

For those respondents living in the Mountains or on the Western Slope, variety of work and location were significantly more important. Over half of those living in Mountain/Western Slope regions (52%) indicated that “variety of work” was an influential factor when deciding to remain with an organization, whereas only one-quarter of Eastern Plains (25%) and two-fifths of Front Range residents (39%) said it influenced them. Location was also significantly more important to those in the Mountain/Western Slope areas (54%) than those on the Eastern Plains (38%) or the Front Range (39%). It is unclear whether librarians live where they do because that is where they found jobs, or whether they are librarians because those were the jobs available where they chose to live. (See Chart 52.)

“If the trend toward cuts continues there is a good possibility that we will lose the good staff and keep only those that can't find positions elsewhere, possibly those with low skills. “

– Public Librarian

Chart 52
Retention Respondents – Credentialed Librarians: Factors Influencing Decision to Remain with an Organization by Geographic Location



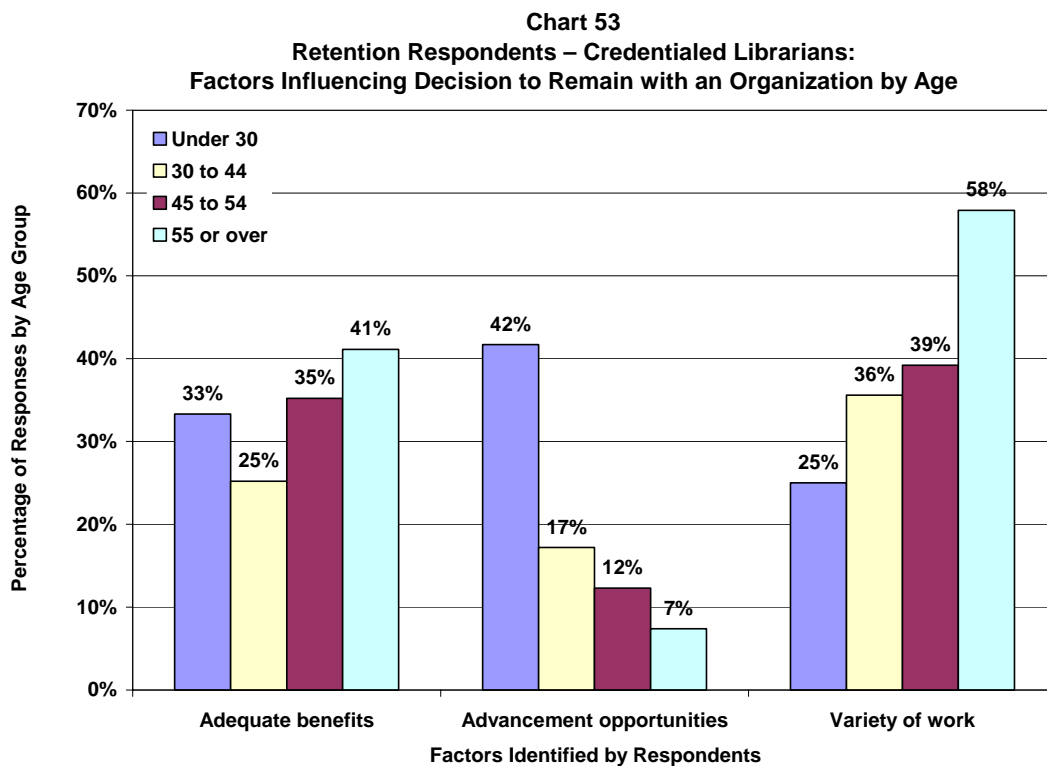
Factors Influencing Decision to Remain with Organization by Age

Respondents under age 30 were most likely to identify advancement opportunities as a factor that explains their remaining with an organization. Two out of five respondents under 30 (42%) said advancement opportunities were important, compared to less than one out of five 30-44 year olds (17%), one out of eight 45-54 year olds (12%), and one out of fourteen 55 or older (7%).

Interestingly, variety of work was more frequently chosen as a factor in decisions about remaining with an organization as respondents aged. Those 55 and older selected variety of work more frequently than younger age groups. Indeed more than twice as many respondents in the older group (58%) chose variety of work as did those in the under 30 group (25%). It was also more than those in the 30-44 (36%) and 45-54 (39%) age brackets. Presumably, the younger respondents are building their careers and are looking for opportunities for increased

responsibility and compensation. Generally, older respondents are more settled in their careers and are able to choose other priorities like variety of work.

Adequate benefits became slightly more important as respondents became older. This reason for remaining with an organization was identified by only a quarter (25%) of those ages 30-44; but, two out of five (41%) of those age 55 or older. (See Chart 53.)

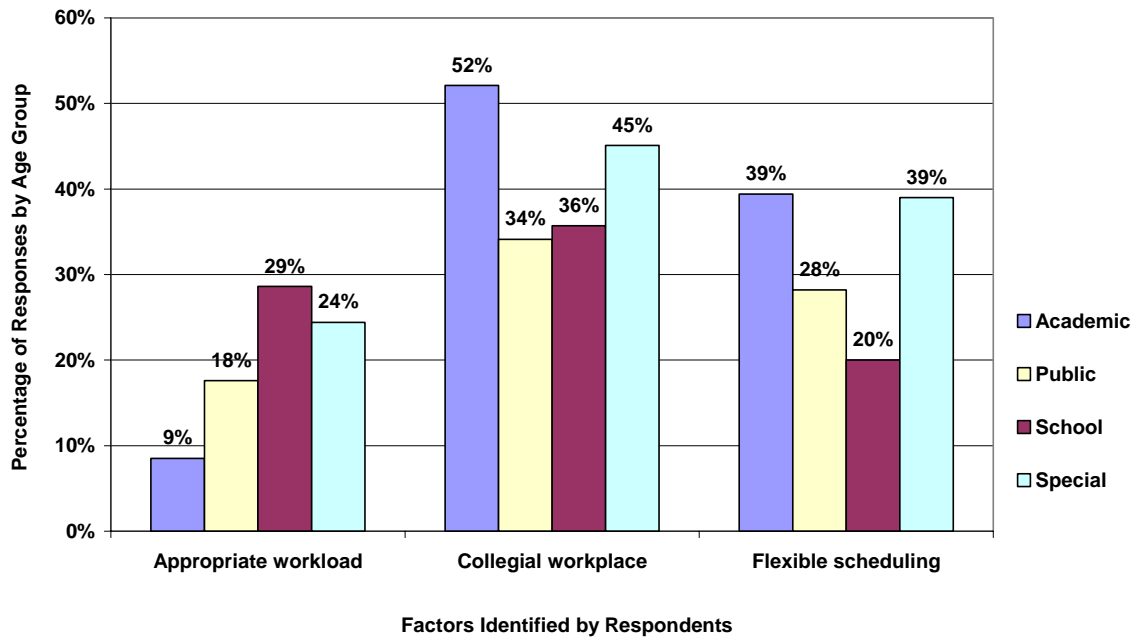


Factors Influencing Decision to Remain with Organization by Library Type

An appropriate workload was far more important to respondents working in school (29%) and special (24%) libraries than those in public (18%) or academic libraries (9%). Conversely, school librarians (20%) were less likely to indicate flexible scheduling as a priority than respondents from other types of libraries (academic and special 39%, and public 28%). Half of academic librarians (52%)

and almost half of special librarians (45%) are influenced by a collegial workplace, compared to one-third of their public (34%) and school (36%) library counterparts. (See Chart 54.)

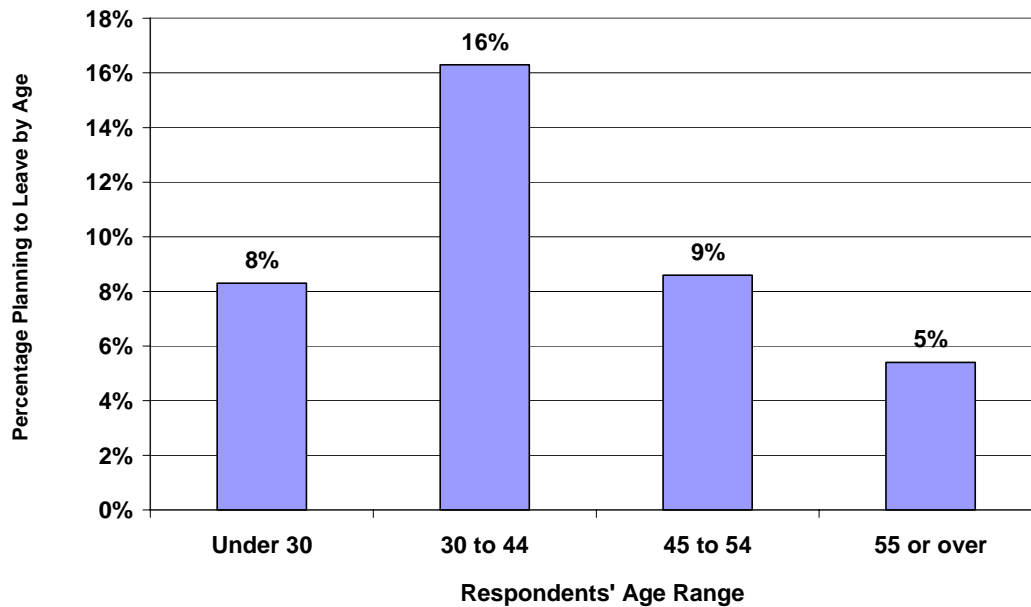
Chart 54
Retention Respondents – Credentialed Librarians:
Factors Influencing Decision to Remain with an Organization by Library Type



Planning to Leave Librarianship by Age

Approximately one in ten respondents said they had plans to leave the library/information science field. By far, the age group with the largest percentage planning to leave the field is the 30-44 age bracket. A number of factors may explain why this age group wishes, or feels compelled, to start a second career: they are attracted to another field, concerned about the costs of educating children and retiring themselves, managing family changes (later marriages, children, divorces) or, perhaps, simply wishing for a change and feeling they have enough working years left to build a new career outside librarianship. (See Chart 55.)

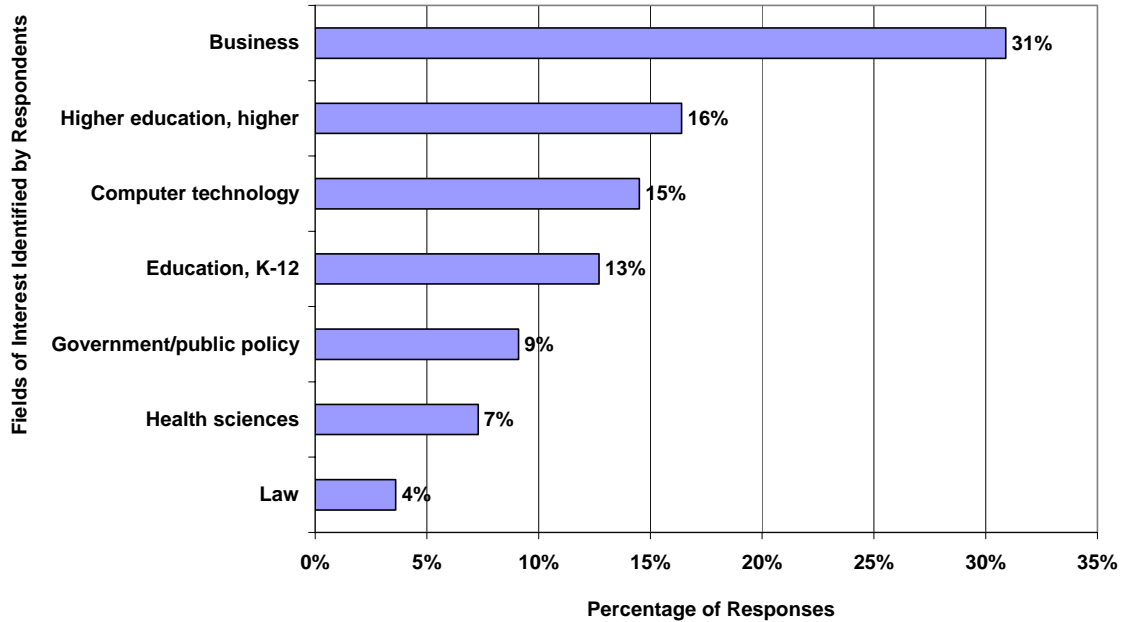
Chart 55
Retention Respondents – Credentialed Librarians:
Planning to Leave the Library/Information Science Field by Age



Fields of Interest to Those Leaving Librarianship

Of those indicating they were planning to leave the library field, almost one-third (31%) are considering going into business. Considering the findings regarding low compensation, fair pay, and adequate benefits, an interest in business is likely explained by the potential for better pay and benefits. Others are contemplating fields somewhat similar to library science, including computer technology (15%) and education (higher education at 16% and K-12 at 13%). Government (9%), health science (7%), and law (4%) were generally of less interest to respondents. (See Chart 56.)

Chart 56
Retention Respondents – Credentialed Librarians: Fields of Interest to Respondents Leaving Library/Information Science Profession



Fields of Interest to Those Leaving Librarianship by Library Type

Only one demographic, library type, was significantly linked to fields of interest to respondents planning to leave the library profession. In three fields, higher education, K-12 education, and business a predictable pattern generated significant differences. Logically, respondents from academic institutions were the most interested in higher education (67%) compared to those from school (29%), special (20%), and public (6%) libraries. Approximately 2 in 5 public library respondents are interested in going into the business field (44%), the same proportion of school librarians are considering K-12 education (43%). School librarians indicated they were also considering higher education (29%).

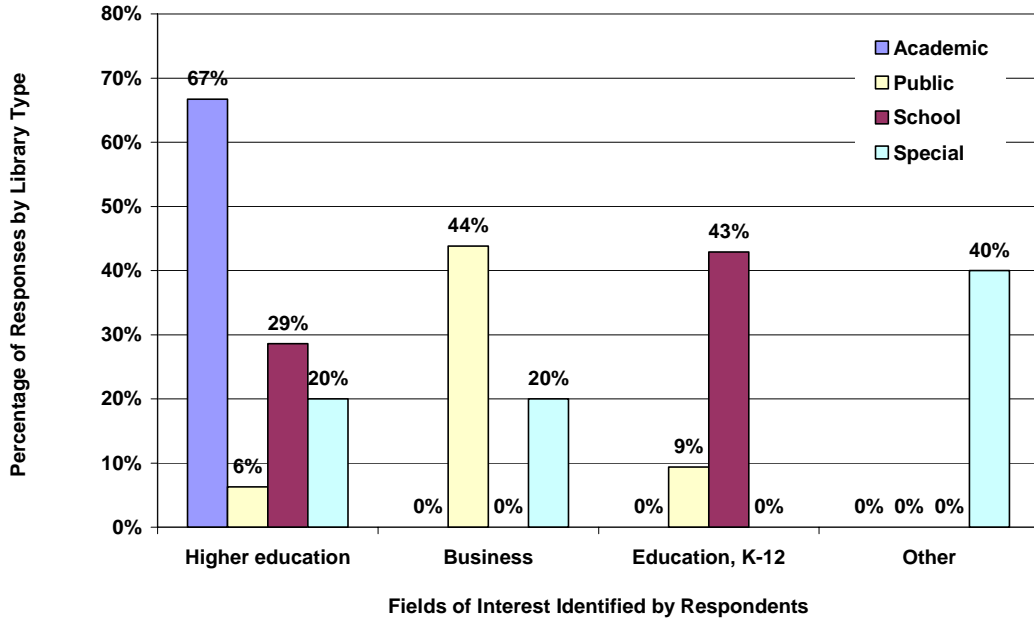
Respondents in special libraries were the only group that indicated “other” with 40 percent. They were also interested in higher education (20%) and business (20%). (See Chart 57.)

“I see myself as a teacher first and librarian second, so my remaining in the field may be in schools even more than libraries, but I hope to advocate for libraries as well as schools.”

– School Librarian

Retirement, Retention, and Recruitment:
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Chart 57
Retention Respondents – Credentialed Librarians: Fields of Interest to Respondents Leaving the Library/Information Science by Library Type



Recruitment

Of the 1,241 survey respondents, 459 (37%) indicated that they are students or paraprofessionals—those who might be the best candidates for recruitment into librarianship. Of that group, 77 (17%) identified themselves as currently pursuing a master’s degree in library and information science or a school library media endorsement. The remaining 382 respondents (83%) are paraprofessionals—individuals who work in libraries but do not have a master’s degree in library and information science or a school library media endorsement. While both library and information science (LIS) students and current library paraprofessionals are likely recruits into librarianship, they often have very different views, so they will be discussed separately.

Recruitment – LIS Students

The 77 LIS students who responded to the survey reflect the varied geography, demographics, interests, motivations, and opinions of those who are currently preparing to pursue careers in librarianship.

Metropolitan Status & Geography

More than nine out of ten responding LIS students (92%) reside in metropolitan areas. (See Table 8.) This is not surprising considering that all of the on-site master’s and endorsement programs available in the state are offered in metropolitan areas. In addition, most professional librarian positions available in the state are located in its metropolitan areas. The only opportunities for further study for students in non-metropolitan areas are to relocate, to commute—sometimes great distances—to attend classes, or to

“The opportunity for any kind of professional development whether it be workshops or college level classes is very limited on the Western Slope of Colorado. More opportunities need to be made available to those of us on the Western Slope.”

– School Librarian

attend classes online. In fact, non-metro paraprofessionals tend to cite an academic institution’s inconvenient location and an aversion to online classes as factors that discourage them from pursuing a library degree.

Table 8
Recruitment Respondents – LIS Students:
Metropolitan Status and Geographic Distribution

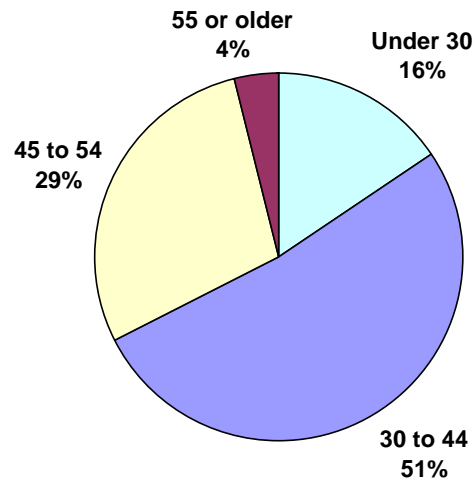
Metropolitan Status	
Metropolitan area	92%
Non-metropolitan area	8%
Geographic Area	
Front Range	91%
Eastern Plains	1%
Mountains & Western Slope	8%

Age

The population of students attending LIS or library media endorsement programs spans a wide age range. However, more than half of responding students (51%) are ages 30 to 44. Apparently, these students are not moving directly from undergraduate to graduate-level education, yet they are still relatively early in their working lives. More than a quarter (29%) of responding students are between the ages of 45 and 54, meaning that four out of every five responding students (80%) are between the ages of 30 and 54. The data suggests that the majority of LIS students are pursuing the field of librarianship as a second career. (See Chart 58.)

“Librarians and library workers need [to] allow for change and innovation to bring the younger generations into the library.”
—LIS Student
Paraprofessional, Public Library

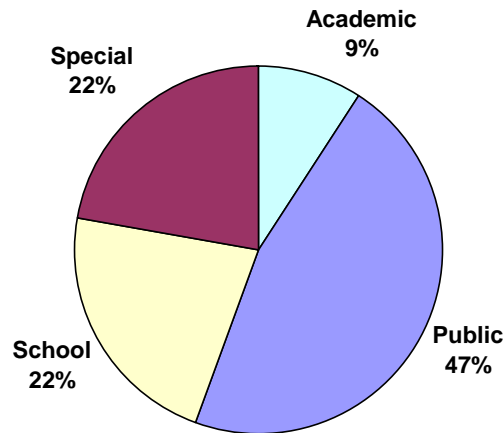
Chart 58
Recruitment Respondents – LIS Students:
Distribution by Age



Library Type

Of the 77 student respondents to the survey, 54 (70%) indicated that they are also currently working in libraries. Of those working in libraries, nearly half (47%) work in public libraries. Most of the rest are split between working in school and special libraries (22% each), with only a small percentage (9%) working in college or university libraries. (See Chart 59.)

Chart 59
Recruitment Respondents – LIS Students:
Distribution by Type of Library



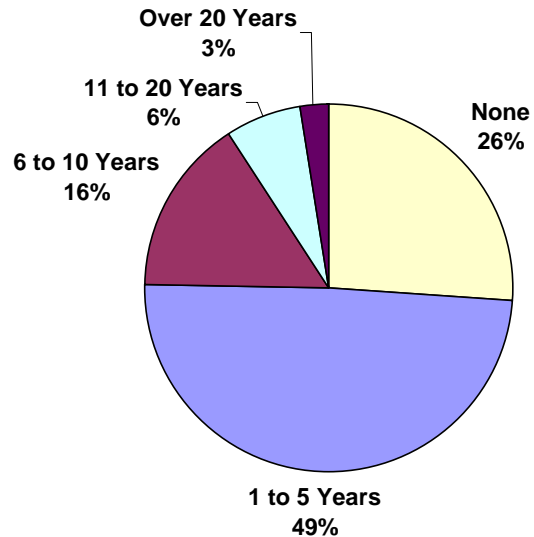
Years of Experience

Responding students are already relatively well-versed in the library world, with nearly three-quarters of them (74%) having some experience working in libraries. A quarter of them (25%) have been employed in libraries for more than five years, and nearly one in ten (9%) have worked in the library sector for more than ten years. Conversely, it is noteworthy that over a quarter of responding students (26%) entered their graduate programs with no previous work experience in a library setting. (See Chart 60.)

“We are being told that there are many openings at libraries, but so far I have not seen them. A forward thinking library system might consider hiring career minded MLIS students who can become part of their system and work their way up...”

– LIS Student

Chart 60
Recruitment Respondents – LIS Students:
Distribution by Years of Library Employment



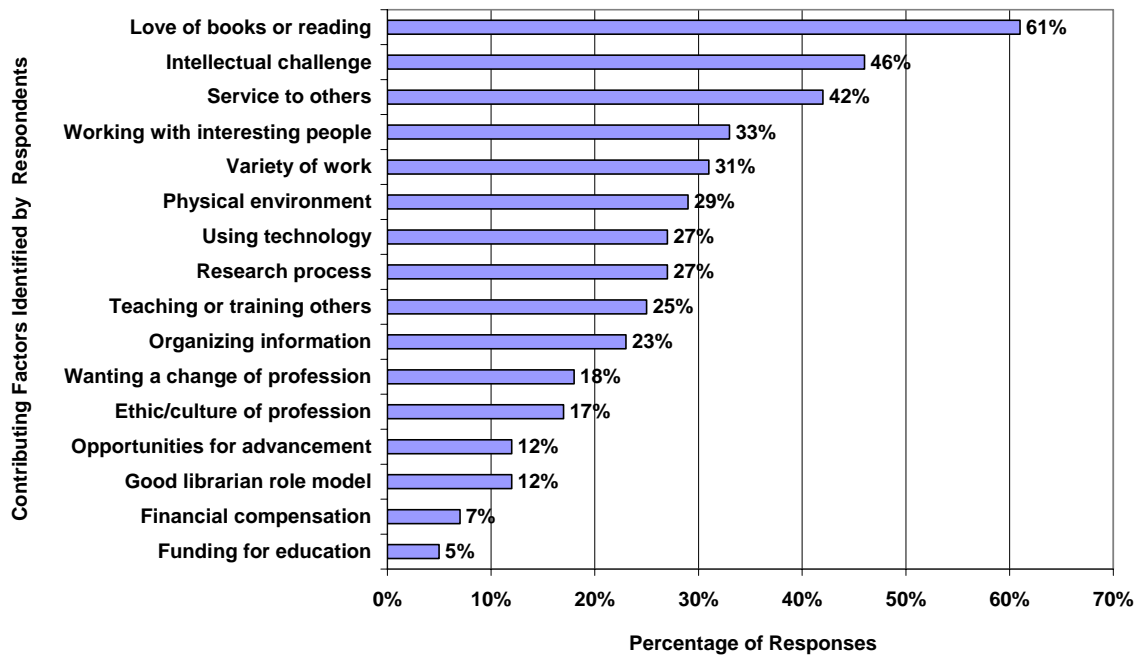
Factors That Make Librarianship an Attractive Profession

The factors that attracted students to the profession of librarianship are the same, though in a different order, as those cited by respondents in general. Students overwhelmingly cited a love of books or reading (61%) as the primary attractive factor of librarianship, with intellectual challenge (46%) coming a somewhat distant second. Approximately a third look forward to working with interesting people (33%) and the variety of work (31%). Students seem to consider librarianship an interesting career that will enable them to continue a lifelong learning process. (See Chart 61.)

“Above all, after all is said is done, I still love my job and feel extremely fortunate to have chosen such a fascinating field. That does not mean that there is not room for improvement, but I know that most people when I tell them what I do get a glint in their eye and say “really!”

– LIS Student and
Paraprofessional, School Library

Chart 61
Recruitment Respondents – LIS Students:
Factors that Make Librarianship an Attractive Profession



Factors That Discourage Choosing a Career In Librarianship

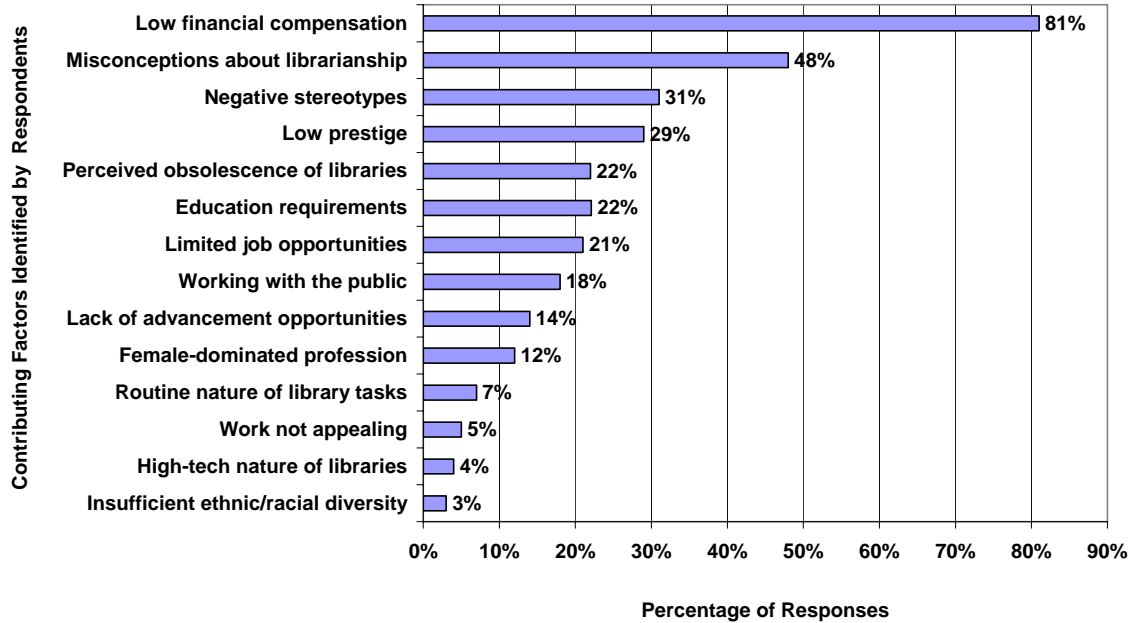
Students also tend to mimic the responses of all respondents in what they perceive to be factors that discourage the pursuit of a career in librarianship. In fact, the top three responses – low financial compensation (81%), misconceptions about what librarians do (48%), and negative stereotypes of librarians (31%) – are the top three responses from all study participants, in the same order. It is interesting, however, that students responded even more strongly than other respondents that low financial compensation would discourage them, yet

they have still decided to pursue a graduate degree. (See Chart 62.)

“Decreasing pay and increasing workloads will continue to make this profession undesirable to students looking for a promising career.”

– Public Librarian

Chart 62
Recruitment Respondents – LIS Students:
Factors that Discourage a Career in Librarianship

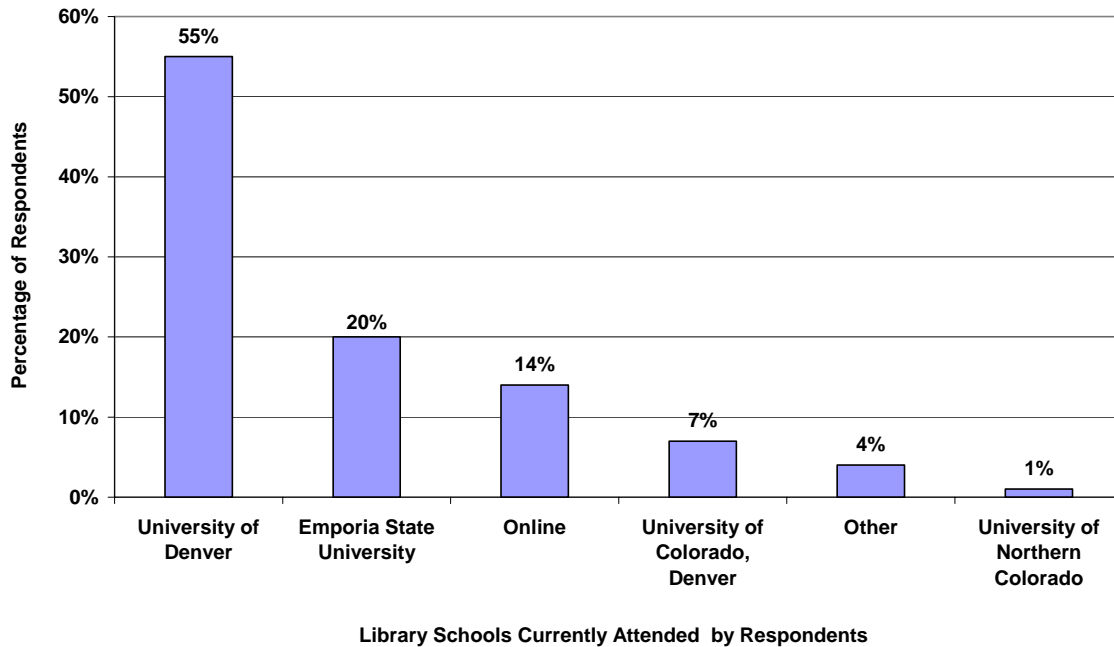


Library School Institution

Over half (55%) of responding students attend the University of Denver Library and Information Science Program. One of five students (20%) attends the satellite program offered by Emporia State University, and one out of seven (14%) is enrolled in an online master's program. (See Chart 63.)

"In order to advance in our current library system, one would need an MLS degree. I don't know how to acquire one except by doing it on-line. This is not an option that I would pursue."
—Paraprofessional
Public Library

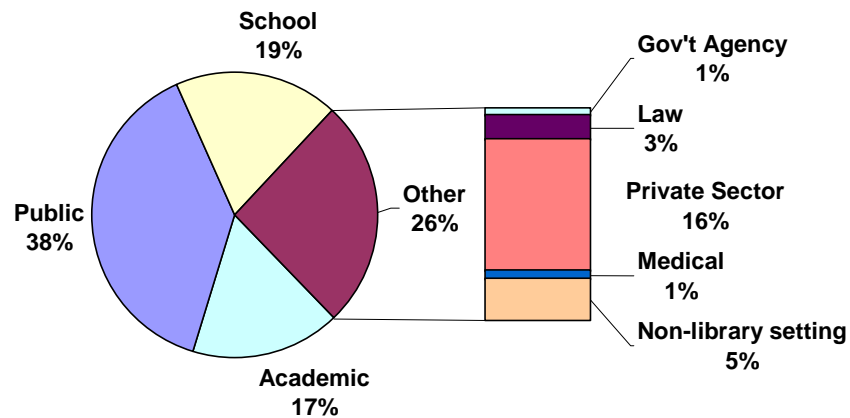
Chart 63
Recruitment Respondents – LIS Students:
Library Program Enrollment by Institution



Anticipated Library Type

More student respondents (38%) indicated they expect to work in public libraries than in any other sector. Interestingly, more students responded that they expect to work in a special library (21%--excluding non-library settings from other) than in either school (19%) or academic (17%) libraries. The popularity of special librarianship may imply a perception that the knowledge management sector of librarianship is growing. The fact that all LIS students who are currently working in academic libraries expect to continue working in academic libraries upon graduation further strengthens the idea that many students entering master's or endorsement programs are already involved in libraries, and are seeking advanced degrees to improve their status within their current organizations. In addition, 92% of students currently working in public and school libraries expect to stay in their respective sector. (See Chart 64.)

Chart 64
Recruitment Respondents – LIS Students:
Type of Library in Which Respondents Anticipate Being Employed



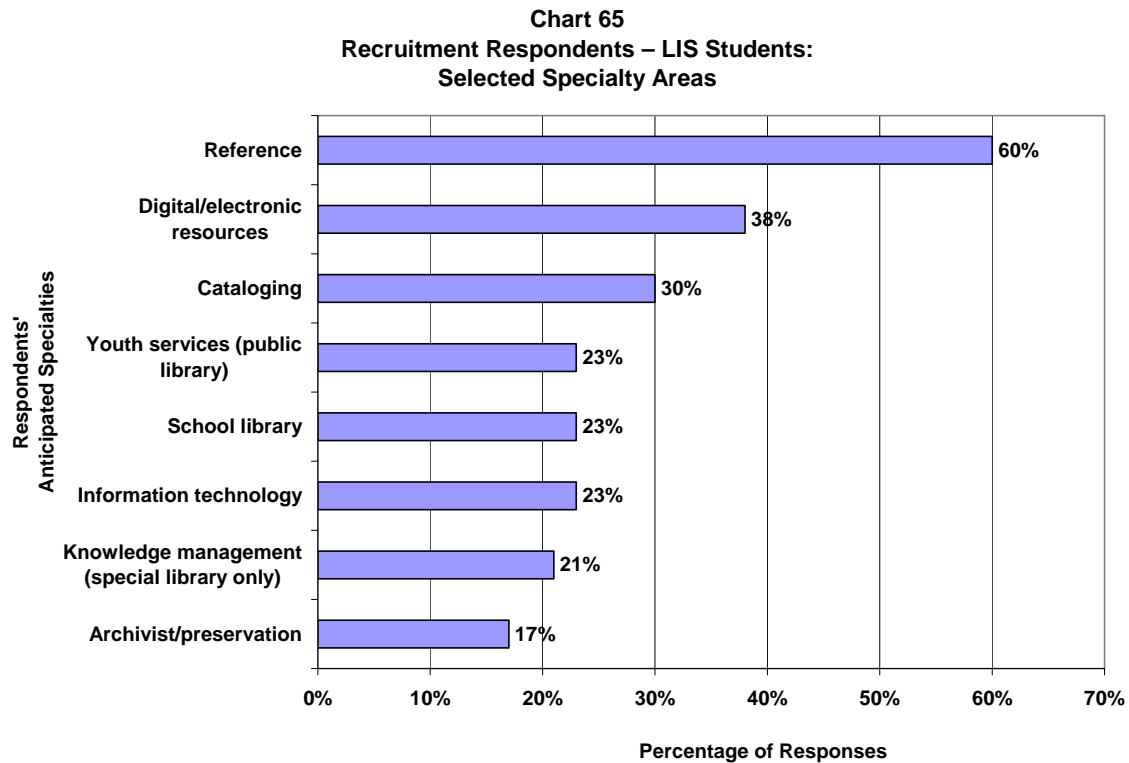
Anticipated Specialties

Current students anticipate working in reference far more than in any other area of library service, as three-fifths (60%) of the student respondents included this as an expected work area. As a sign of the increasingly digital times, more than a third of current LIS students (38%) also have high expectations of working with digital and electronic resources. Cataloging is the third largest area of expected work (30%), and working in school libraries or with youth services in public libraries account for nearly a quarter of respondents each (23% each) (See Chart 65.)

“Our economy is shifting in this country from product-based industry towards service-based and knowledge-based industries. As that shift occurs, librarians or, more accurately, information professionals will be in increasing demand. Business success will depend on gathering, synthesizing, analyzing, and responding to information... I therefore believe that the future outlook for information professionals in the state is very positive.”

– LIS Student

Retirement, Retention, and Recruitment: The Future of Librarianship in Colorado



In three out of eight specialty areas—archives, knowledge management, and youth services—the number of credentialed librarians planning to retire in the next five years is exceeded by the number of students planning to go into that specialty. If the number of positions in these areas does not increase, there may be competition for positions in this specialty.

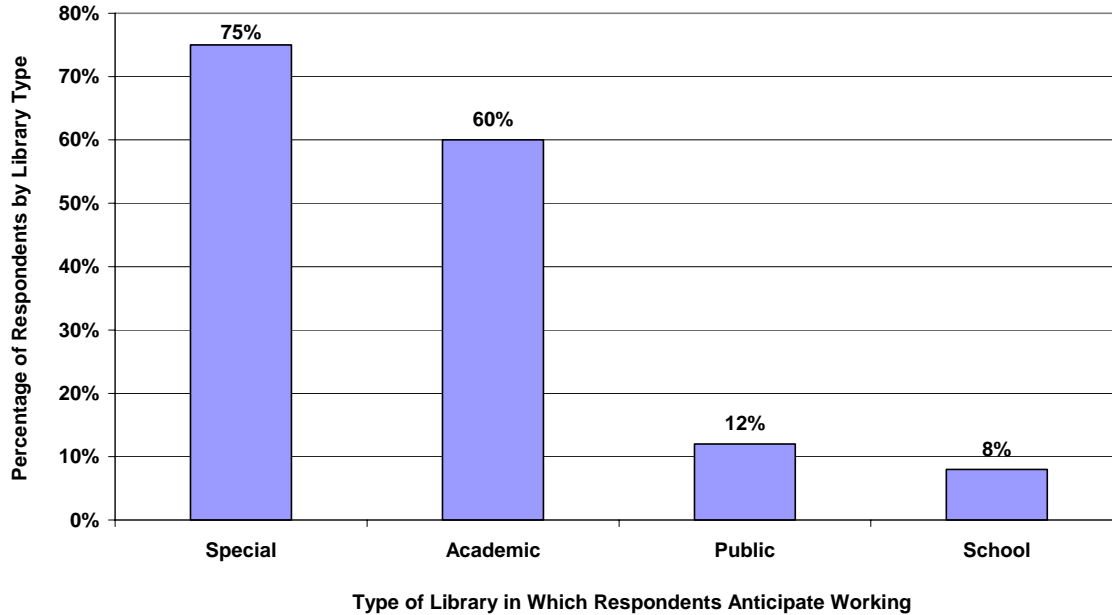
Survey responses show the other five specialties will lose more retirees in each area of expertise than there are current students planning to specialize in that area. School libraries and media centers will be the hardest hit with a 63 percent deficit between retirees (48) and students (18). (See Table 9.)

Table 9
Recruitment Respondents – LIS Students:
Comparing Retirees and LIS Students in Selected Library Specialty Areas

Library Specialty Area	Current Library Science Students	Retiring Librarians	Difference
Archivist/preservation	13	11	2
Cataloging	23	38	-15
Digital/electronic resources	29	38	-9
Information technology	18	35	-17
Knowledge management (special libraries only)	16	8	8
Reference	46	58	-12
School library/media center	18	48	-30
Youth services (public library only)	18	11	7

Within the area of digital and electronic resources, it is worth noting different expectations from students currently working in different types of libraries. Well over half of students currently working in academic (60%) or special (75%) libraries expect to be working in this arena upon graduation, whereas fewer than 15 percent of students currently working in public (12%) or school (8%) libraries share these expectations. (See Chart 66.) This suggests that students perceive special and academic librarianship as more involved with technology.

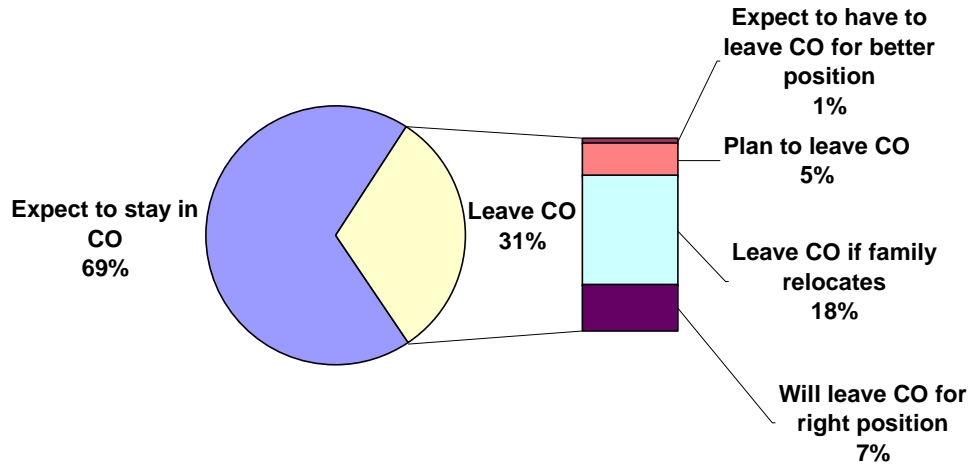
Chart 66
Recruitment Respondents – LIS Students:
Percentage Expecting to Work with Digital and Electronic Resources, by Type of
Library in Which They Anticipate Working



Anticipated Residency

Fortunately for Colorado’s libraries, the great majority of responding students expect to stay in the state upon completion of the degree. Over two-thirds (69%) plan on staying in Colorado. A quarter (25%) will leave the state for the right position or if their families relocate. Perhaps, the poor budget situation facing Colorado’s libraries caused six percent to plan to leave Colorado voluntarily or to accept a better position. (See Chart 67.)

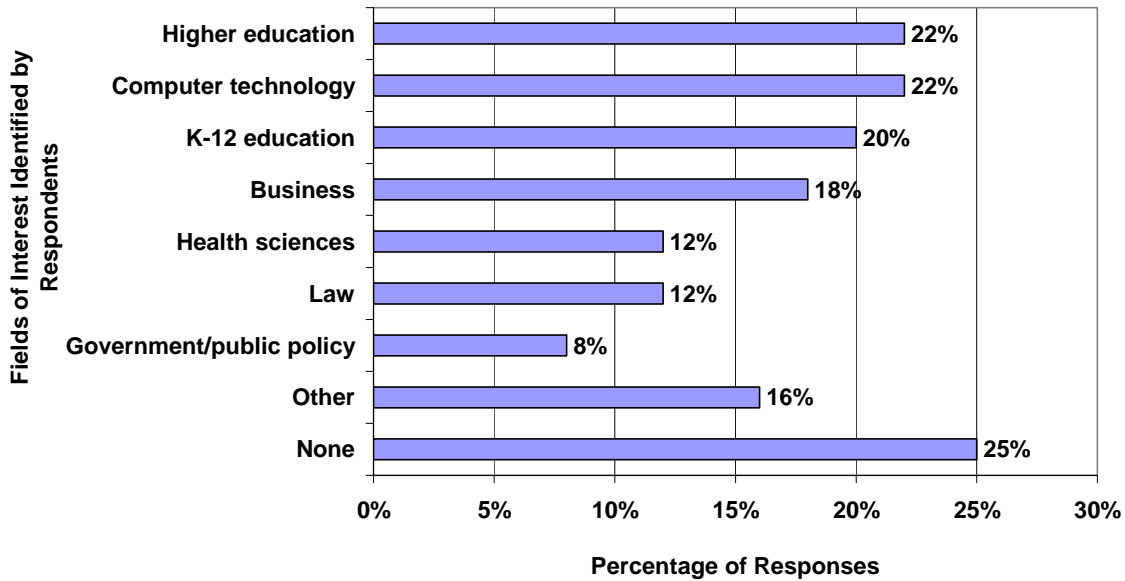
Chart 67
Recruitment Respondents – LIS Students:
Anticipated Colorado Residency Status



Other Fields Considered by LIS Students

Responding LIS students tended to be relatively single-minded. When asked, “What, if any, other fields did you consider?” a greater percentage (25%) answered “none” than any other specific sector. Still, three out of four (75%) indicated that they considered one or more other fields. Many considered some form of education, higher education (22%) or K-12 (20%), as an alternative career path. Computer technology also received attention from LIS students, with more than one in five (22%) considering it as a career option. (See Chart 68.)

Chart 68
Recruitment Respondents – LIS Students:
Other Fields Considered Before Pursuing Library Credential



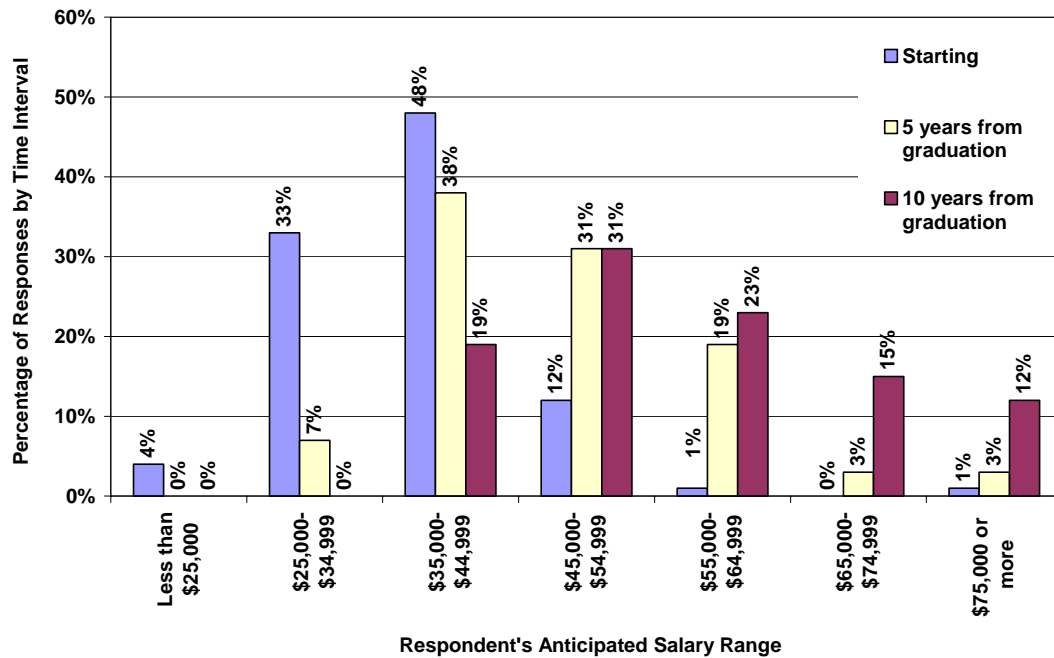
Expected Salaries

Students seem to have realistic expectations regarding the type of salary they will receive upon graduation. More than four out of five students (81%) expect to receive a starting librarian salary between \$25,000 and \$44,999, in line with starting salaries for public librarians across the state which tend to be near \$35,000. (Starting librarians in Colorado public libraries generally make between \$32,000 and \$40,000. See

www.LRS.org for more information. Comprehensive salary statistics for other library types are not available.) Older library students are likelier to expect higher salaries five and ten years after graduation than younger ones. (See Chart 69.)

"I am concerned that budget shortfalls in public libraries will perpetuate for many years. I expect this to severely change my prospects. In 2000 I chose library school for the promising opportunities, and only three years later, in 2003, I feel they are limited."
– LIS Student

Chart 69
Recruitment Respondents – LIS Students:
Expected Salaries After Graduation by Five Year Intervals



Recruitment – Paraprofessionals

Of the 1,241 survey respondents, 459 (37%) indicated that they are students or paraprofessionals—those who might be the best candidates for recruitment into librarianship. Of that group, 382 respondents (83%) are paraprofessionals—individuals who work in libraries but do not have a master’s degree in library and information science or a school library media endorsement.

“I think to consider ‘librarians’ as only those who possess an advanced degree actually hurts the library profession. The public does not perceive ‘real librarians’ as only those who have an MLS. I believe the term ‘paraprofessionals’ as applying to those who work in a library setting without the advanced degree is demeaning.”

– Paraprofessional
Public Library

Metropolitan Status & Geography

Similar to the general response population for the survey, the majority (two-thirds) of paraprofessional respondents live in Front Range counties. Most of the rest of paraprofessional respondents live in the mountains or on the Western Slope, while only five percent reside in the Eastern Plains. (See Table 10.)

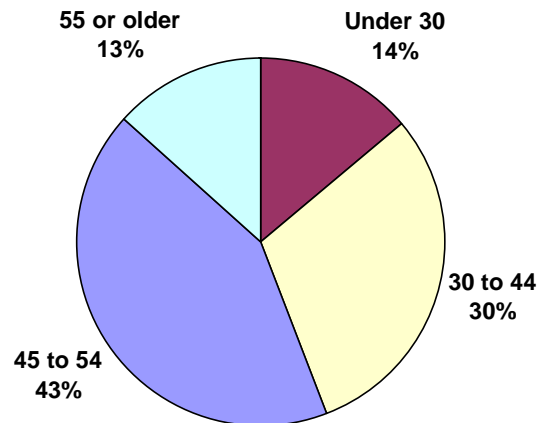
Table 10
Recruitment Respondents – Paraprofessionals:
Metropolitan Status and Geographic Distribution

Metropolitan Status	
Metropolitan area	72%
Non-metropolitan area	28%
Geographic Area	
Front Range	67%
Eastern Plains	5%
Mountains & Western Slope	28%

Age

Paraprofessionals who responded to the survey represent a broad range of ages, but most seem to be in the middle of their working life. Nearly three-quarters (73%) of responding paraprofessionals are between the ages of 30 and 54, with more than two out of five (43%) between 45 and 54. Almost equal numbers represent the upper and lower age extremes, with 14 percent of responding paraprofessionals being under 30 and 13 percent at least 55 years old. (See Chart 70.)

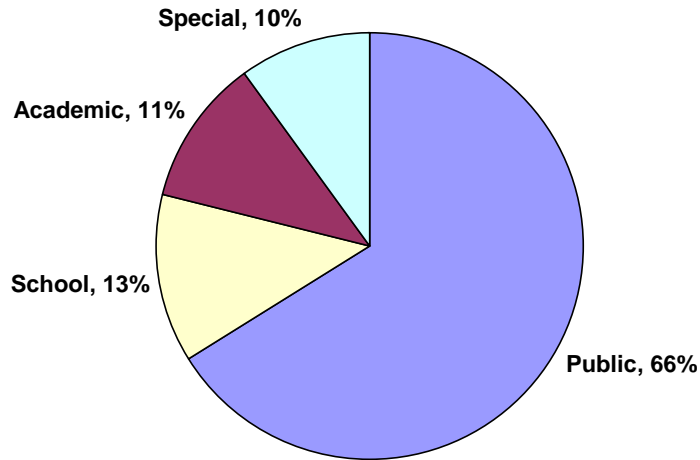
Chart 70
Recruitment Respondents – Paraprofessionals:
Distribution by Age



Library Type

Two-thirds (66%) of responding paraprofessionals work in public libraries, a slightly higher percentage than those responding to the survey in general. This reflects a greater diversity of positions in public libraries than is typically found in other types of libraries, with a higher number of clerical staff than others. Roughly equal numbers of paraprofessionals work in school, academic, and special libraries (13%, 11%, and 10%, respectively). (See Chart 71.)

Chart 71
Recruitment Respondents – Paraprofessionals:
Distribution by Library Type



Educational Level

The educational level of paraprofessional respondents is almost exactly split in half between those that have a high school diploma and those with a bachelor's degree, further exhibiting the diversity that is found in the paraprofessional community. One percent of paraprofessionals reported having a master's degree or higher.

Years of Experience

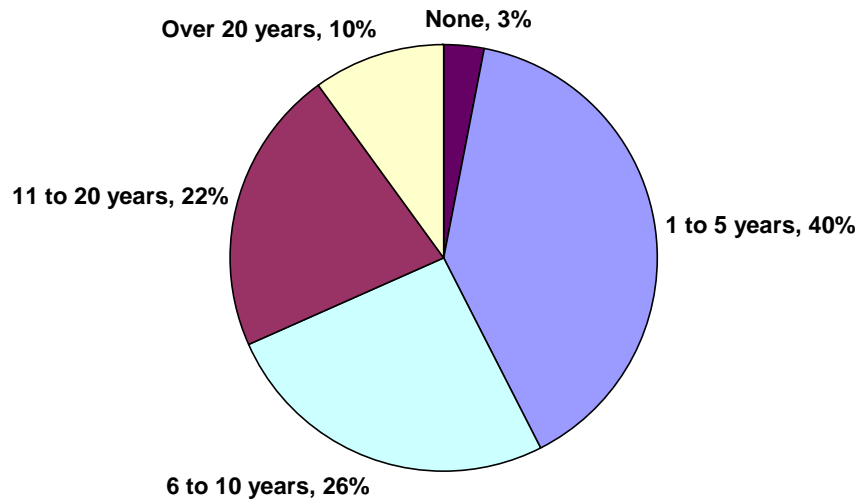
Paraprofessionals in Colorado libraries have relatively few years of library experience compared with other respondents to the survey. As years of experience increase, the percentage of responding paraprofessionals with that much experience decreases. Two of five responding

"I love libraries and enjoy my opportunities to work with the public in information, circulation, and children's programming. An advanced degree in librarianship would lead to more management, less interaction with patrons and a less satisfactory position, though at a higher wage."

–Paraprofessional
Public Library

paraprofessionals (40%) have been working in libraries for five or fewer years. Two-thirds (66%) have been working in libraries for fewer than 11 years, and only 10 percent have been working in libraries for more than 20 years. (See Chart 72.) Likely this is partly a function of the trend that paraprofessional positions tend to be stepping-stones in a career path, leading to further education and professional positions. Three out of four credentialed librarians who participated in the survey said they had worked or volunteered in a library or school before pursuing a master of library and information science/arts degree or a library media endorsement.

Chart 72
Recruitment Respondents – Paraprofessionals:
Distribution by Years of Library Employment

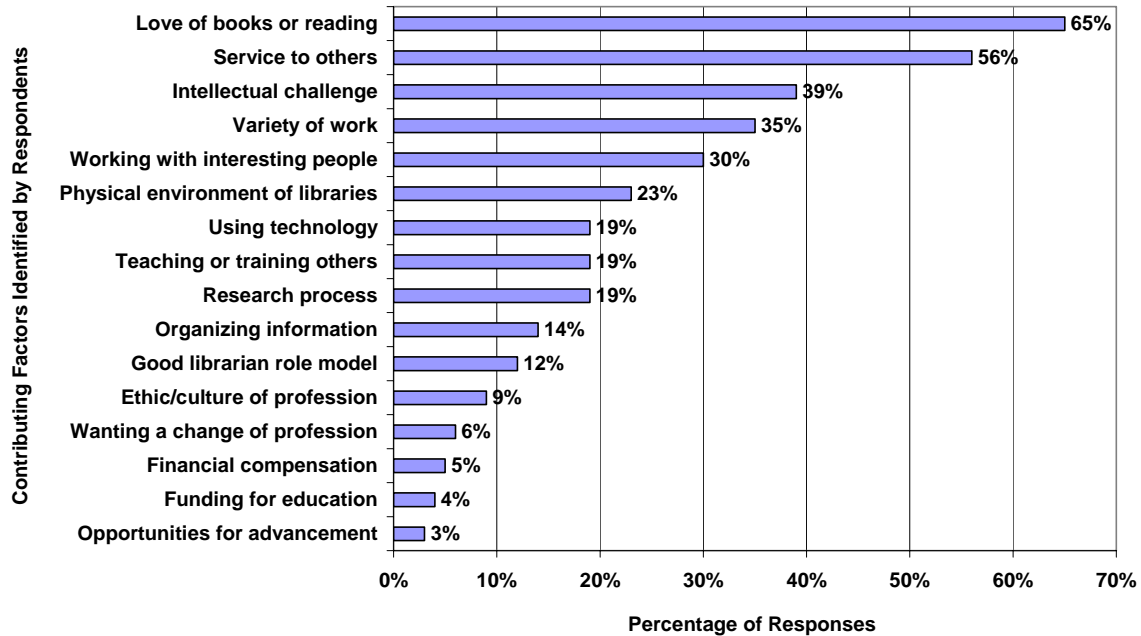


Factors That Make Librarianship an Attractive Profession

Paraprofessionals report finding librarianship an attractive profession for the same five main reasons as all survey respondents, if in a slightly different order. Nearly two-thirds (65%) of paraprofessionals say that a love of books or reading makes librarianship attractive. Over half of the respondents (56%) enjoy the public service aspect of librarianship, and many also mention the intellectual

challenge of librarianship (39%), the variety of work experiences available to librarians (35%), and the opportunity to work with interesting people (30%). (See Chart 73.)

Chart 73
Recruitment Respondents – Paraprofessionals:
Factors That Make Librarianship an Attractive Profession



Factors That Discourage Choosing Librarianship as a Profession

When considering the future of the librarian profession, it is vital to consider factors that discourage paraprofessionals from pursuing a professional career, particularly given that many librarians work as paraprofessionals before pursuing a degree. Far and away, the thing that responding paraprofessionals believe most discourages

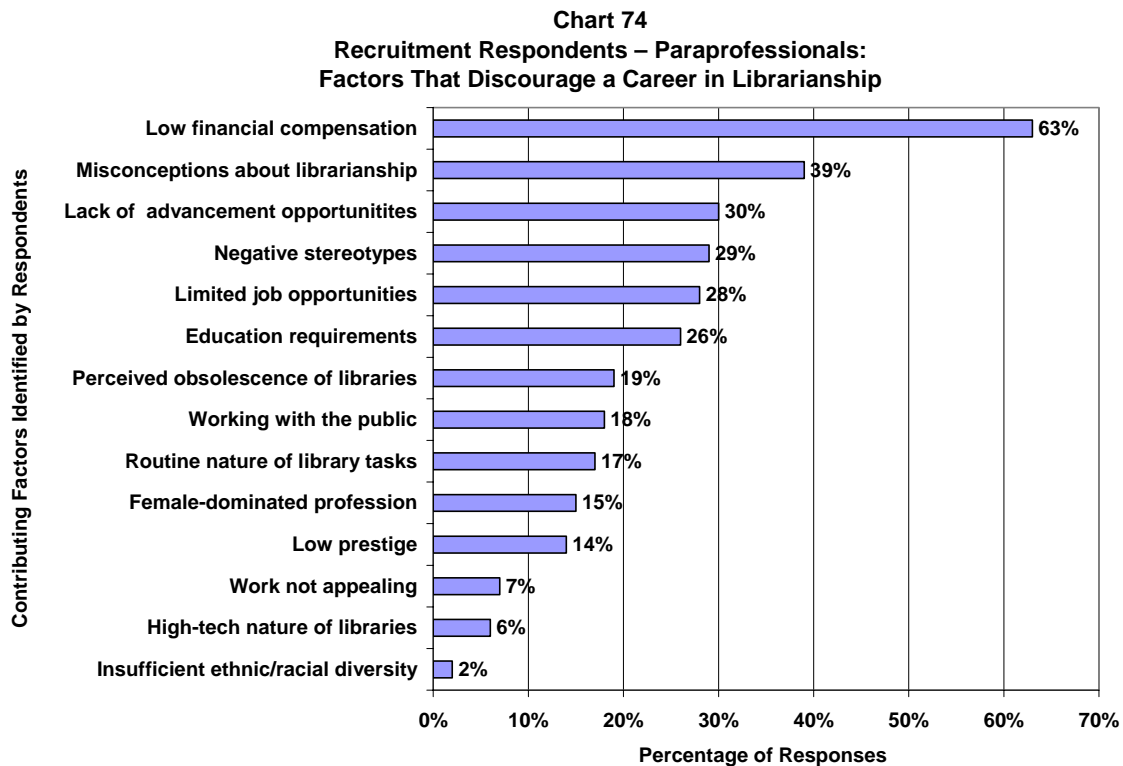
someone from pursuing a career in librarianship is low financial compensation. Nearly two-thirds of paraprofessionals (63%) reported this as a

“Public libraries are facing funding problems... academic libraries seem to be seeing dropping user counts. This leads to less need for staff, including professional staff. Add to this the low prestige our profession holds and I do wonder whether staffing could get cut back further over time. In the public eye, are we necessary?? Or are we a relic of the past?? I've honestly wondered whether to complete my MLIS at DU.”

– LIS Student

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discouraging factor, while none of the other factors was chosen by more than two-fifths (39%). The next four most popular responses, however, are related to each other. Many paraprofessionals responded that misconceptions about what librarians do (39%) and/or a negative stereotype about librarians (29%) are discouraging factors, emphasizing the belief that librarians are undervalued in our society. As well, both lack of opportunities for advancement (30%) and limited job opportunities (28%) received substantial responses from paraprofessionals, indicating their perception that the job market in librarianship is extremely tight. (See Chart 74.)



Pursuing a Library Degree or Credential

By definition, library employees who were classified as paraprofessionals are not currently enrolled in a master's or endorsement program. Students were discussed earlier, and some of that group work currently as paraprofessionals. A large number of paraprofessionals who are not actively pursuing further library education reported that they are considering doing so. Slightly over a quarter of

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the paraprofessional respondents said that they are considering pursuing such a degree. Again, as we face a potential shortage of librarians, it is encouraging that a large number of paraprofessionals are considering joining the professional realm.

“My biggest obstacle in pursuing a master's degree in library science is the lack of an adequate pay scale to compensate for the time and cost as well as opportunity cost of graduate education.”

–Paraprofessional
Public Library

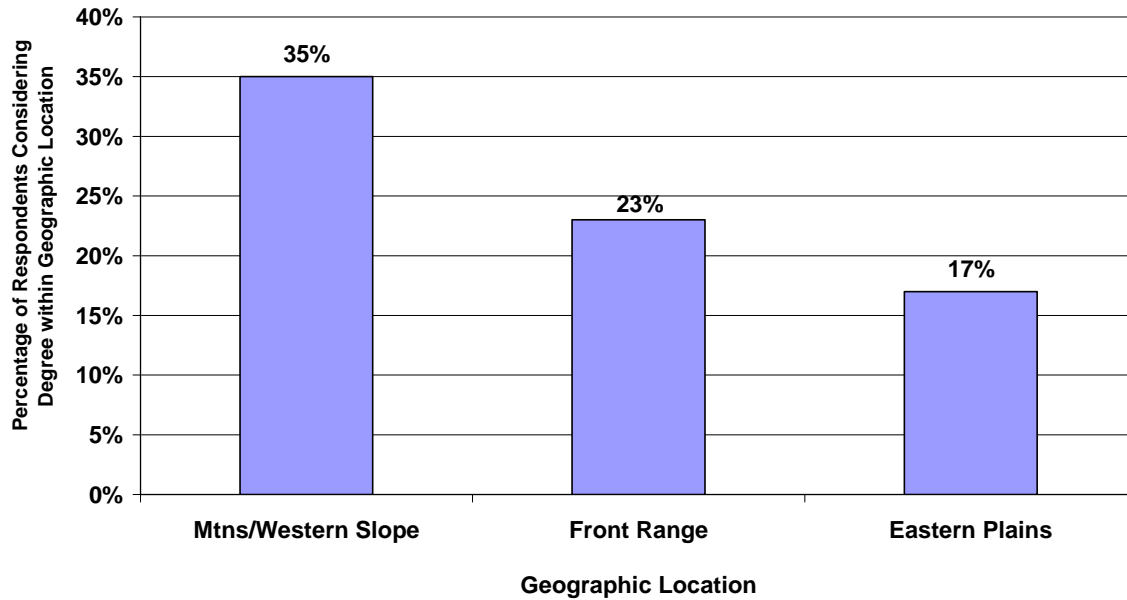
Pursuing a Library Degree or Credential by Geography

Paraprofessionals responding from the mountains or the Western Slope were more likely to report considering pursuit of librarian credentials than those from other geographic regions of the state. Over one-third of paraprofessionals from the mountains and the Western Slope (35%) indicated that they are considering pursuing a degree, compared with just under one-quarter (23%) of their peers on the Front Range and fewer than one-fifth (17%) of paraprofessionals on the Eastern Plains. (See Chart 75.)

“We need more education opportunities for Western Slope residents interested in obtaining an MLS degree.”

–Paraprofessional
Public Library

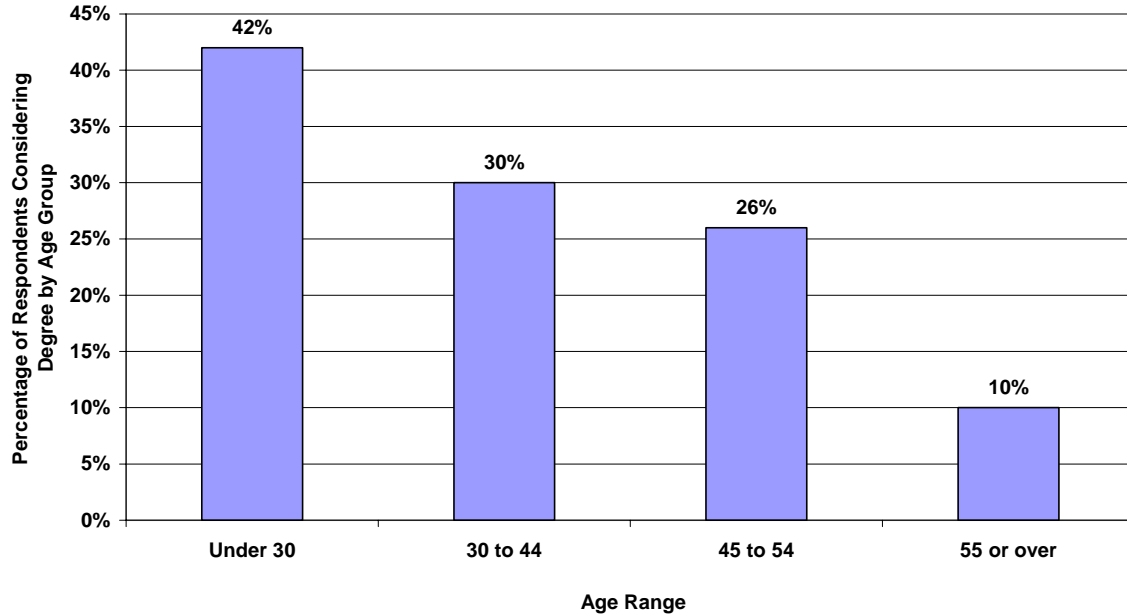
Chart 75
Recruitment Respondents – Paraprofessionals: Respondents
Considering Pursuing an Advanced Library Degree and/or Library
Credential by Geographic Location



Pursuing a Library Degree or Credential by Age Group

In addition, and not surprisingly, younger paraprofessionals across the state are more likely to consider pursuing further education in the library sector. It bodes well for the future of librarianship in Colorado that more than two out of five (42%) responding paraprofessionals who are under 30 years old are considering the pursuit of an advanced degree in the discipline, and that almost a third (30%) of those between 30 and 44 years old are considering this pursuit. (See Chart 76.)

Chart 76
Recruitment Respondents – Paraprofessionals:
Respondents Considering Pursuing an Advanced Library Degree and/or Library
Credential by Age



Factors That Would Encourage Paraprofessionals to Pursue a Library Degree or Credential

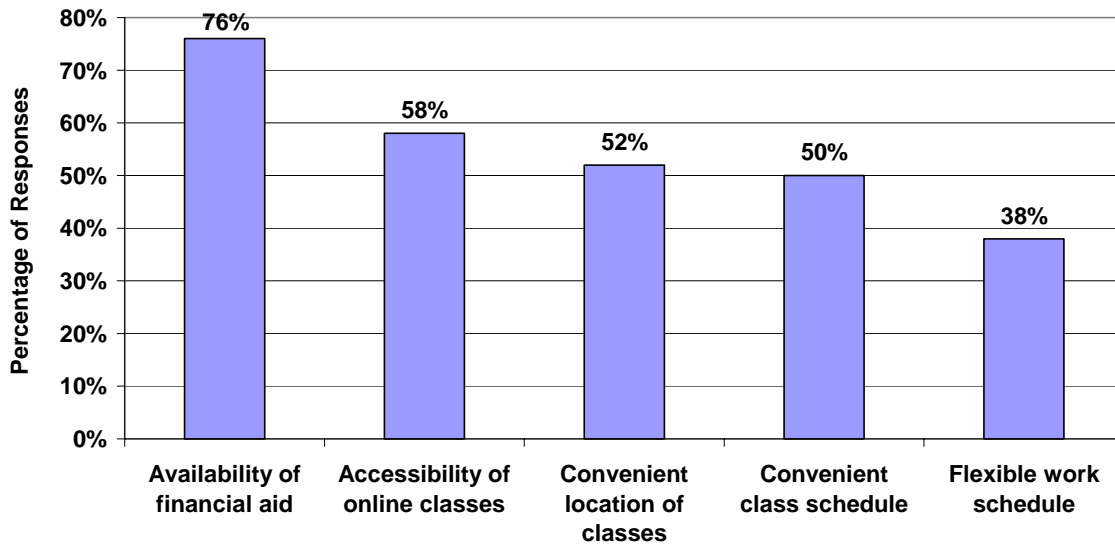
As seen repeatedly in responses to various questions in this survey, financial factors play an important role in career planning decisions. Of the paraprofessionals who responded that they are considering pursuing a further degree or endorsement in library studies, over three-fourths (76%) cite the availability of financial aid as an encouraging factor.

“It is very difficult to obtain an ALA-MLS in Colorado... I believe many more people would get an MLS if it were more convenient. Also, people don't believe that distance education is a good idea and it is generally quite expensive.”
– Public Librarian

Convenience also plays an important part in terms of enticing paraprofessionals to become students. The availability of online classes was cited by almost three out of five paraprofessionals (58%) as a factor that would encourage them to pursue a degree, and over half (52%) responded that a convenient class location and/or schedule would help convince them to pursue the degree. Less important,

but still significant, was having a flexible work schedule, as about a third (38%) said that this would be an encouraging factor. (See Chart 77.)

Chart 77
Recruitment Respondents – Paraprofessionals:
Factors that Would Most Encourage Respondents to Pursue an
Advanced Library Degree and/or Library Credential



Encouraging Factors Identified by Respondents

Access to Online Classes by Metropolitan Status

For these respondents, accessibility of online classes is significantly more important to non-metro residents than it is to those living in a metro area. Nearly three-quarters of non-metro paraprofessionals (74%) cite online class access as an encouraging factor, while just under

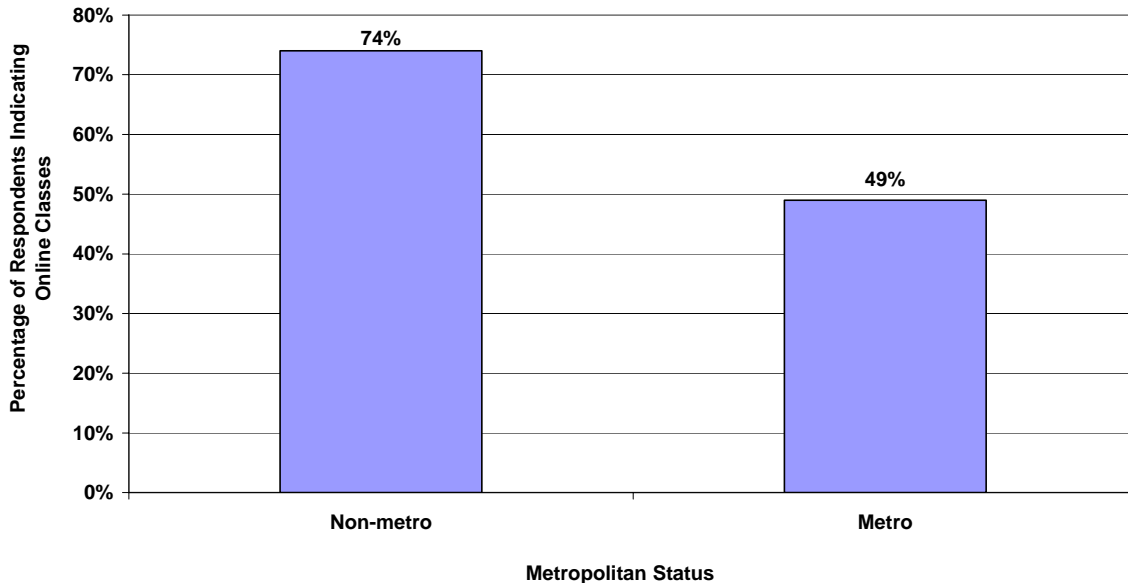
half of metro residents (49%) share this sentiment. Of course, this is to be expected considering that the location of predominantly face-to-face library education programs tends to be in urban areas, but is an important issue to take into account in light of the fact that a relatively large percentage of

"I do think there is a future for librarianship in Colorado and I'm encouraging everyone capable in our libraries to pursue a library science degree. At the same time, I'm working to increase funding for further education for our library staff. Increasing online educational opportunities have finally made library science degrees more attainable for Colorado's rural working library communities, now we need the funding."

– Paraprofessional
Public Library

paraprofessionals in the mountains and Western Slope are considering pursuit of a library degree. (See Chart 78.)

Chart 78
Recruitment Respondents – Paraprofessionals:
Respondents Indicating "Accessibility of Online Classes" as an Important
Factor Encouraging Pursuit of Library Degree and/or Credential
by Metro Status



Reasons for Not Pursuing a Library Degree or Credential

Nearly three-quarters of responding paraprofessionals said that they were not planning on pursuing a library degree or endorsement. They offered a variety of reasons for this choice, but the five most-reported replies can be placed in one of two categories. Either a further degree will not improve the respondent's current work situation (i.e., she is happy with her current position, a further degree is not required for her current

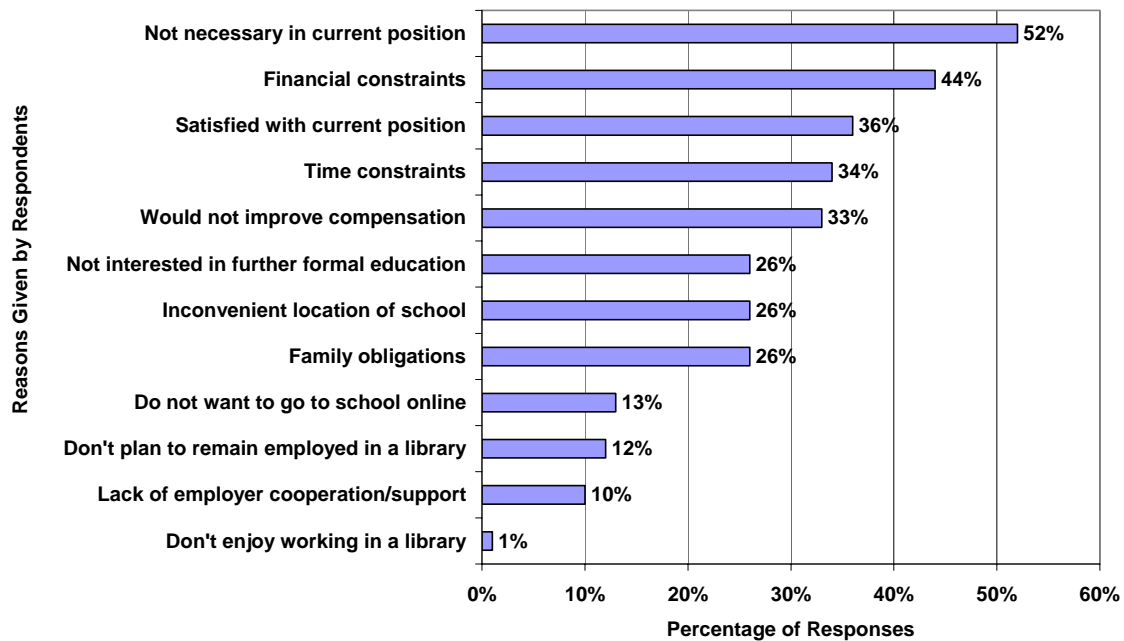
position, or more education will not increase her financial compensation), or the respondent is lacking one of two important

"Since I am at the top of my range in salary, it would not benefit me to get an MLS, as I would spend a lot of time and money and not be compensated back for it. Unless an organization is willing to pay a lot more with an MLS, (and help with tuition and time off) and people know that there are jobs out there once they get that degree, then it appears that a 'paralibrarian' can do just as well if they stick with it."

- Paraprofessional
Public Library

resources – time or money – necessary for the pursuit of an advanced degree. Encouraging for the profession is the fact that only one percent of responding paraprofessionals stated that they were not pursuing further education because they did not enjoy working in libraries. (See Chart 79.)

Chart 79
Recruitment Respondents – Paraprofessionals:
Reasons Given for Not Pursuing a Library Degree and/or Credential

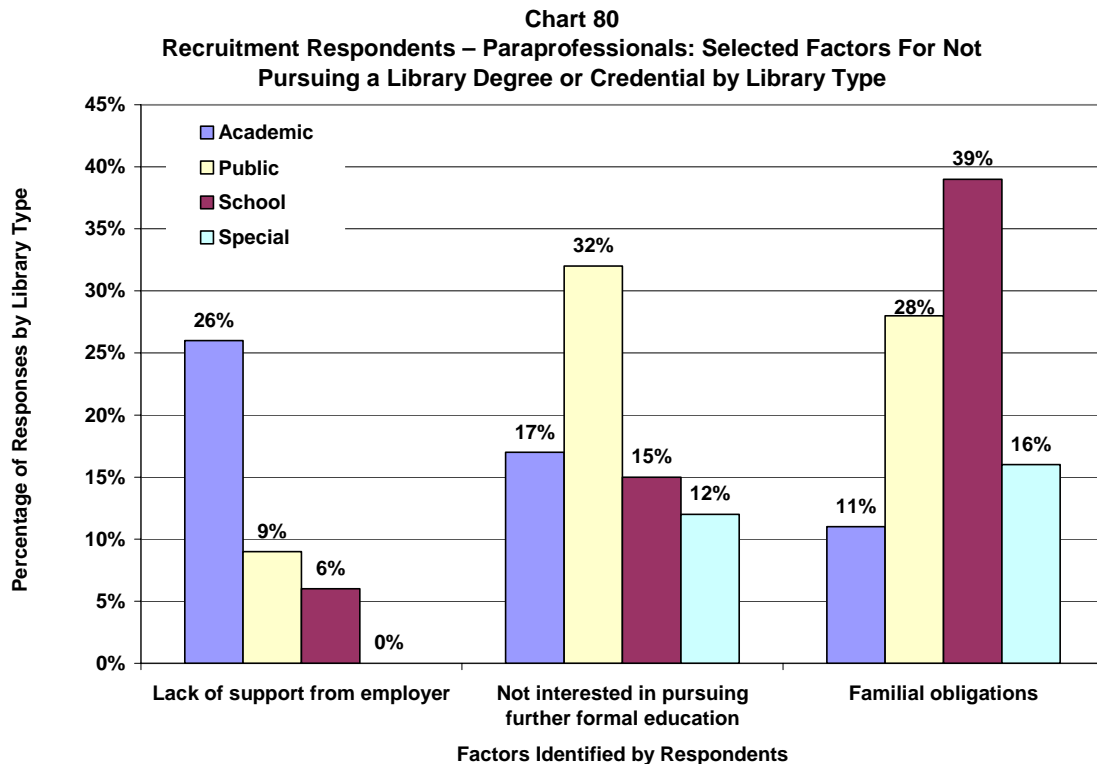


Reasons for Not Pursuing a Library Degree or Credential by Library Type

Paraprofessionals' reasons for not pursuing a library science degree or credential varied based on the type of library in which they work. Paraprofessional respondents working in academic libraries were more likely than others to cite lack of employer support (26%) as a reason for not pursuing a degree. Public library paraprofessionals were more likely to respond that they are not interested in further education (32%). Meanwhile, those working in school

“With the understanding that the funds for libraries are being cut I am pursuing other careers.”
– Paraprofessional
Public Library

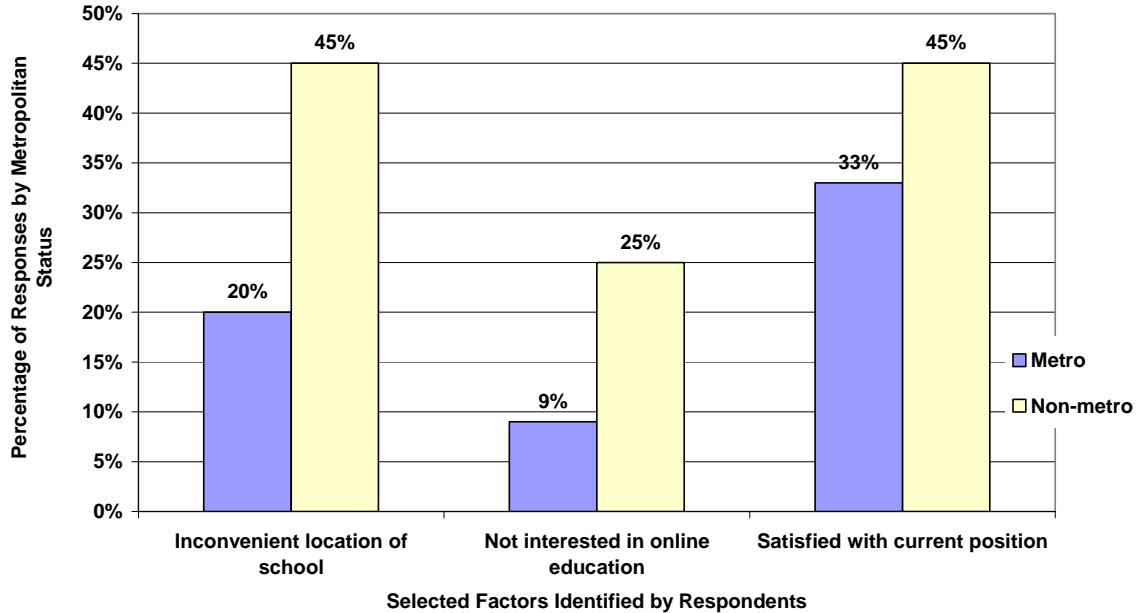
libraries are more likely than others to be deterred by familial obligations (39%).
(See Chart 80.)



Reasons for Not Pursuing a Library Degree or Credential by Metropolitan Status

Metropolitan status also tended to affect some reasons for not pursuing more education. Not surprisingly, respondents from non-metro areas were more likely to cite the inconvenience of the academic institution’s location. However, they are also more likely to display an aversion to taking online classes. Also, non-metro paraprofessionals were more likely to decline further education because they are satisfied with their current positions. This might be a consequence of metro libraries being more likely to require master’s degrees for the rank or title of “librarian,” whereas non-metro libraries often do not have the same requirement.
(See Chart 81.)

Chart 81
Recruitment Respondents – Paraprofessionals:
Selected Factors For Not Pursuing a Library Degree or Credential by
Metropolitan Status



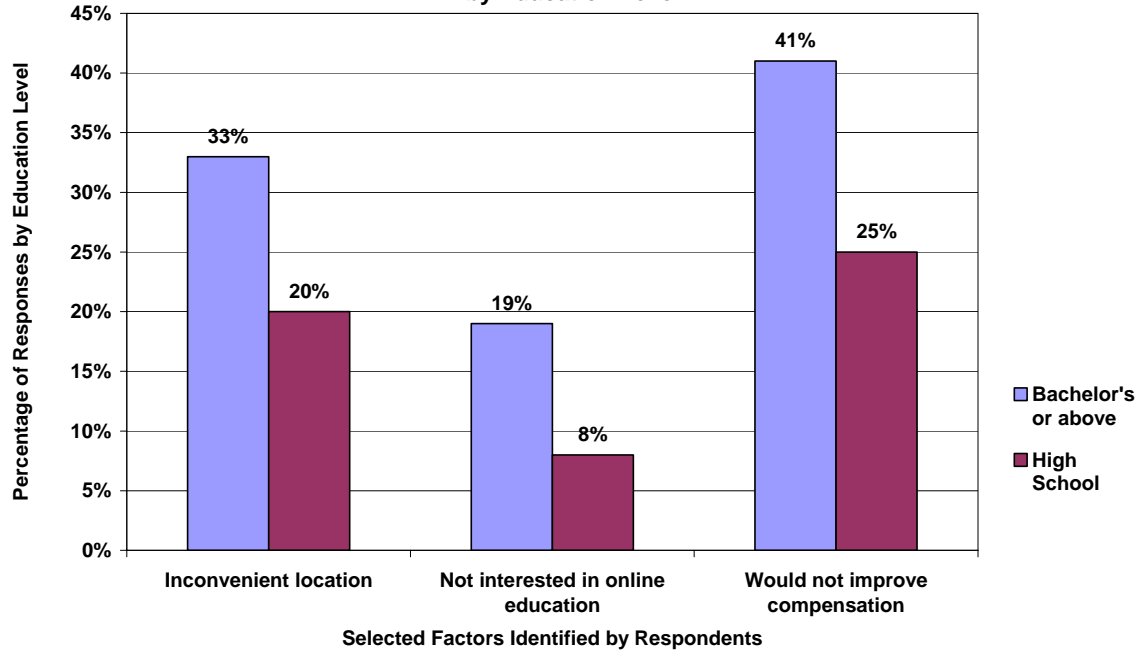
Reasons for Not Pursuing a Library Degree or Credential by Education Level

Current education level also affects some factors that deter paraprofessionals from pursuing further schooling. Paraprofessional respondents with a bachelor’s degree are more likely to be deterred by an inconvenient location of the school, the fact that they are not interested in online education, or the belief that a master’s degree will not improve their compensation. (See Chart 82.)

“Colorado does not offer high enough salaries to ask for an MLS.”
–Paraprofessional Public Library

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Chart 82
Recruitment Respondents – Paraprofessionals:
Selected Factors For Not Pursuing a Library Degree or Credential
by Education Level



Conclusion

In Colorado as throughout the nation, librarianship is being—or is about to be—transformed by a generational wave of retirements. The majority of these retirees have been in key leadership positions for 20 years or more, so their departures over at least the next five years will create dozens of openings for new library directors, department heads, association officers, and library educators and trainers. Many of these high-profile positions have not been vacant at all—or, at least, open to up-and-coming librarians—for decades. A percolation effect seems most likely. As library directorships and other senior positions in the field open due to retirements, those in the middle echelons are most likely to move up into them. That, in turn, will create vacancies at middle management levels for librarians awaiting such opportunities.

Decision-makers for libraries must examine the patterns that can be discerned in these retirements for lessons that will help to inform their efforts to shape the future of the profession in this state through recruiting and retention efforts. It is not just a matter of how to recruit new librarians or how to retain incumbents generally; it is a matter of re-populating the state's library leadership.

This study surveyed current librarians, paraprofessionals, and library and information science (LIS) students. Librarians and paraprofessionals planning to retire within the next five years were asked, among other things, to report that fact and to identify factors influencing their decision to retire. Incumbent paraprofessionals and current LIS students were asked questions related to recruitment, such as what factors most encourage or discourage them from choosing librarianship as a profession. Incumbent librarians and paraprofessionals were asked questions about how to retain them in the field and, if they are considering leaving the field, what other fields appear attractive to

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them and why. While the survey generated a lot of data, it did not capture all of the data one might wish to have to take stock of these issues. For instance, data was not captured from librarians who have already retired or about positions that may be vacant and whose fates may not yet be determined. Still, the answers to the questions asked shed considerable light on the status of librarianship in Colorado.

Retirements over the next five years are likely to be numerous, but they will not be restricted to those reaching the traditional retirement age of 65. Neither are retirements likely to be evenly distributed among library types, geographic areas, or specialties. Those who are retiring also tend to be among the state's most active library leaders—people who preside over professional organizations, chair committees, make presentations, and write books and articles. This wave of librarian retirements that has already begun—and that will continue through at least the next five years—will affect some parts of the profession more than others, and the imbalances apt to result will require thoughtful care and attention to be set right. As decision-makers for libraries seek to replace retiring librarians, they will face issues related both to recruiting new people into librarianship and to retaining librarians who are not retiring, but who might be tempted to leave the profession for other reasons.

Thus, the relationship between these three R's—retirement, recruitment, and retention—is one that calls for a comprehensive statewide strategy to ensure that users of libraries of all types in all parts of the state receive equitable, high-quality services from credentialed librarians. Specific recommendations for action by various key players in the state's library leadership, which are justified by the findings of this study, are offered.

Retirement

Colorado librarians are retiring at a dramatic rate. To address the high incidence of retirements during the next five years, decision-makers for libraries will need to know which types of librarians are retiring, and why they are retiring, what their loss means for the professional community as well as the positions they are vacating, and where to look for their successors.

How many librarians are retiring?

More than 20 percent (22%) of responding Colorado librarians expect to retire within the next five years. Of all responding school librarians, almost half (47%) indicate plans to retire within five years—more than twice the percentage for special librarians, more than three times the percentage for public librarians, and almost five times the percentage for academic librarians. This is likely explained by the fact that the percentage of school librarian respondents age 55 or over was also dramatically higher than for other types of librarians.

Who are these retirees?

Many librarians are not waiting until age 65 to retire. Almost 30 percent of those who expect to retire within the next five years are ages 45 to 54. These retirees will take with them enormous amounts of experience. Nearly nine out of ten responding librarians who are retirement candidates have more than 10 years of library experience, and three out of five have more than 20 years of experience.

How have librarian retirements been affected by the recent economic downturn?

The recent economic downturn has affected many librarians' retirement plans. Of responding prospective retirees from librarian positions, one out of five now plans to retire later than originally planned. Another one out of five now plans to retire earlier.

What human capital is being lost to retirement?

Retiring librarians will also take with them substantial administrative skills. Of responding prospective retirees, three out of four are supervisors, two out of five are generalists, and one out of five is an administrator. In addition to losing leadership skills in the workplace, librarianship is also losing such skills in the professional community. Four out of five retiring librarians who responded to this survey have served in one or more leadership roles in the profession, compared with only about half of all responding library workers. Considering what we know about current LIS students, librarian retirements may lead to shortages in the following areas: school librarianship, information technology, cataloging, reference, and digital resources.

What is happening to retirees and their jobs?

Retiring librarians who participated in this study are not optimistic about the future of their positions. Many expect their jobs to be downgraded, combined with other jobs, or outright eliminated. Of responding prospective retirees, almost one out of five expects their job to be combined with another or eliminated. Almost one out of five expects to be succeeded by someone with less education. Fortunately, these retirees are not abandoning the profession altogether. More than half of them plan to continue working part-time or on-call. More than two out of five also plan to volunteer in libraries.

Where do we find their replacements?

To find some of the likeliest candidates to fill librarian vacancies due to retirement, we do not need to look very far. Four out of five retiring librarians said they worked or volunteered in a library or school before becoming librarians. This suggests that current paraprofessionals and volunteers may be fertile ground for recruitment into librarianship.

Retention

Because of the high number of librarian retirements, it will not be enough to recruit more people into the profession. Decision-makers must also formulate policies, develop workplace environments, and structure librarians' jobs in ways that encourage those already in the profession not to abandon it, whether to early retirement or to another profession that they perceive to be more lucrative or fulfilling.

What do incumbent librarians identify as factors that make librarianship most attractive or most discourage the choice of a library career?

Echoing LIS students and paraprofessionals, incumbent librarians identify low financial compensation (78%) and misconceptions about the field (58%) as leading factors discouraging recruitment of new librarians. Interestingly, however, they believe that service to others (57%) and intellectual challenge (53%) outrank love of books or reading (45%) as factors that make librarianship an attractive career option.

What are incumbent librarians doing on the job? To what other fields are those leaving librarianship going?

The traditional conception of libraries as places to obtain books appears to be most prevalent among public librarians. Academic, school, and special librarians who replied to this survey are more likely to specialize in digital resources than their public librarian counterparts and are, therefore, less book-focused.

Those who are tempted to leave librarianship do not venture far. Academic librarians are most likely to move to other higher education jobs. School librarians reported being most likely to move to other K-12 education jobs. Special librarians say they are likeliest to move to either academia or business. The lone exception is public librarians, who say they are most likely to move to jobs in the business world.

What does the future of librarianship—and their own careers—look like to incumbent librarians?

Librarians, especially beyond the state's major cities and their suburbs, are not optimistic about the profession's ability to maintain adequate educational requirements for librarian positions. Librarians responding from non-metro areas are almost four times more likely than their metro counterparts to expect that their successors will have less education. This concern is particularly acute in school libraries. Responding school librarians are five times more likely than other librarian types to expect that their successors will have less education.

Worst of all, Eastern Plains librarians feel that the very existence of their positions will be threatened when they leave their jobs. Respondents from this region are most likely to expect that their jobs may be eliminated altogether.

Public, school, and special librarians tend to have stronger professional and/or family ties to Colorado. Academic librarians report expecting that they will have to be more mobile to advance professionally. Most likely, this is because of the limited number of colleges and universities in Colorado and increasingly limited funding for higher education. Responding librarians from this sector are least likely to limit themselves to jobs in Colorado, when compared to other librarian types.

Who is staying in librarianship and why? Who is not?

Many librarians responding from Colorado's high country find the location of their jobs an incentive to stay at their library. Librarians in the Mountains/Western Slope region are more likely than their counterparts from other regions to identify their location as a reason for remaining in their current organization.

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Older librarians stay in their jobs, not because they are ambitious, but rather because they enjoy their work and rely on the fringe benefits that accompany their salaries. With age, librarian respondents choose to remain in their current organizations less because of perceived advancement opportunities, and more because of the variety of work and the adequacy of benefits.

For academic librarian respondents, and, to a lesser extent, their special librarian counterparts, collegiality in the workplace was perceived as a very important reason to remain with their current organizations. Collegiality was less important to most participants from public and school libraries—particularly in non-metropolitan areas—possibly because they are much less likely to work with other librarians.

Librarians in their 30s and early '40s are sometimes tempted away from the library profession by the appeal of other fields. Librarian respondents ages 30 to 44 are the most likely of all age groups (16% vs. 5-9%) to consider leaving librarianship.

Recruitment

In view of the high number of retiring librarians, decision-makers need to be aware of the foreseeable supply to meet a growing demand for librarians. They also need to be prepared to position librarianship as a profession vis-à-vis other information and education-related professions with which we compete for the “best and brightest.” Achieving that end will depend on the extent to which they understand the factors that encourage and discourage individuals from choosing a career in librarianship. In particular, it will depend on understanding why more of those already working in libraries do not opt to become credentialed librarians.

Who is pursuing library education and where?

The ages of LIS students involved in this study suggest that librarianship is often a second career. Of responding students, four out of five are ages 30 to 54. Only 16 percent are under age 30. LIS students tend to be attracted to the field after gaining some actual work experience in a library setting. Three out of four students who replied to this survey have at least some library work experience. A quarter of them have more than five years of library experience.

Prospective librarians are earning graduate degrees via a variety of options. Over half of responding students are enrolled at the University of Denver, attending the only MLIS program based at a Colorado university. In addition, one out of five participates in the Kansas-based Emporia in the Rockies extension program, one out of seven participates in an out-of-state program online, and one out of 12 is enrolled at either the University of Colorado, Denver or the University of Northern Colorado programs for school librarians. In addition to LIS students in these school-specific programs, some prospective school librarians may be pursuing master's degrees in library and information science from the University of Denver, Emporia in the Rockies, or another program based outside Colorado.

With which fields does library and information science compete?

Library and information science competes most frequently for prospective recruits with other professions that connect inquiring minds with information and help them to apply that information in their own lives or the lives of others. Like incumbent librarians, LIS students who returned this survey are most tempted away from librarianship by education—K-12 or higher—computer technology and business.

What encourages and discourages students and paraprofessionals to choose a career in librarianship?

Generally, students and paraprofessionals agree that a love of books and reading is the factor that most encourages choosing a career in librarianship (61% and 65%, respectively). For students, second and third place go to intellectual challenge (46%) and service to others (42%). For paraprofessionals, their order is reversed: service to others (56%) and intellectual challenge (39%). Students and paraprofessionals agree, rather resoundingly, that the factor they believe most discourages choosing a library career is low financial compensation (81% and 63%, respectively). They also agree on a distant second: misconceptions about librarianship (48% and 39%, respectively).

Surprisingly, paraprofessionals responding from the Mountains/Western Slope region are more likely to consider pursuing library degrees than their Front Range counterparts. Paraprofessionals responding from the Eastern Plains are least likely to consider pursuing a library degree. These inclinations are probably based on accurate assessments of the library job markets in different regions of the state. For instance, many public libraries in the Mountains/Western Slope region are library districts, whose budgets can or will afford the ability to create more librarian jobs. But, many public libraries on the Eastern Plains may not be able to afford credentialed librarian salaries.

Paraprofessional respondents are most encouraged to pursue librarianship if financial aid is available, and if several inter-related logistical issues are addressed. These issues include: class location and schedule, availability of online classes, and flexible work schedule.

How do student expectations about school librarianship differ from reality?

Those planning to become school librarians may not have realistic expectations about the nature of the work their jobs will require. Only 8 percent of LIS students

who said they planned to be school librarians expect to work with digital resources; but, 39 percent of incumbent school librarians claim this specialty.

There is a market for graduate library education beyond the state's few major metropolitan areas. Three out of four non-metro paraprofessionals report that access to online courses would encourage them to pursue LIS degrees or other credentials. Almost half of that group would be discouraged by inconveniently located educational institutions.

Why aren't more of those who already work in libraries pursuing library education?

Of paraprofessional study participants not considering pursuing LIS credentials, over half believe a degree is not necessary to do their job and more than two out of five feel constrained financially from academic pursuits. Public and school library workers, in particular, report feeling discouraged by concerns about family obligations. Responding academic library paraprofessionals are most discouraged by a perceived lack of employer support. Reflecting the concern of all library workers that librarianship is not a well-paid profession, a third of all paraprofessionals do not believe a degree would improve their compensation.

Recommendations for Action

Colorado State Library/Colorado Library Consortium

The Colorado State Library (CSL), the Colorado Library Advisory Board (CoLAB), and the Colorado Library Consortium (CLiC) have important roles to play in advocating for credentialed librarian positions, encouraging local libraries to develop policies and practices that support human resources development, and identifying and cultivating new library leaders. They should:

- Encourage decision-makers for all types of libraries in non-metro areas, especially school libraries, to establish or maintain professional librarian positions.

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- Provide human resources support (writing job descriptions, announcing positions, recruiting applicants, interviewing, selecting, and orienting), to decision-makers for one-person libraries.
- Educate decision-makers about the importance of establishing and maintaining professional librarians as directors and managers of libraries. Focus special attention on schools and Eastern Plains libraries that are in greatest jeopardy of losing professional librarian positions.
- Develop new library leaders through professional development activities, grants and scholarships, mentoring programs, etc.

Library Professional Organizations

Library professional organizations—including the Colorado Association of Libraries (CAL), the Rocky Mountain Chapter of the Special Libraries Association and other state and regional library associations and networks—can do much to affect the overall health of the library industry, and thus the library job market in the state. They can:

- Promote legislative action, particularly funding, that improves library services by securing the future of librarianship as a profession in the state's schools, colleges and universities, and communities.
- Produce conferences, workshops, and publications that better equip public decision-makers, library administrators, and current and prospective librarians as employers and employees.
- Confer awards on individuals and organizations that contribute to the public's understanding of librarianship, promote the choice of librarianship as a profession, and exemplify Colorado librarianship.

Library Decision-Makers

A variety of groups play important decision-making roles for libraries and librarians. Such groups include: school boards, public library trustees, higher education regents, local government officials, and agency and corporate

executives. They, too, can do much to promote the recruitment and retention of the state's next generation of librarians and library community leaders. These groups should:

- Make it a matter of policy to recruit, hire, and support professional librarians as directors and managers of libraries. Resist fiscal and other pressures to downgrade educational requirements or to eliminate or combine positions. Encourage academic librarians, in particular, to remain in Colorado.
- Provide incentives for employees who are LIS students to pursue graduate course work, such as administrative leave to attend classes, financial aid, and assurance of professional positions and higher compensation after completing degrees.
- Provide salaries, benefits, and advancement opportunities, sufficient to encourage veteran employees to remain in the organization. Provide career ladders sufficient to retain the best and brightest.
- Endorse policies and practices that encourage accomplished librarians to serve as leaders in the state and national library communities. For example, reimburse employees for costs of participating in, and attending conferences of, professional organizations.

Library Educators

Library educators at the University of Denver and Emporia in the Rockies, their counterparts for school librarianship at the University of Colorado, Denver and the University of Northern Colorado, and other library education programs active in the state should:

- Promote librarianship as a career choice to younger adults.
- Recruit LIS students from the ranks of library paraprofessionals.
- Generate scholarship support for LIS students.
- Make library education available statewide via both extension and online classes. Provide extension courses at locations convenient to those who reside outside metropolitan areas, and, especially beyond the Front Range.

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- Respect different learning styles (e.g., older vs. younger adults).
- Produce graduates who have the management skills required by leadership roles in the library community.
- Produce graduates, especially for school librarianship, who have required expertise about information technology and digital resources.
- Recruit retired library leaders to serve on LIS program boards and as adjunct instructors, guest speakers, and mentors to students.
- Provide opportunities for student associations to develop and practice leadership skills required by the library community.
- Develop strong LIS collections (books, journals, magazines, and databases) to support students, faculty, graduates, and other practitioners.

Individual Libraries

Other stakeholders can do much to foster the replacement of retiring librarians; but, ultimately, directors and other managers at individual libraries have the most influential role to play. They can and should:

- Create and maintain professional librarian positions. Propose requiring appropriate credentials where they do not currently exist. Resist fiscal and other pressures to combine or eliminate positions.
- Counsel employees, as appropriate, about career plans, including their leadership potential, advancement opportunities, retirement planning, and post-retirement options.
- Support employees who are LIS students by providing flexible work schedules and encouraging enrollment in job-related courses.
- Implement policies and practices that encourage veteran employees to remain in the organization based on their individual needs (e.g., a collegial work environment, variety of work).
- Encourage all employees to join and participate in professional organizations.
- Provide all employees ready access to professional literature.
- Cultivate newer librarians for leadership roles in the profession.

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- Recruit the best of paraprofessionals and volunteers to pursue LIS degrees or credentials while continuing to work in the library. (For school libraries, this includes recruiting the best teachers to become school librarians.)
- Don't depend on retirees as part-time workers, on-call workers, and volunteers. While many retirees wish to fill these roles in the short-term, they are not a long-term alternative to recruiting and retaining credentialed librarians.
- Don't assume that staff will retire at age 65. Many are choosing to retire earlier, and some wish to retire later.

Librarians and Library Job Seekers

People who are just choosing to become librarians and who are actively seeking employment as librarians can take several lessons from the findings of this study.

They can and should:

- Pursue appropriate graduate education. For professional librarians, the generally accepted credential is a master's degree from a library and information science program accredited by the American Library Association. While most school librarians have LIS master's degrees, the key credential for them is a school library endorsement, in addition to teacher certification. For advancement in an academic library, a second master's degree or a doctorate is often required or strongly preferred. Library educators are generally expected to have doctorates in an appropriate field, and many directors of metropolitan academic and public libraries also have such degrees.
- Communicate with their employers about job-related needs. Ask for salary raises, as appropriate, desired changes to benefits, and advancement and professional development opportunities.
- Join and participate actively in professional organizations. Being an active part of such organizations contributes dramatically to an individual's personal professional network—a resource that can be very important when seeking advancement.

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- Volunteer for leadership roles. As more and more librarians retire, these positions will become vacant; some for the first time in years. These roles are excellent opportunities to become more visible in the field statewide.
- Pursue continuing education to stay current in the field. The library business is constantly coping with change. What you learn in graduate school will not carry you through an entire career. Keeping pace with technological developments, in particular, is very important.
- Read appropriate professional literature. In addition to pursuing continuing education, be a lifelong professional learner by keeping abreast of developments in librarianship and in your specialty area.

Dealing with “the three R’s” of Colorado librarianship will require action on the part of all of these important players. Each has something to contribute to Colorado librarianship not only surviving, but thriving, in the future.

Appendix A



It's All About You! A Survey of Colorado Library Personnel

This survey is for all Colorado library personnel and information professionals, from directors and administrators to librarians and paraprofessionals to clerks and pages. The study includes personnel in all types of libraries – academic, public, school, and special – as well as information professionals in non-library settings. Tell us about you, your job, and your career. After all, IT'S ALL ABOUT YOU!

Privacy Policy: We do not collect personal information about you or your computer. In addition, individual level data will be kept confidential. Data will be reported in the aggregate only and will not reflect any individual's responses.

1. In which Colorado county do you reside? Choose one from the drop-down box.

(Drop-down box contained choices of "Outside Colorado" and each Colorado county name. Response required.)

2. What is your gender?

- Female
- Male

3. What is your age? _____

4. To what racial/ethnic group(s) do you belong? Mark all that apply.

- American Indian/Alaskan Native
- Asian/Pacific Islander
- Black/African-American
- Hispanic/Latino
- White/Caucasian
- Other (please specify)

Appendix A:
Questionnaire

5. In what type of library or other organization are you currently employed? Mark one.

- Private industry library
- College/university library
- Government agency library
- Independent information professional
- Institutional library
- Law library
- Medical library
- Public library
- School library
- Not applicable – retired
- Not applicable – unemployed
- Non-library setting/other (please specify)

6. How many years have you been employed in a library or related organization? Mark one.

- None
- 1-5
- 6-10
- 11-20
- Over 20

7. What is your highest level of education? Mark one.

- Doctorate or professional degree
- Master's degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Associate's degree
- High school diploma
- Less than high school diploma

8. Do you have any of the following credentials? Mark all that apply.

- ALA-accredited master's degree
- NCATE-accredited master's degree
- Other master's degree in library/information science
- Master's degree in educational media
- Library media endorsement
- None of the above

Appendix A:
Questionnaire

9. Please check all that apply:

- I worked in a library before pursuing a master of library and information science/arts degree or library media endorsement.
- I worked in a K-12 school (outside the library) before pursuing master of library and information science/arts degree or a library media endorsement.
- I volunteered in a library before pursuing a master of library and information science/arts degree or library media endorsement.
- None of the above

10. In which of the following professional leadership roles have you served during the past five years? Mark all that apply.

- National, regional, or state library association officer
- Library association committee chair or member
- Federal library agency committee member
- State library committee member
- Regional library system board or committee member
- Author of a book or article related to libraries or librarianship
- Reviewer of books or other resources for librarians
- Presenter of library conference sessions or workshops
- Participant in legislative day or other lobbying activities on behalf of libraries
- Grant proposal reader and/or writer
- Teacher or trainer in the library/information science field
- Mentor to a library/information science school student
- None of the above
- Other (please specify)

11. In your view, which of the following factors contribute most to making librarianship an attractive profession? Choose up to three.

- Love of books or reading
- Opportunities for advancement
- Physical environment of libraries
- Service to others
- Wanting a change of profession
- Working with interesting people
- Good librarian as a role model
- Teaching or training others
- Research process
- Financial compensation
- Variety of work experiences

Appendix A:
Questionnaire

- Using technology
- Intellectual challenge
- Ethic or culture of the profession
- Organizing information
- Availability of funding for training/education
- Other (please specify)

12. In your opinion, which of the following factors most discourage someone from pursuing a career in librarianship? Choose up to three.

- Negative stereotypes of librarians
- High-tech nature of libraries
- Misconceptions about what librarians do
- Limited job opportunities
- Routine nature of many library tasks
- Low financial compensation
- Perception that it is a female-dominated profession
- Perceived obsolescence of libraries in a high-tech world
- Demands of working with the public
- Insufficient ethnic/racial diversity
- Work not appealing
- Educational requirements
- Low prestige
- Lack of opportunities for advancement
- Other (please specify)

13. How has the current downturn in the economy changed your career plans?
Mark all that apply.

You decided to...

- Leave the library field
- Retire earlier
- Retire later
- Retrain for a different library specialty
- Return to school for library degree or media endorsement
- Return to school for a non-library degree
- Stay in current library job
- Seek another library job
- No change of plans
- Other (please specify)

Appendix A:
Questionnaire

14. Which, if any, of the following has happened to you in the last 12 months? Mark all that apply.

- Lost a library job
- Took a different library job for better pay
- Took a different library job for worse pay
- Took an additional job (including consulting)
- Salary or benefits for current job frozen or cut
- Increased or changed duties in current job
- Changed work schedule
- Work hours reduced
- Staff cuts at current job
- None of the above

15. What is your current career status? Select one of the following.

- I plan to retire within the next five years.
- I have a master's degree in library and information science, and do not plan to retire within the next five years.
- I have a school library media endorsement, and do not plan to retire within the next five years.
- I have a graduate degree in a field other than librarianship, and do not plan to retire in the next five years.
- I am currently pursuing a master's degree in library and information science or a school library media endorsement.
- I do not have a master's degree in library and information science or a school library media endorsement.

Each respondent was automatically forwarded to one the four sections (i.e., retirement, retention, recruitment/LIS students, or recruitment/paraprofessionals) of the survey based on their response to question 15.

Retirement

Section for respondents who indicated "I plan to retire in the next five years" on Question 15.

16. In your current position, what kind of supervision do you provide, if any? Mark all that apply.

- Supervise paid staff with master's degree or higher
- Supervise paid staff with bachelor's degree or less
- Supervise volunteers and/or other unpaid workers
- Do not supervise anybody

Appendix A:
Questionnaire

17. In your current position, which of the following areas best describes your primary responsibilities? Mark one.

- Generalist (i.e., lone librarian or one of small staff)
- Administration
- Public services
- Technical services
- Other (please specify)

18. In your current position, do your primary responsibilities fall in any of the following selected areas? Mark all that apply.

- Archivist/preservation
- Cataloging
- Digital/electronic resources
- Information technology (IT)
- Knowledge management (special libraries only)
- Library education
- Reference services
- School library/media center
- Youth services (children and/or young adults in public libraries only)
- None of the above
- Other (please specify)

19. When you retire, what do you expect to happen to your position? Mark one.

- Refill position with higher minimum education requirements
- Refill position with similar minimum education requirements
- Refill position with lower minimum education requirements
- Reorganize or combine this position with another position
- Eliminate this position
- Don't know

Appendix A:
Questionnaire

20. How important is each of the following factors in making your decision about when to retire? Mark one for each factor.

	Not at all	Not very	Somewhat	Very	Critical
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Career change	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
General economic conditions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health benefits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Job burnout	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personal finances	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personal or family member's health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Relocation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Retirement incentives	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Salary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spouse's retirement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

21. Do you plan to remain involved with the library field after retiring?

- Yes (Go to Question 22.)
- No (Go to next page.)

22. If Yes, how would you like or expect to remain involved? Mark all that apply.

- Active in professional organization
- Serve on library boards or committees
- Teach class(es) for a library education program
- Mentoring
- Volunteer at a library
- Work as a consultant
- Work part-time or on-call as a librarian
- Write for and/or present to a librarian audience
- Other (please specify)

Respondents to this section now automatically jump to Question 41 to finish survey.

Retention

Section for respondents who indicated on Question 15 one of the following:

1. "I have a master's degree in library and information science, and do not plan to retire within the next five years." OR
2. "I have a school library media endorsement, and do not plan to retire within the next five years." OR
3. "I have a graduate degree in a field other than librarianship, and do not plan to retire in the next five years."

23. In your current position, what kind of supervision do you provide, if any? Mark all that apply.

- Supervise paid staff with master's degree or higher
- Supervise paid staff with bachelor's degree or less
- Supervise volunteers and/or other unpaid workers
- Do not supervise anybody

24. In your current position, which of the following areas best describes your primary responsibilities? Mark one.

- Generalist (i.e., lone librarian or one of small staff)
- Administration
- Public services
- Technical services
- Other (please specify)

25. In your current position, do your primary responsibilities fall in any of the following selected areas? Mark all that apply.

- Archivist/preservation
- Cataloging
- Digital/electronic resources
- Information technology (IT)
- Knowledge management (special libraries only)
- Library education
- Reference services
- School library/media center
- Youth services (children and/or young adults in public libraries only)
- None of the above
- Other (please specify)

Appendix A:
Questionnaire

26. If you left your current position, what do you expect would happen to it? Mark one.

- Refill position with higher minimum education requirements
- Refill position with similar minimum education requirements
- Refill position with lower minimum education requirements
- Reorganize or combine this position with another position
- Eliminate this position
- Don't know

27. Where do you expect to live and work? Mark one.

- I expect to stay in Colorado
- I plan to leave Colorado
- I expect to have to leave Colorado to find a better position
- I will leave Colorado for the right position
- I will leave Colorado if my family relocates

28. Which of the following factors influence you to remain in an organization? Mark up to three.

- Flexible scheduling
- Fair pay
- Location
- Collegial workplace
- Diversity in the workplace
- Variety in work
- Responsive management
- Professional development/continuing education/training opportunities
- Advancement opportunities
- Adequate benefits
- Appropriate workload
- Other (please specify)

29. Do you have any foreseeable plans to leave the library/information science field for a different field? Mark one.

- Yes
- No

30. If Yes, which of the following fields are you considering? Mark all that apply.

- Business
- Computer technology
- Education, Elementary or secondary
- Education, Higher
- Government/public policy
- Law
- Health sciences (medicine, nursing, etc.)
- Other (please specify)

Respondents to this section now automatically jump to Question 41 to finish survey.

Recruitment – LIS Students

Section for respondents who indicated on Question 15, “I am currently pursuing a master’s degree in library and information science or a school library media endorsement.”

31. In which library/information science/library media program are you currently enrolled? Mark one.

- University of Denver
- University of Colorado, Denver
- University of Northern Colorado
- Emporia State University
- Online program (out of state institution)
- Other (please specify)

32. In what type of library or other setting do you anticipate working? Mark one.

- Private sector library
- College/university library
- Government agency library
- Institutional library
- Law library
- Medical library
- Public library
- School library
- Non-library setting/other (please specify)

Appendix A:
Questionnaire

33. Do you anticipate working in any of the following selected areas? Mark all that apply.

- Archivist/preservation
- Cataloging
- Digital/electronic resources
- Information technology (IT)
- Knowledge management (special libraries only)
- Library education
- Reference services
- School library/media center
- Youth services (children and/or young adults in public libraries only)
- None of the above
- Other (please specify)

34. Where do you expect to live and work? Mark one.

- I expect to stay in Colorado
- I plan to leave Colorado
- I expect to have to leave Colorado to find a better position
- I will leave Colorado for the right position
- I will leave Colorado if my family relocates
- Other (please specify)

35. What, if any, other fields did you consider? Mark all that apply.

- Business
- Computer technology
- Education, Elementary or secondary
- Education, Higher
- Government/public policy
- Law
- Health sciences (medicine, nursing, etc.)
- None
- Other (please specify)

Appendix A:
Questionnaire

36. After you complete your professional education, what are your full-time salary expectations for your first position and whatever positions you are in five and ten years later? Select one for each time period.

(Note: The online version of the survey had drop-down boxes containing the salary ranges for each of the three time periods rather than a grid.)

	Full-Time Annual Salary after Graduation						
	Less than \$25,000	\$25,000- \$34,999	\$35,000- \$44,999	\$45,000- \$54,999	\$55,000- \$64,000	\$65,000- \$74,999	\$75,000 or more
Starting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 years from graduation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10 years from graduation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Respondents to this section now automatically jump Question 41 to finish survey.

Recruitment – Paraprofessionals

Section for respondents who indicated on Question 15, “I do not have a master’s degree in library and information science or a school library media endorsement.”

37. Are you considering pursuing a library/information science degree or library media endorsement? Mark one.

- Yes (continue to question 38)
- No (continue to question 39)

38. If Yes, which of the factors below would most encourage you to pursue a library/information science degree or library media endorsement? Mark up to three.

- Accessibility of online classes
- Convenient location of classes
- Convenient class schedule
- Availability of financial aid
- Flexible work schedule
- Other (please specify)

39. If No, why do you plan not to pursue a library/information science degree or library media endorsement? Mark all that apply.

- Do not want to go to school online
- Not interested in pursuing further formal education
- Lack of cooperation and/or support from employer (e.g. financial aid, scheduling, attitude)
- Satisfied with current position
- Time constraints
- Do not enjoy working in a library
- Financial constraints
- Family obligations
- Would not improve compensation
- Inconvenience of educational institution's location
- Not necessary in current position
- Do not plan to remain employed in a library setting
- Other (please specify)

40. What, if any, other fields are you considering? Mark all that apply.

- Business
- Computer technology
- Education, Elementary or secondary
- Education, Higher
- Government/public policy
- Law
- Health sciences (medicine, nursing, etc.)
- Not applicable
- Other (please specify)

Appendix A:
Questionnaire

Final two questions for all respondents.

41. Please take this opportunity to share your thoughts about the future of librarianship in Colorado. (OPTIONAL)

42. May we use your comments in the final report? (All respondents are anonymous.)

- Yes
- No

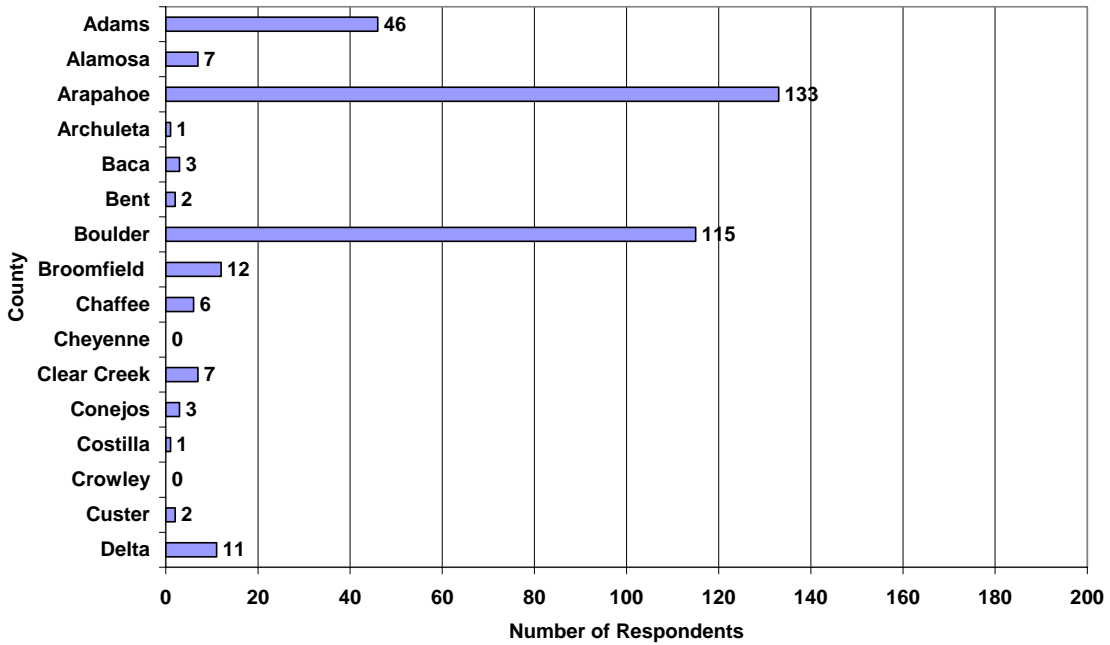
Thank you for participating in "It's All About You – A Survey of Colorado Library Personnel." Survey results will be available this spring on the LRS web page at <http://www.lrs.org/>

Sponsored by MADCAL, Colorado Association of Libraries Management and Administration Division www.cal-webs.org/mgmt.html

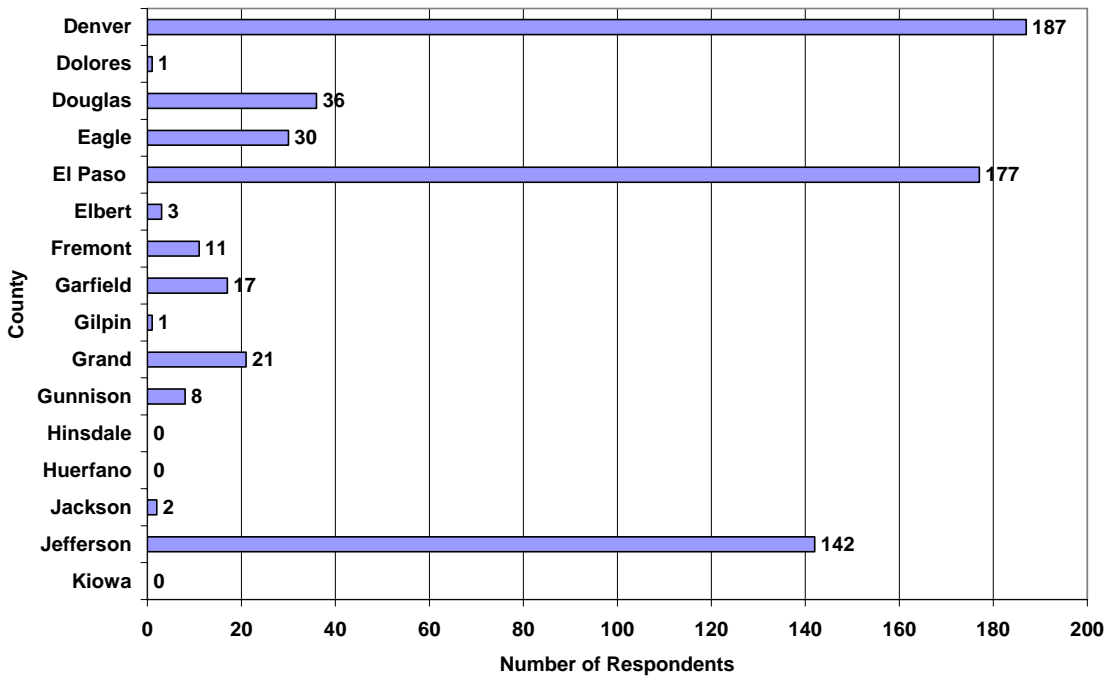
Appendix B

Appendix B:
Individual Question Responses

Question 1: In which Colorado county do you reside?
(Chart 1 of 4)

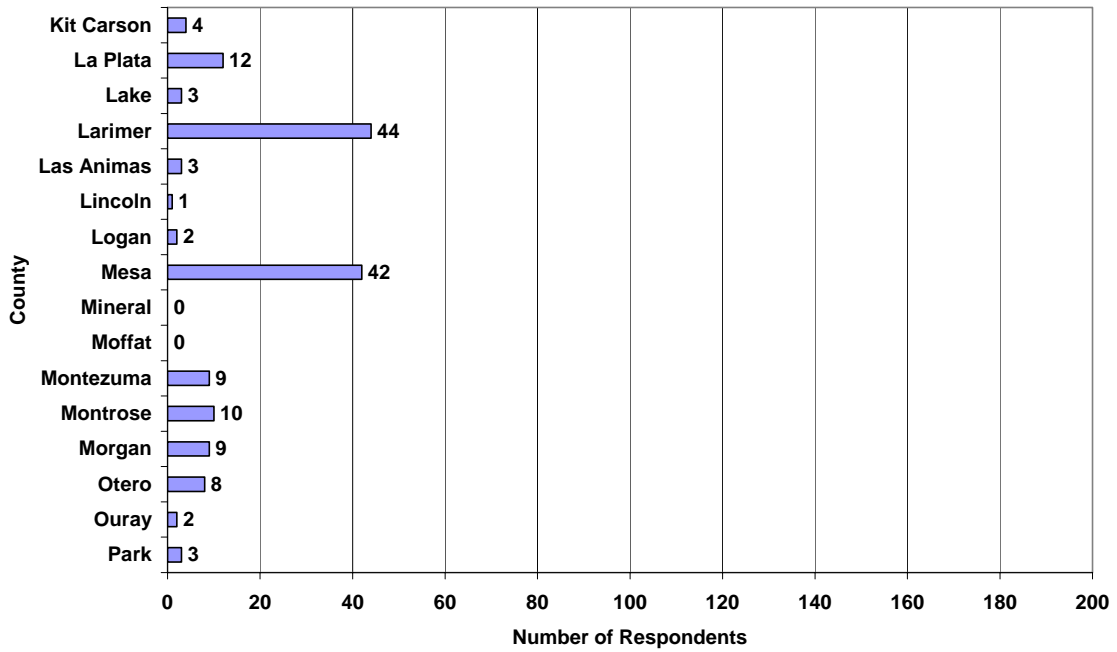


Question 1: In which Colorado county do you reside?
(Chart 2 of 4)

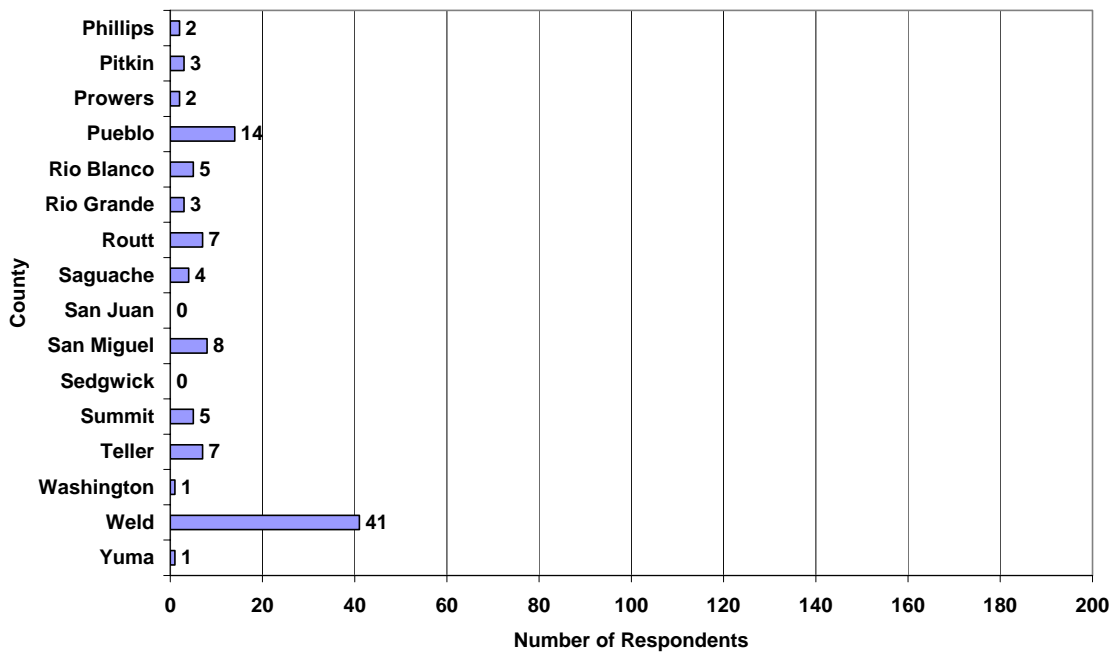


Appendix B:
Individual Question Responses

Question 1: In which Colorado county do you reside?
(Chart 3 of 4)

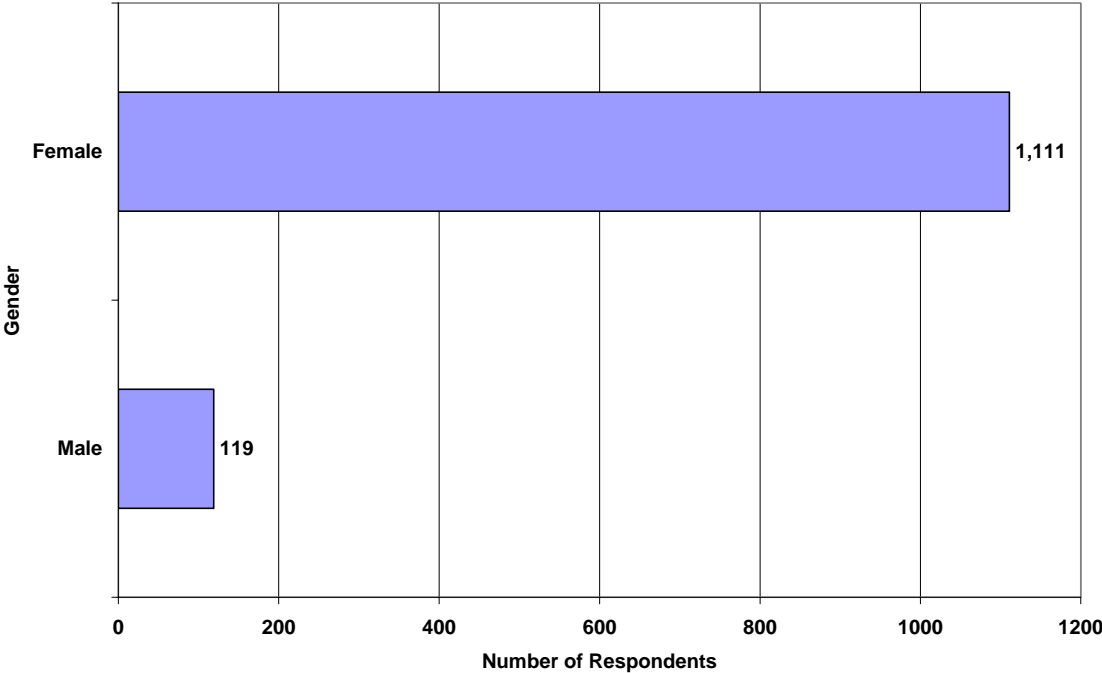


Question 1: In which Colorado county do you reside?
(Chart 4 of 4)

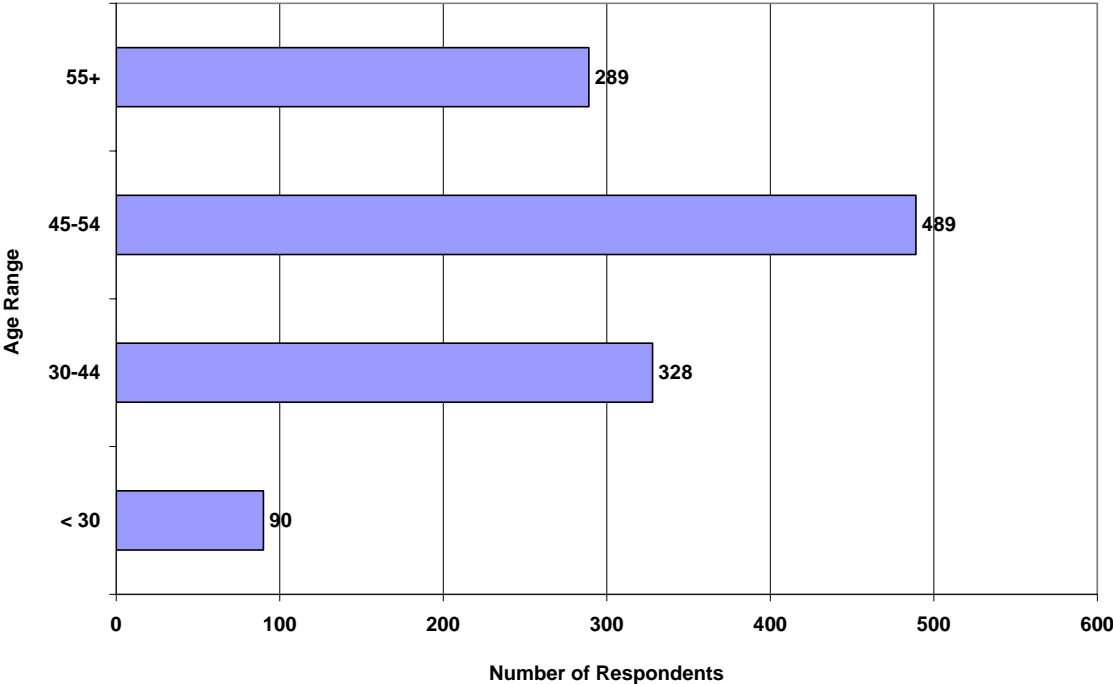


Appendix B:
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Question 2: What is your gender?

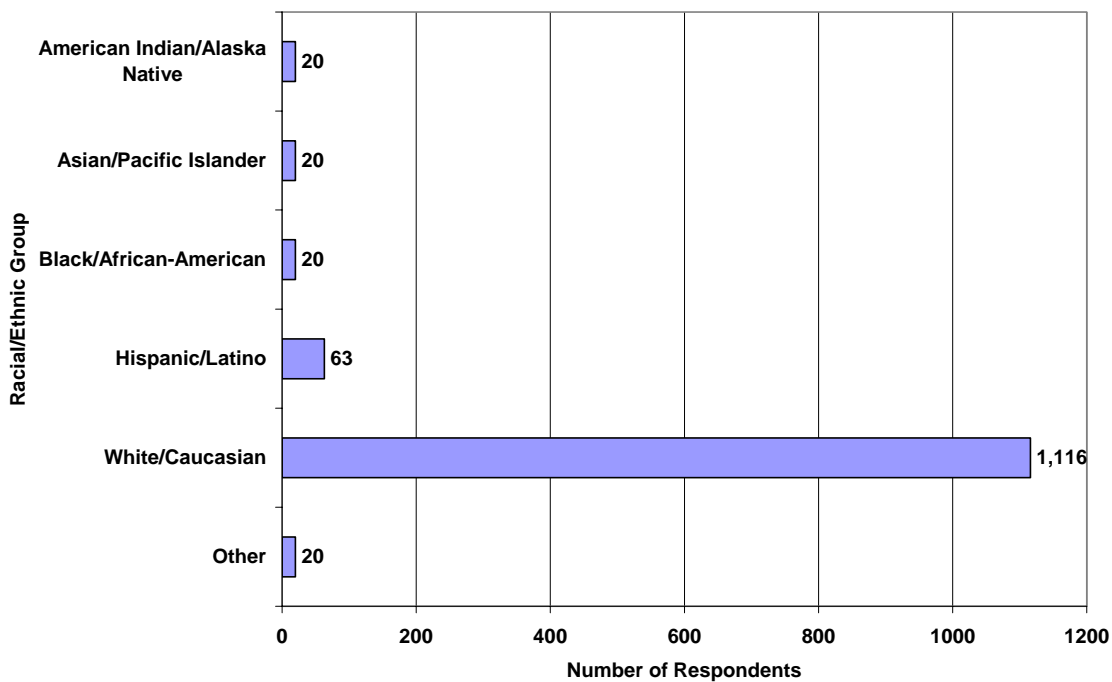


Question 3: What is your age?

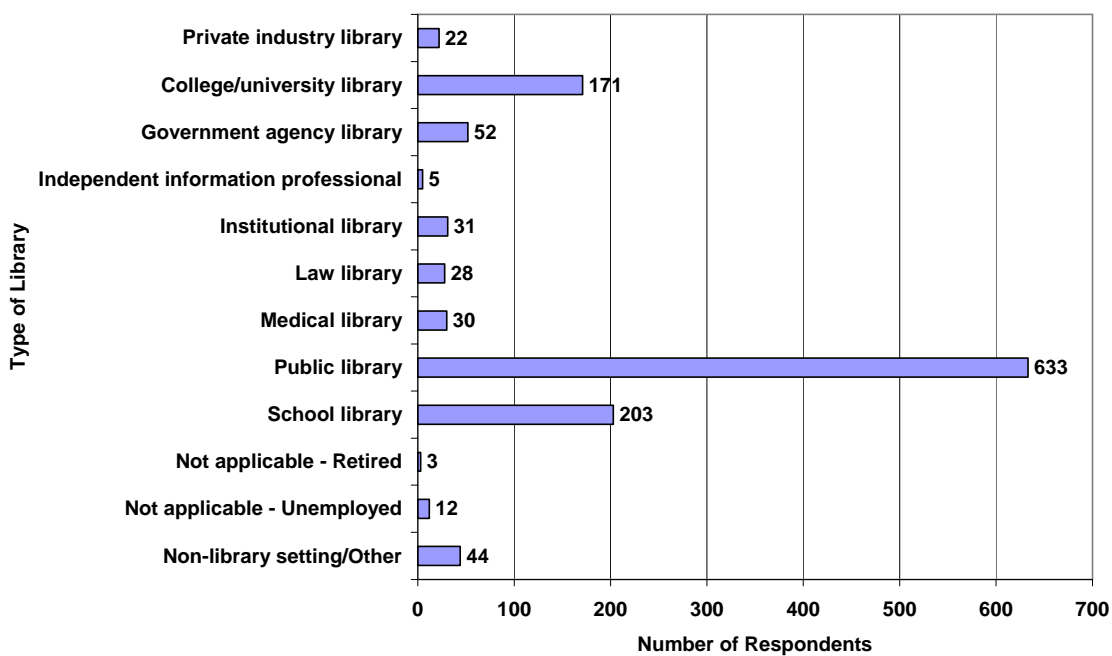


Appendix B:
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Question 4: To what racial/ethnic group(s) do you belong? Mark all that apply.

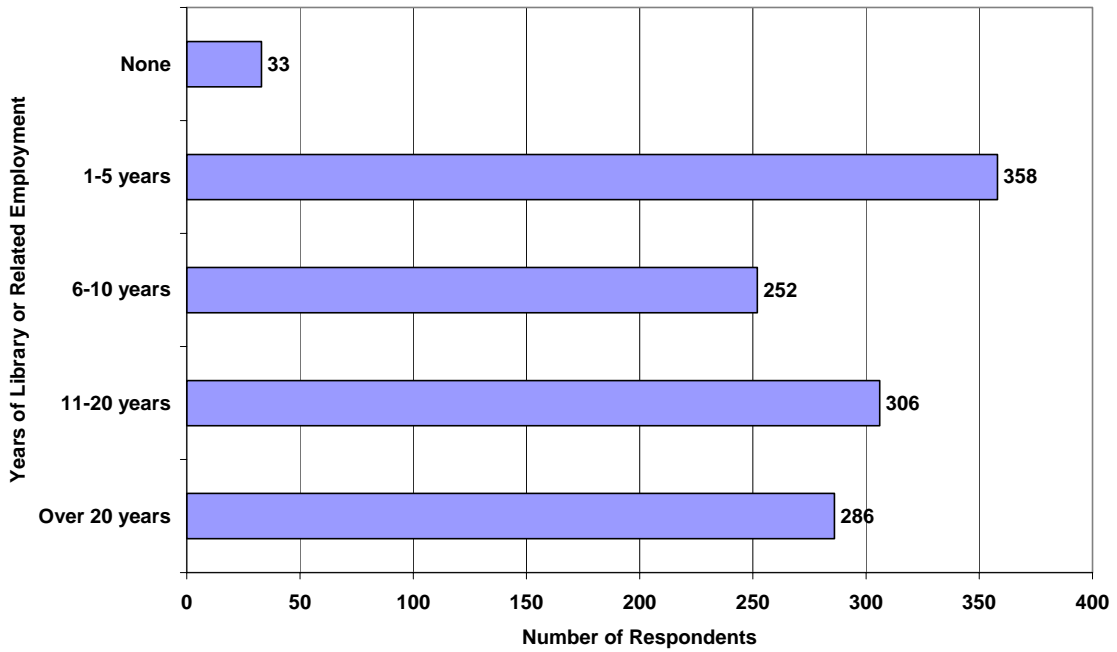


Question 5: In what type of library or other organization are you currently employed? Mark one.

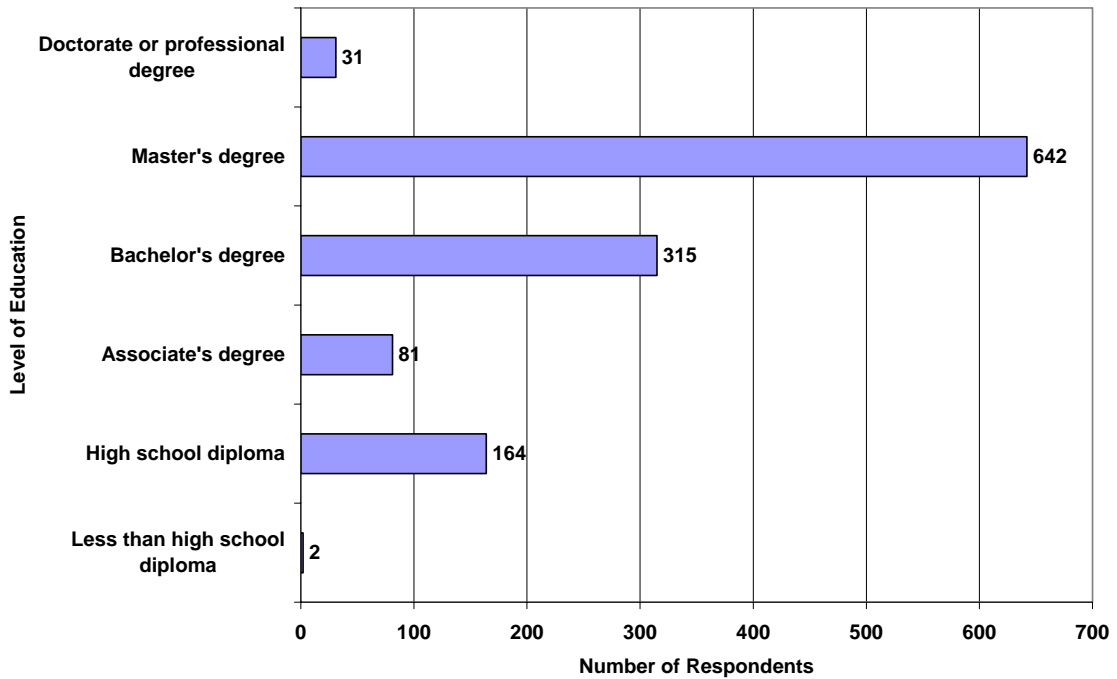


Appendix B:
Individual Question Responses

Question 6: How many years have you been employed in a library or related organization? Mark one.

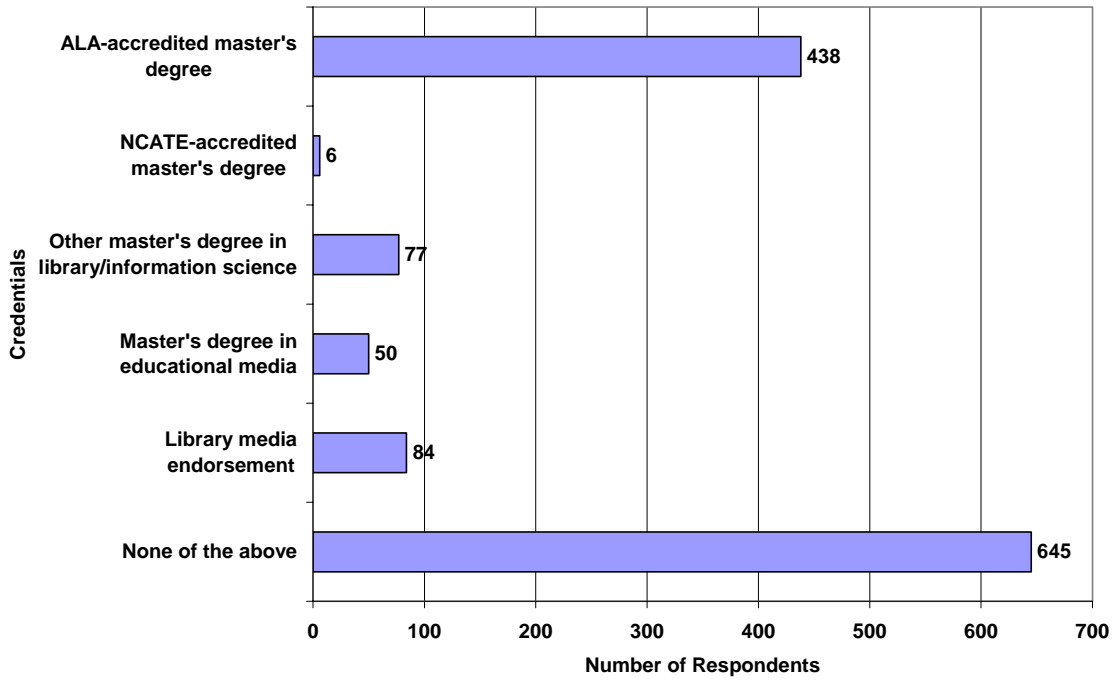


Question 7: What is your highest level of education? Mark one.

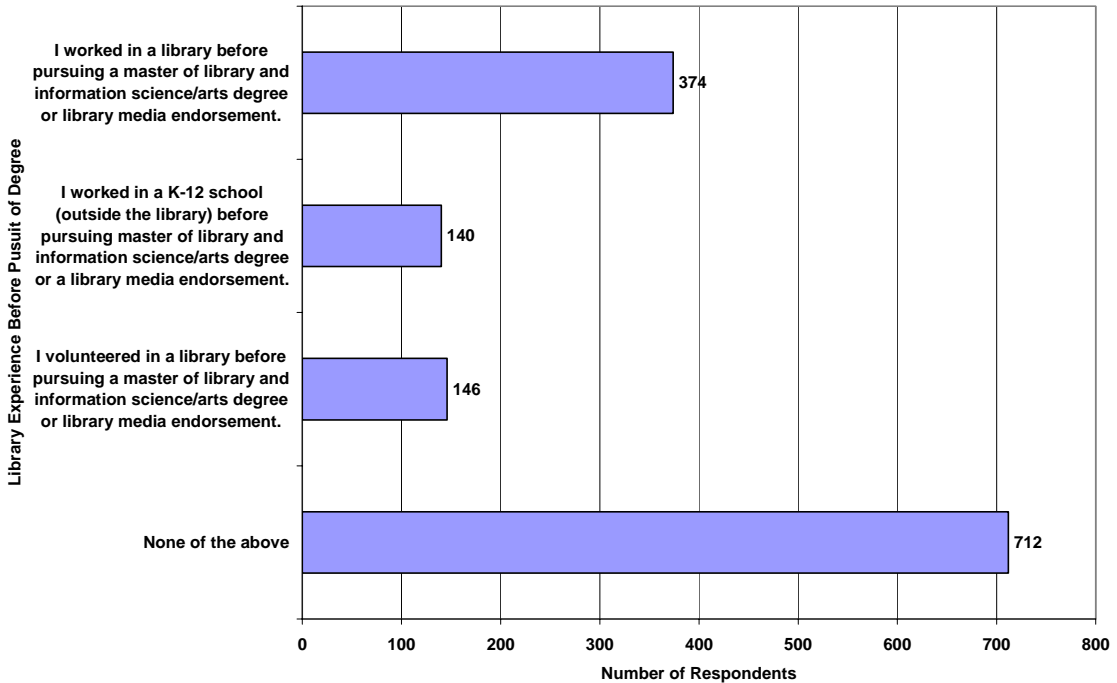


Appendix B:
Individual Question Responses

Question 8: Do you have any of the following credentials? Mark all that apply.

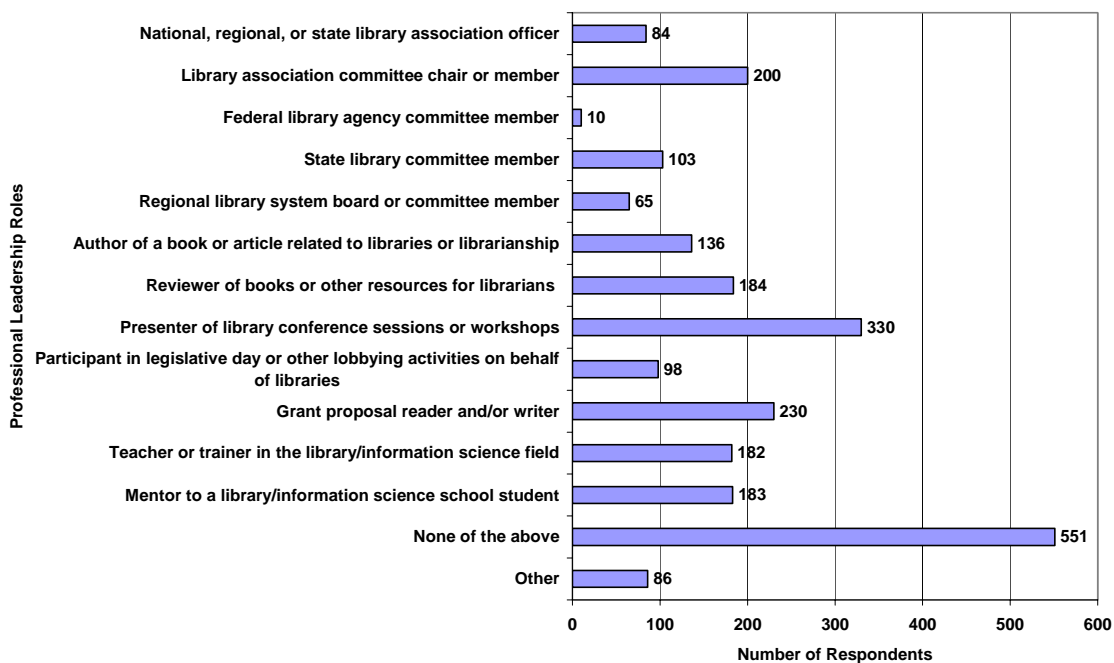


Question 9: Please check all that apply:

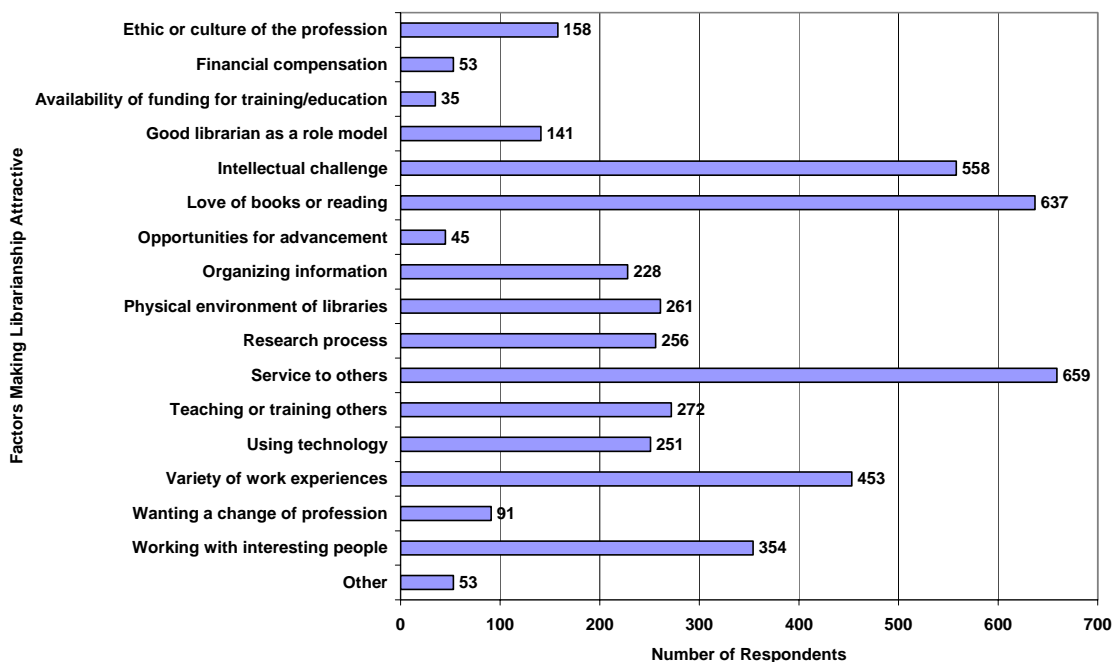


Appendix B: Individual Question Responses

Question 10: In which of the following professional leadership roles have you served during the past five years? Mark all that apply.

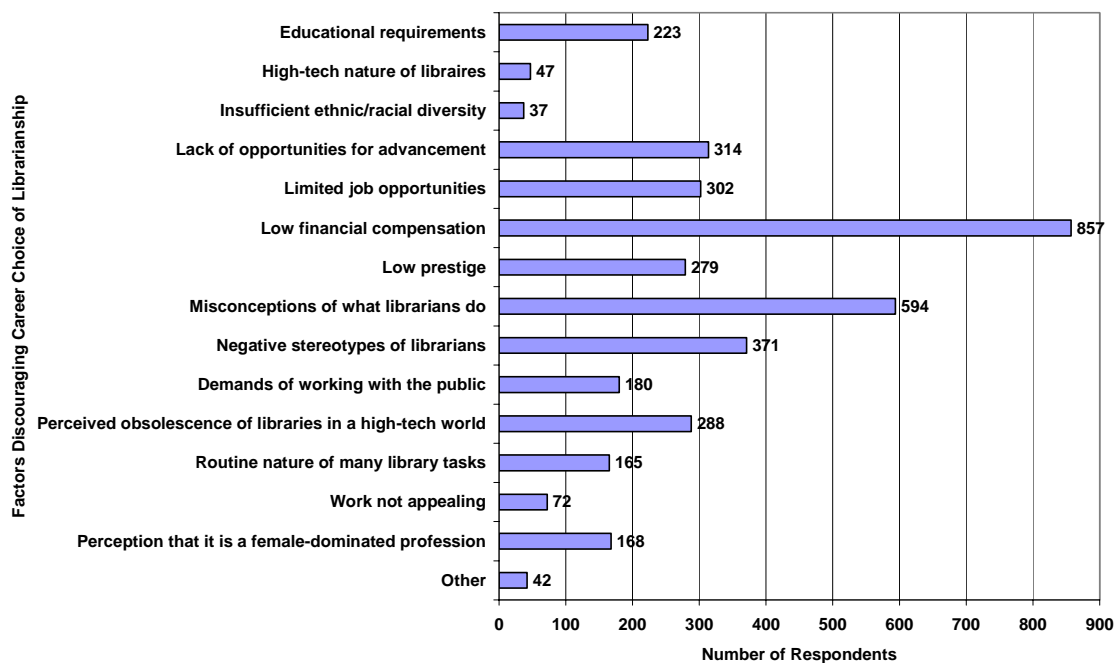


Question 11: In your view, which of the following factors contribute most to making librarianship an attractive profession?

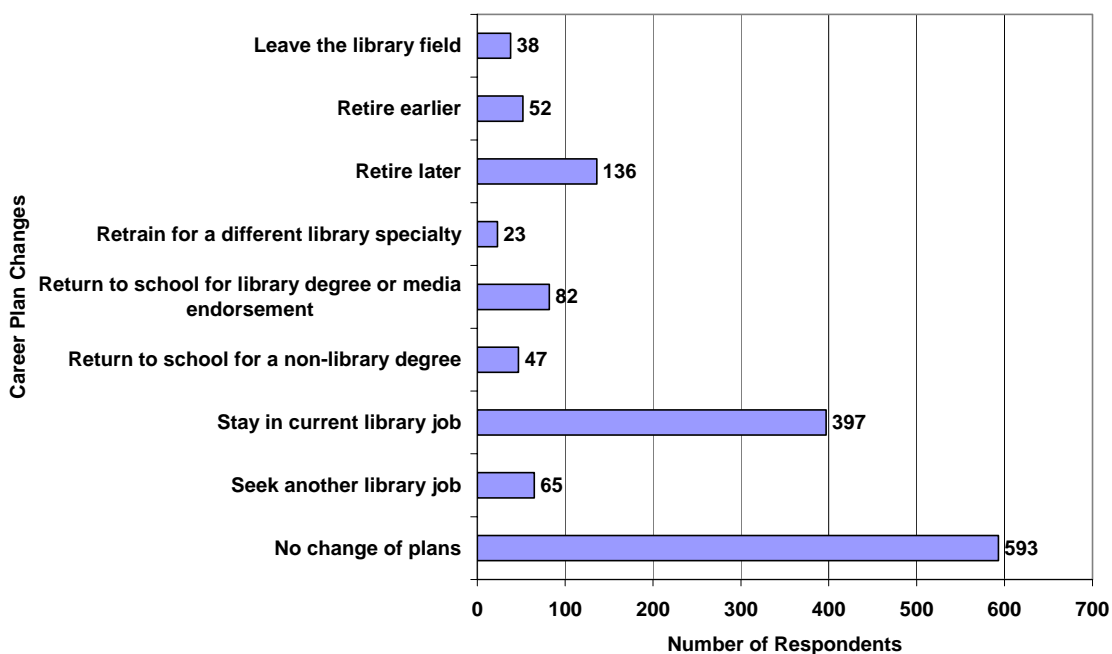


Appendix B: Individual Question Responses

Question 12: In your opinion, which of the following factors most discourage someone from pursuing a career in librarianship?

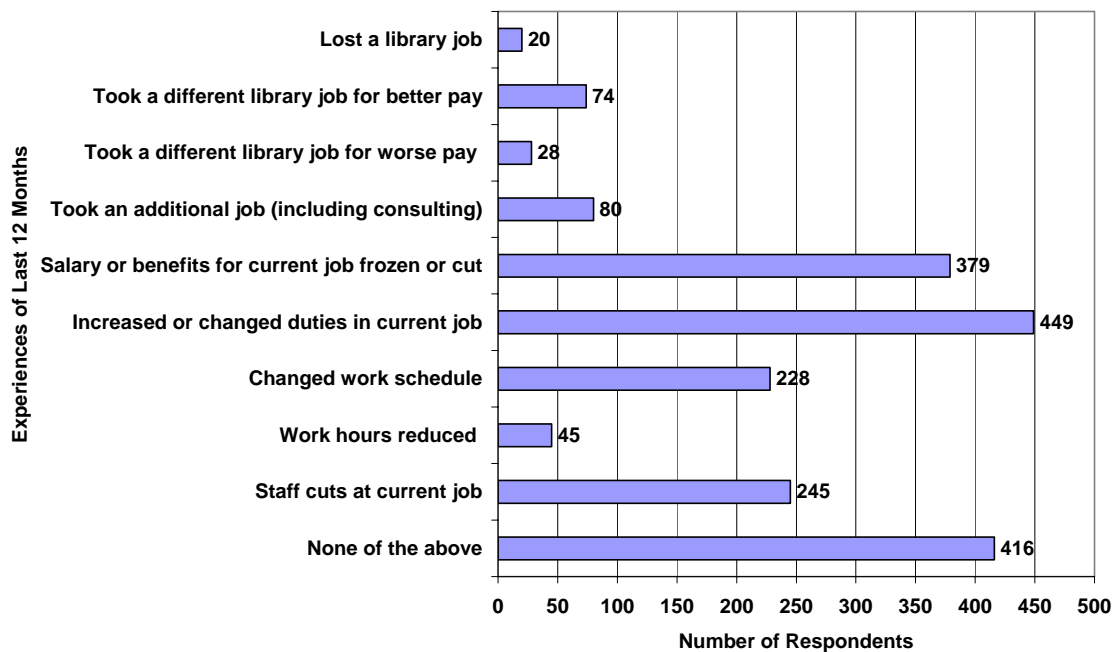


Question 13: How has the current downturn in the economy changed your career plans? Mark all that apply.

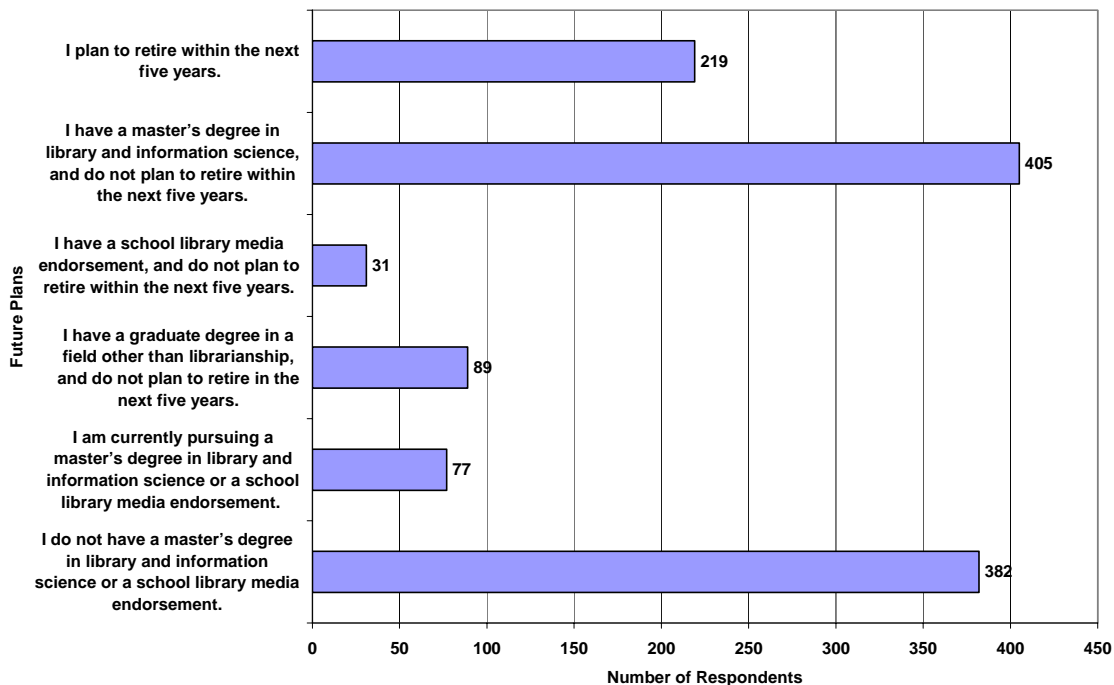


Appendix B: Individual Question Responses

Question 14: Which, if any, of the following has happened to you in the last 12 months? Mark all that apply.

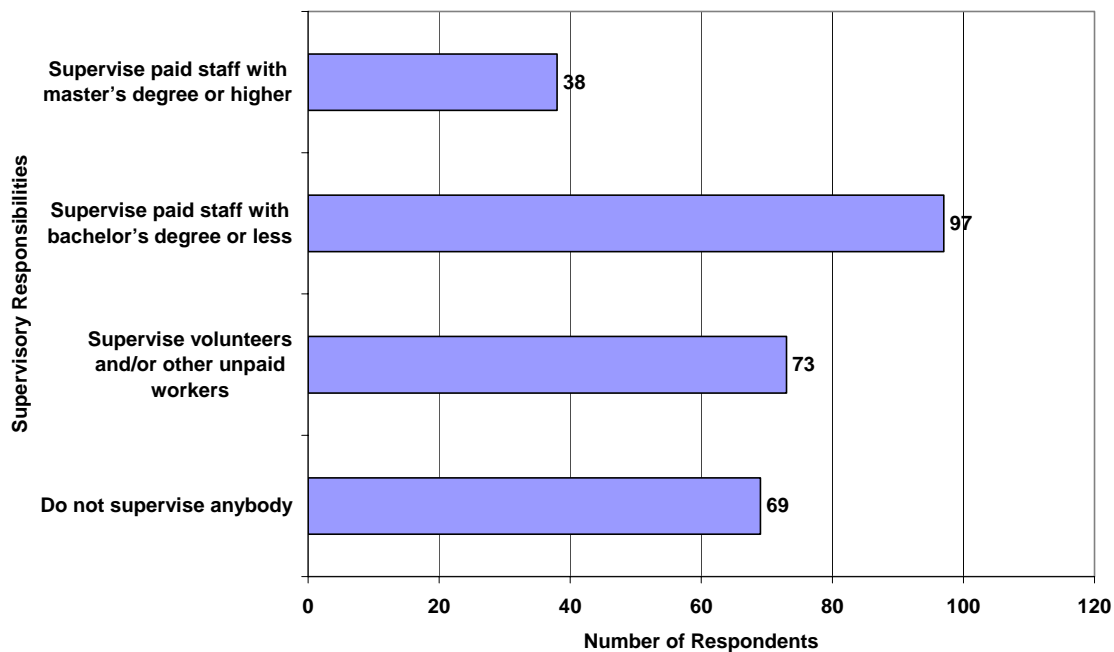


Question 15: What is your current career status? Select one of the following.

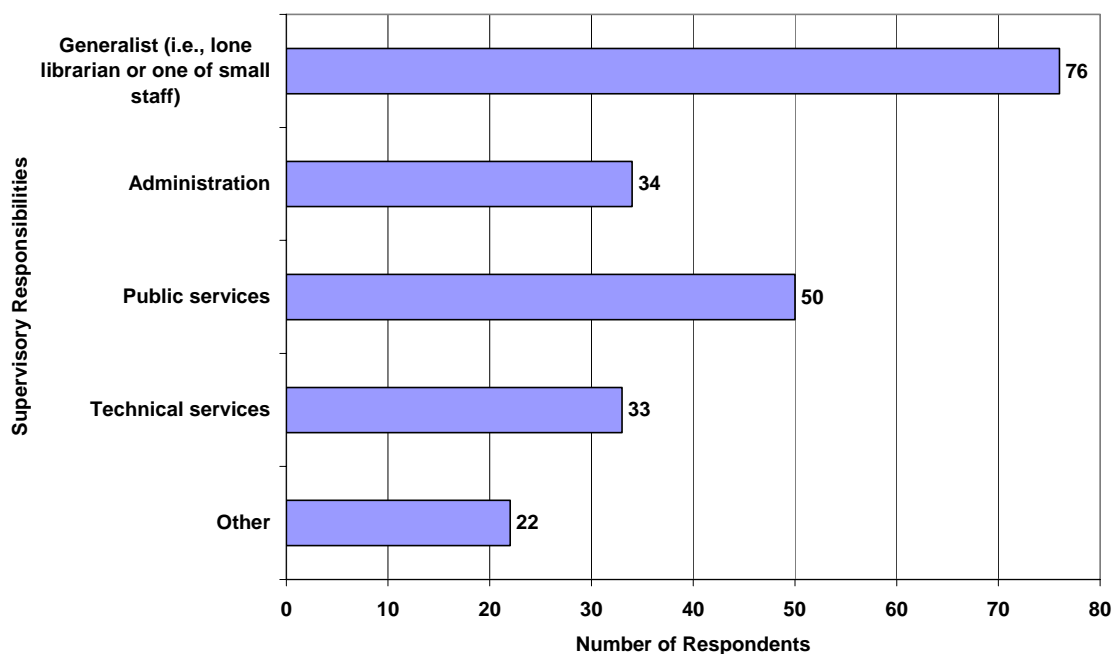


Appendix B:
Individual Question Responses

Question 16: In your current position, what kind of supervision do you provide, if any? Mark all that apply.

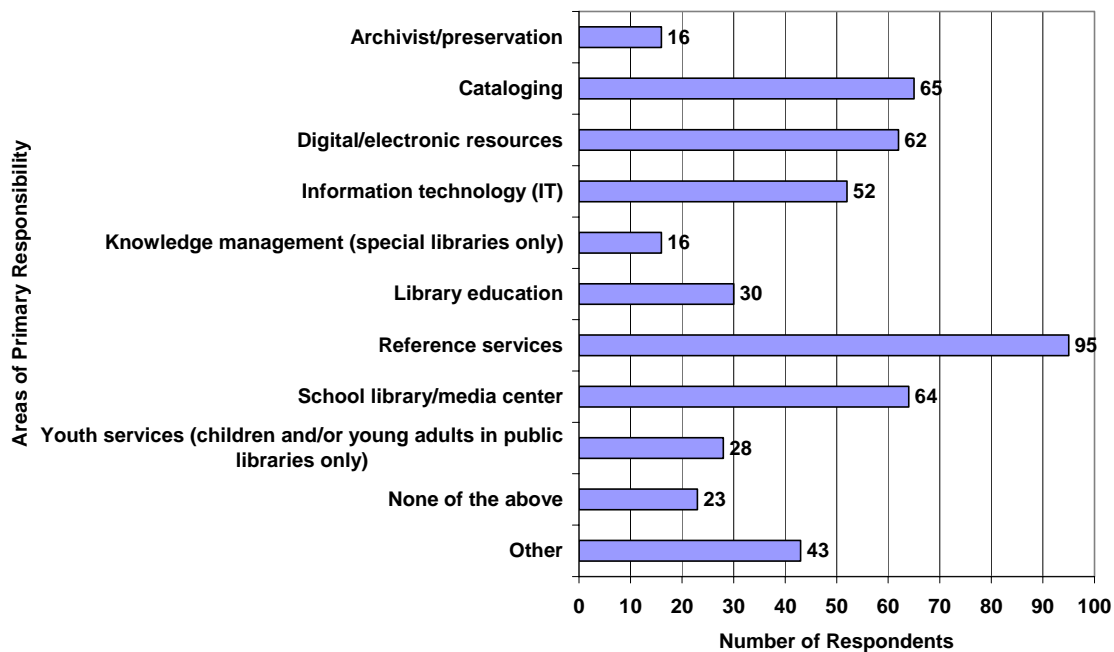


Question 17: In your current position, which of the following areas best describes your primary responsibilities? Mark one.

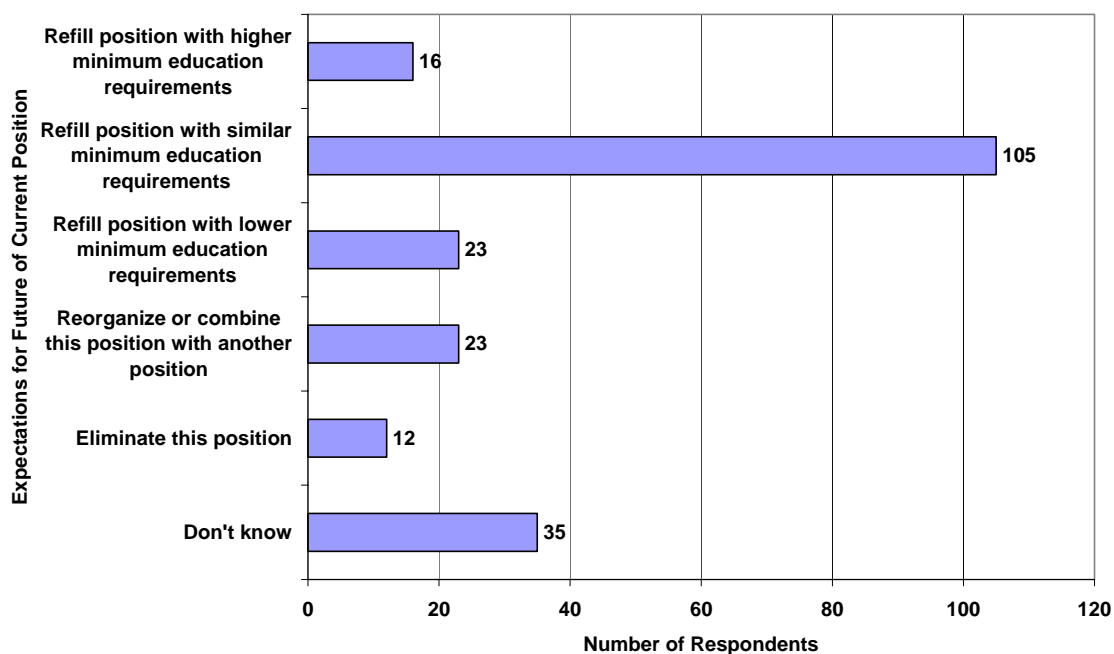


Appendix B: Individual Question Responses

Question 18: In your current position, do your primary responsibilities fall in any of the following selected areas? Mark all that apply.



Question 19: When you retire, what do you expect to happen to your position? Mark one.

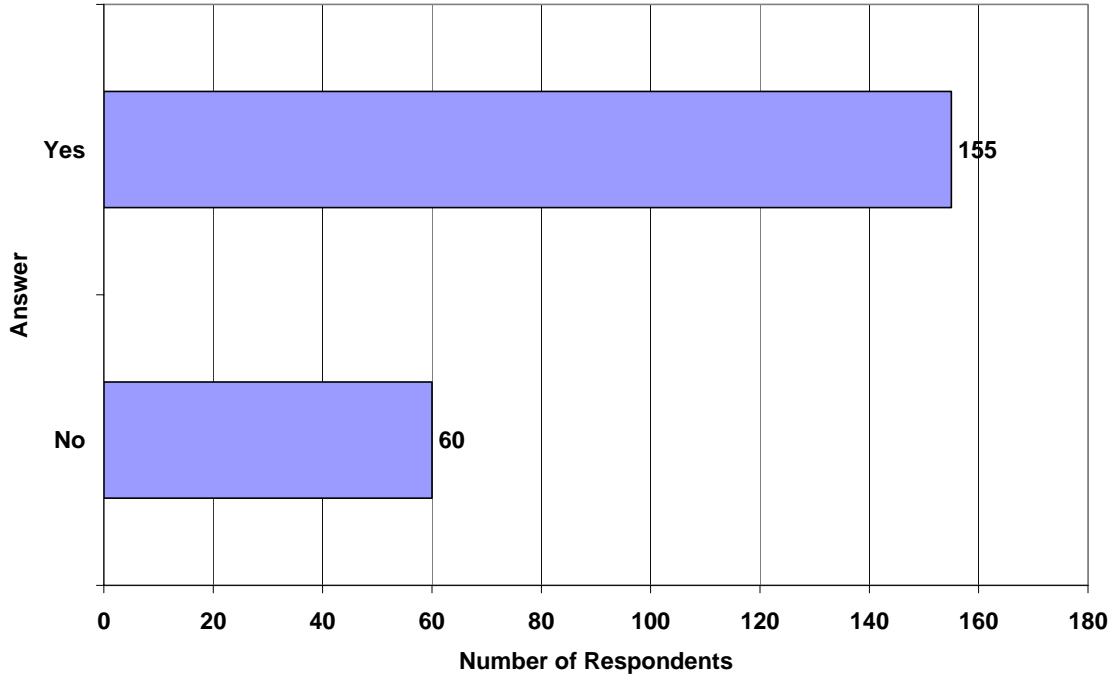


Appendix B:
Individual Question Responses

Question 20: How important is each of the following factors in making your decision about when to retire?

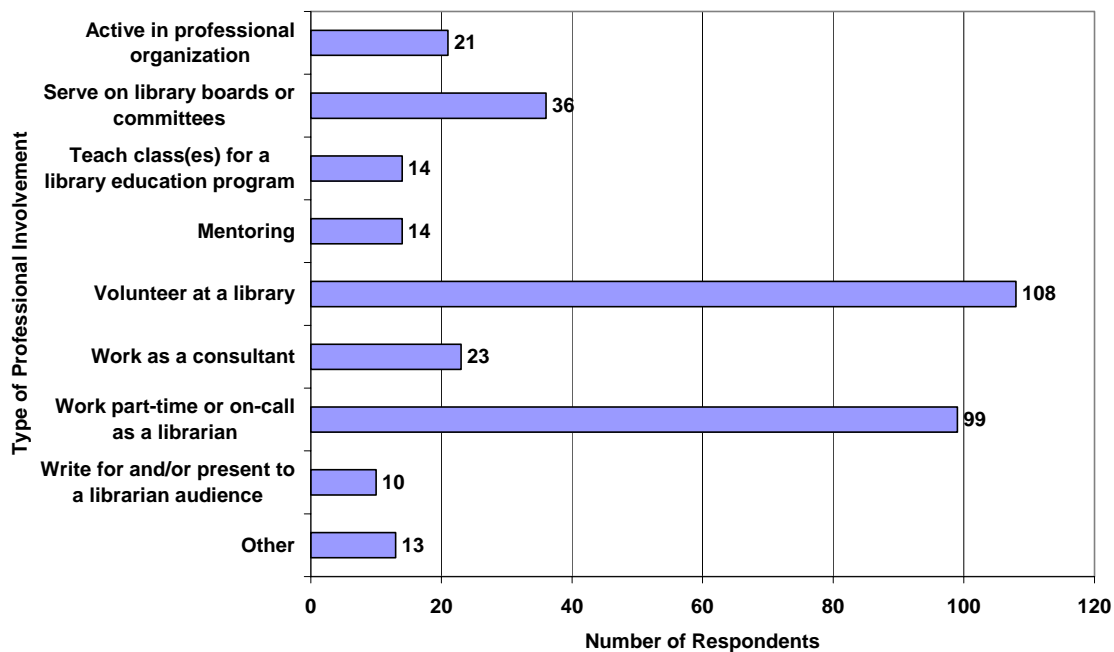
	NOT AT ALL	NOT VERY	SOMEWHAT	VERY	CRITICAL
Age	19	25	79	74	17
Career change	126	32	27	8	6
General economic conditions	39	29	57	52	28
Health benefits	38	23	44	54	46
Job burnout	50	37	56	36	26
Personal finances	24	25	50	54	52
Personal or family member's health	74	27	32	42	27
Relocation	132	31	16	13	6
Retirement incentives	72	21	61	36	13
Salary	46	27	57	50	24
Spouse's retirement	92	15	37	40	18

Question 21: Do you plan to remain involved with the library field after retiring?

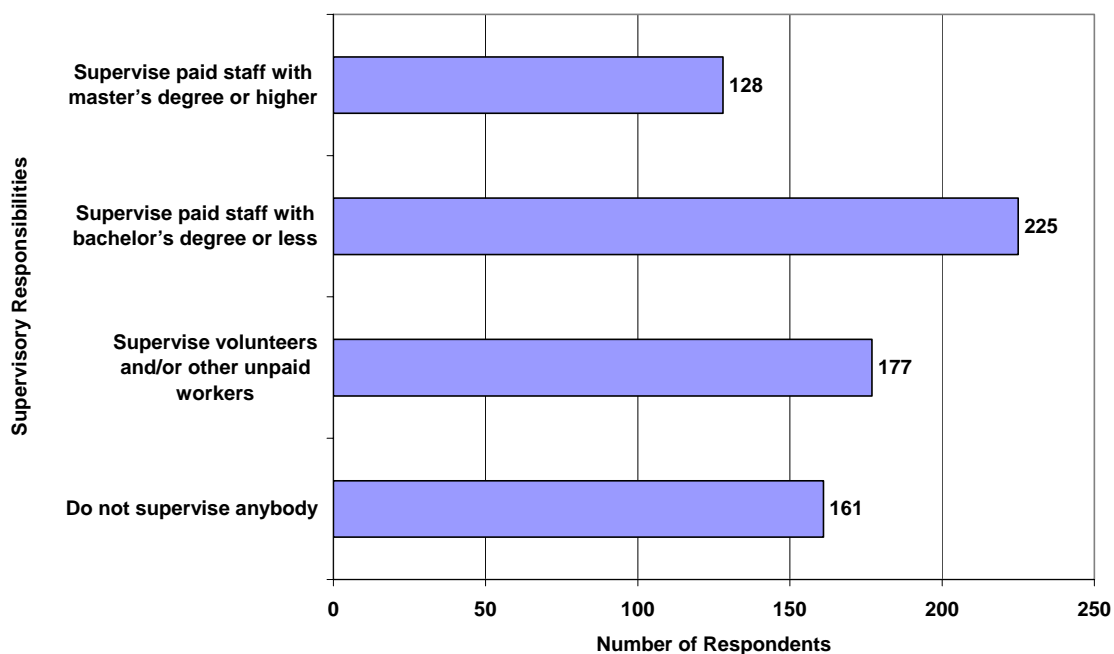


Appendix B:
Individual Question Responses

Question 22: If Yes, how would you like or expect to remain involved? Mark all that apply.

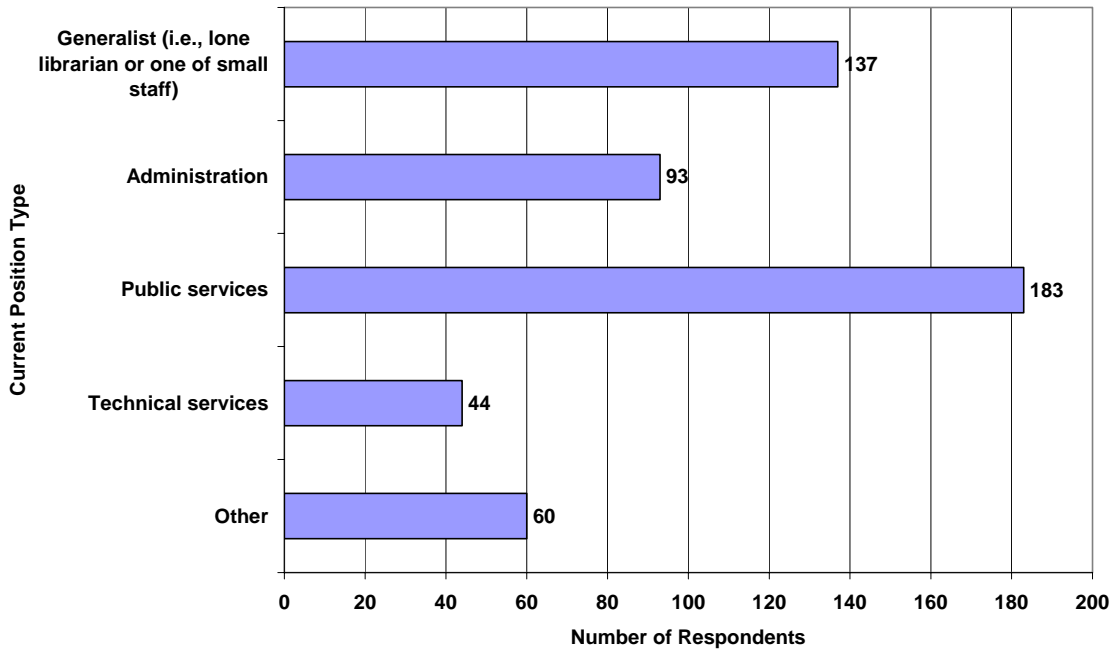


Question 23: In your current position, what kind of supervision do you provide, if any? Mark all that apply.

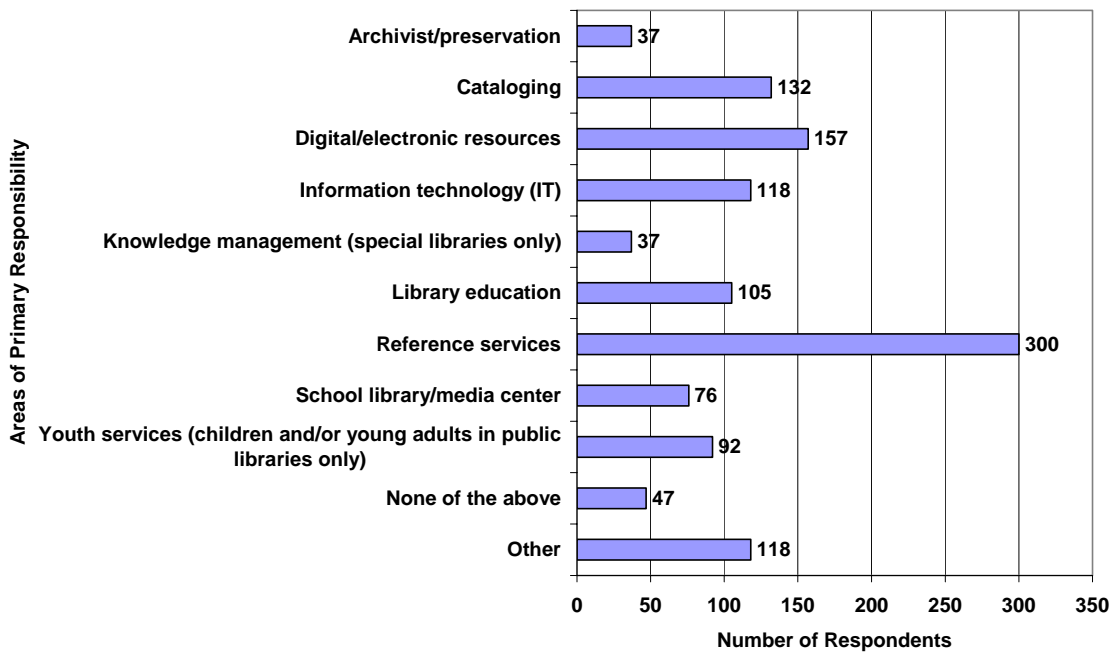


Appendix B:
Individual Question Responses

Question 24: In your current position, which of the following areas best describes your primary responsibilities? Mark one.

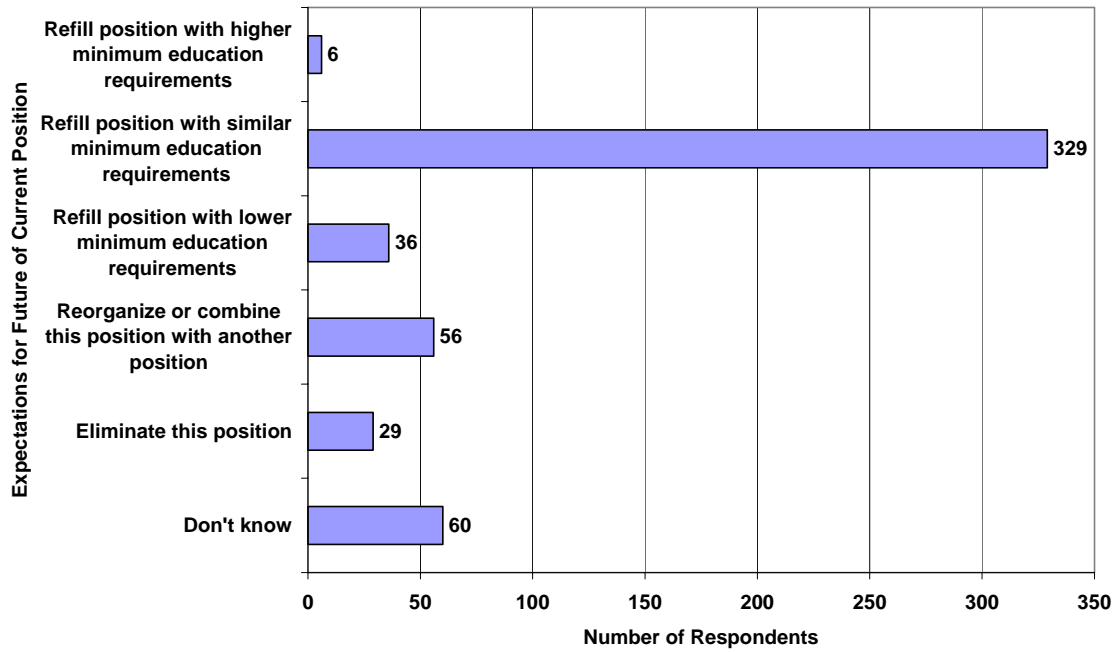


Question 25: In your current position, do your primary responsibilities fall in any of the following selected areas? Mark all that apply.

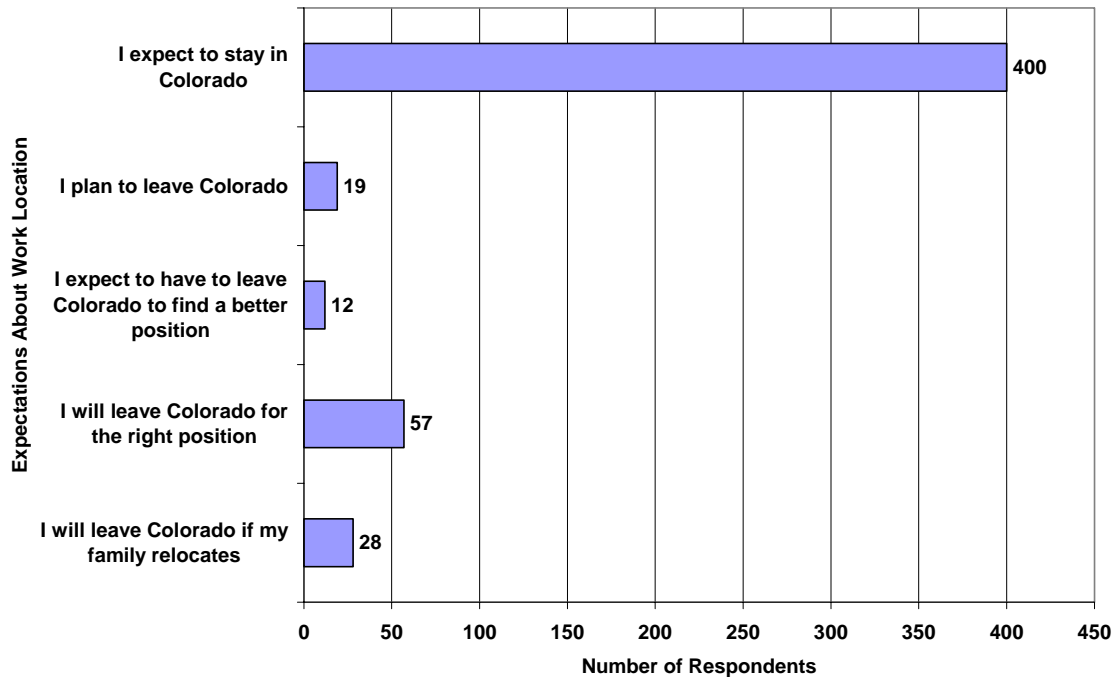


Appendix B:
Individual Question Responses

Question 26: If you left your current position, what do you expect would happen to it? Mark one.

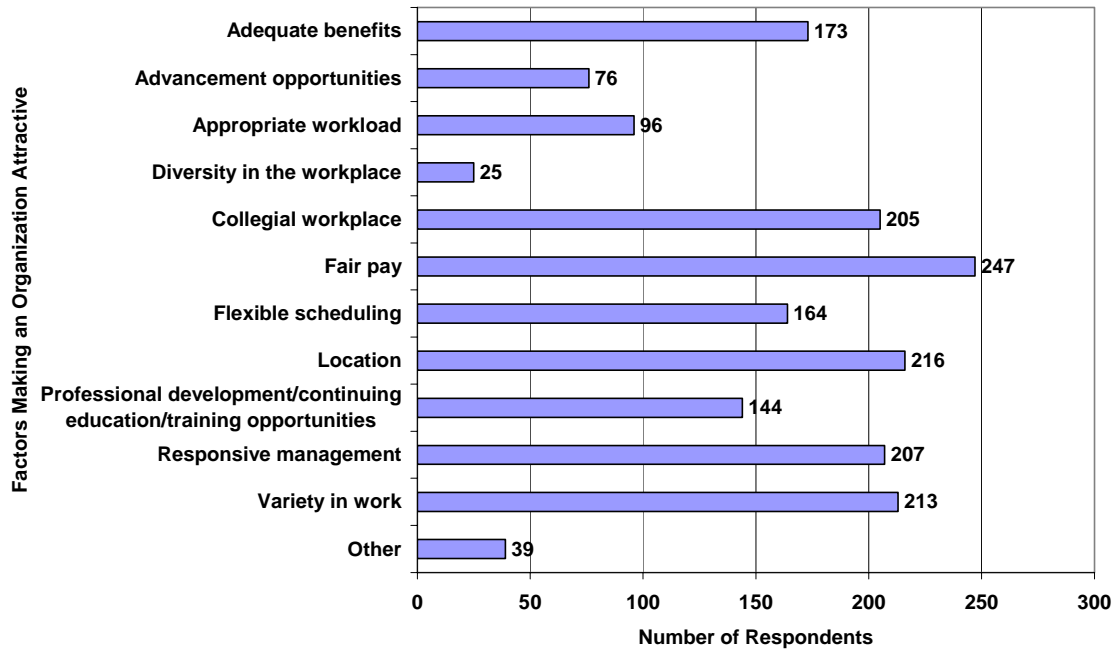


Question 27: Where do you expect to live and work? Mark one.

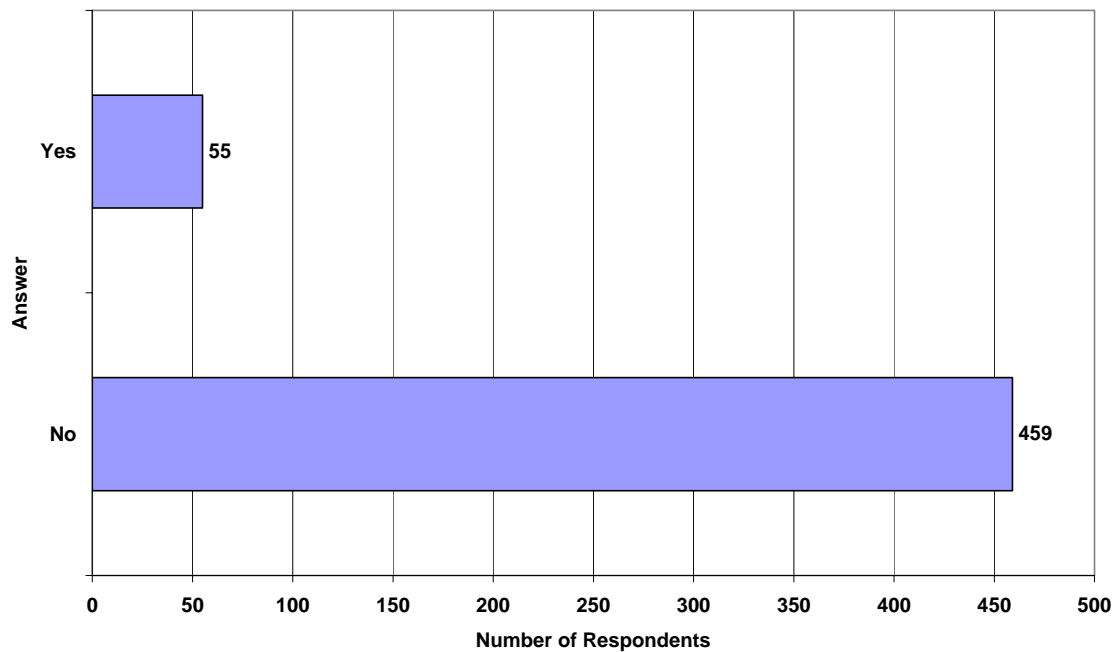


Appendix B:
Individual Question Responses

Question 28: Which of the following factors influence you to remain in an organization? Mark up to three.

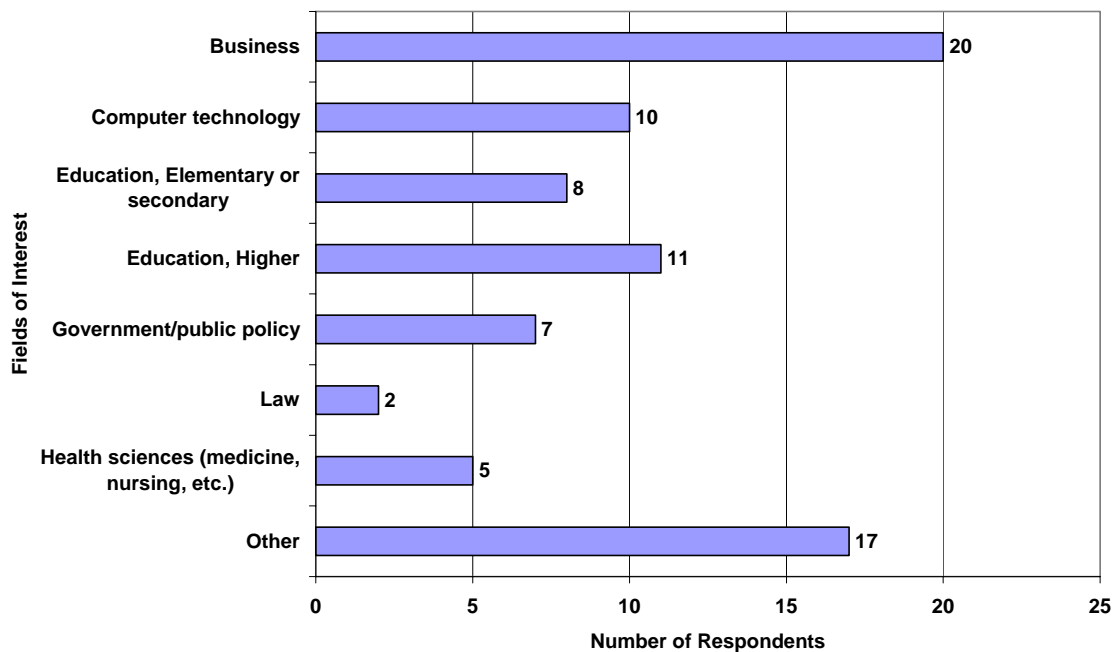


Question 29: Do you have any foreseeable plans to leave the library/information science field for a different field? Mark one.

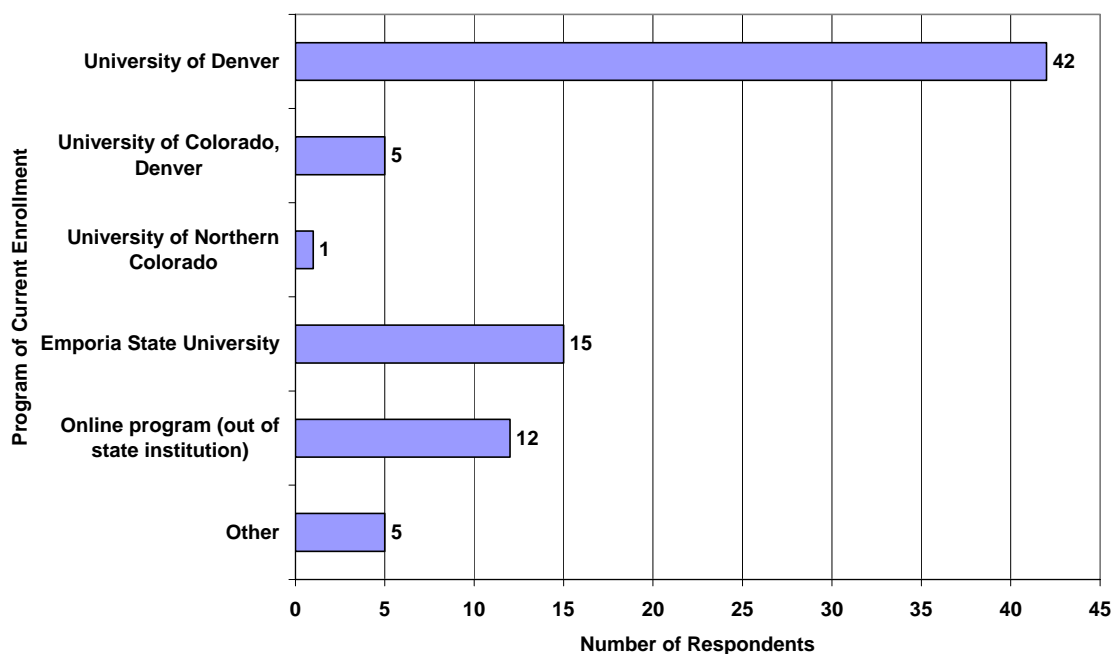


Appendix B:
Individual Question Responses

Question 30: If Yes, which of the following fields are you considering? Mark all that apply.

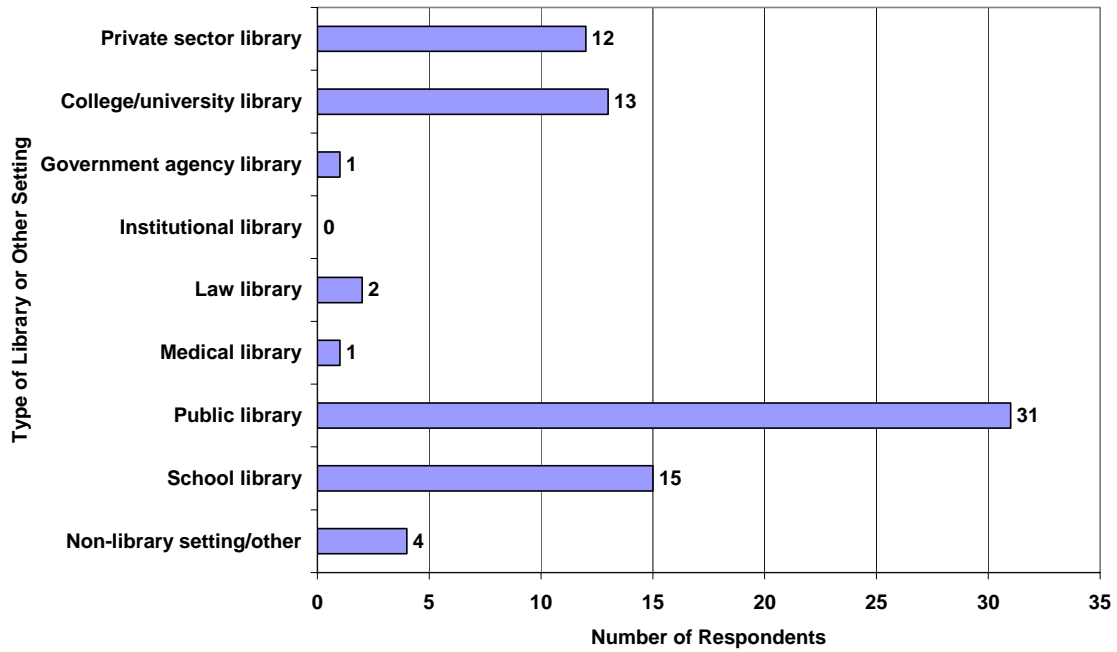


Question 31: In which library/information science/library media program are you currently enrolled? Mark one.

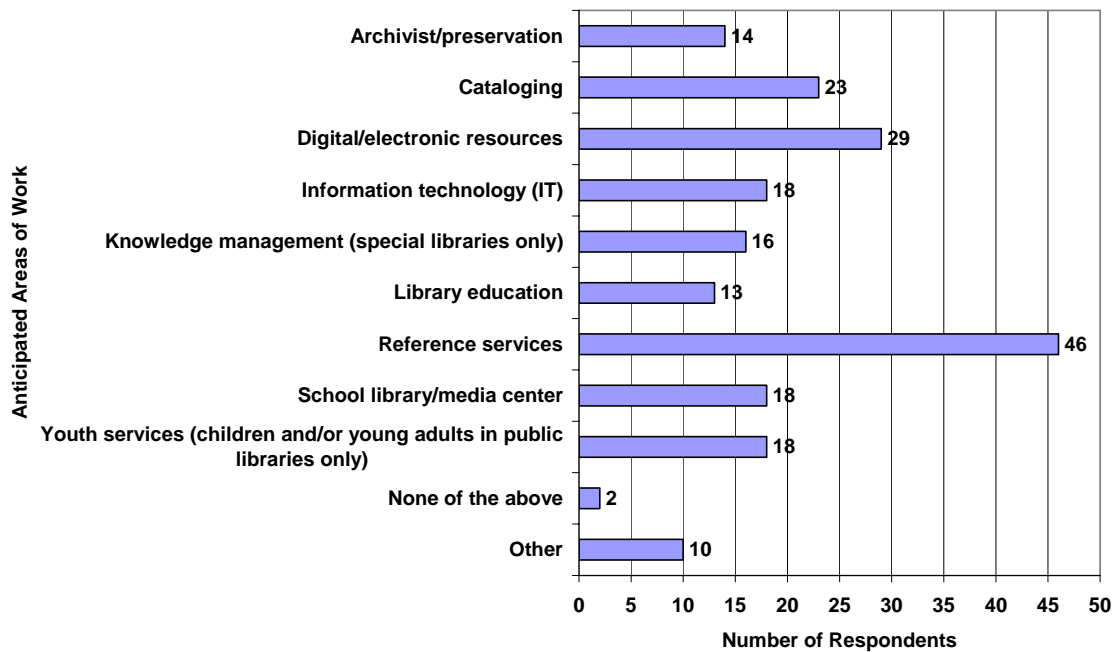


Appendix B:
Individual Question Responses

**Question 32: In what type of library or other setting do you anticipate working?
Mark one.**

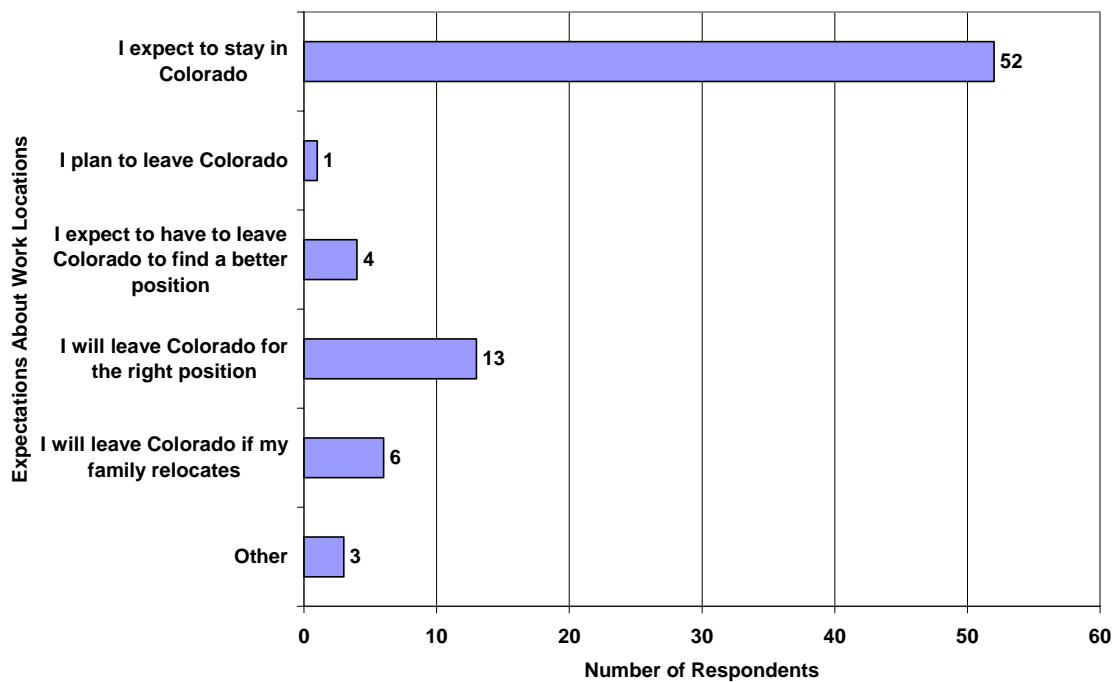


**Question 33: Do you anticipate working in any of the following selected areas?
Mark all that apply.**

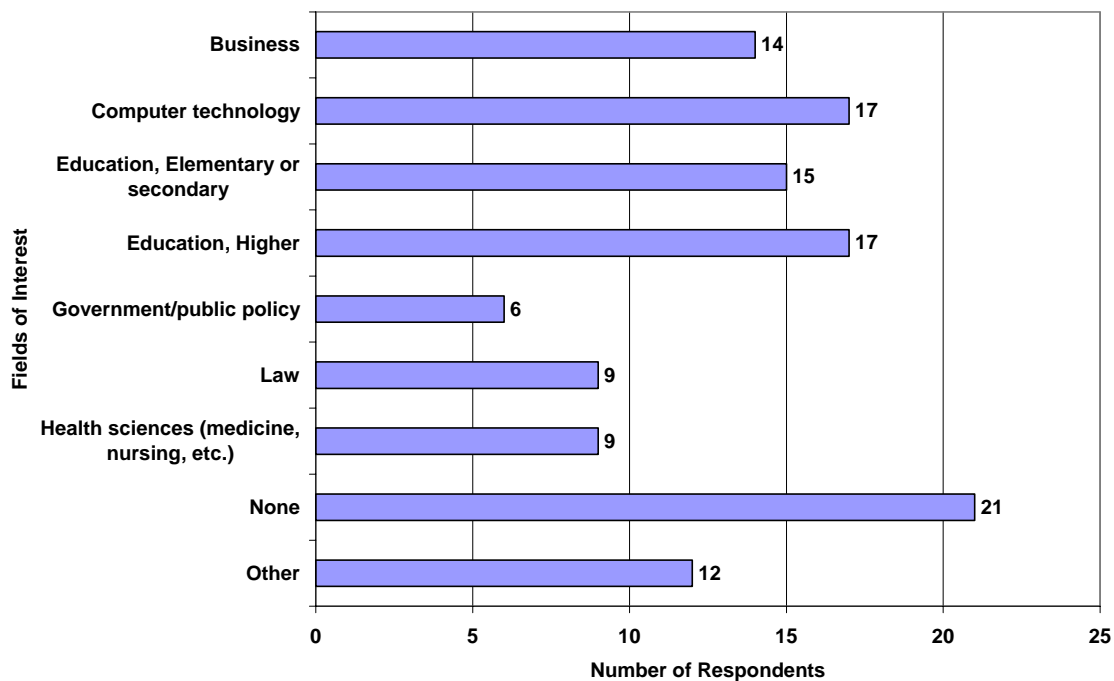


Appendix B:
Individual Question Responses

Question 34: Where do you expect to live and work? Mark one.



Question 35: What, if any, other fields did you consider? Mark all that apply.

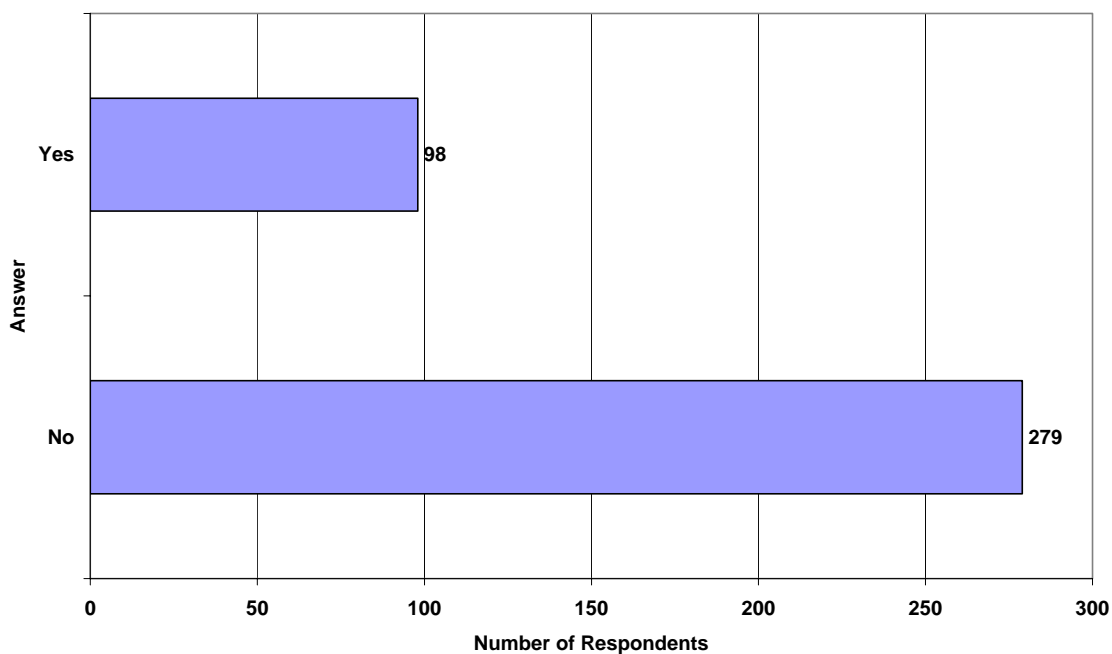


Appendix B:
Individual Question Responses

Question 36: After you complete your professional education, what are your full-time salary expectations for your first position and whatever positions you are in five and ten years later?

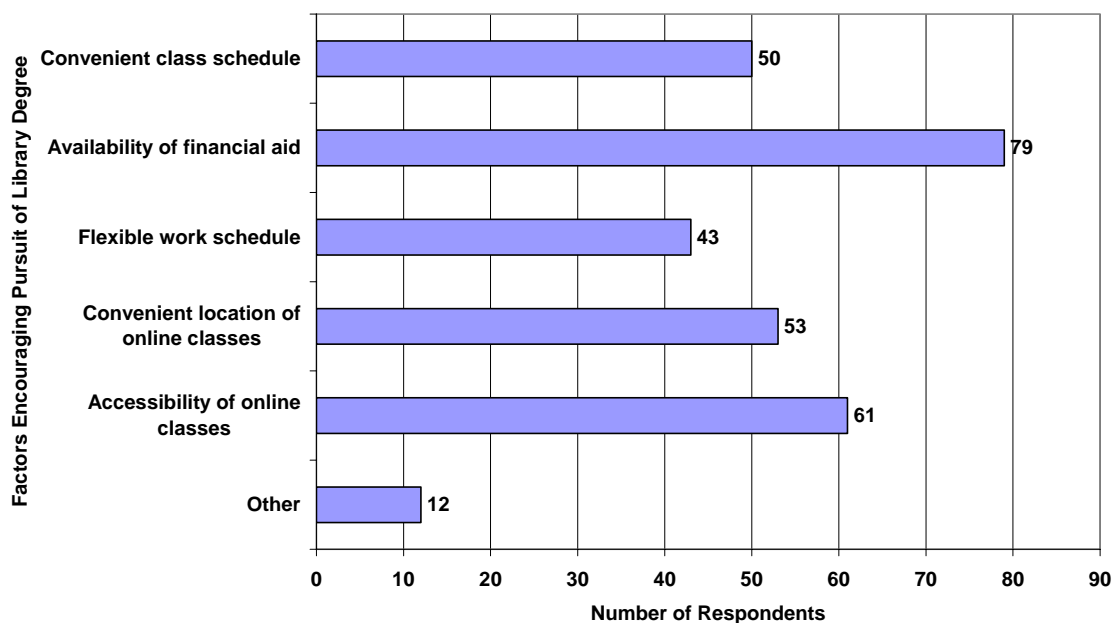
	LESS THAN \$25,000	\$25,000-\$34,999	\$35,000-\$44,999	\$45,000-\$54,999	\$55,000-\$64,999	\$65,000-\$74,999	\$75,000 OR MORE
Starting	3	25	36	9	1	0	1
5 years from graduation	0	5	28	23	14	2	2
10 years from graduation	0	0	14	23	17	11	9

Question 37: Are you considering pursuing a library/information science degree or library media endorsement? Mark one.

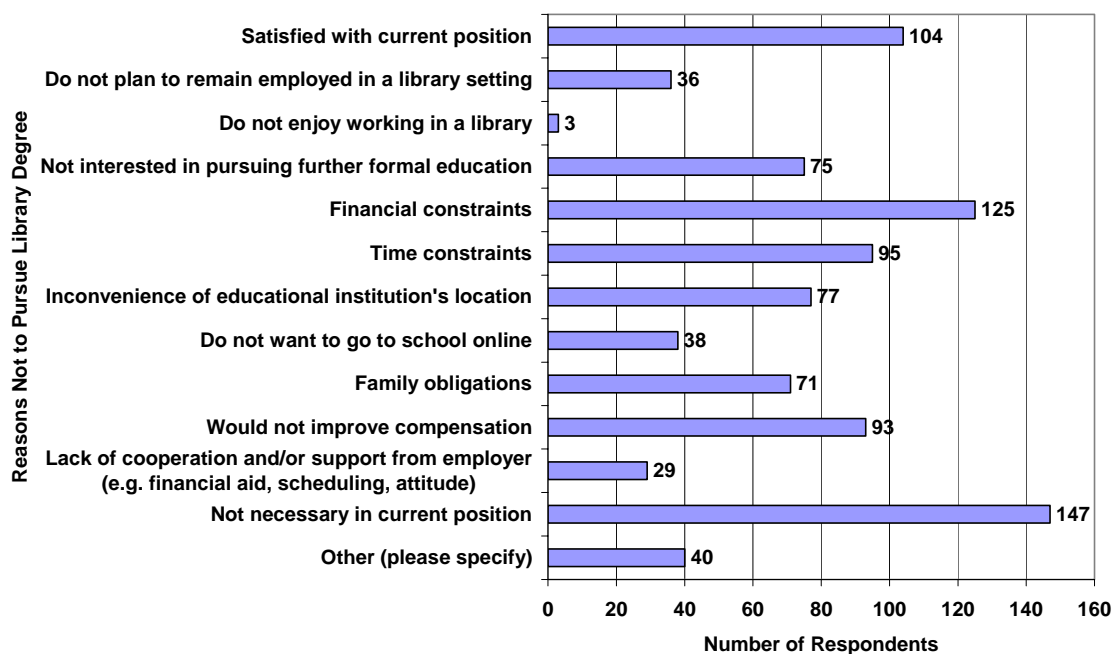


Appendix B:
Individual Question Responses

Question 38: If Yes, which of the factors below would most encourage you to pursue a library/information science degree or library media endorsement? Mark up to three.

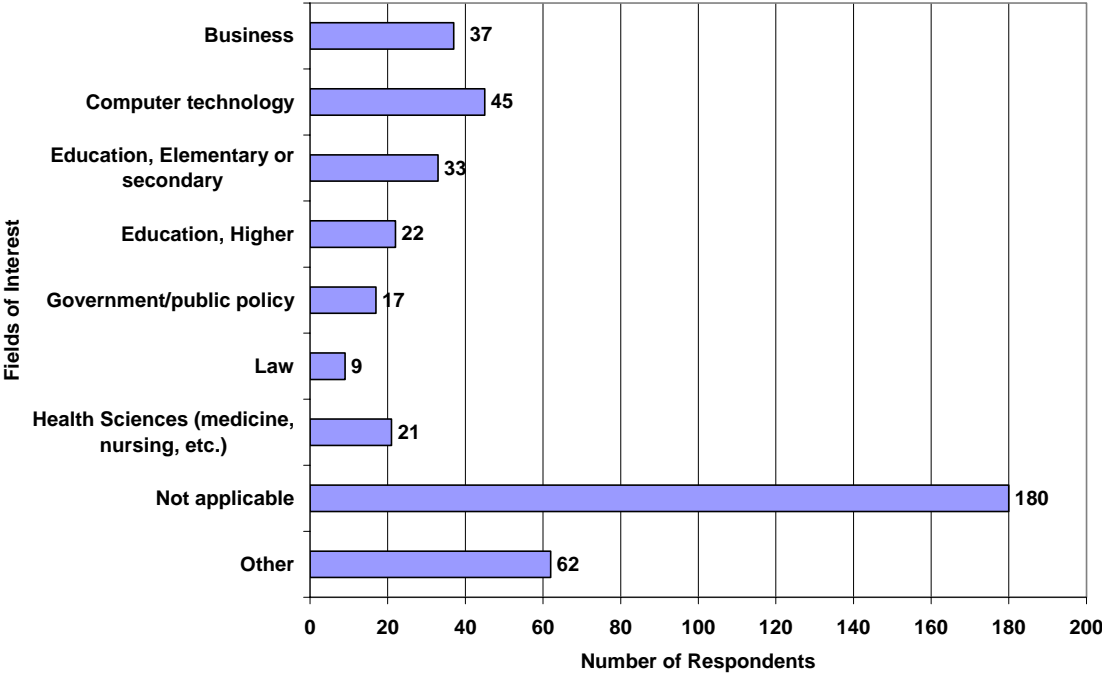


Question 39: If No, why do you plan not to pursue a library/information science degree or library media endorsement? Mark all that apply.



Appendix B:
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Question 40: What, if any, other fields are you considering? Mark all that apply.



Appendix C

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