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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the characteristics of presently employed documents professionals at ARL (Association of Research Libraries) libraries. A survey covering educational background; continuing education activities; organizational affiliations; documents experience; staffing; type of arrangement of the documents collection; total professional experience; and method by which the present position was conducted. A questionnaire was administered through the mail to a random selection of ARL documents librarians. Findings of the study indicate that the highest percentage of the professionals are employed in documents collections which are classed separately, yet located near the remaining collection; they work with one other professional on a full-time basis and two others on a part time basis; their academic background is in the social sciences subject area with a graduate degree in library science; the average amount of professional experience is 12 years in the document field and 16 years in general; and the majority of the professionals surveyed had prior experience in reference service, are active in continuing education activities, and on average regularly read at least two professional journals. A copy of the questionnaire is appended. (Contains 8 references.)
 (Author/JLB)

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**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE, CONTINUING EDUCATION,
PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS, AND EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF
DOCUMENTS PROFESSIONALS AT ARL LIBRARIES**

A Master's Research Paper submitted to the
Kent State University School of Library Science
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree Master of Library Science

by

Mary Jane Ledvina

November, 1990

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the characteristics of presently employed documents professionals at ARL libraries. A survey covering educational background, continuing education activities, organizational affiliations, documents experience, staffing, type of arrangement of the documents collection, total professional experience, and method by which the present position was obtained was conducted. A questionnaire was administered through the mail to a random selection of ARL documents librarians. Findings indicate that the highest percentage of the professionals are employed in documents collections which are classed separately, yet located proximate to the remainder of the institution's collections, and work with one other professional on a full-time basis and two others on a part-time basis. The highest percentage of the professionals have an academic background in the social sciences subject area and a graduate degree in library science. The average amount of professional experience is approximately twelve years in the documents field and sixteen years in general. The majority of the professionals surveyed had prior experience in reference services. The majority of the professionals are active in a number of continuing education activities and on the average they regularly read at least two professional journals.

Master's Research Paper by

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B.S., Western Michigan University, 1978

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Approved by

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Ms. Parmer, Documents Coordinator at Bowling Green State University, has an unflagging enthusiasm for government documents that is certainly contagious to anyone who comes in contact with her.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The documents field of librarianship appears to have long been a neglected area of library science for the library school student or new professional. The subject is briefly mentioned in bibliographic library science courses and a few individuals actually take a course in documents.

The field's literature appears to be primarily concerned with bibliographic control and improving access to the materials through improved reference services. Nothing appears to be written to tell the inquiring individual about the people who make up the field of documents professionals.

What seems to be obviously lacking in the range of literature about the documents field and in the information provided to students about the field, is information about what the documents professional is like and how he/she got to be where and what he/she is.

It seems to be obvious, that a basic understanding of the present state of documents librarianship is a necessary precursor to further investigation in the field and the implementation of any changes into the present system. This study provides both an initial investigation of the field of documents librarianship and a starting point for further exploration of the field.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research project was to conduct a survey of Documents Librarians in the ARL libraries in order to determine their qualifications, background, training and general experience in the documents field of librarianship. The major emphasis of this research project was on professional experience both in and outside of the documents field, educational background, and continuing education and training. Attention was paid to the manner in which documents librarian's positions are obtained. Additional information was obtained regarding whether or not the documents collections are maintained as separate collections to maintain their integrity as documents collections or to what degree they are physically integrated into the rest of the collection.

The findings of this study will prove of interest to individuals presently employed within the documents field. It will also provide students or other individuals interested in entering the documents field of librarianship with information useful in planning educational, practicum, and other experiences to meet their goals. Anyone entering the job market in search of a documents position will find the information on how positions in the field are obtained essential to the development of their employment search strategy.

Definitions of Terms

For the purposes of this study, the following terms have been defined as stated.

Type of Documents Collections:

Integrated collection - a system whereby the documents materials are classed and arranged with the total library collection and no attempt is made to separate them from the other materials

Separate yet proximate collection - a documents collection in which the materials are classed separately and maintained independently of the major collection at the institution yet are still located or generally accessed in conjunction with the reference collection

Totally separate collection - a documents collection which is classed and located geographically independent from the rest of the collections. The most common example of a totally separate collection is one in which the documents collection is maintained on a separate floor.

Staffing:

Full time professional - a full time employee whose duties are professional in nature and exclusively concerned with the documents collection

Part time professional - an employees whose duties are professional in nature but who works less than full time or spends a portion of his/her time on

duties that are not related to the documents collection. An example of this category of employee is one who works a split day between cataloging and documents.

Full time paraprofessional - a full time support staff employee whose duties are clerical and/or technical in nature and performed exclusively for the benefit of the documents collection or its users

Part time paraprofessional - an individual who performs the same types of duties as the full time paraprofessional but is either employed less than full time or splits his/her time between different departments at the institution

Continuing Education:

Coursework - post graduate coursework in any subject

Seminars - short, generally one day or less, educational or training sessions about a specific subject or general in nature for which no academic credit is received

Workshops - longer, more formally structured educational or training sessions about a specific subject for which academic credit may or may not be received

Professional meetings - meetings which are sponsored by professional organizations

Professional literature - literature which is

subject specific to librarianship in general or documents in particular

Limitations of the Study

This study is concerned with the actual characteristics, experience, and background of presently employed documents professionals in research libraries that are members of ARL. The findings, therefore, are limited in their application to libraries of a similar caliber and do not necessarily apply to documents librarianship as a whole.

II. LITERATURE SURVEY

A comprehensive search of Library Literature, Library and Information Science Abstracts (LISA), and ERIC, from 1976 through the present, was undertaken in an attempt to locate any pertinent information regarding the training and education of documents librarians. The literature search was limited to a fourteen year time span in an attempt to address the problem of identifying the present state of the measurement and evaluation of documents librarianship. The focus of the study was not historical in nature.

Very few articles were located on the subject of documents librarianship and training or educational background. This lack of literature pertaining to the subject indicates to this author the relevancy of this survey.

Barbara Marston Cross and John Richardson, Jr. did conduct a survey of documents librarians to determine their educational training.(1) The emphasis of the study was on the documents curriculum component of library education programs. Their findings indicate that the majority of individuals employed in the documents field believe that curriculum coverage and preparation are inadequate for employment as government

(1) Barbara Marston Cross and John Richardson, Jr. "The Educational Preparation of Government Information Specialists," Journal of Education for Library and Information Science 30, no. 1 (Summer 1989): 28.

documents librarians and that learning on the job was the most frequent method of training.(2)

Marvin C. Guilfoyle and Irma Tomberlin reported on a Government Documents Practicum program at the University of Oklahoma. The program began in 1974 and has gone through a number of revisions since its original implementation.(3) Enrollment in the program is limited to two or three students per semester and a prerequisite to participation is the successful completion of the government documents course.(4) The report concentrated on the practicalities of the program and did not provide any information regarding the actual post-graduate employment of the participants.

Kathleen M. Heim published an article based on her presentation at the American Library Association Conference in Dallas, Texas in June of 1984. She identified five characteristics for the successful government information professional.(5) In both the article and her presentation, she identified a number of

(2) Ibid., 31.

(3) Marvin C. Guilfoyle and Irma Tomberlin. "Government Documents Practicum: Completing the Basic Education," Government Publications Review 5, no. 1 (1978): 58.

(4) Ibid.

(5) Kathleen M. Heim. "Attitudinal and Operational Considerations for Education in the Provision of Government Information," Government Publications Review 12 (1985): 131.

characteristic goals necessary for the Government Information Librarian to function well in his/her position. The five characteristics she identified are as follows:

1. The government information librarian must be politically aware at all levels of government.
2. The government information librarian must be able to identify historical and current publications, regardless of format, for all levels of government.
3. The government information librarian must be able to elicit information from all formats of publications at all levels of government.
4. The government information librarian must be able to convey information.
5. The government information librarian must be committed to the dissemination of information with an advocacy stance.(6)

She concentrated her attention on the responsibility that she sees the library school as having to develop these characteristics in students. Included in her article are methods by which students could demonstrate the various characteristics she found necessary for the documents professional.

An article comparing and contrasting five Midwestern library school's documents courses was published by Sarah R. Reed.(7) The article focused on

(6) Ibid., 131-135.

(7) Sarah R. Reed. "The Status of Government Publications Courses as Taught in Five Midwestern Library Schools", Government Publications Review 1 (1973): 82.

both the teaching methods employed at the various schools and the actual content of the courses. The article would be of obvious value to educators in the documents field. The emphasis of this project is on the experiences of actual librarians on the job and employed in the documents field and is not limited to their academic experience. The content of their academic courses is not of concern, rather, the fact that a course was or was not taken is of interest.

McClure and Herson conducted an exploratory study in 1982 to determine the quality of reference service provided in academic depository collections and determined that the staff had a 37% correct response rate to the questions posed by the proxies.(8) The study did not attempt to determine or evaluate the qualifications of the individual who responded to the question posed and may have rated the performance of non-professionals.(9) Recommendations for further research included the comparison of correct responses to the academic degrees held by participants, whether professional staff members have taken a documents course

(8) Charles R. McClure and Peter Herson. Improving the Quality of Reference Service for Government Publications (Chicago: American Library Association, 1983), 14.

(9) Ibid., 30.

in library school, and professional activities (number of conferences and workshops attended, reading professional literature).(10) Obviously, the need for determining the type and extent of training, coursework, and involvement in professional activities of presently employed document professionals is necessary.

In 1984, Hernon and McClure published a discussion of issues and trends in the field of government documents with recommendations for improving access to government information. A program for personnel development was proposed with an emphasis on improving the future performance of professionals by skills inventories and personnel evaluations.(11) They stated that

In a number of instances, the problems with many government publications collections are related to the skills/knowledge deficiencies of the documents librarians. On one hand, many of these individuals never received appropriate training before accepting the responsibilities of the position.(12)

They did not, however, provide any statistical basis for their recommendations. The same point is true of their

(10) Ibid., 82-83.

(11) Peter Hernon and Charles R. McClure. Public Access to Government Information: Issues, Trends and Strategies (Norwood, New Jersey: Ablex Publishing Corporation, 1984) 199.

(12) Ibid.

recommendations for the education of the government documents professional.(13) Hernon and McClure did state that their views were based upon their experiences as instructors of government publications courses and their interaction with documents librarians, library administrators, and students, and call for research into the current state of documents education.(14)

Hernon and McClure both repeated and expanded their initial unobtrusive test of documents reference performance in 1985, to include general reference department performance in both academic and public libraries.(15) Once again, the evaluation of the staff's educational background and experience are recommended as areas yet to be studied.(16)

The literature search that was conducted confirms the fact that there has been little published that deals with the method in which documents librarians attained their positions. Research needs to be done concerning itself with the actual experiences of

(13) Ibid., 385-403.

(14) Ibid., 389.

(15) Peter Hernon and Charles R. McClure. Unobtrusive Testing and Library Reference Services (Norwood, New Jersey: Ablex Publishing Company, 1987), 27.

(16) Ibid., 8.

professionals who are working in the field. Evaluation of the training and background of documents professionals needs to be accomplished prior to any discussion of improving performance. It is believed that this project will be of interest to those presently employed in the field and those seeking employment in the area of government documents.

III. METHODOLOGY

The methodology used in this study consisted of conducting a survey by mail of documents librarians in ARL libraries.

Subjects

A random sample of fifty-five libraries was selected and surveyed. The institutions surveyed were identified from the 1989 edition of ARL Statistics. (17) Of the 105 institutions listed, fifty-five were randomly selected.

Instrument

Due to the relatively small population size, it was felt that the open-ended questions would not pose an insurmountable problem in the statistical analysis (see Appendix A). A letter of introduction (see Appendix B) and a return addressed envelope was sent with each survey to the documents librarians at the institutions composing the sample.

The population considered consists of documents librarians in ARL libraries. The documents librarian at each institution selected were surveyed by mail with a questionnaire developed for this study. The questionnaire distributed is contained in Appendix A.

(17) The Association of Research Libraries. ARL Statistics (Washington, D.C.: The Association, 1989).

Upon receipt of the completed questionnaires, the results were tabulated and the measures of central tendency were determined. Due to the relatively small size of the population and amount of data to be analyzed, a manual tabulation and analysis of the data was performed. Chapter Four of this paper presents the results of the study.

IV. ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

A total of thirty-seven questionnaires from the 55 surveys mailed out (67%) were returned and analyzed.

Arrangement of the Documents Collection

Figure 1 presents the number of documents collections according to their type of arrangement. Fourteen percent of the librarians surveyed indicate that the documents collections at their institutions are integrated into the rest of the collection. Thirty-five percent of the collections are totally separated geographically and organizationally in nature. Librarians responding to the survey indicate that the majority of these separate collections are located on separate floors of the libraries and a few are in separate buildings. The majority of the librarians who responded to the questionnaire, fifty-one percent, indicate that the documents collections at their institutions are maintained separately from the rest of the collection yet still located in close proximity to the rest of the collection. A number of librarians responded that the documents collections are accessed via the reference desk in these proximate situations.

Type of Arrangement	N	F	%	MIN	MAX	S.Dev.
Integrated	37	5	13.5	0.0	1.0	0.35
Separate/Proximate	37	19	51.4	0.0	1.0	0.51
Totally Separate	37	13	35.1	0.0	1.0	0.48
Total	-	37	100%			

Figure 1. Number and percentages of documents collections according to their type of arrangement.

Staffing

For the purposes of this study, the staffing of the documents departments is divided into five categories consisting of full-time professionals, part time professionals, full-time paraprofessional and/or clerical, part time paraprofessionals and/or clerical, and student employees. Figure 2 presents the distribution of libraries in the sample that has specific numbers of employees in each of the categories of staffing developed, mean and mode number of employees in each category, maximum and minimum values in each category, and the standard deviations among responses.

Six of the thirty-seven librarians who responded to the questionnaire, or sixteen percent, report no full-time professional staff in the documents department. Twenty of the librarians (or fifty-four percent) report full-time professional staffs consisting of more than one librarian. As indicated in

Figure 2, on the average, the documents collections are staffed with 2.11 full-time professional employees.

Also indicated in Figure 2 is the fact that, on an average, the ARL libraries surveyed have 3.49 full time paraprofessional and/or clerical employees and 8.24 student employees. The variance in the number of student employees is the greatest amount at a standard deviation of 6.27 employees. The variance in the number of student employees can be accounted for by the fact that not all of the ARL libraries are associated with academic institutions.

		# of institutions by # of employees				
# of staff		*FTP	**PTP	***FTC	****PTC	Student
	none	6	16	1	24	2
	1	11	9	5	7	2
	2	5	4	9	2	1
	3	6	1	7	0	1
	4	5	0	4	1	3
	5	4	3	6	0	6
	6	0	3	1	2	3
	7	0	0	0	1	4
	8	0	1	3	0	2
	9	0	0	1	0	1
	10	0	0	0	0	2
	11-15	0	0	0	0	5
	16-20	0	0	0	0	2
	21+	0	0	0	0	3
mode		1	0	2	0	5
mean		2.11	1.65	3.49	0.92	8.24
minimum		0	0	0	0	0
maximum		5	8	9	7	27
st.dev		1.64	2.24	2.22	1.83	6.27
N		37	37	37	37	37

Figure 2. Staffing of the documents department by category and number of employees.

- * FTP = number of full time professional employees
- ** PTP = number of part time professional employees
- *** FTC = number of full time paraprofessional and/or clerical employees
- **** PTC = number of part time paraprofessional and/or clerical employees

Continuing Education

The continuing education portion of the survey, addressed in question number six, was designed to determine the type of continuing education pursued by documents professionals and to determine the extent of such continuing education activities. Figure 3 presents the results of the continuing education portion of the questionnaire, including the percentage of librarians participating in each of the five types of continuing education activity considered in this study and defined previously.

	N	%	F
coursework	37	51.4	19
workshops	37	81.1	30
seminars	37	78.4	29
meetings	37	97.3	36
literature	37	91.9	34

Figure 3. Frequency of occurrence of continuing education activity by type of activity.

It is important to note that the ARL documents professionals who responded to this survey are involved, on the average, in 3.92 types of the five continuing education activities that are measured. The most popular activity, attendance at professional

meetings, includes attendance at meetings that are discussed further in the Organizational Affiliation portion of these findings.

Coursework that is mentioned by the respondents includes foreign languages, history, computer science, law, geography, and library science courses including online reference and subject bibliography courses. The most popular examples provided by the respondents are geography and computer classes. The majority of the classes mentioned by the survey respondents is easily identified with improving or refreshing job skills and improving documents professional performance.

The most popular example of seminars which occurred is census seminars. The second most popular response is Depository Library Council. Other responses include management seminars, desktop publishing seminars, and online seminars including Dialog, BRS, and OCLC.

Workshops that are reported by the respondents as having been attended, include computer workshops, legislative history compilation, map cataloging, government information, and various United Nations workshops.

The most popular example for professional literature reading is Documents To The People. The second most popular response was Government

Information Quarterly. Other periodicals mentioned by the respondents include Government Publications Review, CD-ROM Professional, RQ, CRL, College and Research Library News, Library Journal, and American Libraries. It is interesting to note that one individual indicated that almost everything one reads is subject related and that another individual includes Time and Newsweek magazines in his/her professional reading. Many of the respondents indicate that they regularly read more than five journals per month. The greatest number of publications of a professional nature reported read by any one individual is 20 on a regular basis.

Organizational Affiliations

The documents professionals surveyed belong to an average of 2.68 organizations each. Figure 4 presents the findings of this portion of the study. Only 5% of the individuals surveyed belong to SLA and 81% and 86% respectively, belong to ALA and GODORT. The majority of librarians who report membership in the other category indicate that they belong to state documents interest groups. Other organizations reported include Association of College and Research Libraries, local library associations, local documents interest groups, MAGERT, and Association of Public Data Users, and Intellectual Freedom Round Table.

Name of Organization	N	%	F
ALA	37	81.1	30
State Association	37	51.4	19
GODORT	37	86.5	32
SLA	37	5.4	2
Other organizations	37	48.6	18

Figure 4. Frequency of membership by type of organization.

Professional Experience

The professional experience portion of this study addresses both the actual amount of documents and other professional experience and the type of any experience other than that associated with the professional's experience in his/her documents work. Figure 5 presents the findings.

Experience	N	Mean	St.Dev.	Min	Max
Documents	37	11.92	7.52	0.0	24.0
Total Exp.	37	16.33	7.09	1.5	27.0

Figure 5. Comparison of documents experience and other types of professional experience in years.

Types of Exp.	N	* %	St.Dev.	Min	Max	F
Reference	37	73.0	0.45	0.0	1.0	27
Subject Ref.	37	45.9	0.51	0.0	1.0	17
Tech Service	37	27.0	0.45	0.0	1.0	10
Circulation	37	18.9	0.40	0.0	1.0	7
Adult Services	37	8.1	0.28	0.0	1.0	3
Childrens' Serv.	37	2.7	0.16	0.0	1.0	1
Administration	37	2.7	0.16	0.0	1.0	1
InterLibraryLoan	37	2.7	0.16	0.0	1.0	1
Total	37	181%	-	-	-	67

Figure 6. Frequencies of specific types of experience outside of the documents field.

* % = percent of total sample that have specific types of professional experience

As can be seen in Figure 5, the professionals surveyed have an average of 11.92 years of documents experience and 16.33 years of total professional experience. In order of occurrence, as shown in Figure 6, the other types of experience that the librarians surveyed have are general reference, subject specialty reference, technical services, circulation, adult services and, tied for least often experienced, childrens' services, administration, and inter library loan. The finding that 73% of the respondents have general reference experience is not particularly surprising. What does, however, prove surprising is the

fact that on the average, the documents librarians have close to twelve years of documents' experience. With the slightly more than 16 years of total experience this indicates that the professionals have spent a substantial portion of their careers employed in the documents field. It would appear that the choice of documents librarianship as a career is made early in the librarian's professional experience. There are a number of individuals who indicate that they have no professional experience other than that in the documents field which is also an interesting finding.

Method of Obtaining Present Position

The most common response (27%) of the documents professionals who responded to the survey indicate that they obtained their present position through a professional journal advertisement. Responding to an in-house job posting was a close second at 22% of the librarians surveyed obtaining their position through that method. An interesting finding is that 16% were transferred to their present position from some other job position. The other category of obtaining employment consists of four of the individuals (11%) obtaining their position through direct inquiry to the institution and one individual who was recommended by a colleague for the position. Figure 7 summarizes the findings.

Type	F	%	N
Journal Advertisement	10	27.0	37
Newspaper Advertisement	3	8.1	37
In-House Posting	8	21.6	37
Transfer	6	16.2	37
Professional Contact	2	5.5	37
Word of Mouth	2	5.5	37
University Placement Serv.	1	2.7	37
Direct Inquiry	4	10.7	37
Recommended by Colleague	1	2.7	37
Total	37	100	--

Figure 7. Percentage of professionals by method that they obtained their present documents position.

Educational Background

Figure 8 lists the undergraduate majors of the respondents. The most frequently appearing majors are English and History with a respective 27% and 24% of the librarians surveyed having those undergraduate majors.

All of the respondents to the questionnaire possess the Master's in Library Science degree except for one individual. Obviously, a master's degree is the norm.

Approximately 38% of the professionals surveyed have subject masters degrees, as shown in Figure 9. The most common subject area is history and Figure 10 shows

the variety of subject masters' degrees within the social sciences subject area.

Figure 12 lists the undergraduate minors that the respondents hold, indicating that the most common minor in undergraduate studies is in the category of social sciences including Political Science, Economics, Education, Philosophy, Psychology, and general Social Sciences. Of the respondents listing an undergraduate minor, 65% have a minor in the social sciences. Figure 11 summarizes the subject distribution of various minors within the social sciences category. Based on the findings presented in Figures 8 through 12, it is obvious that the most frequently held undergraduate and graduate training, besides the Masters' in Library Science degree, is in the social sciences subject area.

Undergraduate Major	F	N	%
History	9	37	24.3
English	10	37	27.0
Political Science	2	37	5.5
Education	3	37	8.2
Sciences	3	37	8.2
Languages	2	37	5.5
Library Science	2	37	5.5
Fine arts	2	37	5.5
Sociology	2	37	5.5
Other Social Science	4	37	10.9
Total	*39	-	**106.1%

Figure 8. Frequency of specific undergraduate majors.

- * Total does not equal N due to respondents having more than one major
- ** total does not equal 100% due to respondents having more than one major

Subject Masters	N	* %	F	**% of Prof.
English	14	14.4	2	5.4
Social Sciences	14	71.4	10	27.0
Foreign Language	14	7.1	1	2.7
Speech and Theater	14	7.1	1	2.7
Total	--	100%	14	*** 37.8

Figure 9. Frequency of specific masters' degree subjects.

* % = percent of all individuals with subject masters' degrees
 ** % of prof. = percent of total sample (N=37) with specific subject masters' degrees
 *** does not equal 100% due to not all respondents having subject masters' degrees

Social Science	N	* %	F	**% of Prof.
History	14	28.6	4	10.8
Administration	14	21.4	3	8.1
Teaching	14	14.3	2	5.4
Anthropology	14	7.1	1	2.7
Total	--	71.4	14	*** 27.0

Figure 10. Frequency of specific masters' degree subjects within the social sciences

* % = percent of all individuals with subject masters' degrees
 ** % of prof. = percent of total sample (N=37) with specific subject masters' degrees
 *** does not equal 100% due to not all respondents having subject masters' degrees

Social Science Minor	N	F	%	*% of Prof.
Economics	37	2	15.4	5.41
General S.S.	37	4	30.7	10.81
Political Science	37	2	15.4	5.41
Philosophy	37	1	7.7	2.70
Education	37	1	7.7	2.70
Psychology	37	2	15.4	5.41
History	37	1	7.7	2.70
Total	-	13	100%	35.14%

Figure 11. Frequency of distribution of undergraduate minors among the social sciences.

* % of Prof. = percentage of the total sample (N=37) that have specific undergraduate minors.

Minors	N	F	%	*% of Prof.
Social Sciences	37	13	65.0	35.14
Library Science	37	1	5.0	2.70
English	37	2	10.0	5.41
Speech	37	2	10.0	5.41
Other Minors	37	2	10.0	5.41
Total	-	20	100%	54.07%

Figure 12. Frequencies of specific undergraduate minors by subject.

* % of Prof. = percentage of the total sample (N=37) that have specific undergraduate minors.

V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

To summarize the findings of this study, the typical documents librarian, working at an ARL research library, can be described in the following way:

He/she is working with a separate collection of documents materials that is still proximately located in or accessible to the rest of the collection.

He/she has a Masters degree in Library Science and an undergraduate background in the Social Sciences, most likely, History.

He/She probably does not have a subject master's degree. If he/she does, however, it is in the social sciences subject area and is probably History.

He/she works with one other professional librarian on a full time basis and two others on a part time basis. There is a full time paraprofessional or clerical staff of three individuals in the department and another part time staff member. There are eight student employees.

He/she has been working in a professional position for an average of sixteen years and in the documents field for twelve of those sixteen years. The experience other than documents experience was in reference services.

He/she belongs to three professional organizations. In all likelihood, the memberships are

in ALA, Godort, and the state library association.

He/she reads Documents to the People and Government Information Quarterly on a regular basis and also reads a number of other professional publications. Participation in workshops, seminars, and academic courses and attendance at professional meetings is the norm.

He/she obtained the present documents position by responding to a journal ad or an in-house position posting notice.

Recommendations

A number of areas investigated in this study do bear further investigation. A comparison of the areas investigated in this study with other fields of librarianship such as general reference services or subject specific reference services would be a valuable undertaking. It would be valuable to determine if there is a correlation between background, experience, continuing education activity, and organizational affiliations of documents professionals with other areas of librarianship.

An indepth study of any of the subject areas explored in this study would also be useful as would a repetition of the study with a different subject group than ARL documents professionals. Other subject groups

that would be appropriate for further study include documents professionals in public libraries and those in academic libraries in general.

A final point that requires further investigation is whether there is a comparable correlation between number of years of experience in a specific field and total professional experience. It would be interesting to determine if a decision within the first few years of professional work is the norm for the career pattern throughout the professional's career.

APPENDIX A

SURVEY OF DOCUMENTS PROFESSIONALS

Please complete the following questionnaire as completely as possible. All answers will be kept in the strictest confidence.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. your position title (please specify) _____

2. location of documents collection to the rest of the collection (please check one)

integrated _____ separate but proximate _____

totally separate _____

3. staffing

number of full time professional exclusively documents _____

number of part time professionals (may include full time professional with duties other than documents) _____

number of full time paraprofessional and/or clerical _____

number of part time paraprofessional and/or clerical (exclusive of student workers) _____

number of student workers employed less than full time _____

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

4. undergraduate degree(s)

type of degree(s) _____

major(s) _____

minor(s) _____

5. graduate degree(s)

type of degree(s) _____

6. continuing education (give an example of each type of continuing education which applies)

course work _____

work shops _____

professional seminars _____

professional association meetings _____

reading professional literature _____

7. professional association memberships (please check all that apply)

ALA _____

State Library Association _____

GODORT _____

ARL _____

SLA _____

other (please specify) _____

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

8. years of professional documents experience _____

9. total years of professional experience _____

10. type of professional experience (please check all that apply)

general reference _____

reference (subject specialty) _____

technical services _____

circulation _____

adult services _____

children services _____

11. method by which you obtained your present position
(please check the best answer)

advertisement in professional journal _____

advertisement in a newspaper _____

in-house job posting _____

transfer from other position _____

professional association contact _____

word-of-mouth _____

university placement office _____

employment agency _____

other (please specify) _____

APPENDIX B

Letter of introduction sent to ARL documents librarians randomly selected.

October 10, 1990

Dear Documents Librarian:

Enclosed is a survey that I am currently conducting as part of the requirements for my M.L.S. degree. I am interested in determining the background, experience, and professional activities of individuals employed in the government documents field. Results of the survey are available upon request. The survey should only take a few moments to complete and return in the enclosed envelope.

Your cooperation in promptly responding is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Mary Jane Ledvina

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