

## Reinvigorating engagement with scholarship: Supporting early career librarians as they research and publish

**Poster abstract:** Research and publication can be a challenging process, particularly for early career librarians. This poster shares ways to cultivate engagement with those activities, based on survey results. Respondents rated factors that influenced their research and publication and their confidence in those activities. Of the qualified responses ( $n = 255$ ), the majority reported a lack of confidence but a desire to publish. Factors that respondents said influence their engagement show how MLIS programs and academic libraries can support early career librarians. Libraries can implement practical takeaways from this research to support the scholarly pursuits of their early career colleagues.

<b>DEFINITIONS</b>	
Early career librarians	Less than 5 years of working in libraries since their last degree
MLIS degree	Certification to be a librarian, which could have different titles

<b>WHY IS THIS RESEARCH NEEDED?</b>	
<i>Preparation for Research and Publication</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● MLIS programs provide inconsistent research methods education.</li> <li>● MLIS students may not have experience with research and may not have enough information to determine if they are interested in research and publication as a librarian (i.e. tenure-track positions or pursuing research and publication on their own time).</li> </ul>
<i>Support (or lack thereof) for Research and Publication</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Early career librarians are learning in their jobs, which makes also engaging with research and publication challenging.</li> <li>● Support varies widely across libraries, including inter-personal supports, the available technology, and access to scholarly resources.</li> </ul>

<b>RESEARCH QUESTIONS &amp; METHODOLOGY</b>	
<i>Research and Publication Practices of Early Career Librarians:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are their practices?</li> <li>2. What factors influence them?</li> <li>3. How confident are they?</li> </ol>	<i>Methodology:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Online survey conducted Jan - Mar 2018 via professional listservs</li> </ul>

<b>RESULTS: Demographics</b>	
<i>Responses:</i> <i>n = 345; qualified n = 255</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From 40 states + Washington DC + international</li> <li>All had an MLIS degree (though not required for this survey)</li> <li><b>Required to publish = 31%</b> of respondents</li> </ul>

<b>RESULTS: Factors Influencing Research and Publication</b>	
<p><b>Top positive factors:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Convenience of accessing scholarly resources (86%)</li> <li>Access to necessary technology (84%)</li> <li>Collaborator support and/or presence (78%)</li> </ol> <p><b>Other highly ranked positive factors:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dedicated time to research and/or write</li> <li>Colleague support and/or presence</li> <li>Presence of supervisor support</li> <li>Presence of mentor support</li> <li>Culture at my academic library</li> </ul>	<p><b>Top negative factors:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Absence of supervisor support (48%)</li> <li>Absence of mentor support (48%)</li> <li>Culture at my academic library (19%)</li> </ol> <p><b>Additional factors:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self motivation</li> <li>View of librarianship</li> <li>Lack of confidence</li> <li>Personal life</li> <li>Access to conferences</li> <li>Career advancement</li> </ul>

<b>RESULTS: Confidence in Research and Publication</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>90%</b> of respondents <b>took research methods</b> in their MLIS program.</li> <li><b>81%</b> were confident in their <b>research skills</b>, but only <b>55%</b> were confident in their <b>ability to publish scholarly, peer-reviewed articles</b>.</li> <li>Despite this low confidence in publishing, <b>94% desired to publish more</b> in the future.</li> </ul>	

<b>TAKEAWAYS</b>	
<i>Individual librarians</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Small research projects and non-peer-reviewed publications, like professional blogs or trade journals, are good ways to start.</li> <li>Confidence comes from actually engaging with research and publication.</li> </ul>
<i>MLIS curricula</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respondents indicated a desire to learn more about scholarly publishing, often wanting a dedicated scholarly publishing course.</li> </ul>
<i>Academic libraries</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offering mentoring and discussion groups on research and publication are key to helping early career librarians engage with these activities.</li> <li>Research and publication require time that needs to be allowed for.</li> </ul>