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# What Factors Contribute to or Inhibit Publishing Among Medical Librarians

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## Objective

To discover what factors influence librarians to publish or present their work. The study aims to determine what type of publications and presentations are most prevalent, what external factors impact the decision to publish or present, what internal factors affect the decision, and why one chooses to do one rather than the other or both.

## Methodology

Data were collected using an electronic questionnaire sent to various listservs, including the Medical Library Association, Special Libraries Association, Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries, and regional MLA chapters. The questionnaire was developed by the researchers and it consisted of both quantitative and qualitative items.

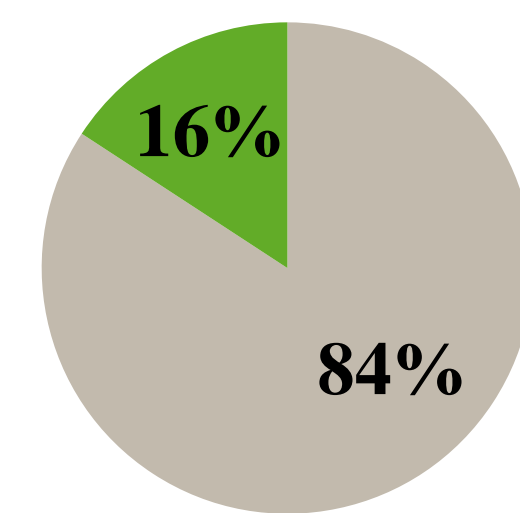
Participants were 209 health sciences librarians from across the United States. However, three sets of questions regarding presentations of research caused confusion among many of the participants and the number of poster vs. paper presentations did not match their total number of presentations. Only the 102 participants whose responses were correctly matched were included in that part of the analysis.

Factors affecting publication of journal articles were analyzed using multiple regression. A combination of descriptive statistics and axial coding were used to determine factors influencing and inhibiting publication and presentation of research.

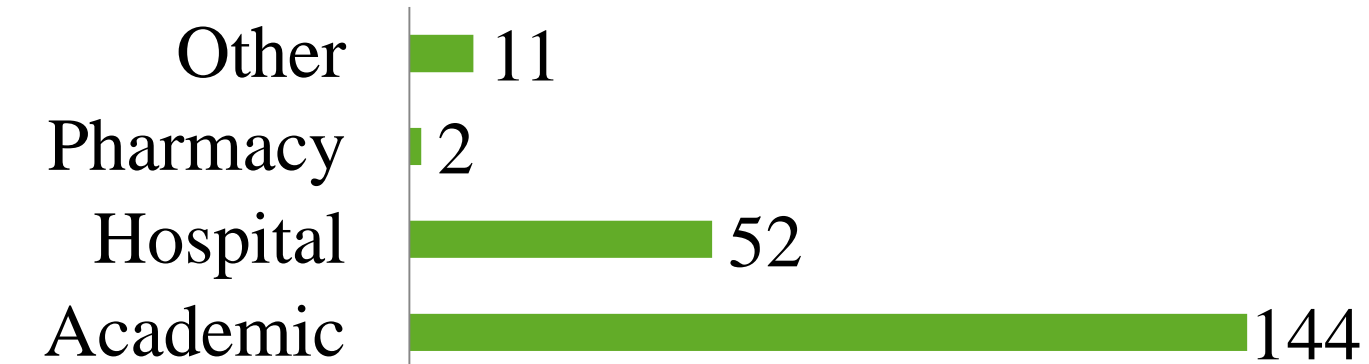
## Participant summary

### Gender

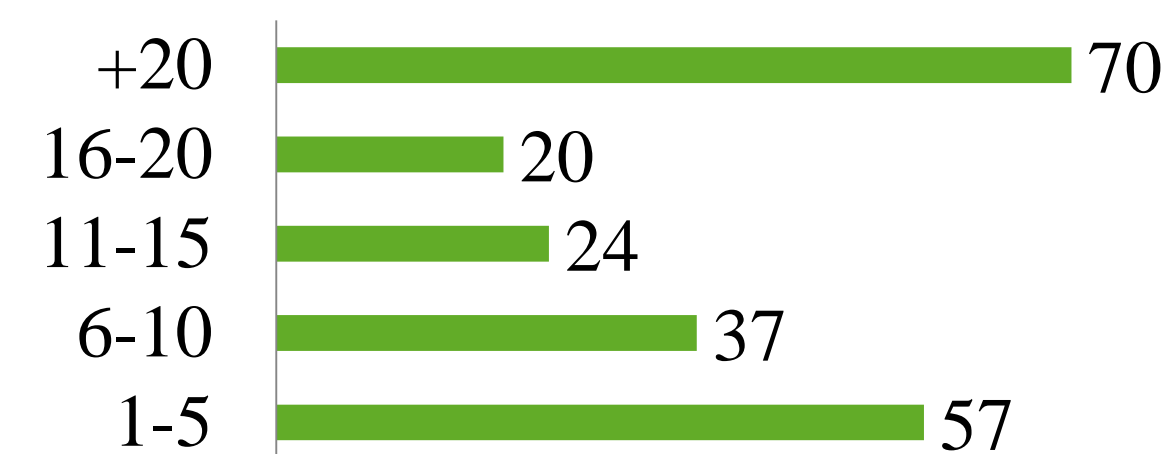
■ female ■ male



### Type of Library Where Currently Employed



### Number of Years in the Profession



## Results

- Preferred publishing or presenting equally at 50.8%
- Preference for quantitative research over qualitative or mixed methodology
- Equal mix of peer reviewed and non-peer reviewed publishing
- Research presented at all conference levels – local, regional, and national
- Most of presentations were in poster format

## Factors that influence librarians

### The most common factors that contribute to publication or presentation of research are:

- an interest in conducting research,
- encouragement from a colleague or supervisor,
- resume enhancement,
- interest in learning new information.

### The most common factors that inhibit publication or presentation of research are:

- not enough time,
- not encouraged to do so by colleague or supervisor,
- no mentor to assist with the process,
- a lack of travel funds.

## Who is most likely to publish?

A librarian in a *tenure track* position, having publications as a *job requirement*, and a greater number of *years in the profession*.

## Conclusion

In order to promote publishing and presenting library schools, managers, and those who have been in the field for several years should introduce new librarians to research through encouragement and mentorship. Incorporating one or more of the following suggestions can encourage more librarians to become interested in conducting research and disseminating the knowledge they gain, thus increasing the knowledge-base of our profession.

## Suggestions

- Be a mentor
- Promote the benefits of presenting/publishing
- Encourage resume building
- Add a research project to your job description

**What motivates you to research?  
What holds you back?  
Tell us here.**

## Suggested Readings



1. Harvey SA, Wandersee JR. Publication rate of abstracts of papers and posters presented at medical library association annual meetings. *J Med Libr Assoc* 2010 Jul;98(3):250-5.
2. Klobas JE, Clyde LA. Beliefs, attitudes and perceptions about research and practice in a professional field. *Library & Information Science Research* 2010 10;32(4):237-45.
3. Lamothe AR. The importance of encouraging librarians to publish in peer-reviewed Publications. *Journal of Scholarly Publishing* 2012 01;43(2):156.
4. Nicholson S. Writing your first scholarly article: A guide for budding authors in librarianship. *Information Technology & Libraries* 2006 06;25(2):108-11.