

Public Abstract

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Academic librarianship is a career punctuated in recent years by the growth of new technologies used in creating, organizing, and retrieving information. Many academic librarians are struggling to keep up to date with these technology changes. The career itself is evolving and reaching out to a new generation of student that is increasingly dependent on these recent technologies, members of the Millennial Generation. However, Millennials are not only students, but they are becoming academic librarians that believe they can work with new technologies and evolve the library in new and exciting ways to meet the needs of students today and into the future. However, there is not a good understanding as to the reasons why this generation chose librarianship as a career, what path they desire to take, and their demographics, although the profession is eager to learn about them. These newer and younger librarians are also seeking to have the professionals understand them.

A two part multiple methods (qualitative and quantitative) approach was undertaken for this study. The quantitative part surveyed currently employed academic librarians and library school students desiring an academic library career that were born in 1982 to 2000. The survey was designed to gather demographic information, reasons for career choice, examine generational attitudes and job satisfaction, as well as measure technology skills. The qualitative part of this study involved 20 interviews sampled from survey respondents who volunteered to participate in an interview. A semi structured interview protocol was used to guide further examination of career selection, generational attitudes, technology skills, and the role technology plays within their career.

The findings reveal that Millennial librarians are not drawn to the profession for its technical nature, and many do not have advanced technical skills, though they desire to learn. Many became academic librarians citing a love of research and a desire to work in the higher education environment. They also want to take a leadership role in shaping libraries for the future, but many are frustrated that they may not get a chance.