Researchers' Final Report for
The British Columbia Library Association's
Professional Learning Assessment Project—

Study Findings and Analysis

Presented to

Annette DeFaveri, Executive Director
British Columbia Library Association

Prepared by

Pia Russell, Librarian
Todd Milford, Assistant Professor

The University of Victoria

Executive Summary

Libraries are innovative and dynamic organizations that respond quickly to changes in their communities and in society. Libraries embrace and incorporate rapid advances in technology while vigorously ensuring the public's right to access information and freedom of speech. Library management, librarians, and library staff do work as varied as designing provincial reading programs for children, supporting university-level research, and advancing international treaties. Providing services that are detailed, well-articulated, valued, and germane are the foundation of a library's commitment to society. To do this, libraries are committed to building broad-based knowledge among staff, to developing staff awareness of community needs and wants, and to ensuring that staff confidence in their abilities is matched to the services they provide. Ongoing professional development builds strong staff members who, in turn, build strong libraries and strong communities.

The British Columbia Library Association's (BCLA) Professional Learning Assessment Project was developed to help understand the professional learning needs of the British Columbia library community. While the Project is uniquely provincial in scope and academic rigor, it builds on work done by individual libraries, Federations, and other groups interested in professional development opportunities for the library community. Some previous assumptions based on anecdotal evidence are now supported by the work of this Project. At the same time, new and unexpected trends have been revealed. The Project and resulting analysis are significant in library literature and provide a timely insight to the changing needs of libraries and library staff.

Background, Context and Analysis

The Professional Learning Assessment Project focuses on the educational and training needs of library service stakeholders—including but not limited to library directors, librarians, library technicians, library assistants, and students. BCLA members, as well as subscribers to the BCLA listserv and subscribers to the provincial Director's listserv, received links to one of two comprehensive questionnaires (a General Questionnaire, or a Directors' Questionnaire) and an invitation to forward the questionnaires to other interested parties. Given the different hierarchical models in libraries, the Directors' Questionnaire purposefully omitted a detailed definition of "Director" and left it to individual respondents to self-identify. Approximately 20 closed- and open-ended questions were asked regarding general and specific information about stakeholders' professional learning requirements, experiences, and interests.

Overall the study demonstrated a strong level of stakeholder engagement. Based on BCLA membership numbers, the General Questionnaire achieved a 44% response rate and the Directors' Questionnaire received a 53% response rate. Participants for both

questionnaires were representative across library types, geographic regions, employment groups, age, gender, years and extent of professional experience, preferred methods of professional learning, and areas of interest for professional learning.

All results were initially analyzed descriptively. Statistical data was tabulated and qualitative data underwent a first cycle of elemental and exploratory coding. A second, more in-depth phase of analysis was conducted where quantitative analysis included a focus on specific to sub-groups—specifically by geographic region, library type, and employee group.

The collected data and subsequent analysis yields insights far beyond the study's original intention: to gather a list of subject-related suggestions to help plan professional development programs and training. Details and comments on this unexpected result are included throughout the Executive Summary and can be examined in detail in the research data.

Who responded to the Questionnaires?

Respondents self-described in the following way:

- 57% identified as librarians
- 27% as library technicians
- 20% identified as 'other', identifying as policy analysts, teacher librarians, archivists, library trustees, and library school students
- 13% self-identified as library assistants

While the Project was designed for current library staff in all roles, significant under-representation of MLIS program students, library technician program students, educators, volunteers, teachers, school librarians, policy analysts, and trustees was expected and observed. This under-representation suggests that it is inappropriate to extrapolate survey data to build professional development opportunities for these groups.

Demographics

Most respondents identified their age as being between 31-35 (18%), with the 36-40 (14%), 41-45 (14%), and 46-50 (13%) ranges following equally closely behind. Given that the majority of respondents are between 31 and 35 years, it is useful to consider the survey results as representative of a younger portion of library directors, librarians, and library staff. It is heartening that newer members of the library

community are interested in professional development and have expressed their wants and needs in the surveys.

Library Representation

Public library representation is 57% for the General Questionnaire and 76% for the Directors' Questionnaire. Academic library representation is 32% for the General Questionnaire and 17% for the Directors' Questionnaire.

Current Employment Status

When asked in the General Questionnaire about current employment status, 73% of respondents indicated they worked in full-time positions, 26% worked part-time, and 1% were unemployed. Comments throughout the General Questionnaire expressed the difficulty individuals faced, across employee groups, in finding full-time and permanent work.

Education

Education level among survey respondents is heavily weighted to a master's degree (60% of respondents). Nearly tied for distant second place are respondents holding either a diploma (16%) or a bachelor's degree (15%). Project analysts suggest that a more in-depth survey is necessary to understand how educational levels might better determine further professional development opportunities.

Those respondents identifying as professional librarians were asked about their years since graduation. The greatest number of librarians (27%) reported between zero and five years since MLIS graduation. With the exception of more than 20 years (24%), the trend through the years steadily decreased by an average of 5% with each five-year increment, so that the lowest number (11%) were those with 16-20 years since their MLIS graduation. This trend emphasizes that the data collected is a good indicator of what new and younger members of the library community want and need for professional development.

Years of Leadership Experience

The Directors' Questionnaire asked about years of leadership experience. More than half of respondents hold less than 10 years of library leadership experience and within that group the average is 5.5 years. Leadership patterns are weighted to those who have fewer years of library leadership experience. Professional development opportunities

specific to the needs of this group are worth exploring further. Project analysts recommend a second survey that explores the needs of library leaders so they have the opportunity to define and identify the skills and knowledge that they feel would be most helpful to them.

Professional Preparedness

General Questionnaire respondents were asked if the quality of their professional preparation, as measured with a Master of Library and Information Studies (or equivalent), was sufficient. Only 23% felt their MLIS education had prepared them *very well* for their positions, while 52% of respondents felt their education had prepared them *somewhat well*, 9% were *undecided*, 12% felt their MLIS education *had not prepared them well*, and 4% felt the preparation was *not well at all*. This questionnaire did not ask which universities respondents had graduated from. Those organizations, associations, and libraries invested in librarian education within BC might ask what further initiatives could be implemented in MLIS programs to ensure that MLIS graduates are prepared for the professional responsibilities of their positions.

The quality of professional preparation is far more positive for library technicians than for librarians. Library technicians felt better prepared for their work, and felt that their education focused on the skills they needed and that their institutions were looking for.

Of library support staff 74% felt that the training provided through their organizations had been *adequate*, while 26% felt that training provided elsewhere had been *adequate*. Questionnaire responses suggest that the role of individual libraries in providing in-house training is critical to the professional learning of library support staff.

Describing and Connecting the Data

With a demographic context established, subsequent questions sought data that described and connected the actual, intended, and perceived experiences of professional learning at individual and organizational levels. In-depth analysis explored trends specific to library type, employee group, and geographic region. Specific questions related to: different methods of professional learning involvement, percentage of work time spent on professional learning, costs and funding sources, sources of professional learning and levels of satisfaction with such sources, challenges to professional learning, what supports would improve professional learning, how BCLA and the broader library community can better serve professional learning, examples of effective professional learning, and pressing issues facing libraries in BC today.

What are the most pressing issues in libraries today?

Both the General and Directors' questionnaires asked about the most pressing issues currently facing libraries in BC. While this question was not specific to professional learning, it did provide some remarkable insight into the tensions libraries are currently experiencing. These questions were open-ended and 196 general respondents (44% of total respondents for that questionnaire) provided comments, while all directors provided comments. This qualitative data was analyzed using initial and descriptive coding; the same coding schema was used for both questionnaires.

General Questionnaire respondents identified the following six leading themes, in percentage priority order, as being the most pressing issues facing BC libraries today:

- Technological change
- Library advocacy
- Community engagement
- Budgets, funding, and financials
- Assessment, evaluation, user experience monitoring, metrics, and analytics
- Collections

Directors' Questionnaire respondents identified the following six leading themes, in percentage priority order, as being the most pressing issues facing BC libraries today:

- Community engagement
- Technological change
- Professional learning
- Library as place
- Leadership, administration, management
- Innovation or lack of

These responses suggest a troubling difference between what staff and directors perceive the challenges for libraries to be. This difference reflects negatively on current perceptions of professional development needs, understanding of institutional priorities, and expected learning experiences. Without a shared understanding of the important issues facing libraries it is difficult to determine the skills and training that all agree are helpful in building the future.

Areas of Interest and Areas of Need for Professional Development

Respondents were asked about areas of interest and need for professional learning. Three distinct sets of answers emerged. The expectation was to see considerable

overlap in the answers from the General Questionnaire responses and Director Questionnaire responses. In fact the overlap is small and suggests a gap that might be indicative of larger communication and leadership issues. All answers are ordered according to the percentage of respondents who indicated a specific area of interest and need.

The top five areas of interest for professional learning of General Questionnaire respondents were:

1. Staying informed of emerging trends and issues
2. Equitable access
3. Evaluation of library services
4. Equity, diversity, and inclusion
5. Effective communication

The top five areas where directors observed knowledge and/or skill gaps that they would like to see addressed through professional opportunities were:

1. Effective communication
2. Planning and strategy
3. Evaluation of library services
4. Emerging web technologies specific to libraries
5. Organizational change and development

The top five areas of actual recent participation for professional learning of General Questionnaire respondents were:

1. Customer service
2. Conflict resolution
3. Team work and collaborations
4. Effective communication
5. Equity, diversity, and inclusion

While the intention of the Project was not to identify gaps in relationships, communication, or leadership, it is important to acknowledge where such gaps emerged. The disparity in these three answer sets is one such example.

Professional development is intrinsically linked to the needs of the library as well as to the needs and wants of the individual. While this may not always be a smooth and *simpatico* relationship, there is, never the less, an overarching need for collaborative conversations to ensure that library employees and management understand and support the role of the library in society.

Determining appropriate and ongoing learning is critical for both personal and professional growth. It is also critical that a discussed and debated understanding of the role of libraries in society be shared by management and staff. This shared understanding helps determine the skills and training needed to reach the goals and objectives of the library. At the same time this shared understanding helps individuals develop professional values and ensures that they grow in their profession and contribute to the future of their institution.

Accessing Professional Development Opportunities

Regional responses for the General Questionnaire were weighted to the Mainland/Southwest (68%), Vancouver Island/Coast (16%), and Thompson/Okanagan (7%); other regions represented only 9% of responses. The directors' responses were weighted less to the Lower Mainland (31%). Kootenay was represented by 20% of director respondents, while Cariboo and Vancouver Island/Coast each had 10%. For context, according to BCStats[1] 2015 population estimates, Greater Vancouver comprises 54% of the total provincial population.

Regional access to professional development opportunities is a long-standing and critical issue for the BC library community, particularly in areas outside the urban core. The results of the Project's questionnaires validate the existence of a rural and urban divide in both access to professional learning and the types of learning that are wanted and needed.

While many libraries share overarching and common workflows, procedures, and policies, the results of this project reveal operational and service differences between rural and urban libraries. Such differences are worth further exploration in each geographical area in order to design professional development that accurately meets the distinct needs and wants of urban and rural libraries.

Regional respondents emphasize the many advantages to living in the Lower Mainland when accessing professional learning opportunities. Achieving the ideal of equitable access to professional learning throughout the Province begins by addressing geographical considerations. Web-based technologies such as webinars, video conferencing, course management systems, and social media are often suggested as methods to ensure equitable opportunities—but before such methods can be implemented, access to reasonably priced and reliable broadband must exist for rural libraries. Collective advocacy emphasizing a provincial focus on this issue is an important step toward equitable access and professional development opportunities in rural libraries and communities.

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[1] http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/Demography/PopulationEstimates.aspx

The discord demonstrated within the quantitative and qualitative data concerning urban and rural professional development disparity suggests the need for a concentrated and enduring discussion in the BC library community. Such discussions can help the library community to better understand expectations and areas of responsibility as well as developing new and unique approaches for mutual support and learning.

Interest and Participation in Professional Learning Opportunities

Both the General and Directors' questionnaires asked respondents about interest and participation with the following seven broad categories common to work in libraries:

- Foundations of the profession
- Interpersonal and soft skills
- Leadership, management, and administration
- Library collections development
- Reference and user services
- Service and scholarship in the profession
- Technical knowledge and skills

Responses revealed a sizable difference between what interested General Questionnaire respondents and what they had actually participated in. In other words, General Questionnaire respondents participate in professional learning opportunities that they feel are not suited to their interests or needs.

Responses suggest that directors and general questionnaire respondents do not share an understanding of professional or institutional priorities. General Questionnaire responses focus on foundational topics such as equitable access, effective communication, and evaluation of library services, while directors emphasize managerial topics such as planning and strategy, organizational change and development, leadership development, and developing partnerships and networks. With this inconsistency in mind, organizations planning professional development offerings may see benefits to working closely with both directors and staff to determine opportunities that meet the needs of both groups. Such collaborative work builds a shared understanding of professional learning that enhances both the professional and the institution.

The Importance of Professional Learning

Questions about the importance of professional learning served as important benchmarks for the Project, but also for any additional future research. Both the general and directors' responses indicate that professional learning is important, but the degree

and distribution of this importance was distinct: 26% of directors felt that professional learning was *very important*, while 74% of general respondents felt that professional learning was *very important*; 25% of directors felt that professional learning was *moderately important*; and 12% of directors felt that professional learning was of *little importance* or *unimportant*. None of the general respondents felt that professional learning was of *little importance* or *unimportant.*

Directors were asked how they ranked the importance of professional learning in relation to other competing priorities. The Project analysts felt that the questionnaire wording may have been somewhat confusing for respondents; however the results to this question indicate that directors feel that professional learning is of moderate to low importance in relation to other competing priorities.

When General Questionnaire respondents were asked about the importance of professional learning they indicated that such training and support was important. However, the degree of importance between 'moderately' and 'very' important differs between regions. 'Very important' dominates most regions; North Coast was distinct, with approximately 60% of respondents stating that professional learning was only 'moderately important'. When the importance of professional learning is compared across library type, parallelism of response is consistent, meaning that all library types are highly inclined (approximately 80%) to professional learning being very important; public libraries are marginally more inclined to important rather than very important, but the difference is slight.

Approaches to Professional Learning

Asking about methods of professional learning involvement provided considerable insight, especially when compared by library type and geographic region. For general respondents, informal professional learning methods such as reading on one's own, listservs, and online webinars dominated as methods for professional learning. Directors did not emphasize the importance of self-initiated methods for professional learning and appeared to be less aware of these options, or did not consider them as professional development opportunities. Directors as well as general respondents noted other initiatives—such as conferences and online sessions offered through professional associations, and in-person classes offered through employers—as important approaches to professional learning.

Online and informal approaches to professional learning are equally important across all regions, while conferences and in-person employer training remain moderately important as they are dependent on financial support and accessibility. Overall it appears that unique professional learning needs are more relevant to library type than regional distinction. So while geography may be a recurring theme within the descriptive and qualitative data, when looking deeper into the stated preferences for

methods of professional learning, library type is considerably more relevant than geography.

Time for Professional Learning

When asked about the amount of work time respondents spend on professional learning, 60% of general respondents reported they spent either no time or less than 5% of their work time on professional learning, 23% reported having spent between 5-10%, 10% reported have spent between 11-15%, and 9% spent more than 16% of their work time on professional learning.
When asked how much time librarian respondents had spent at work on professional learning activities, 169 librarians responded: 56% reported having spent between 0-5% of their work time last year on professional learning related activities, while 24% reported having spent between 6-10% of their time. When asked how much time respondents had spent at work on professional learning activities, 138 library technicians or assistants responded. Of these, 62% reported having spent between 0-5% of their work time on professional learning and 19% spent between 6-10% of their time. This is a commendable amount of time spent on professional learning.

Current Professional Learning Opportunities

Satisfaction levels with currently available professional learning opportunities were mediocre in nature across both the General and Directors' questionnaires as well as by library type and region. Professional learning opportunities provided by respondents' home organizations were somewhat more satisfactory than those provided by educational institutions, online options, and professional associations, but not overwhelmingly so. Opportunities provided by formal education, offered through educational institutes, were consistently of least satisfaction to all respondents. Directors identified geography as cost prohibitive for much professional learning, while all respondents indicated a preference for in-person training. Public and academic libraries demonstrate consistently similar satisfaction levels.

Questionnaire responses indicate that directors believe hands-on training has a more lasting impact on staff and the institution. Directors' comments highlight the benefit of professional learning to their organizations as being: increased staff confidence, enthusiasm, organizational commitment, and improved front line service.

Professional Learning Interests, Participation and Skills Gap

The top five areas of interest for professional learning of General Questionnaire respondents, as determined by percentage priority selection, are:

1. Staying informed of emerging trends and issues
2. Equitable access
3. Evaluation of library services
4. Equity, diversity and inclusion
5. Effective communication

The top five areas of actual recent participation for professional learning of General Questionnaire respondents were:

1. Customer service
2. Conflict resolution
3. Team work and collaborations
4. Effective communication
5. Equity, diversity and inclusion

The top five areas where directors indicated an observed knowledge and/or skill gap that they would like to see addressed through professional learning included:

1. Effective communication
2. Planning and strategy
3. Evaluation of library services
4. Emerging web technologies specific to libraries
5. Organizational change and development

These responses help identify areas where professional learning is wanted, needed, and considered beneficial. Working with staff and directors to identify overlapping areas of interest and need will make future professional learning experiences constructive and helpful to all involved.

Challenges to Professional Learning Participation

When asked about challenges to participating in professional learning, General Questionnaire respondents ranked time challenges highest (66%), followed closely by funding challenges (62%). Geographical distance was an issue for 45% of respondents. Insufficient employer support for release time from work accounted for 34% of respondents, and family commitments followed closely at 31%. Health and mobility were challenges for 5% of respondents.

Director feedback regarding challenges for their staff to participate in professional learning emphasized, in order of significance: geographic distance, time, insufficient institutional budget, and other financial considerations. Family obligations and personal relevance were less pressing challenges.

Public and academic library respondents showed considerable pattern overlap for each category, sharing order of challenge as financial, geographical, time, family obligations, and mobility. As with previous questions, academic and public library settings have more in common than may be commonly perceived within the library community.

Support for Professional Learning

General Questionnaire respondents felt their professional learning would be better supported, in ranked order, if:

1. There was more work time to participate
2. Regional challenges could be addressed
3. There was more funding available from a variety of sources, but specifically from employers
4. More online options were available
5. Staff was paid for the time to participate in conferences and workshops
6. Employers better supported and encouraged attending professional learning opportunities
7. Staff had less burdened work schedules and more time for professional learning
8. Professional learning content from workshops, conferences, and courses was made available afterwards for them to consult at their convenience.

Pressing Issues facing BC Libraries

Both the General and Director's questionnaires included an item about the perception of the most pressing issues currently facing libraries in BC. This question was not specific to professional learning, but provided some remarkable insight into the state of libraries generally. The questions were open-ended and 196 general respondents provided commentaries (44% of total respondents) while all directors provided comments. This qualitative data was analyzed using initial and descriptive coding; both questionnaire responses utilized the same coding schema.

General Questionnaire respondents identified the following six leading themes as being the most pressing issues facing BC libraries today:

1. Technological change
2. Library advocacy
3. Community engagement
4. Budgets, funding, and financials
5. Assessment, evaluation, user experience monitoring, metrics, and analytics
6. Collections

Directors' Questionnaire respondents identified the following eight leading themes as being the most pressing issues facing BC libraries today:

1. Community engagement
2. Technological change
3. Professional learning
4. Library as place
5. Leadership, administration, management
6. Innovation or lack of
7. Succession planning
8. Foundations of the profession

These two lists echo a recurring theme in the survey results—specifically, the gap between the perceptions, priorities, and experiences of general questionnaire respondents and the directors who lead them. The gap suggests that professional learning opportunities need to be developed collaboratively with close attention to the needs and sensitivities of both groups. Intentional conversations about professional learning would enhance a shared understanding of personal, professional, and institutional needs. An emphasis on staff-led discussions about professional development, complimented by discussions with directors about the overarching needs of the library, could enrich a shared awareness of relevant, needed, and wanted professional learning.

Overall the Professional Learning Assessment Project provides significant benchmarks for understanding the current learning landscape in the BC library community, as well as providing direction for further research aimed at better understanding the significant challenges the current research exposed. Deeper and academically rigorous research into areas such as the role of librarians, from both an individual professional perspective and from a management perspective, would add considerably to an understanding this group's ongoing professional development needs. The library community would also benefit from research focused on barriers to regional access to professional development opportunities, coupled with a rigorous examination of new and realistic avenues for delivering ongoing learning opportunities. Finally, the gaps and divisions within the library community revealed by this survey suggest that important discussions to facilitate a model for fully sharing our resources and knowledge are necessary if we are to sustain libraries across the province.

-Annette DeFaveri

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Introduction

BCLA's Professional Learning Assessment Project

Through the Professional Learning Assessment Project the British Columbia Library Association (BCLA) sought to understand the professional development needs of the British Columbia library community. During this exploratory project, library service stakeholders (e.g., library directors, librarians, library technicians, library assistants, students, board members, etc.) were invited to participate in one of two comprehensive online questionnaires. Approximately 20 closed- and open-ended questions were asked regarding both general and specific information about stakeholders' professional learning needs, experiences, and interests.

Photographer unknown. (jca. 1950-). New Westminster Public Library. [photograph]. Part of Archives Visual Records Collection, Accesssion number 199003-004. British Columbia Archives, Victoria.

For the purpose of this project, **professional learning** was defined as:

> …a wide variety of learning opportunities including conferences, workshops, webinars, and classes. It is learning at the most fundamental level and receiving training in the skills that you need in order to become a more well-rounded professional. These events and classes are also a great way to stay abreast of new technologies and keep up with the latest trends.

<div align="right">

Janvey McCurry, 2013
"Professional Development 101" NMRT—News.
May 2013, Volume 42 No. 4
American Library Association

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Purpose of this project

This exploratory project assumes that professional learning is critical to ensure the knowledge and skills of service providers within BC's library community are continuously enhanced. However, for many individuals and organizations the ability to maintain and acquire such knowledge and skills is an ongoing challenge.

The project aims to describe the current state of professional learning within BC's library community.. Project findings will directly inform the development of new programs and services to better support the professional learning needs of those invested in libraries throughout British Columbia.

Using two versions of a related questionnaire, quantitative and qualitative data was gathered on individual and organizational professional learning needs, experiences, and interests; demographic data was also gathered.

Goals of the project include identifying:
- Challenges and/or barriers to professional learning
- Existing offerings and their value
- Professional learning gaps
- Emerging areas of professional expertise
- Educational opportunities
- New and potential partnerships
- evolving methods of training delivery

Scope of this project

BCLA's Professional Learning Assessment Project explored the state of professional learning within British Columbia's library community.

Participants were represented from across:
- Library types
- Geographical regions
- Employee and/or stakeholder groups
- Age
- Gender
- Years of professional experience
- Extent of professional learning experience
- Preferred methods of professional learning
- Diverse areas of interest for professional learning

Specific areas and modes of professional learning were also explored. The project gathered both individual- and organizational-level data.

This report describes and summarizes questionnaire responses as well as provides quantitative (statistical) and qualitative (text-based) data analysis.

Limitations of this report include:
- Triangulation between the two questionnaire versions was constructive in portraying discrepancies between director and individual responses, but also limited in its ability to expand upon why such discrepancies might exist.
- The self-selection of participants meant randomization was not possible given the lack of a total known population number for BC's library community.
- This project assumed that respondents had access to the web-based questionnaire and had the approximately 15 minutes of time required to complete the questionnaire.
- Not every respondent answered every question, as many questions were optional.

Photographer unknown. (ca. 1947). Prince George Public Library. [photograph].
Part of Archives Visual Records Collection, Accession number 193501-001. British Columbia Archives, Victoria.

Sources and methods

In the summer of 2015, the BCLA succeeded in attaining a grant from the Libraries' Branch of the BC Ministry of Education. The proposal outlined a comprehensive needs assessment as the main portion of BCLA's Professional Learning Assessment Project. Led by the BCLA Executive Director, two researchers (one faculty member and one academic librarian) from the University of Victoria were consulted to provide guidance on gathering exploratory empirical data on the professional learning needs, experiences, and challenges of organizations and individuals within the BC library community.

Throughout the fall of 2015 the consultants drafted two questionnaire instruments. One questionnaire sought organization-level responses from library directors and the second, more general questionnaire, focused on gathering individual data from various library employees within BC libraries. These providers included, but were not limited to: librarians, library technicians, library trustees, and library school students (see figure 1). Each questionnaire contained approximately 20 questions that were both closed- and open-ended.

Four sections comprised each questionnaire:
1. Demographic information
2. Experience and interest with professional learning
3. Challenges to professional learning
4. Additional insights and follow-up

Professional learning interest and experience questions were informed by:

- The American Library Association's (ALA) Core Competencies for Librarianship (2009)
- The Canadian Association of Research Libraries' (CARL) Core Competencies for 21st Century CARL librarians (2010)
- The Special Libraries' Association (SLA) Competencies for Information Professionals of the 21st Century (2003)
- Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals' (CILIP) Professional Knowledge and Skills Base (2014)
- The Canadian Library Association's (CLA) "Guidelines for the Education of Library Technicians" (2011)

Throughout the spring of 2016 the questionnaires were edited, tested, and revised. For the month of March 2016, both questionnaires were deployed via FluidSurveys and invitations to participate were sent via BCLA's numerous listservs and between library staff by word-of-mouth. Participants spent on average 18 minutes to complete the general questionnaire. Response rates peaked at three times throughout the month of deployment; 136 responses (approximately 20% of the responses) were completed within the first three days of questionnaire deployment. Two smaller peaks occurred with about 10% each of responses came in for one week within deployment and an equal peak during the last week of deployment. The directors' questionnaire also took participants approximately 18 minutes to complete. An incentive of free conference attendance or annual professional association membership was offered to the first 20 respondents.

After the questionnaire closed on Mar. 31, 2016, 547 entries were recorded in FluidSurvey for the general questionnaire, with 387 completing the entire questionnaire; 66 entries were recorded for the directors' questionnaire, with 53 respondents completing the entire questionnaire. The difference in entries as opposed to actual completion could be explained by participants starting the questionnaire and not completing it or completing it later in a new session.

Throughout the spring of 2016 results were analysed one-dimensionally. Statistical data was descriptively analyzed and qualitative data underwent a first cycle of elemental and exploratory coding[2]. In particular, elemental coding included descriptive, *in vivo*, and initial approaches, while exploratory coding included provisional and hypothesis approaches. A second, more in-depth phase of analysis was conducted in the summer of 2016. Further quantitative analysis included multivariate statistical analysis with a focus on analyses specific to sub-groups specifically by geographic region.

Triangulation was sought both between the two questionnaire instruments as well as the quantitative and qualitative nature of responses. This project relied upon an exploratory mixed methods design comprised of concurrent statistical data and qualitative inference throughout both the data collection and analysis stages[3].

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[2] Saldana, Johnny. (2013). *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers.* SAGE: Thousand Oaks, CA.
[3] Tashakkori, A., & Teddlie, C. (Eds.) (2003). *Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social & Behavioural Research*. SAGE: Thousand Oaks, CA.

Professional self-identification

Archivist 2%

Other 15%

Library Assistant 11%

Librarian 49%

Library Technician 23%
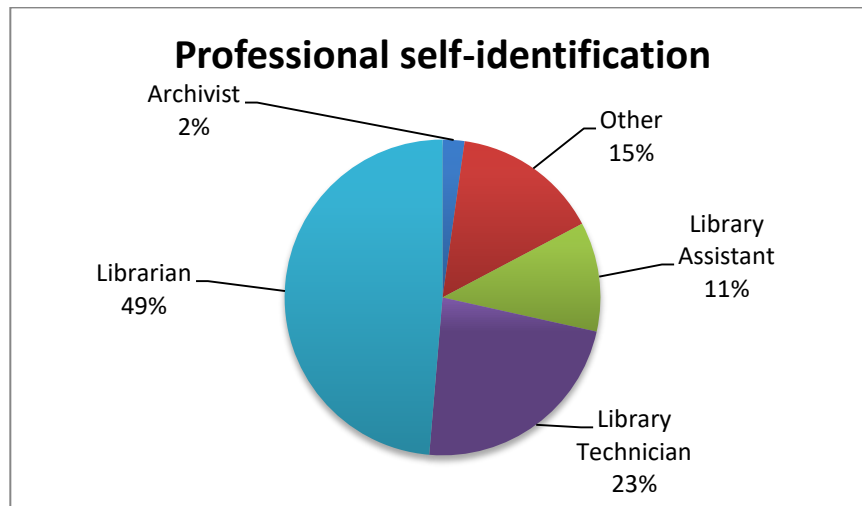
Figure 1. Brief professional self-identification of general questionnaire respondents

The questionnaire designers developed both instruments with a holistic approach in mind, which resulted in both quantitative and qualitative data being sought. Because of the exploratory nature of the project, a balance of data breadth and depth was the goal. While closed-ended data would provide for quick respondent input, without open-ended response options, little insight would explain the large volume of numeric responses. Open-ended questions and optional comments fields complemented most of the closed-ended question items. This in-depth data was more time consuming for respondents, adding to the questionnaire response time, as well as to the researchers throughout the analysis stage. However, the richness of this text-based data was extremely valuable to the British Columbia Library Association and to other provincial organizations interested in providing professional learning opportunities.

In the end, the researchers believe the data collection strategy and accompanying results were well balanced, albeit extensive, and provide a robust initial depiction of the state of professional learning in BC's library community. Given additional resources, future applications could extend related data collection into the future; for example, longitudinal time-series and cohort study.

Respondents were extraordinarily generous with their time and were thoughtful in their responses. Because of the response richness, in many ways the questionnaires served beyond the original intention of gathering a snapshot of professional learning within BC libraries. These questionnaires provided thorough insight into the state of libraries in BC generally, as well as an exploration into the professional identities, challenges, and aspirations of people involved in libraries across union groups, regions, sectors, and experience levels.

Results

This report outlines findings in two parts and discusses commonalities and connections throughout. *Results—Part 1: Demographics* explores trends in the demographic data provided by respondents in both the general and directors questionnaires. *Results—Part 2: Experiences and Challenges with Professional Learning* describes and connects the actual, intended, and perceived experiences of respondents with professional learning on both an individual and organization-wide level. Results from both the general and directors' questionnaires are discussed together so connections between themes can be more closely understood.

Photographer unknown. (ca. 1916). The staff of the Victoria Public Library on the steps of the Carnegie building; corner of Yates and Blanshard streets. [photograph]. Part of Archives Visual Records Collection, Accession number 193501-001. British Columbia Archives, Victoria.

Findings, Analysis, and Discussion Part 1: Demographics

The general questionnaire had 378 completed responses and the directors' questionnaire had 53. The response rate for both the general and directors' questionnaires were considerably higher than anticipated and this had three noteworthy effects: 1) trend confidence as well as the plurality and depth of such responses; 2) considerably strong membership engagement; and, 3) comprehensive insight into BC's library community beyond only professional learning issues.

While it is difficult to determine the total population size of library staff within BC, the BCLA Executive Director estimates there are approximately 850 individual BCLA members. Many people who work in libraries throughout BC are not members of BCLA, however, if the value of 850 is a best approximation, the response rate would be 44%. The directors' representation is even stronger. The BCLA Executive Director estimates there are fewer than 100 library directors in BC, which would make the directors' response rate 53%. These are strong response rates and while the generalization of responses cannot be conclusive, this report is confident sound trends can be established and a far-reaching diversity of experiences and perspectives is revealed.

The strong response rate is an indication that engagement is sufficiently high. Thousands of additional comments were provided and the researchers draw from this that the library community cares considerably about professional learning, as well as other library-related topics.

The extensiveness of both questionnaires and the response richness indicates that the questionnaires served beyond the original intention of gathering a statistical snapshot of professional learning within BC libraries. These questionnaires provided thorough insight into the state of libraries in BC generally and these observations will be invaluable to strategic planning as well as planning for professional learning in the coming years. It would be particularly interesting to deploy these questionnaires (or similar versions) again in the next year or two so that demonstrated changes can further inform planning. Furthermore, redeployed and modified versions of these questionnaires would measure the impact of any professional learning interventions that may be implemented as a result of this report's findings.

1.1　How respondents self-identify professionally

A benchmark question determined respondent professional identity. Question 15 of the general questionnaire asked how individuals self-identified within BC's library community. If respondents had multiple identities (for example, if a respondent was a library school student as well as a library assistant) they were encouraged to select both identities.

Photographer unknown. (ca. 1915). Receiving Desk, Victoria Public Library.
Mary Stewart, Acting Librarian in foreground [photograph]. Part of Archives Visual Records Collection,
Accession number 193501-001. British Columbia Archives, Victoria.

General Questionnaire—Question 15: Which of the following best describes how you identify yourself within BC's library community? (Please select all that apply)

Results

Response	Count	Percentage
Librarian	217[a]	57[b]
Library Technician	102	27
Library Assistant	50	13
Other[d]	28	7
Archivist	10	3
Professional employee	6	2
Student, Library, Archival and Info. Studies	6	2
Teacher (non-certified) or Educator	5	1
Volunteer, Docent or Friend of Library	5	1
Student, Library Technician	4	1
Teacher (BC certified)	4	1
Teacher or School Librarian	4	1
Policy Analyst	3	1
Library board member or trustee	1	0
Museum professional	1	0
Total	446[c]	

[a] total responses to this category
[b] percentage of total responses to this category, respondents may have multiple identities.
[c] total responses to question
[d] 'Other' category includes respondents who entered in their own 'identity' in an open comment box, for example, 'Administrative Assistant'

Table 1. Detailed professional self-identification of general questionnaire respondents
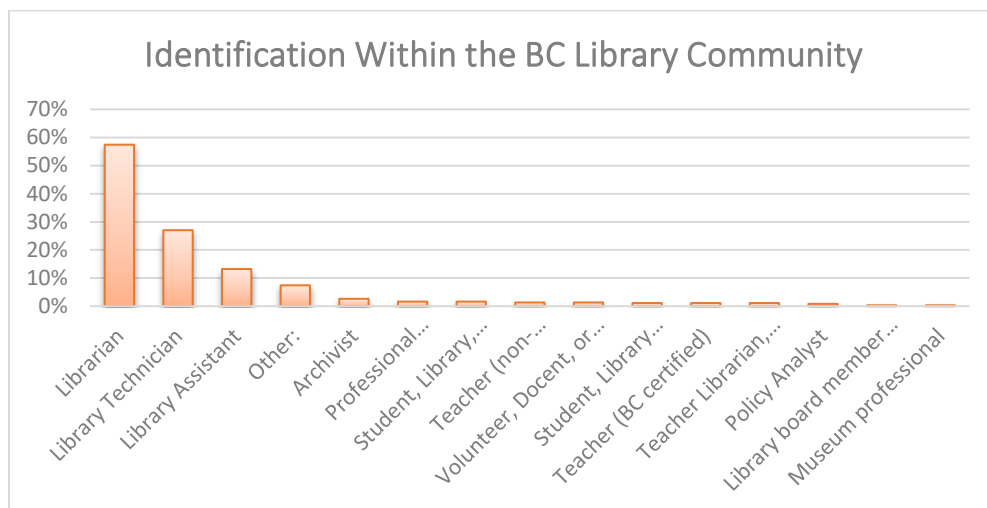
Figure 2. Professional self-identification of general questionnaire respondents

Discussion

A total of 446 responses were gathered to this question. Over half of respondents (57%) identified as librarians and one quarter (27%) as library technicians; library assistants represented 13% of respondents.

A leading goal of the BCLA Professional Learning Assessment Project was to gain insight about professional learning from all those involved in providing library services across the province. There was no focus on one employee group as this would not provide a holistic perspective. In most organizations, library staff teams are comprised of multiple employee group representation, and while there is valid discussion on the existence of a hierarchy among employment groups (also noted throughout this report), when professional learning perspectives are understood across groups, a more fulsome approach can be implemented to further enhance opportunities for all stakeholders. When we combine the important para-professional and/or support role of both library technicians and library assistants, these respondents comprise 40% of total participation.

While individuals could select multiple identities, such as being a Library Assistant who is also a library school student, it appears that any respondents who did double respond had little to no statistical impact on the overall count.

As indicated, the response rate was considerably higher than anticipated. However, some stakeholder groups are noticeably absent. For example, only six students in library, archival and information studies programs responded. Furthermore, only four students of library technician programs responded. UFV and Langara's Library Technician programs have robust enrollment and their perspectives were missed within this report. UBC's SLAIS enrollment across five academic programs in any given year must surely be more than six, not to mention BC residents who may be studying in MLIS programs by distance at other institutions.

With only five respondents for each category of Educator and Volunteer, we can find little representation of the important perspectives these library community members would have. Eight responses from certified teachers (4) and teacher librarians (4) were a poor showing from these groups as well. Library staff in K-12 schools comprise large portions of BCLA's special interest groups, yet their input was not adequately captured. Only three policy analysts and one library board member or trustee responded. Given the decision-making authority these individuals have on local libraries, their perspectives are important. Certainly a different questionnaire that targets their needs and perspectives more specifically would be more appropriate and necessary to carry this research forward.

Highlights

- 446 responses captured how individuals identify themselves within BC's library community.
- 57% identified as librarians.
- 27% identified as library technicians.
- 20% identified as 'other', including policy analysts, teacher librarians, archivists, library trustees, and library school students.
- 13% self-identified as library assistants.
- Significant under-representation of: MLIS program students, library technician program students, educators, volunteers, teachers, school librarians, policy analysts, and trustees.

1.2   Regional representation

Another essential demographic question determined the regional representation of respondents. In the general questionnaire, this was asked in question 24 and in the directors' questionnaire, this was asked in question 16.

General Questionnaire—Question 24: In what region are you currently employed? (optional)

Results

Response	Count	Percentage
Mainland/Southwest	237	68
Vancouver Island/Coast	56	16
Thompson/Okanagan	24	7
Kootenay	11	3
Cariboo	9	3
Northeast	6	2
Nechako	4	1
North Coast	4	1
Out of province	0	0
TOTAL	**351**	

Table 2. Regional representation of general questionnaire respondents
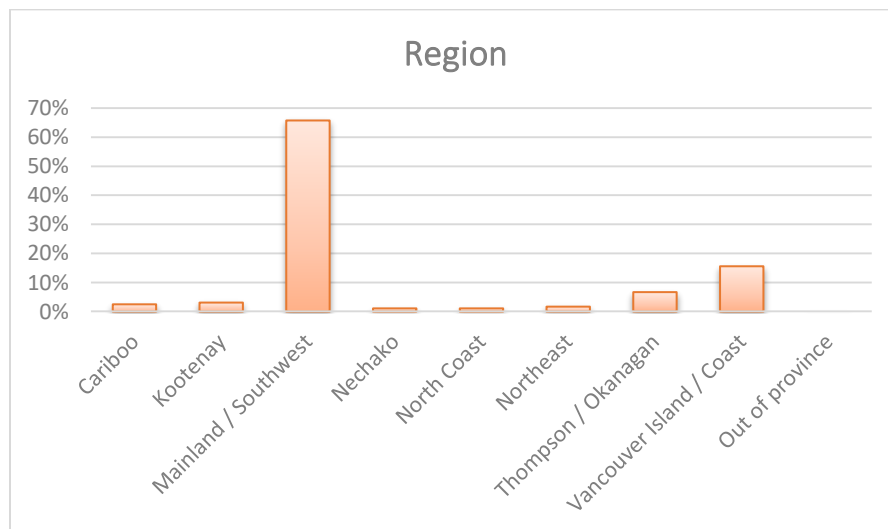
Figure 3. Regional representation of general questionnaire respondents

Directors' Questionnaire—Question 16: In what region are you currently employed? (optional)

Results

Response	Count	Percentage
Mainland / Southwest	16	31
Kootenay	10	20
Cariboo	5	10
Vancouver Island / Coast	5	10
Northeast	4	8
Thompson / Okanagan	3	6
North Coast	3	6
Nechako	3	6
Out of province	0	0
Total Responses	**49**	

Table 3. Regional representation of directors' questionnaire respondents
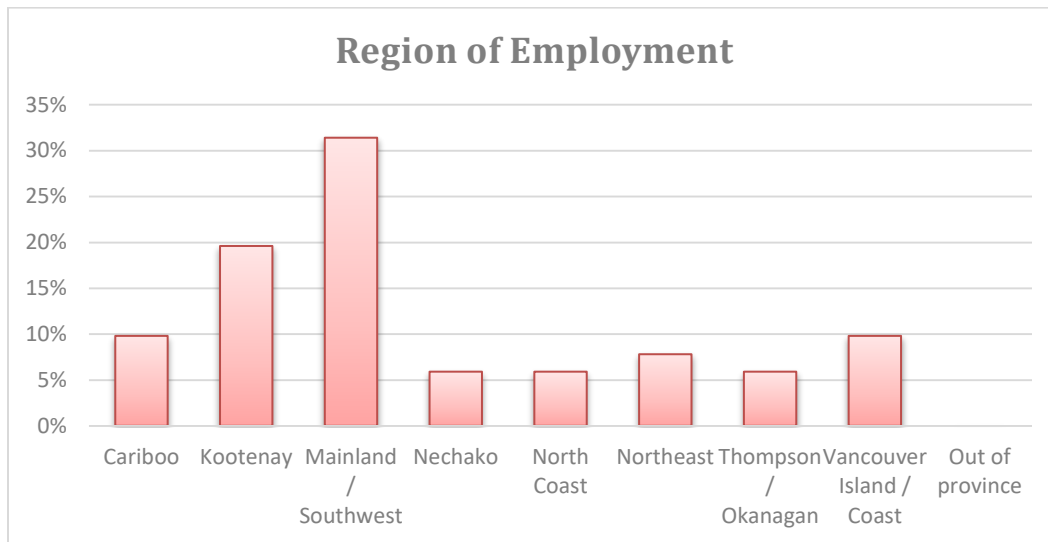
Figure 4. Regional representation of directors' questionnaire respondents

Discussion

Throughout the analysis phase of these questionnaires the significance of geography was revealed to be a leading theme. Question 24 of the general questionnaire and question 16 of the directors' question served as important benchmark questions for the project as a whole. The Lower Mainland's status as the lead region of respondents is not surprising given the concentration of the province's population: 66% of general questionnaire respondents and 31% of directors are located in the Mainland/Southwest. Bigger library systems with fewer directors and more staff per system could account for the 29% range between the two groups.

While Vancouver Island/Coast was a very distance second to the Mainland/Southwest of the general questionnaire responses (16%), the second most represented region for the directors was Kootenay at 20%. An inconsistent third place was Thompson/Okanagan (7%) for the general questionnaire and a tie between Cariboo and Vancouver Island/Coast (both at 10%). This contrary pattern continues with fourth place representation being a tie between Kootenay (3%) and Cariboo (3%) for the general questionnaire and Northeast at 8% for the directors'.   The final regional representation standings for the general questionnaire are Northeast (2%), Nechako (1%), and North Coast (1%); for the directors' questionnaire the lowest represented regions were Thompson/Okanagan, North Coast, and Nechako (all at 6%). No representation from out of province was observed.

Regional representation is a long-standing and critical issue for BCLA and for other organizations striving to serve the provincial library community and the results of these questionnaires further validate this. As demonstrated in responses to these two questions, and in additional comments throughout both questionnaires, regional issues exist in two themes. First, there is evidence of a strong urban versus rural distinction. Second, respondents repeatedly emphasized the regional focus of the Lower Mainland for in-person conference and workshop locations over regions in the rest of province.

All types of libraries share common workflows, procedures, and policies; however, the results of this project demonstrate distinct operational and service differences between rural and urban libraries. Moving forward, BCLA and other organizations serving the BC Library community would be wise to consider these differences and similarities when developing professional learning programs and services. A follow-up project and questionnaires to the distinct groups could further explore the unique needs and operations of rural and urban libraries. Additionally, section 2.9 of this report outlines professional learning experiences and gaps compared by geographic region.

The library sector is not alone in facing the challenges of geography in BC. Health and education as well as other professional sectors must face parallel obstacles. It would be worth discussing this challenge with counterpart professional organizations to understand how the challenges of geography are addressed. Web-based technologies such as webinars, video conferencing, course management systems, and social media will go a long way to addressing such challenges (provided internet access is reliable and reasonably priced) — but the point is not only logistic, it is also about equitable representation and consideration balanced with financial considerations.

Given the discord demonstrated within the quantitative and qualitative data to the issue of regional disparity, BCLA as well as all other provincial organizations need a focused and enduring discussion on best ways to link rural and urban opportunities for professional learning. Clarity on expectations and areas of responsibility for addressing these concerns would go a long way to addressing respondent feedback and developing a shared mandate for equitable access to professional development.

Highlights

- The significance of geography is a leading, if not *the* leading, theme.
- There is evidence of a strong urban versus rural distinction.
- Respondents repeatedly emphasis the regional focus of the Lower Mainland for conference and workshop location over regions in the rest of province.
- Follow-up questionnaires to the distinct groups could help to further understand the unique needs and operations of rural and urban libraries.
- Discussing geographical challenges with counterpart professional organizations to understand how such challenges might be addressed.
- Web-based technologies such as webinars, video conferencing, course management systems, and social media will go a long way to addressing such challenges (provided internet access is reliable and reasonably priced).
- Questions about regional representation serve as benchmarks for the project.
- 66% of general questionnaire respondents and 31% of directors are located in the Mainland/Southwest.
- Vancouver Island/Coast was a very distant second to the Mainland/Southwest of the general questionnaire responses (16%). The second most represented region for the directors was Kootenay at 20%.
- Inconsistent third place was Thompson/Okanagan (7%) for the general questionnaire and a tie between Cariboo and Vancouver Island/Coast (both at 10%).
- Fourth place representation being a tie between Kootenay (3%) and Cariboo (3%) for the general questionnaire and Northeast at 8% for the directors'.
- The final regional representation standings for the general questionnaire are Northeast (2%), Nechako (1%), and North Coast (1%); for the directors' questionnaire the lowest represented regions were Thompson/Okanagan, North Coast, and Nechako (all at 6%).
- No representation from out of province was observed.

1.3 Gender

Gender continues to be an interesting demographic dimension in many professional surveys—and often for unanticipated reasons. The exploration of themes and dimensions related to gender within these questionnaires served to illuminate the evolution of the profession, particularly in terms of leadership roles.

General Questionnaire—Question 25: Gender (optional)

Results

Response	Count	Percentage
Female	292	81
Male	39	11
Other	0	0
Prefer not to answer	28	8
Total	359	

Table 4. Gender identification of general questionnaire respondents

Figure 5. Gender identification of general questionnaire respondents

Results

Response	Count	Percentage
Female	42	79
Male	7	13
Other	0	0
Prefer not to answer	4	8
Total	53	

Table 5. Gender identification of directors' questionnaire respondents
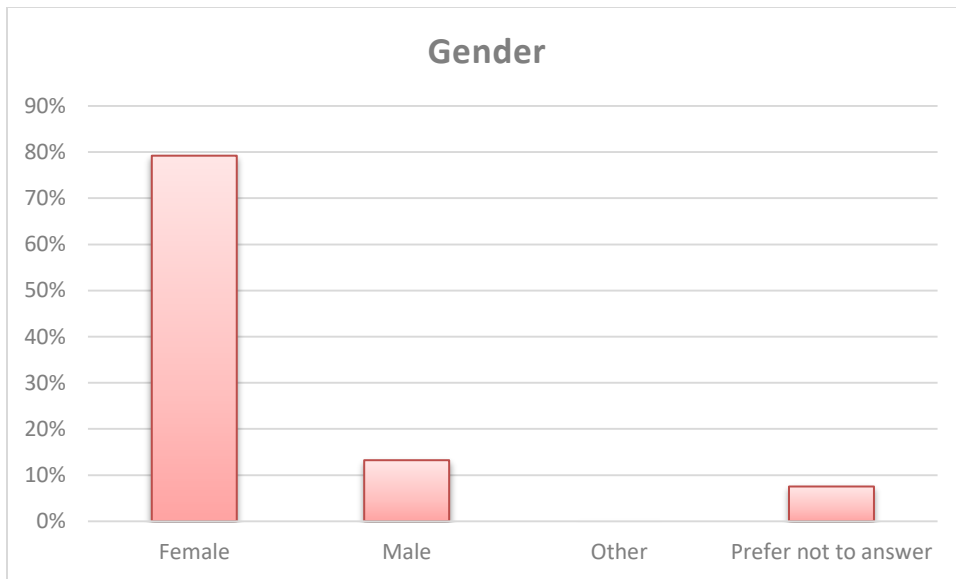
Figure 6. Gender identification of directors' questionnaire respondents

Discussion

Percentile consistency between the gender identification questions within both the general and directors' questionnaires was remarkably mirrored. The vast majority of respondents from both questionnaires were female (a very small range between 81% and 79%). Males self-identified consistently across the two questionnaires as well (again, a small range was observed 13% and 11%). The common perception that the industry is female dominated is evidenced in both questionnaires; however, the perception that leadership within libraries is dominated by male representation is not evidenced in these questionnaires. Important to note is that a statistically significant 8% on both questionnaires preferred not to answer.

Highlights

- The vast majority of respondents from both questionnaires were female (a very small range between 81% and 79%).
- The common perception that the industry is female-dominated is evidenced in both questionnaires.
- The common perception that leadership within libraries is dominated by male representation is not evidenced in these questionnaires.
- 8% of both questionnaires preferred not to answer.

1.4   Age

Age is another fundamental demographic question that is particularly revealing when comparing to questions related to years of library experience.

General Questionnaire—Question 26: What is your age range? (optional)

Results

Response	Count	Percentage
20 and Under	1	0
21-25	4	1
26-30	30	9
31-35	57	18
36-40	43	14
41-45	43	14
46-50	40	13
51-55	34	11
56-60	30	9
61-65	19	6
66-70	2	1
Over 70	1	0
Prefer not to answer	14	4
Total	**318**	

Table 6. Age distribution of general questionnaire respondents
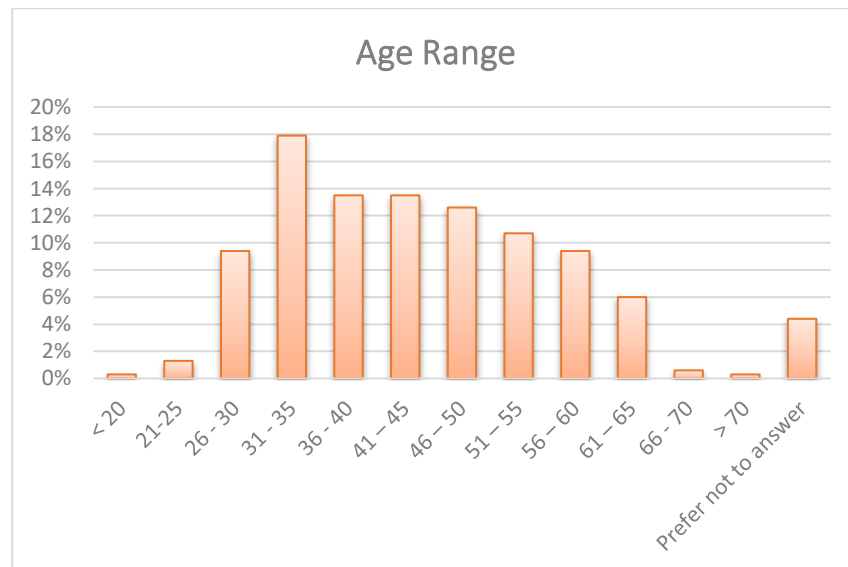
Figure 7. Age distribution of general questionnaire respondents

Discussion

One question on age was asked in the general questionnaire; an age question was not asked on the directors' questionnaire. In the general questionnaire the age question was another optional question and 318 individuals responded. Some participants skipped over the question and 14, or 4%, preferred not to answer. Most respondents identified as being between 31-35 (18%), with the 36-40 (14%); 41-45 (14%); and 46-50 (13%) ranges following equally closely behind. The retiree population was not explored, but it should have been considered further (see also section 1.1 above). A handful of comments expressed this concern as well.

Highlights
- Age range of respondents was: <20->70.

1.5   Type of library

Library type as well as library identity served as the leading keystone or benchmark questions within the demographic section of the questionnaires. Sub-group analysis in relation to library type can serve as an essential pivot point from which more in-depth analysis can be drawn.

General Questionnaire—Question 16: What type of library or related organization do you currently work in?

Results

Response	Count	Percentage
Public	217	57
Academic	121	32
Special	17	5
Government	14	4
School (K-12)	13	3
Other	10	3
Not currently employed	6	2
Total	**398**	**106***

*Total is greater than 100% because respondents can give multiple responses

Table 7. Type of library employed within for general questionnaire respondents
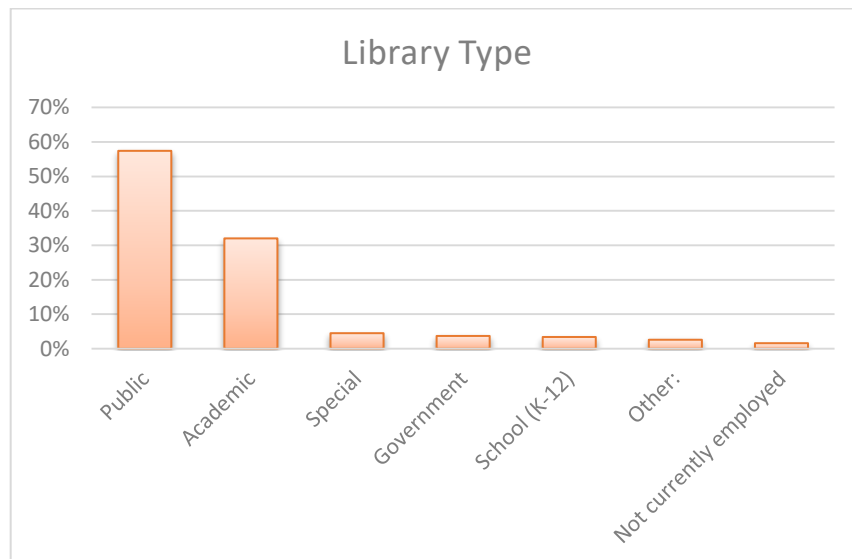
Figure 8. Type of library employed within for general questionnaire respondents

Directors' Questionnaire—Question 15: What type of library do you currently lead?

Response	Count	Percentage
Public	40	76
Academic	9	17
Other:	3	6
School (K-12)	1	2
Government	0	0
Special	0	0
Total	**53**	

Table 8. Type of library director leads directors' questionnaire respondents
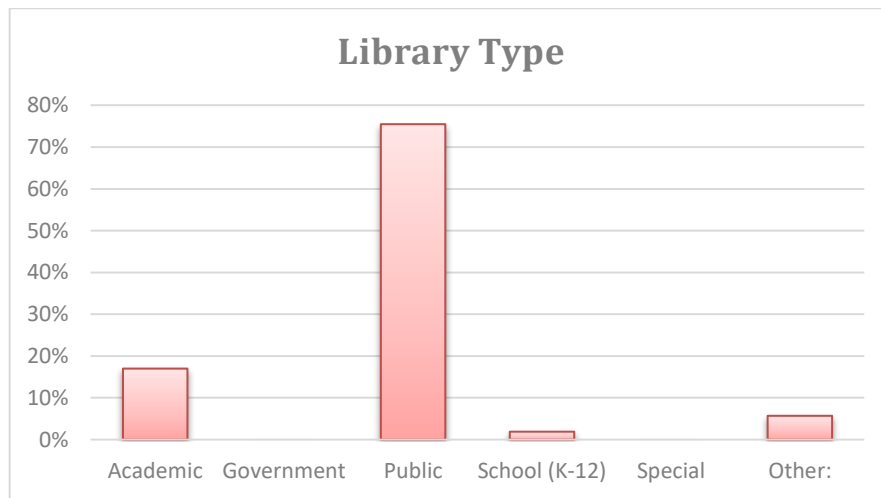
Figure 9. Type of library director leads directors' questionnaire respondents

Discussion

378 individuals and 53 directors responded to the general questionnaire on what type of library they are employed in. Public library representation led by a considerable margin for both questionnaire versions: 57% for the general questionnaire and 76% for the directors'. Academic libraries represented the second most frequent type of library in which respondents were employed: 32% for the general questionnaire and 17% for the directors'.

A higher proportion of public library directors responded than did public library staff while the opposite was true for academic libraries.

Special, government, and school libraries were nearly equally represented within the general questionnaire results (5%,, 4%,, and 3%, respectively). School, government, and special library representation was between 0-2% for the directors' questionnaire. The low participation of non-public library directors may be explained by these directors' feeling that other professional organizations, such as the Special Library Association (SLA), may better meet their needs. Knowing the total number of library systems within BC and how these types break down by percentage would help to further illuminate this question.

Highlights
- 378 individuals responded to the general questionnaire on what type of library they are employed in and 53 directors responded.
- Public library representation led by a considerable margin for both questionnaire versions: 57% for the general questionnaire and 76% for the directors'.
- Academic libraries represented the second most frequent type of library in which respondents were employed: 32% for the general questionnaire and 17% for the directors'.
- Knowing the total number of library systems within BC and how these types break down by percentage would help to further illuminate this question.

1.6 Current employment status

Questions regarding employment status demonstrate the nature of work on an individual basis. Topics such as under-employment and precarious employment were also explored.

General Questionnaire—Question 23: What is your current employment status? (optional)

Results

Response	Count	Percentage
Full-time	272	73
Part-time	95	26
Currently not employed	5	1
Total	**372**	

Table 9. Current employment status of all general questionnaire respondents
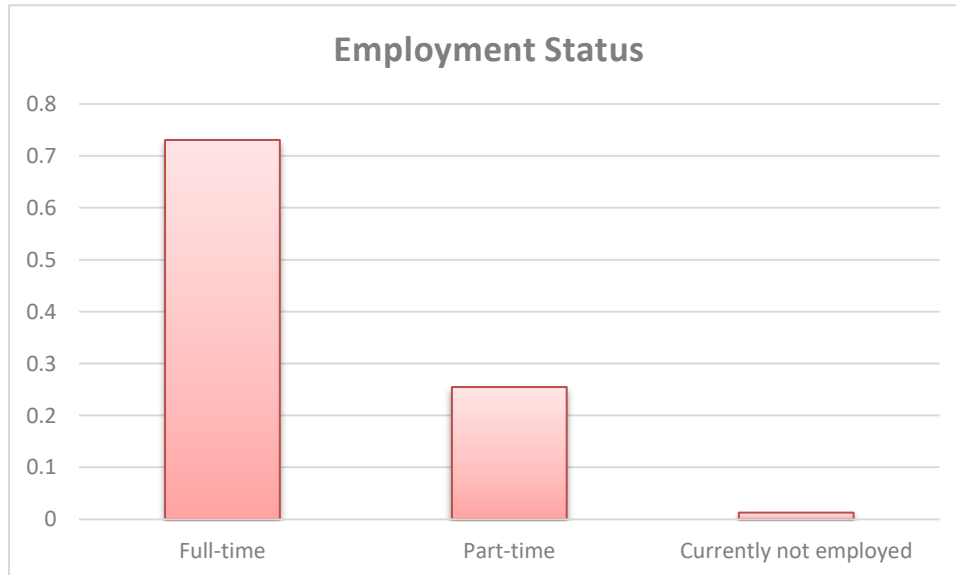
Figure 10. Current employment status of all general questionnaire respondents

Discussion

73% of respondents indicated they worked in full-time positions. 26% worked part-time and 1% was unemployed. A significant question for another questionnaire is whether or not individuals work part-time by choice or because that is all that is available. Frequent comments throughout the general questionnaire expressed how difficult it was for individuals across employee groups to find full-time and permanent work. Many library assistants, technicians, and librarians appear to be piecing together numerous part-time and temporary contracts in order to make up the equivalent of a full time position.

Highlights

- 73% of respondents indicated they worked in full-time positions.
- 26% worked part-time.
- 1% were unemployed.
- Frequent comments throughout the general questionnaire expressed how difficult it was for individuals across employee groups to find full-time and permanent work.
- An oversight of this questionnaire was to differentiate between contract and permanent positions, regardless of full or part-time status.
- Also omitted in this questionnaire were those who perceive themselves as under-employed. Possible future questionnaires should address this more thoroughly.

1.7   Levels of educational attainment

Levels of educational attainment further reveal experiences, identities, and traits of staff on individual levels. When educational attainment is compared with library identity as well as library type, we can see how richly and diversely qualified individuals are within BC's library community.

General Questionnaire—Question 22: Please indicate your highest level of educational attainment. (optional)

Results

Response	Count	Percentage
Certificate of Graduation	10	3
Certificate	7	2
Diploma	59	16
Bachelors	55	15
Masters	221	60
Doctoral	0	0
Other	12	3
Total	364	

Table 10. Highest level of educational attainment for all general questionnaire respondents
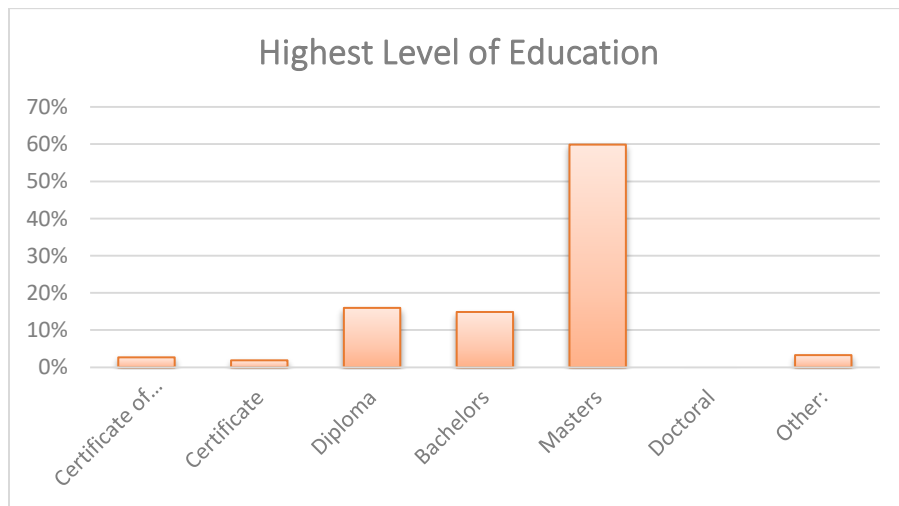
Figure 11. Highest level of educational attainment for all general questionnaire respondents

Discussion

Level of highest educational attainment was only asked in the general questionnaire. 221 respondents (60%) reported holding a master's degree, which is also the most common terminal degree for librarians. 217 respondents self-identify as librarians (see part 1.1 above), which means that at minimum four non-librarians hold masters degrees; however, further analysis would likely reveal that many non-librarians also hold advanced degrees. Nearly tied for distant second place are respondents holding either a diploma (16%) or a bachelor's degree (15%). As with section 1.6 above, it may be the case that many employees within BC libraries are under-employed.

Highlights
- 60% reported holding a master's degree.
- Nearly tied for distant second place are holding either a diploma (16%) or a bachelor's degree (15%).
- It may be the case that many employees within BC libraries are under-employed.

1.8   Years since MLIS graduation

Those respondents self-identifying as librarians were asked for their number of years since graduation in general questionnaire question 16.

General Questionnaire—Question 16: If you are a librarian, how long ago did you graduate with your Master in Library and Information Studies or equivalent? (Optional)

Results

Response	Count	Percentage
0-5 years	58	27
6-10 years	49	22
11-15 years	36	16
16-20 years	24	11
More than 20 years	52	24
Total	**219**	

Table 11. Number of years since graduation from an accredited Masters of Library and Information Studies program
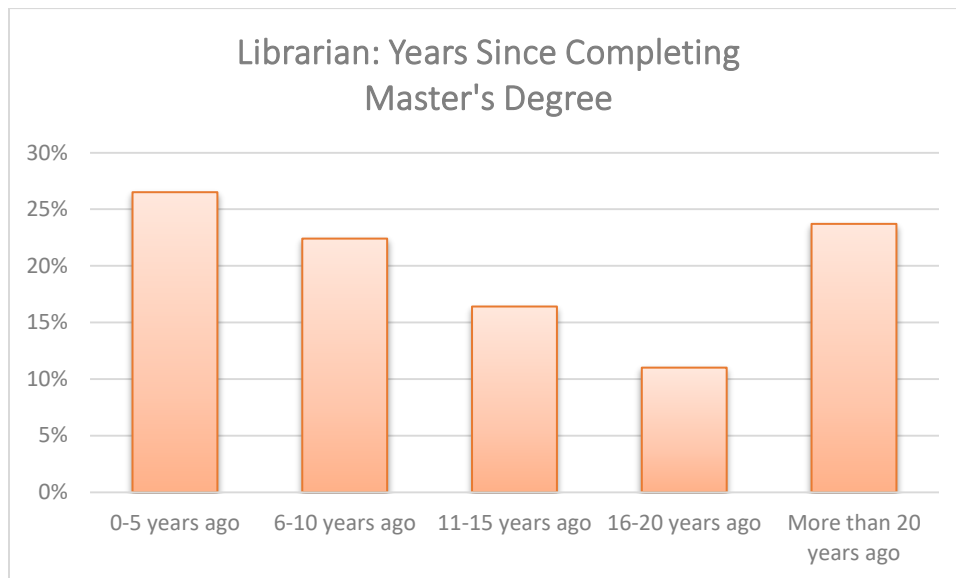
Figure 12. Number of years since graduation from an accredited Masters of Library and Information Studies program

Discussion

When librarians were asked the number of years since graduation from an MLIS program, the greatest number (27%) reported between zero and five years. With the exception of 'more than 20 years' (24%), the trend line through the years steadily decreased by an average of 5% with each five-year increment, so that the lowest number (11%) was those with 16-20 years since their MLIS graduation. One might ask what factors were at play 16-20 years ago, in the years between 1996 and 2001, when employment options may have been reduced. Also, it might be interesting to ask the 24% with more than 20 years' experience, how they have seen changes evolve with librarianship generally and professional learning specifically. Finally, it is intriguing to question why the steady rise of MLIS graduates began to shift 16 years ago, and what factors continue to encourage growth.

Highlights

- The greatest number of librarians (27%) reported between zero and five years since MLIS graduation.
- With the exception of 'more than 20 years' (24%), the trend line through the years steadily decreased by an average of 5% with each five-year increment, so that the lowest number (11%) was those with 16-20 years since their MLIS graduation.
- Though beyond the scope of this study, three key points beg further study:
    o What factors were at play 16-20 years ago (1996 and 2001), when employment options may have been reduced?
    o How might the 24% with more than 20 years of experience have seen changes evolve with librarianship generally and professional learning specifically?
    o Why does this project's data observe that a steady rise of MLIS graduates began to shift 16 years ago, and what factors are encouraging growth?

1.9   Years of leadership experience

One question specific to the directors' questionnaire asked individuals for the number of years of leadership experience they had.

Director's Questionnaire—Question 18: How many years have you been in a leadership role within any library institution? (optional) (years)

Results

When asked how many years of leadership experience they had in any library institution, 43 directors responded. Directors reported an average of 11.6 years of leadership experience, ranging between 1 to 35 years. 22 respondents (51%) had less than 10 years of library leadership experience, and, within this subgroup the average number of years of experience was 5.5 years; 13 respondents (30%) had between 11 and 20 years of experience; 7 (16%) had between 21 and 30 years of experience; and one (2%) had 30 years or more of library leadership experience.

Discussion

It is interesting to note, and may be significant for professional learning activities developed for library leaders, that over half of respondents hold less than 10 years of library leadership experience and, within that grouping, why the average is only 5.5 years. The leadership patterns appear to be significantly weighted to those who have lower years of library leadership experience.

Highlights
- Over half of respondents hold less than 10 years of library leadership experience and within that grouping the average is only 5.5 years.
- Perhaps those with more years of leadership experience did not respond to this questionnaire.

1.10   Perception of professional preparation acquired from MLIS program

Those respondents self-identifying as librarians were asked about how they perceived the quality of their professional preparation as acquired through a Master of Library and Information Studies (or equivalent).

General Questionnaire—Question 18: If you are a librarian, how well do you feel your Master of Library and Information Studies (or equivalent) education prepared you with a strong professional foundation? (optional)

Results

Response	Count	Percentage
Very well	51	23
Somewhat well	113	52
Undecided	20	9
Not well	27	12
Not well at all	8	4
Total	**219**	

Table 12. Perception of professional preparation acquired from MLIS program
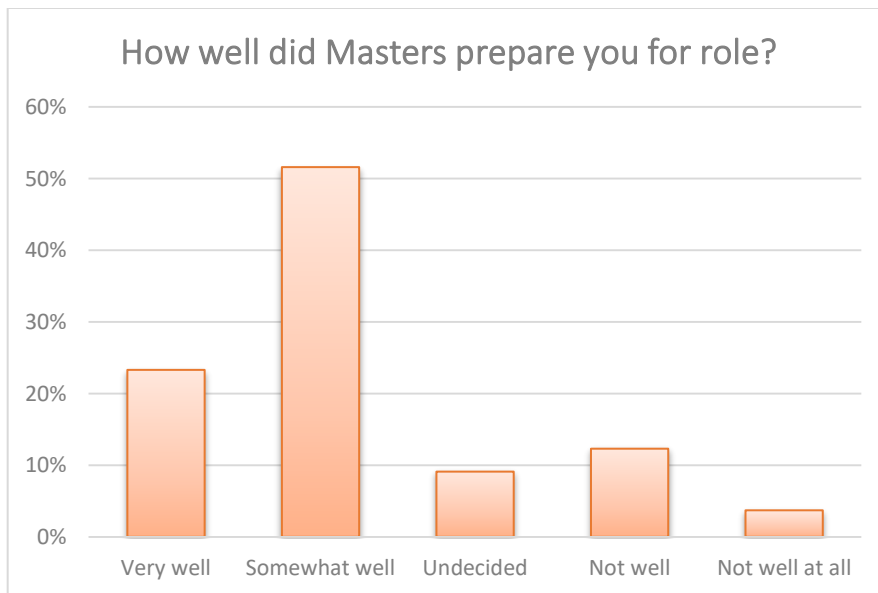
Figure 13. Perception of professional preparation acquired from MLIS program

Discussion

219 librarians responded to the question of how well they felt their MLIS education equipped them with a strong professional foundation. Only 23% felt their MLIS education had prepared them very well, while 52% of respondents felt their education had prepared them somewhat well. 9% were undecided, 12% felt their MLIS education had not prepared them well, and 4% felt the preparation was not well at all. Combined positive perceptions of feeling very or somewhat well prepared reached a strong 75%, but those invested in librarian education within BC might ask what further initiatives could be implemented in MLIS programs to seek a stronger connection between the education provided by an MLIS program, and the skills and learning needed for existing positions and corresponding responsibilities. Finally, further multivariate analysis could reveal additional dimensions to these satisfaction levels. These might include exploring what connections might exist between levels of satisfaction and years of graduation from programs. Library type and age could also prove significant.

Highlights

- Only 23% felt their MLIS education had prepared them very well, while 52% of respondents felt their education had prepared them somewhat well. 9% were undecided, 12% felt their MLIS education had not prepared them well, and 4% felt the preparation was not well at all.
- Combined positive perceptions of feeling very or somewhat well prepared reached 75%,
- Those invested in librarian education within BC might ask what further initiatives could be implemented in MLIS programs to seek a stronger connection between the education provided by an MLIS program, and the skills and learning needed for existing positions and corresponding responsibilities.
- Further multivariate analysis could reveal additional dimensions to these satisfaction levels.

1.11 Number of years since graduation from a library technician program

Those respondents self-identifying as library technicians were asked for their number of years since graduation in general questionnaire question 19.

General Questionnaire—Question 19: If you are a library technician, how long ago did you graduate with your Library Technician degree, diploma, or certificate? (Optional)

Results

Response	Count	Percentage
0-5 years	46	41
6-10 years	27	24
11-15 years	18	16
16-20 years	8	7
More than 20 years	14	12
Total	113	

Table 13. Number of years since graduation from a library technician program
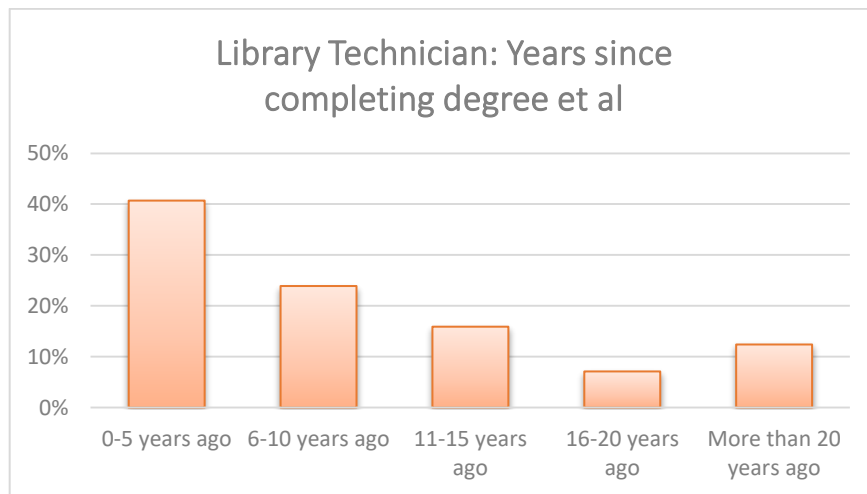
Figure 14. Number of years since graduation from a library technician program

Discussion

Library Technicians were asked about the number of years since the completion of their library technician education. The pattern of a receding trend line starting in 1996 (with the slight exception of 20 years or more) closely mirrored the pattern of years since graduation for librarians (see section 1.8). Career path drop out could partially expand this decrease the further one goes back in time. Additional multivariate analysis would extensively reveal related trends.

Highlights

- The years since completion of library technician education pattern of a receding trend line starting in 1996 (with the slight exception of 20 years or more) closely mirrored the pattern of years since graduation for librarians (see section 1.8).
- Societal level economic trends as well as career path drop out could partially expand this decrease the further one goes back in time.

1.12   Perception of professional preparation acquired from a library technician program

Those respondents self-identifying as library technicians were asked about how they perceived the quality of their professional preparation as acquired through a library technician program (or equivalent).

General Questionnaire—Question 20: If you are a library technician, how well do you feel your Library Technician education prepared you for a career in libraries? (optional)

Results

Response	Count	Percentage
Very well	62	55
Somewhat well	45	40
Undecided	2	2
Not well	4	4
Not well at all	0	0
Total	113	

Table 14. Perception of professional preparation acquired from a library technician program
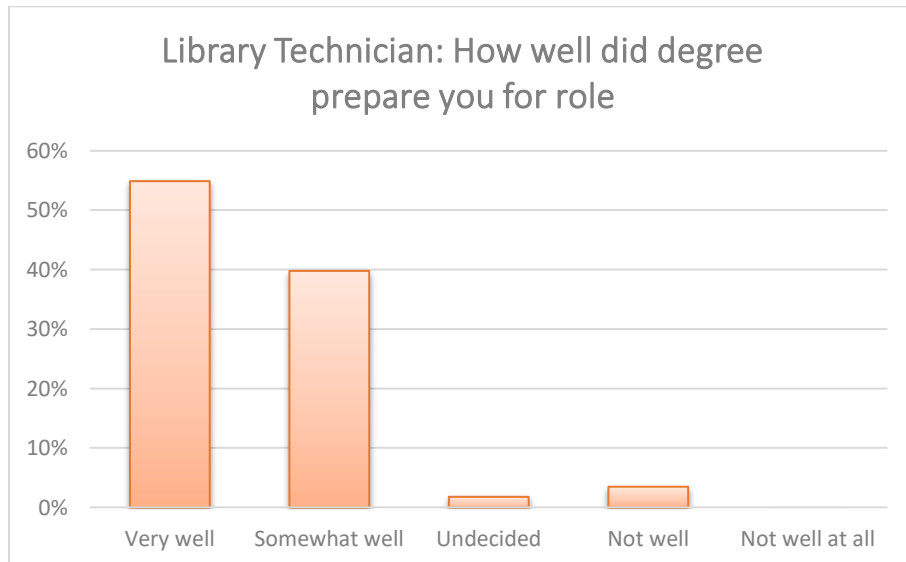
Figure 15. Perception of professional preparation acquired from a library technician program

Discussion

More than 55% of library technicians felt their education had prepared them very well, 40% felt somewhat well prepared, 2% felt undecided, 4% perceived their library technician education had not prepared them well, and 0% stated not well at all. This 95% level of positive perception is a strong indication that library technician programs are providing exceptional education. This trend is quite different from librarians' 75% positive perception of their own education.

Highlights

- More than 55% of library technicians felt their education had prepared them very well, 40% felt somewhat well prepared, 2% felt undecided, 4% perceived their library technician education had not prepared them well, and 0% stated not well at all.
- A 95% level of positive perception is a strong indication that library technician programs are providing exceptional education to their graduates and thus to the libraries in which they serve.
- This trend is quite different from librarians' 75% positive perception of their own education.

1.13   Time since graduation comparison between librarians and library technicians

In previous sections, both library technicians and librarians were asked questions regarding the period of time since graduating from their respective educational programs. The table below compares these two groups.

General Questionnaire— Comparisons of Questions 16 & 19:
- *General Questionnaire—Question 16: If you are a librarian, how long ago did you graduate with your Master in Library and Information Studies or equivalent? (optional)*
- *General Questionnaire—Question 19: If you are a library technician, how long ago did you graduate with your Library Technician degree, diploma, or certificate? (optional)*

Results
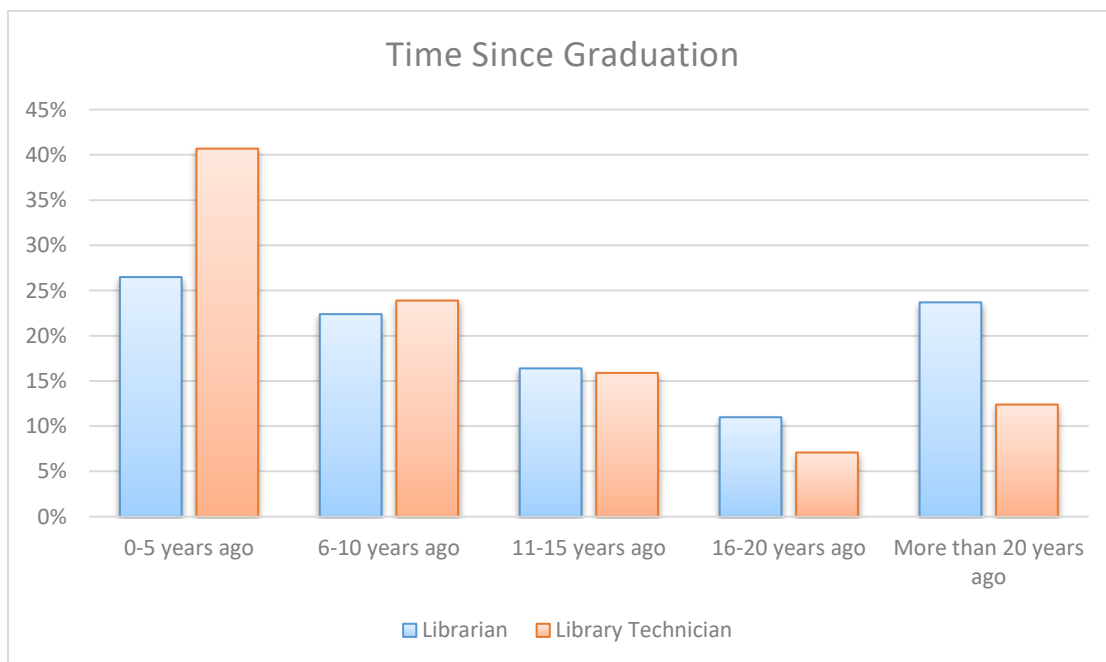
Figure 16. Time since graduation comparison between librarians and library technicians

Discussion & Highlights

As discussed in sections 1.8 and 1.11, the trend lines between the time since graduation of both library technicians and librarians is patterned very similarly.

58

1.14 Comparison between librarians and library technicians perception of professional preparation acquired from academic programs

In previous sections, both library technicians and librarians were asked questions regarding their perception of professional preparedness as acquired through their different educational programs. The table below compares responses from these two groups.

General Questionnaire—Comparisons of questions 18 & 20:
- *General Questionnaire—Question 18: If you are a librarian, how well do you feel your Master of Library and Information Studies (or equivalent) education prepared you with a strong professional foundation? (optional)*
- *General Questionnaire—Question 20: If you are a library technician, how well do you feel your Library Technician education prepared you for a career in libraries? (optional)*

Results
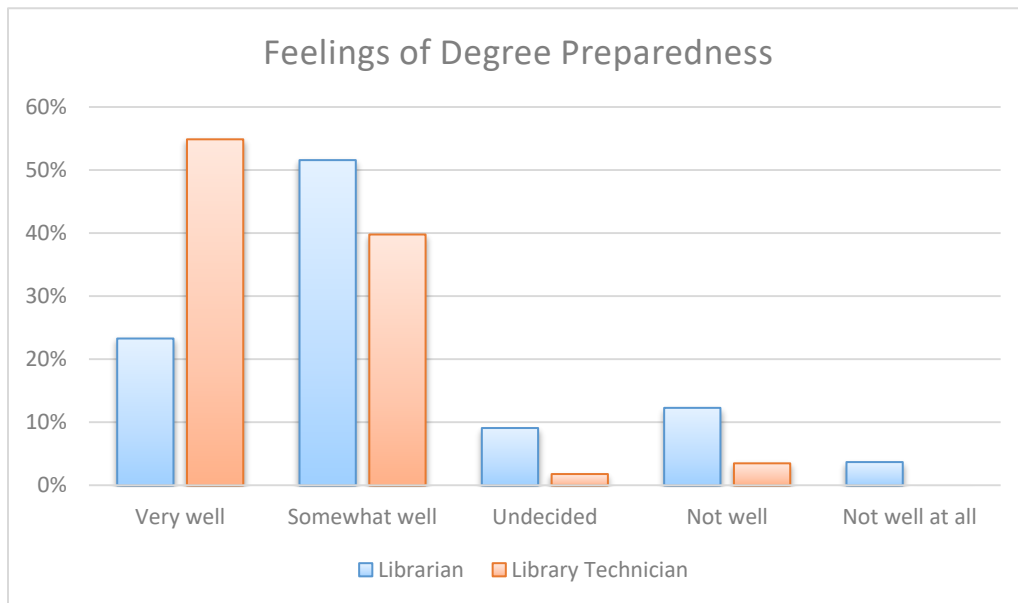
Figure 17. Comparison between librarians' and library technicians' perception of professional preparation acquired from academic program

Discussion

When comparing the perception of library technicians and librarians regarding the quality of the professional preparation they feel they acquired from their respective programs, an intriguing pattern is revealed. While the overall pattern of comparison has broad consistencies, it is evident that the quality of professional preparation is far more positive for library technicians than librarians. Further multivariate analysis could lead to a better understanding of this. However, a separate questionnaire specific to the education experiences of library technicians and librarians would be valuable to get a fuller picture and better understanding of this situation.

Highlights

- The quality of professional preparation is far more positive for library technicians than for librarians.

1.15   Library Support Staff perception of adequate training for current position

While library support staff such as library assistants and clerical support often have job descriptions that do not explicitly outline library technician or librarian training as a requirement, the researchers felt it was important to capture analogous perception data as outlined in the preceding section for library staff who make up a considerable portion of the respondents (library assistant or other comprise 20% of total general questionnaire respondents).

General Questionnaire—Question 21: If you are library support staff, do you feel you have had adequate training for your current position? (optional)

Results

Response	Count	Percentage
Training thru organization	45	74
Training provided elsewhere	16	26
Total	**61**	

Table 15. Library Support Staff perception of adequate training for current position

Discussion & Highlights

74% of library support staff felt that the training provided through their organizations had been adequate, while 26% felt that training provided elsewhere had been adequate. Clearly, the role of separate library organizations is critical to the professional learning of libraries. This report highlights the importance of provincial organizations such as BCLA in providing individual members such as library support staff with professional learning opportunities.

1.16 BCLA individual membership

It was not necessary for respondents to be members of BCLA in order to participate in the questionnaire. Indeed, if respondents were not current members, BCLA still encouraged their participation, particularly regarding why they might not be current members of the Association. Not only did question 27 seek to know how many individuals were members, this question also provided respondents with space to record their comments as well as asking members how long they had been affiliated with BCLA.

General Questionnaire—Question 27: Are you currently a member of BCLA?
- *If no, please indicate why you are not a member (be honest, we can take it!)*
- *If yes, how long have you been a member of BCLA?*

Results

Response	Count	Percentage
Yes	157	45
No	155	44
Unsure	38	11
Total	**350**	

Table 16. BCLA membership status of general questionnaire respondents
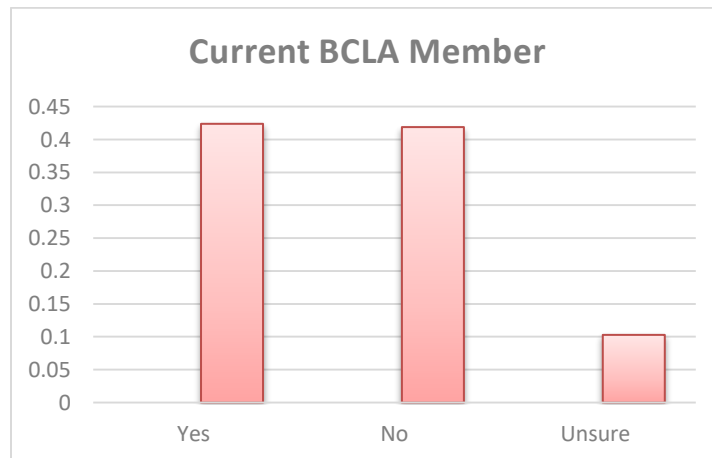
Figure 18. BCLA membership status of general questionnaire respondents

Optional comments regarding membership

When asked about BCLA membership status, a total of 370 individuals responded: 42% (157) identified as being a current BCLA member, 42% (155) responded as not being a current member, 10% (38) were unsure, and several participants skipped the question.

Of all the open-ended response questions within this questionnaire, question 27 and its sub-questions garnered the greatest number of comments. Most respondents who identified as not being a current BCLA member provided comments as to why (138 individuals or 89% of non-members). This high response demonstrates again that the level of respondent engagement was a recurring attribute of the questionnaire. These comments were comprised of the following leading themes: high cost (29% of comments), perception of little value (13%), balancing involvement with other professional associations (9%), attendance to the BCLA conference (9%), lack of clarity about membership status (9%), and other, less significant themes listed in figure 19 below.
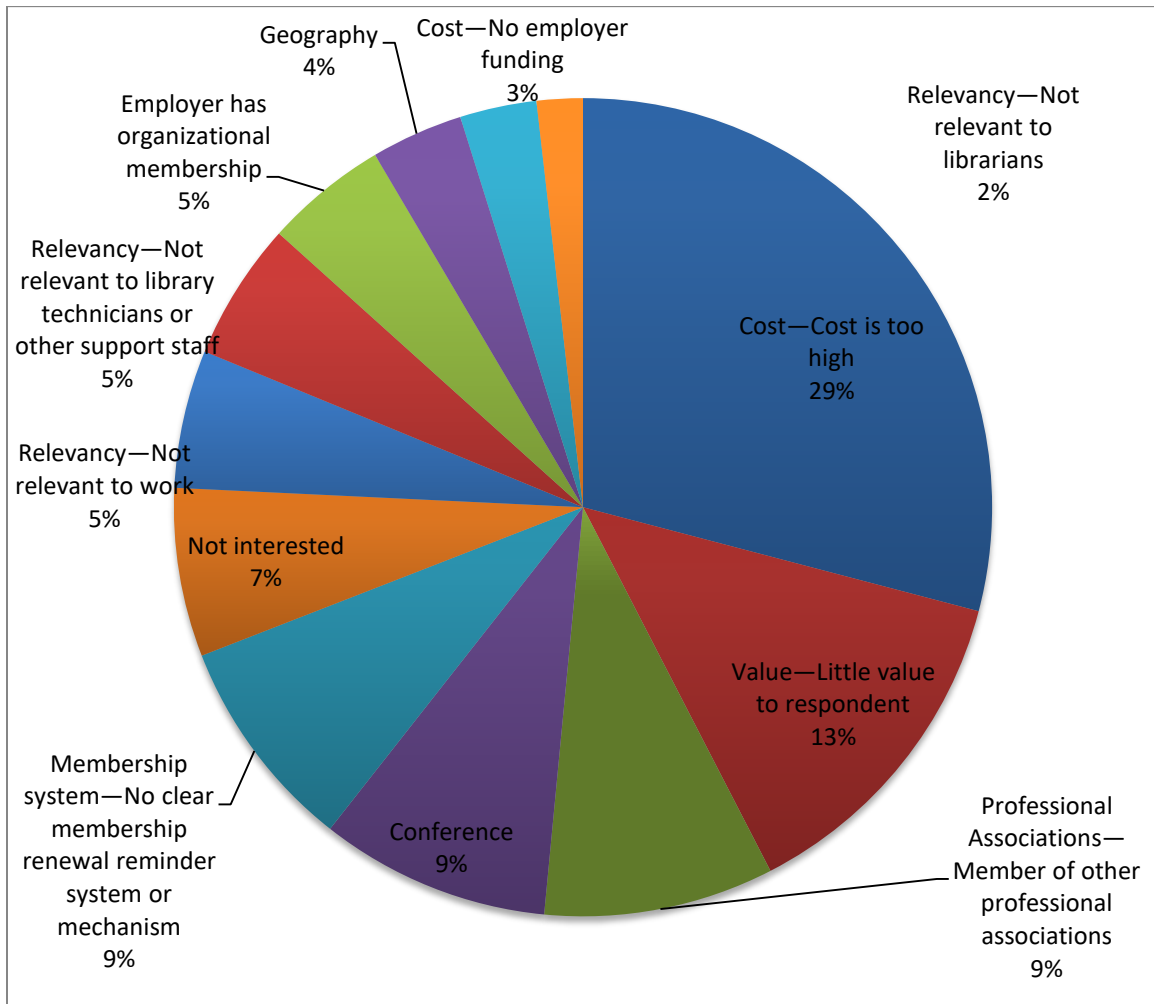
Figure 19. Leading themes for why respondents are not current BCLA members

Years of BCLA membership

The years of library experience listed by respondents ranged from 1 month to 30 years. The average duration of membership was 8 years.

Discussion

An equal number of respondents to the general questionnaire *were not* current members of BCLA as *were* current members; 10% were unsure.

By a considerable margin, cost was the leading reason respondents were not current BCLA members. In 2016 BCLA had three membership options: individual, organizational (regular and two-member), and commercial. Individual BCLA membership fees are based on a sliding scale depending on self-reported income levels. Members can also opt for automatic renewal.

> Individual BCLA membership costs:
> - Student - $ 0.00
> - Annual income below $15,000 - $ 25.00
> - Annual income between $15,000 and $29,999 - $65.00
> - Annual income between $30,000 and $44,999 - $85.00
> - Annual income between $45,000 and $59,999 - $110.00
> - Annual income between $60,000 - $74,999 - $130.00
> - Annual income between $75,000 and $89,999 - $160.00
> - Annual income exceeds $90,000 - $180.00
> - Unemployed - $25.00
> - Retiree from library/info profession - $50.00
> - Person outside Library Profession - $70.00
> - Member/Past Member of Library Board - $60.00

Library support staff (technicians and assistants) consistently reported that they found the fees too costly, particularly in light of what benefits they felt they received through the cost of membership; this was further the case when respondents worked part-time. Librarians outlined cost as less of an issue, though consistently emphasized a perceived lack of value of individual membership in relation to their work. Additionally, librarians reported that with so many professional associations to choose from they found it difficult to have membership in all that interested them so either rotated their membership each year or focused on only one that was specific to their roles. Examples provided included the American Library Association and focused organizations like Health Library Associations. In many cases, individuals relied on their employer's institutional membership.

It was clear across groups that if individuals felt BCLA offered them more value and/or relevancy, the cost would not be onerous. ALA has higher fees and no real sliding scale ($49 USD for paraprofessional staff and $137 for all librarians), yet the association is perceived to be of greater value to respondents. One noteworthy observation is that while librarians have many professional associations to choose from, library support staff do not have the same breadth of

choice. BCLA may be wise to prioritize the needs of library technicians, assistants, and other para-professionals in their outreach.

Given perceptions about value and relevancy BCLA should continue to grow the Association's focus on professional learning and advocacy. Additionally BCLA might consider leaving generic professional learning issues such as conflict resolution and cataloguing to larger associations such as the American Library Association and instead focus on professional learning that is specific to the needs of members in a provincial setting.

The conference is a significant draw for all respondents and many respondents indicated the primary reason they considered membership was to get a reduced conference registration fee.

Geography was, surprisingly, a minimal concern for conference attendees and while some respondents found it frustrating that the conference location is in the Lower Mainland equally as many found it a benefit, whether they work in the Lower Mainland or not.

A number of respondents found the BCLA membership mechanisms confusing, especially in regards to renewal. This was not statistically significant, though, and may speak to the hectic-ness and overworked nature of many individuals. An overarching Communications Plan that included frequent outreach via social media was also mentioned and as one way to keep members better informed. The BCLA listservs are of value to members and non-members alike and identified as import sources of information.

Highlights

- An equal number of respondents to the general questionnaire *were not* current members of BCLA as *were* current members; 10% were unsure.
- Reasons for this low participation in membership were listed as: individuals not feeling the benefits of membership were significant; some took advantage of BCLA offerings through their organization's institutional membership; part-time employees unable to afford the membership fee; respondents suggested a more proactive approach to communication through social media.
- Value and relevancy were recurring rationales for why individuals were not current BCLA members. Throughout the comments, it was clear across groups that if individuals felt BCLA offered them more value and/or relevancy, the cost would be manageable..
- It might be helpful for BCLA to consider reaching out to counterpart professional organizations such as those in health, accounting, law, and education to see what initiatives assist in boosting membership renewal and engagement.
- It is hoped that data from these questionnaires will provide much needed details of professional learning issues specifically and the library sector generally. Possessing such current and in-depth information will go a long way to assisting BCLA develop value and relevancy for the membership.

Findings, Analysis, and Discussion—Part 2: Experiences and Challenges with Professional Learning

Part 2 describes and connects the actual, intended, and perceived experiences of respondents with professional learning on both an individual and organization-wide level. Throughout this section, in-depth analysis explores these trends specific to library type, employee group, and geographic region.

The first series of responses outlines specific professional learning topics of interest and participation on the following seven broad areas common to all work in libraries:

1. Foundations of the profession
2. Interpersonal and soft skills
3. Leadership, management, and administration
4. Library collections development
5. Reference and user services
6. Service and scholarship in the profession
7. Technical knowledge and skills

The remainder of this section explores: the many different methods of professional learning involvement; percentage of work time spent on professional learning; costs and funding sources; sources of professional learning and levels of satisfaction with such sources; challenges to professional learning; what supports would improve professional learning; how BCLA and other organizations supporting the library community might better serve professional learning; exemplars of effective professional learning; and leading issues facing libraries in BC today.

2.1   Foundations of the profession

General Questionnaire—Question 3a: Foundations of the profession
From the list below, please indicate which of the following:
(i) are of interest to you for professional learning, and/or;
(ii) you have participated in professional learning for within the last year.

Directors' Questionnaire—Question 7: From the following list, please indicate knowledge and/or skill gaps that you would like to see addressed through professional learning opportunities.

Results

	Interest in Professional Learning		Participated in Professional Learning	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Intellectual freedom	251[a]	92[b]	43	16
Equitable access	301	92	64	20
Legal issues, copyright, and intellectual	254	85	80	27
Information policy, governance and compliance	229	88	57	22

[a] frequency responses to this category of total response to this question
[b] above question as percentage

Table 17. Foundations of the profession, general questionnaire responses
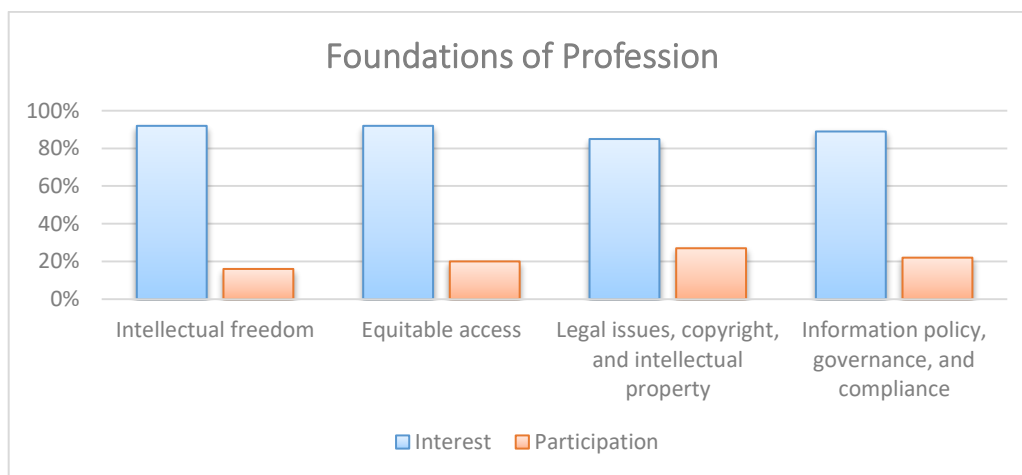
Figure 20. Foundations of the profession, general questionnaire responses

Discussion

Approximately 21% (ranging between 16% and 27%) of respondents had participated in professional learning activities within the past year on topics related to professional development. Potential interest and actual participation were moderately inversely related. Respondents were most interested in topics considered foundational to the profession. Areas of expressed interest occurred in the following order: 1) intellectual freedom; 2) equitable access; 3) information policy; and, 4) legal issues. Participants indicated that these were the topics they were interested in, and in the order they appear here. In Fact respondents had participated in these topics in the reverse order.

With approximately 89% of respondents indicating interest in foundational topics core to libraries and librarianship, BCLA and other organizations supporting the BC library community, could consider for professional learning opportunities in these areas. The difference between interest and participation was 68, indicating that the needs and experiences of respondents is disparate.

34 additional comments supplemented the statistical data. Because this is the first category of professional learning topics and respondents did not know what future topics would be explored in subsequent questions, comments included quite a bit of content that would be covered in future questions. This led to comments that highlighted issues they perceived to be missing from the list, but which would come later in the questionnaire. Leading themes in descending order of frequency from these comments included:

1. Technical services
2. Resource Description and Access (RDA)
3. Teaching, learning, literacy (including information literacy)
4. Children's and young adult
5. Equitable access
6. Readers' advisory
7. Data management
8. Information retrieval
9. Metadata
10. Practical learning
11. Programming
12. User experience
13. Indigenous issues
14. Social media

Leading recommendations highlight the strong need of respondents to continually build upon their knowledge related to technical services, specifically: cataloguing, RDA, and description. Also of strong interest are topics in the areas of teaching and learning, which include literacy generally and information literacy more specifically. Respondents want training related to children's and young adult services, equitable access, and readers' advisory. Respondents noted the importance of making such training hands-on and/or practical.

Indicate knowledge and/or skill gaps that you would like to see addressed through professional learning opportunities	Yes	No
Intellectual Freedom	34%	66%
Equitable Access	52%	48%
Legal issues, copyright, and intellectual property	49%	51%
Information Policy, governance, and compliance	53%	47%

Table 18. Foundations of the profession, directors' questionnaire responses
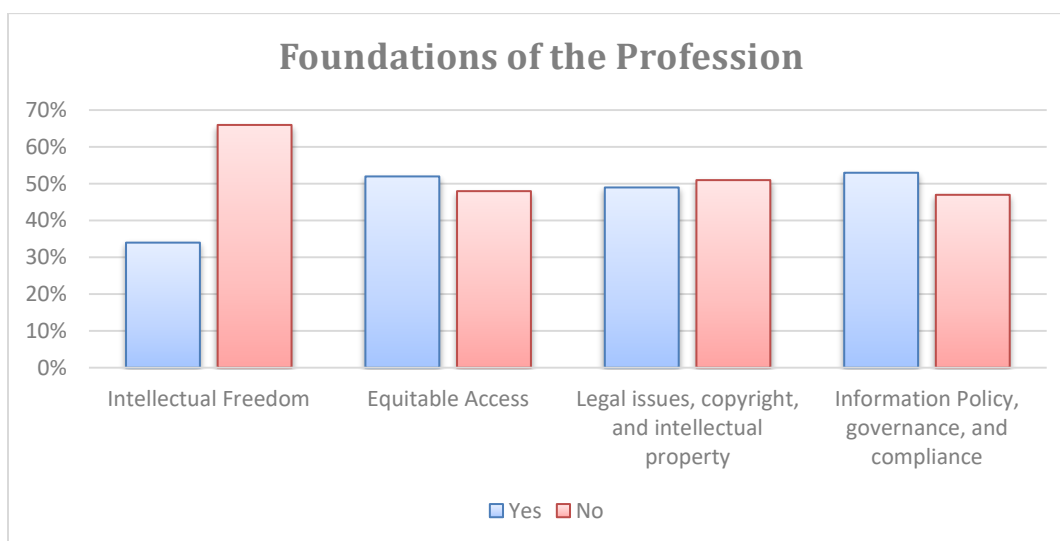
Figure 21. Foundations of the profession, directors' questionnaire responses

When the responses are compared between the general and directors' questionnaires numerous differences are noteworthy.

Intellectual freedom was identified by only 34% of directors as an area of knowledge or skills they felt needed to be addressed through professional learning. 16% (the lowest percentage of this question series) of general questionnaire respondents had participated in professional learning related to intellectual freedom within the past year. However, 92% of general respondents indicated interest in learning more about intellectual freedom.   While interest in intellectual freedom is the highest topic of this question series with general respondents, directors generally do not feel this topic is a knowledge gap for their staff. It is thus not surprising that only 16% of general respondents had actually participated in professional learning for intellectual freedom within the past year. This could be because intellectual freedom is so fundamental to the sector that knowledge levels are already strong.

Equitable access was identified by 52% of directors as an area of knowledge or skills they felt their staff would benefit from. 20% of general respondents indicated they had participated in training related to equitable access within the past year; however, 92% expressed interest in learning more about this topic. Greater cohesion existed between general and director respondents on the topic of equitable access. More than half of directors felt this was an important topic for staff to learn more about, and 20% of general respondents had recently participated in training in this area; 92% were interested in learning more.

Legal issues, copyright, and intellectual property were identified by 49% of directors as important areas requiring further professional learning for their staff; however, the greatest rate of actual participation for this question series (27%) was reported by general respondents. 85% of general respondents indicated that professional learning for legal issues, copyright, and intellectual property would be of interest to them. Strong cohesion existed between general and director respondents on the topic of legal issues, copyright, and intellectual property. About half of directors felt this topic needed further staff exploration through training and 27% reported having participated recently in training for this topic; 85% of respondents were interested in learning more.

An error of question item wording consistency was made with the sub-question on information policy, governance, and compliance or propriety between the two questionnaire versions. Therefore the data for this section is not reliable.

Highlights
- While interest in intellectual freedom is rated the highest topic of interest in this question series among general respondents, directors generally do not feel this topic is an knowledge gap for their staff. It is then not surprising that only 16% of general respondents had actually participated in professional learning for intellectual freedom within the past year. This could be because intellectual freedom is so fundamental to the sector that knowledge levels are already strong.
- Greater cohesion existed between general and director respondents on the topic of equitable access. Over half of directors felt this was an important topic for staff to learn more about and 20% of general respondents had recently participated in training in this area; 92% were interested in learning more.
- Strong cohesion existed between general and director respondents on the topic of legal issues, copyright, and intellectual property. About half of directors felt this topic needed further staff exploration through training and 27% reported having participated recently in training for this topic; 85% of respondents were interested in learning more.

2.2   Interpersonal and soft skills

General Questionnaire—Question 3b: Interpersonal skills
From the list below, please indicate which of the following:
(i) are of interest to you for professional learning, and/or;
(ii) you have participated in professional learning for within the last year.

Results

	Interest in Professional Learning		Participated in Professional Learning	
	Frequency	**Percent**	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Customer service	205	69	161	54
Team work and collaborations	256	75	148	44
Conflict resolution	269	76	156	44
Effective communication	283	80	142	40
Equity, diversity and inclusion	286	84	107	32

Table 19. Interpersonal skills development, general questionnaire responses
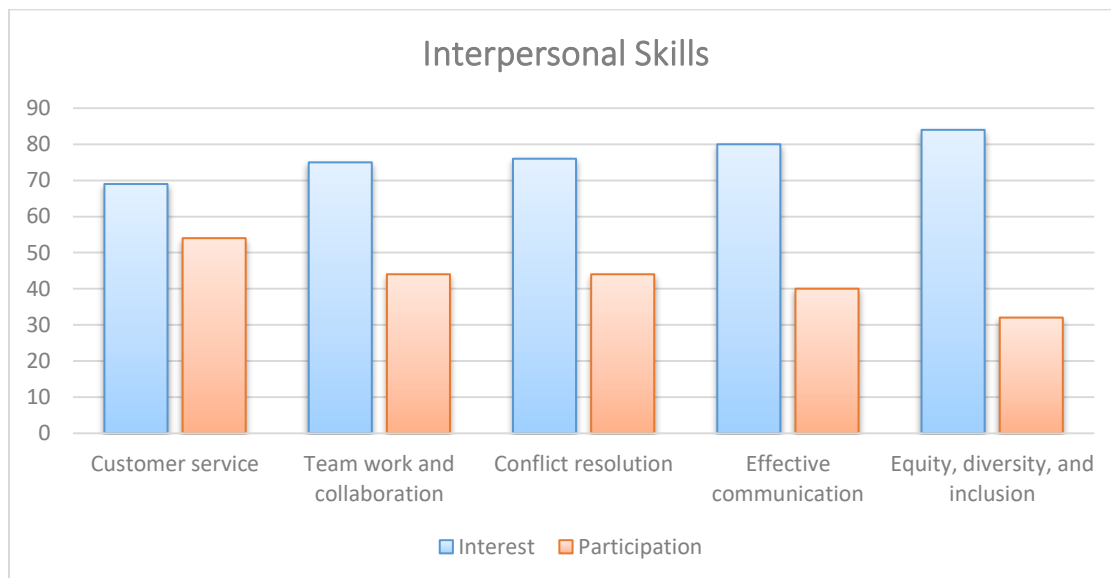
Figure 22. Interpersonal skills development, general questionnaire responses

Directors' Questionnaire—Question 7: From the following list, please indicate knowledge and/or skill gaps that you would like to see addressed through professional learning opportunities.

Indicate knowledge and/or skill gaps that you would like to see addressed through professional learning opportunities	Yes	No
Customer Service	65%	35%
Team work and collaboration	78%	22%
Conflict Resolution	78%	22%
Effective communication	92%	8%
Equity, diversity, inclusion	65%	35%

Table 20. Interpersonal skills development, directors' questionnaire responses
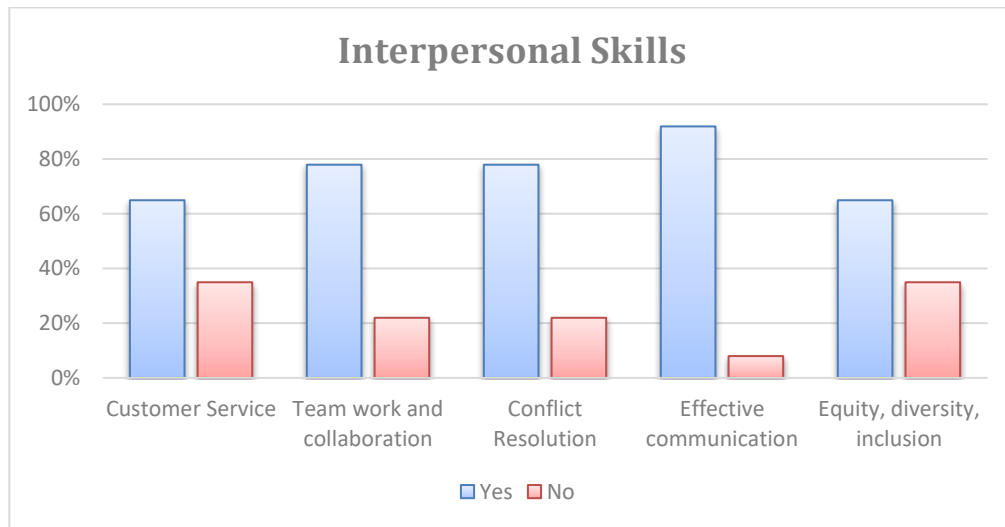
Figure 23. Interpersonal skills development, directors' questionnaire responses

Discussion

65% of directors indicated that their organizations had a gap in customer service skills, while 54% of general respondents had recently participated in customer service training. In relation to other response rates to these seven sub-questions, this is a high number indicating that both director interest and general participation in customer service training is high. Conversely, only 69% of general respondents indicated this topic was of interest to them, again in relation to response rates for the other sub-questions, this is the lowest level of interest.

78% of directors indicated that their organization had a gap in teamwork and collaboration skills. Nearly half of general respondents (44%) had recently participated in training on this topic and three-quarters (75%) were interested in further developing their skills in this area.

Again, 78% of directors indicated that their organization had a gap in conflict resolution knowledge. 44% of general respondents had participated in such training and 76% were interested. The response patterns of this question are highly consistent with those of teamwork and effective communication; indicating that these are priority areas, especially for directors.

As with the two preceding questions, a high level of consistency existed between these themes. 92% of directors (the highest rate yet) felt there were skills gaps in effective communication that they hoped to address through professional learning. 40% of respondents had recently participated in effective communication skills training and 80% were interested in the topic.

Equity, diversity, and inclusion were identified by 65% of directors as important to their organizations. 32% of general respondents had participated in training on this topic and 84% were interested.

Approximately 43% (ranging between 32% to 54%) of respondents had participated in professional learning activities within the past year on interpersonal skills topics; while approximately 78% (ranging between 84% and 69%) had an interest in interpersonal skills development. The difference between interest and participation was 35 percentage points, meaning that the needs and experiences of respondents was far less disparate than existed in the 'foundations of the professional' question series above.

As with the previous category, potential interest and actual participation were inversely related, but in this case by quite a bit more. Specifically, respondents were most interested in topics of interpersonal skills development in the following order: 1) Equity, diversity, and inclusion; 2) Effective communication; 3) Conflict resolution; 4) Team work and collaborations; and, 5) Customer service. Actual professional learning participation in the area of interpersonal skills development existed in the opposite order with more than half of respondents having participated in customer service workshops (see figure above).

Eleven additional comments supplemented the statistical data with two leading themes: conflict resolution and equity, diversity, and inclusion. Numerous comments covered the importance of respective workplaces and how it was perceived that some libraries fall short of this goal while others embrace ongoing training in this area, often facilitated by external partners such as WorkSafe BC workshops.

Highlights
- 65% of directors indicated that their organizations had a gap in customer service skills. 54% of general respondents had recently participated in customer service training. In relation to other response rates to these seven sub-questions, this is a high number; indicating that both director interest and general participation in customer service training is high. Conversely, only 69% of general respondents indicated this topic was of interest to them, again in relation to responses rates for the other sub-questions, this is the lowest level of interest.

- 78% of directors indicated that their organization had a gap in teamwork and collaboration skills. Nearly half of general respondents (44%) had recently participated in training on this topic and three-quarters (75%) were interested in further developing their skills in this area.
- Again, 78% of directors indicated that their organization had a gap in conflict resolution knowledge. 44% of general respondents had participated in such training and 76% were interested. The response patterns of this question are highly consistent with those of teamwork and effective communication; clearly these are priority areas, especially for directors.
- As with the two preceding questions, a high level of consistency existed between these themes. 92% of directors (the highest rate yet) felt there were skills gaps in effective communication that they hoped to address through professional learning. 40% of respondents had recently participated in effective communication skills training and 80% were interested in the topic.
- Equity, diversity, and inclusion were identified by 65% of directors as important to their organizations. 32% of general respondents had participated in training on this topic and 84% were interested.
- The difference between interest and participation was 35 percentage points meaning that the needs and experiences of respondents was far less disparate than existed in the 'foundations of the professional' question series above.

2.3   Leadership, Management, and Administration

General Questionnaire—Question 3c: Leadership, Management, and Administration
From the list below, please indicate which of the following:
(i) are of interest to you for professional learning, and/or;
(ii) you have participated in professional learning for within the last year.

Results

	Interest in Professional Learning		Participated in Professional Learning	
	Frequency	**Percent**	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Planning and Strategy	235	88	66	25
Leadership Development	227	86	89	34
Financial Management	160	94	19	11
Human Resources Management	138	85	39	24
Evaluation of Library Services	292	93	62	20
Developing partnerships and networks	219	92	41	17
Organizational change and development	221	86	70	27
Leading from any position	238	87	67	25
Policy and procedure development	183	91	30	15
Governance, advisory committees, and board relations	116	91	16	13
Fundraising and development	130	94	15	11
Project management	217	90	43	18
Library advocacy and marketing	259	95	39	14
Facilities, health, and safety	132	74	62	35

Table 21. Leadership, Management, and Administration,
general questionnaire responses
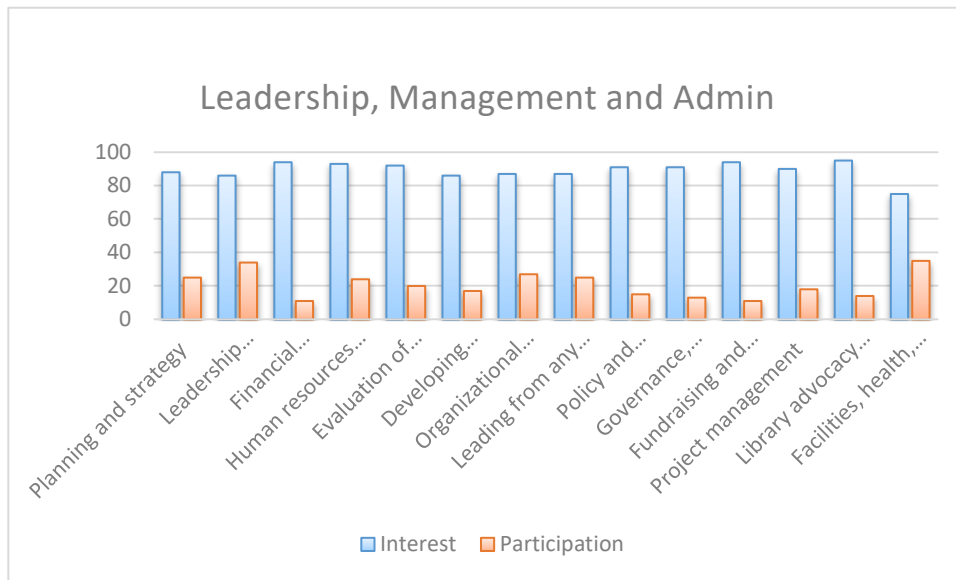
Figure 24. Leadership, Management, and Administration, general questionnaire responses

Directors' Questionnaire—Question 7: From the following list, please indicate knowledge and/or skill gaps that you would like to see addressed through professional learning opportunities.

Indicate knowledge and/or skill gaps that you would like to see addressed through professional learning opportunities	Yes	No
Planning and strategy	86%	14%
Leadership development	79%	21%
Financial management	55%	45%
Human resources management	67%	33%
Evaluation of library services	86%	14%
Developing partnerships and networks	76%	24%
Organizational change and development	83%	17%
Leading from any position	68%	33%
Policy and procedure development	58%	42%
Governance, advisory committees, and board relations	53%	47%
Fundraising and development	62%	38%
Project management	70%	30%
Library advocacy and marketing	82%	18%
Facilities, health, and safety	46%	54%

Figure 22. Leadership, management, and administration, directors' questionnaire responses
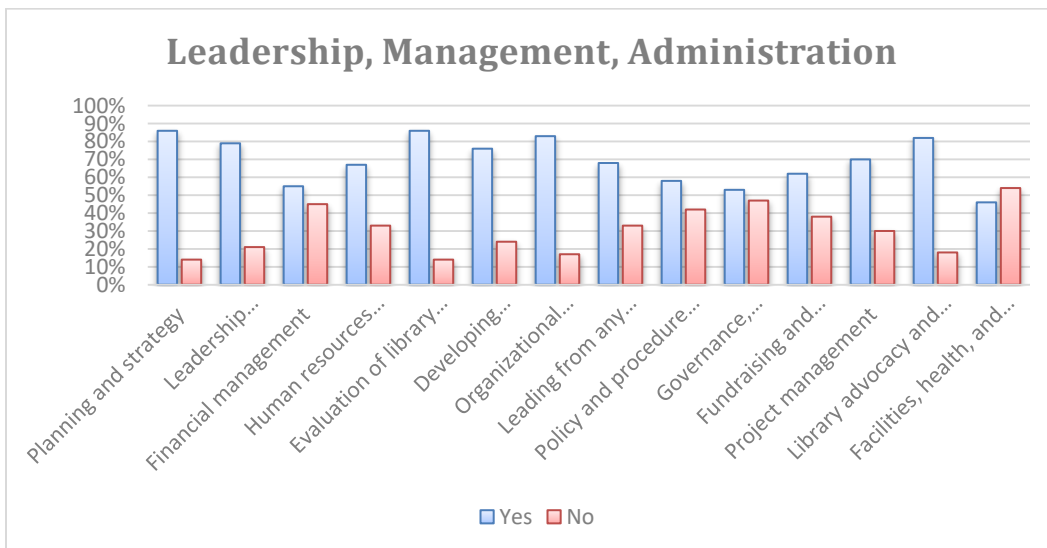
Figure 25. Leadership, management, and administration, directors' questionnaire responses

Discussion

The third series of questions about specific professional learning interests and experiences included items related to leadership, management, and administration. 14 sub-questions comprised this item. An average of 89% of respondents had an interest in these topics, yet only 21% had recently participated in professional learning in these areas. The difference between interest and participation was 68, indicating that the needs and the experiences of respondents are quite disparate.

Topics of interest to respondents related to leadership, management, and administration were reported in the following order:
1. Library advocacy and marketing
2. Financial Management
3. Fundraising and development
4. Evaluation of Library Services
5. Developing partnerships and networks
6. Policy and procedure development
7. Governance, advisory committees, and board relations
8. Project management
9. Planning and Strategy
10. Leading from any position
11. Leadership Development
12. Organizational change and development
13. Human Resources Management
14. Facilities, health, and safety

The relationship between interest and participation of respondents is an inverse relationship. The clearest example was facilities, health, and safety; while most respondents showed low interest in this, it was the highest reported area of actual participation. This is likely to adhere to mandatory health and safety training implemented by provincial government regulations as well as institutional policies. Once WorkSafe BC's anti-bullying and workplace harassment becomes more integrated into regular organizational policies and procedures, it is possible this level of participation will increase even further. Respondents participated in the following professional learning topics in the order presented:
1. Facilities, health, and safety
2. Leadership Development
3. Organizational change and development
4. Planning and Strategy
5. Leading from any position
6. Human Resources Management
7. Evaluation of Library Services
8. Project management
9. Developing partnerships and networks
10. Policy and procedure development
11. Library advocacy and marketing
12. Governance, advisory committees, and board relations
13. Financial Management
14. Fundraising and development

Highlights

- Respondents desire expanded training on library advocacy and marketing; financial management; fundraising and development; evaluation of library services; and, developing partnerships and networks.
- While approximately 95% of general respondents reported an interest in learning more about financial management, only 10% had participated in such training. Furthermore, just over 50% of directors did not feel training in the area of financial management would fill a knowledge or skills gap among staff.

2.4 Library collections development

General Questionnaire—Question 3d: Collections
  From the list below, please indicate which of the following:
    (i) are of interest to you for professional learning, and/or;
    (ii) you have participated in professional learning for within the last year.

Results

	Interest in Professional Learning		Participated in Professional Learning	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Acquisitions, selection and de-selection	234	88	67	25
Cataloguing, metadata, indexing, and classification	188	88	69	32
Digital curation and preservation	188	94	30	15
Circulation	121	83	38	26
Serials	108	88	22	18
Preservation and conservation	144	93	18	12
Electronic resources	243	88	80	29
Records management	129	87	27	18
Institutional repositories	127	92	25	18
Scholarly communications	128	91	32	23

Table 23. Library collections, general questionnaire responses

Figure 26. Library collections, general questionnaire responses

Directors' Questionnaire—Question 7: From the following list, please indicate knowledge and/or skill gaps that you would like to see addressed through professional learning opportunities.

Indicate knowledge and/or skill gaps that you would like to see addressed through professional learning opportunities	Yes	No
Acquisitions, selection, and de-selection	37%	63%
Cataloguing, metadata, indexing, and classification	44%	56%
Digital curation and preservation	53%	47%
Circulation	20%	80%
Serials	9%	91%
Preservation and conservation	19%	81%
Electronic resources	76%	24%
Records management	43%	58%
Institutional repositories	26%	75%
Scholarly communication	22%	78%

Table 24. Collections, directors' questionnaire responses
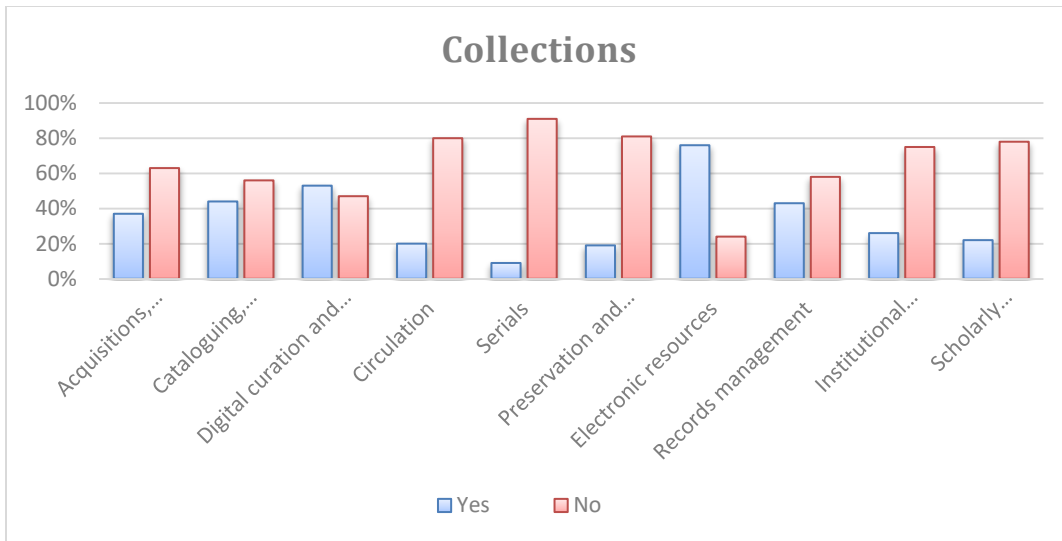
Figure 27. Collections, directors' questionnaire responses

Discussion

As with previous questions, levels of interest in collection development remain high. Cataloguing and electronic resources account for the greatest levels of participation among general respondents. The distribution of both the potential interests and actual participation of respondents was diverse. On average, 89% of respondents had interest in professional learning about library collections. The range was tight: Digital curation and preservation was the highest topic of interest, with 94%; and the lowest topic, circulation, was still high at 83%. In contrast, the actual participation of respondents was 34% engaged in recent learning about classification, metadata, cataloguing, and indexing. The difference between interest and participation was wide, at 67%. Directors indicated that no learning was required to fill knowledge or skills gaps for any of the sub-categories, except for two: digital curation and e-resources.

Highlights

- Recommendations include professional learning to support the importance of digital curation and e-resources and to a lesser extent, cataloguing, metadata, indexing, and classification.

2.5   Reference and User Services

General Questionnaire—Question 3e: Reference and User Services
From the list below, please indicate which of the following:
(i) are of interest to you for professional learning, and/or;
(ii) you have participated in professional learning for within the last year.

Results

	Interest in Professional Learning		Participated in Professional Learning	
	Frequency	**Percent**	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Reference services	242	84	100	35
Library instruction and information	266	86	95	31

Table 25. Reference and User Services,
general questionnaire responses
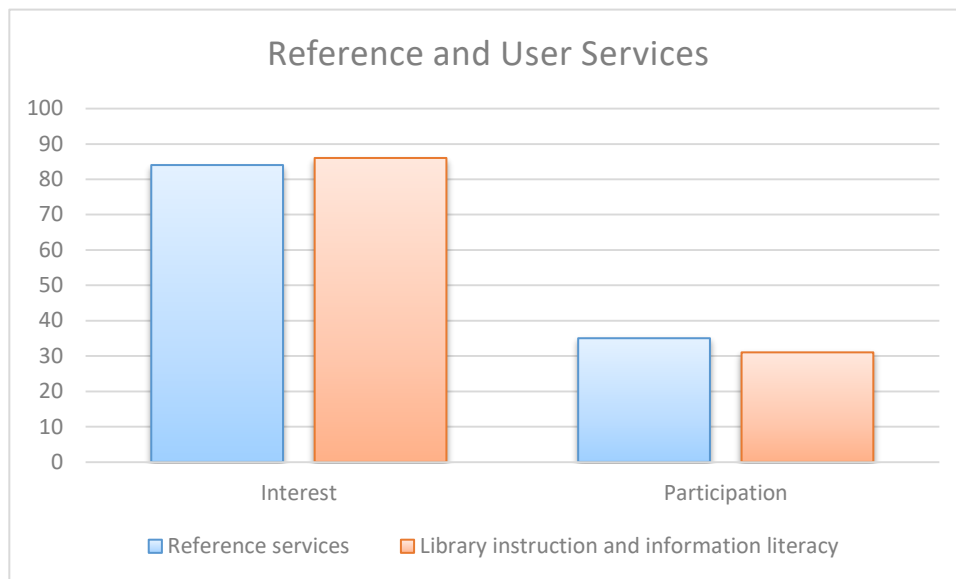
Figure 28. Reference and User Services,
general questionnaire responses

Directors' Questionnaire—Question 7: From the following list, please indicate knowledge and/or skill gaps that you would like to see addressed through professional learning opportunities.

Indicate knowledge and/or skill gaps that you would like to see addressed through professional learning opportunities	Yes	No
Reference services	64%	36%
Library instruction and information literacy	74%	27%

Table 26. Reference and User Services,
directors' questionnaire responses
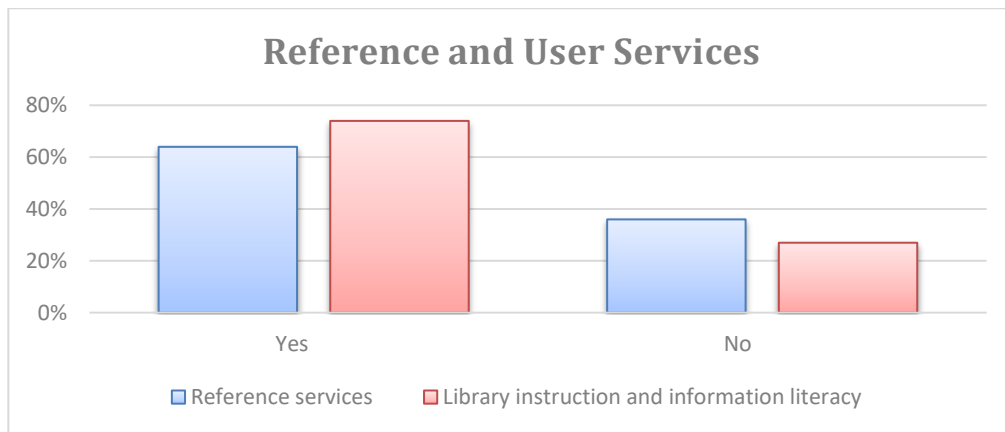
Figure 29. Reference and User Services,
directors' questionnaire responses

Discussion

Due to the overlapping and broad nature of reference and user services topics, this question was purposefully left open to interpretation. The questionnaire designers hoped that comments would fill in some gaps and add specificity, which they did. Three equally reported themes were revealed by respondents: 1) Intercultural understanding, 2) The digital divide, and 3) in-depth subject-specific topics.

Respondents reported that they desired further training on intercultural understanding so they could provide public service that was more culturally responsive and sensitive. Social justice issues were a reoccurring theme throughout the responses, with librarians, library assistants and technicians expressing concern over the digital divide of their patronage. Finally,

respondents wanted training that was subject-specific, such as legal research, business reference services, and health librarianship.

2.6   Service and Scholarship in the Profession

General Questionnaire—Question 3f: Service and Scholarship in the Profession
From the list below, please indicate which of the following:
(i) are of interest to you for professional learning, and/or;
(ii) you have participated in professional learning for within the last year.

Results

	Interest in Professional Learning		Participated in Professional Learning	
	Frequency	**Percent**	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Community liaison, collaboration, and engagement	243	94	50	19
Staying informed of emerging trends and issues	332	93	94	26
Engaging in research	158	88	37	21
Formal study in accreditation programs	116	87	29	22
Professional associations	135	84	45	28
Grant writing	166	98	9	5
		91%		21%

Table 27. Service and Scholarship in the profession, general questionnaire response
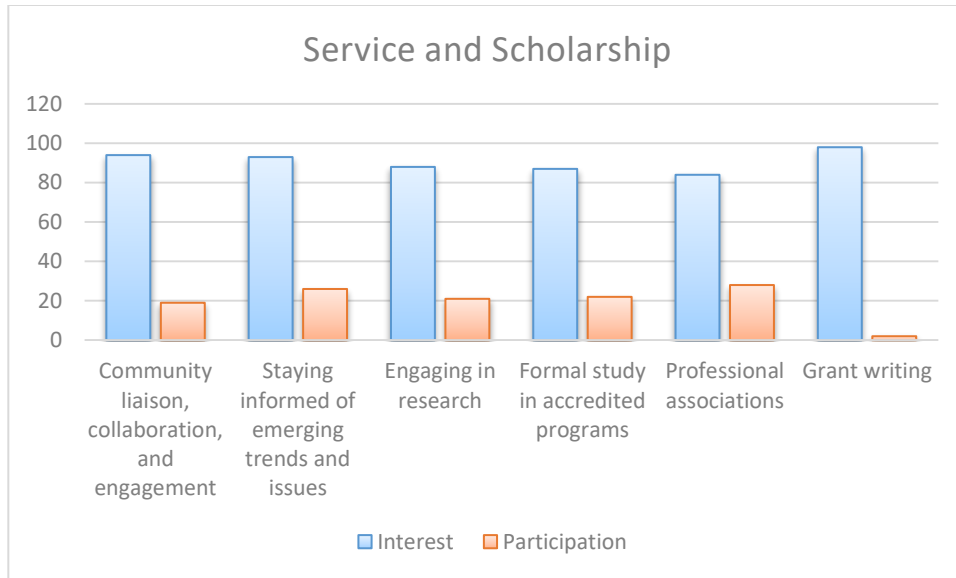
Figure 30. Service and scholarship in the profession, general questionnaire responses

Directors' Questionnaire—Question 7: From the following list, please indicate knowledge and/or skill gaps that you would like to see addressed through professional learning opportunities.

Indicate knowledge and/or skill gaps that you would like to see addressed through professional learning opportunities	Yes	No
Community liaison, collaboration, and engagement	83%	17%
Staying informed of emerging trends and issues	82%	18%
Engaging in research	24%	76%
Formal study in accredited programs	11%	89%
Professional associations	16%	84%
Grant writing	59%	41%

**Table 28. Service and scholarship in the profession,
directors' questionnaire responses**

Service and Scholarship to the Profession
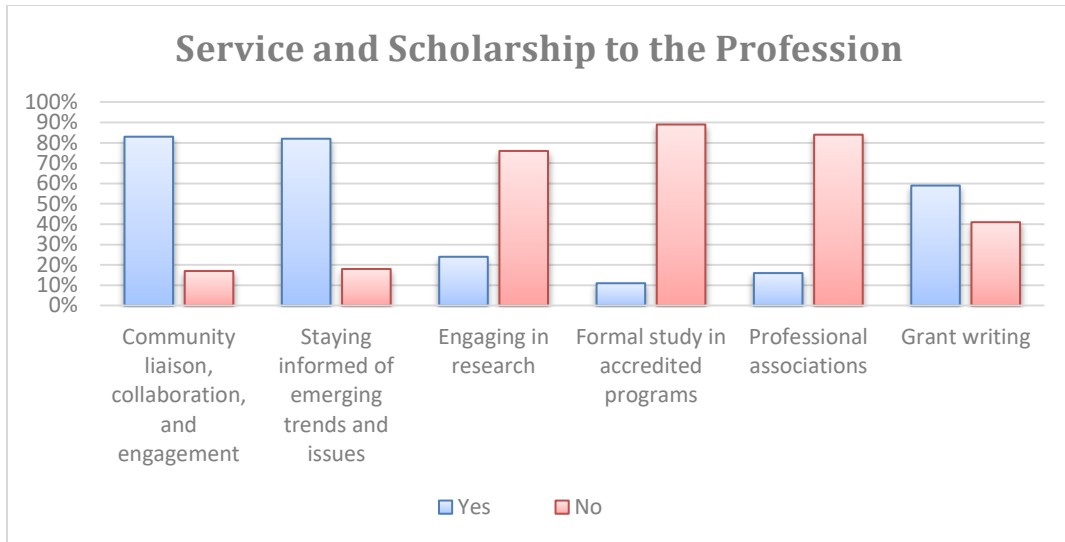
Figure 31. Service and scholarship in the profession, directors' questionnaire responses

Discussion

As with the previous category, potential interest and actual participation were inversely related, but in this case quite significantly. Specifically, respondents (approximately 91%) were most interested in topics of service and scholarship in the profession in the following order:

1. Grant writing
2. Community liaison, collaboration, and engagement
3. Staying informed of emerging trends and issues
4. Engaging in research
5. Formal study in accreditation programs
6. Professional associations

An illustrative comment example is below.

I think Grant writing is a fantastic option, so I want to highlight this as many libraries are underfunded and have few resources. We are all struggling to find more resources and grant writing is an art that takes some practice so that you don't go to the trouble of writing a grant to have it unaccepted and not understand how the process works.
                        (Respondent comment to general questionnaire, question 3f)

Actual professional learning participation in the area of service and scholarship in the profession existed in almost the opposite order, with about 21% (between 5% and 28%) having participated in the following topics over the last year:

1. Professional associations
2. Staying informed of emerging trends and issues
3. Formal study in accreditation programs
4. Engaging in research
5. Community liaison, collaboration, and engagement
6. Grant writing

The inverse relationship of professional associations here is noteworthy. General respondents ranked it of least interest, yet it had been their greatest actual level of participation. Furthermore, directors overwhelmingly (more than 80%) indicated that professional associations were not a method to address skills or knowledge gaps. However, the data here cannot be taken too far in interpretation. This ambiguous response between both groups may have more to do with how the question was asked in relation to other sub-categories than the role of professional associations in general.

Highlights

- For directors, community engagement, staying current, and grant writing are clearly important priority areas for new professional learning. General responses echo this for interest.

2.7   Technological knowledge and skills

General Questionnaire—Question 3g: Technological knowledge and skills
From the list below, please indicate which of the following:
(i) are of interest to you for professional learning, and/or;
(ii) you have participated in professional learning for within the last year.

Results

	Interest in Professional Learning		Participated in Professional Learning	
	Frequency	**Percent**	**Frequency**	**Percent**
General application software	174	83	72	34
Database design	139	90	30	19
Integrated library systems	166	88	43	23
Online info retrieval	170	86	52	26
Educational technologies	178	93	42	22
Assistive technologies	151	94	15	9
Website development	178	87	42	21
Emerging web technologies	277	96	35	12
Social media	193	86	56	25
		89%		21%

Table 29. Technological knowledge and skills, general questionnaire responses
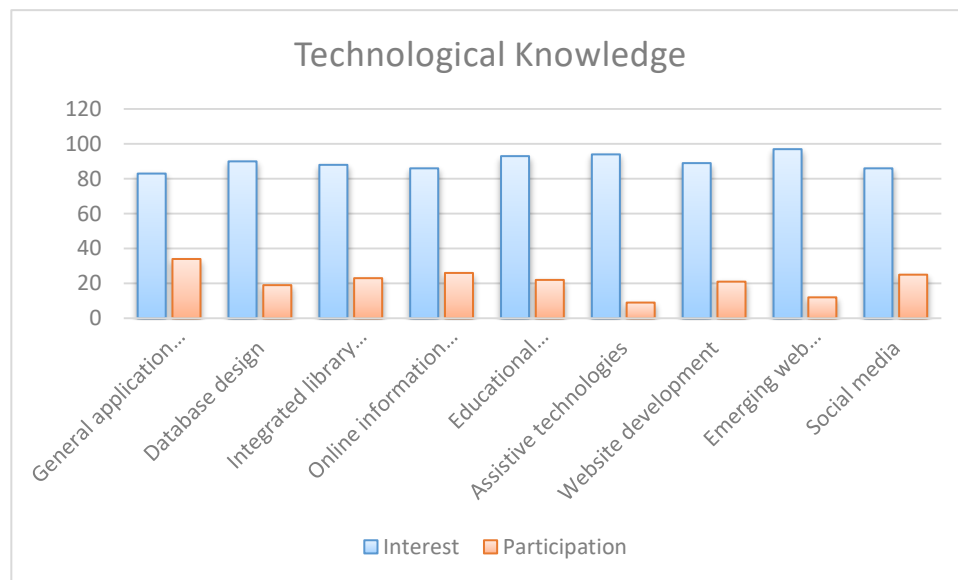
Figure 32. Technological knowledge and skills, general questionnaire responses
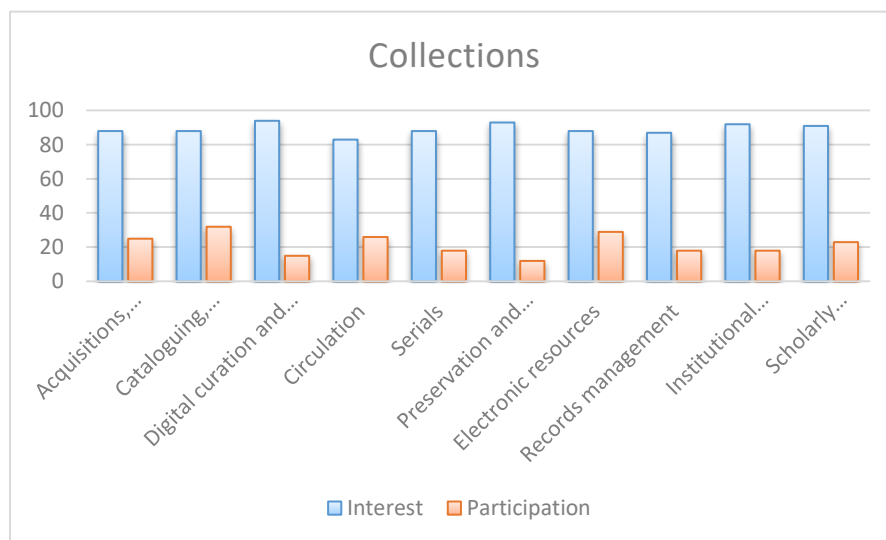
Directors' Questionnaire—Question 7: From the following list, please indicate knowledge and/or skill gaps that you would like to see addressed through professional learning opportunities.

Indicate knowledge and/or skill gaps that you would like to see addressed through professional learning opportunities	Yes	No
General application software for creating and editing documents, spreadsheets, presentations	37%	63%
Database design	19%	81%
Integrated library systems	30%	70%
Online information retrieval	44%	56%
Educational technologies	52%	48%
Assistive technologies	52%	48%
Web site development	40%	60%
Emerging web technologies specific to libraries	86%	14%
Social media	74%	26%

**Table 30. Technological knowledge and skills,
directors' questionnaire responses**
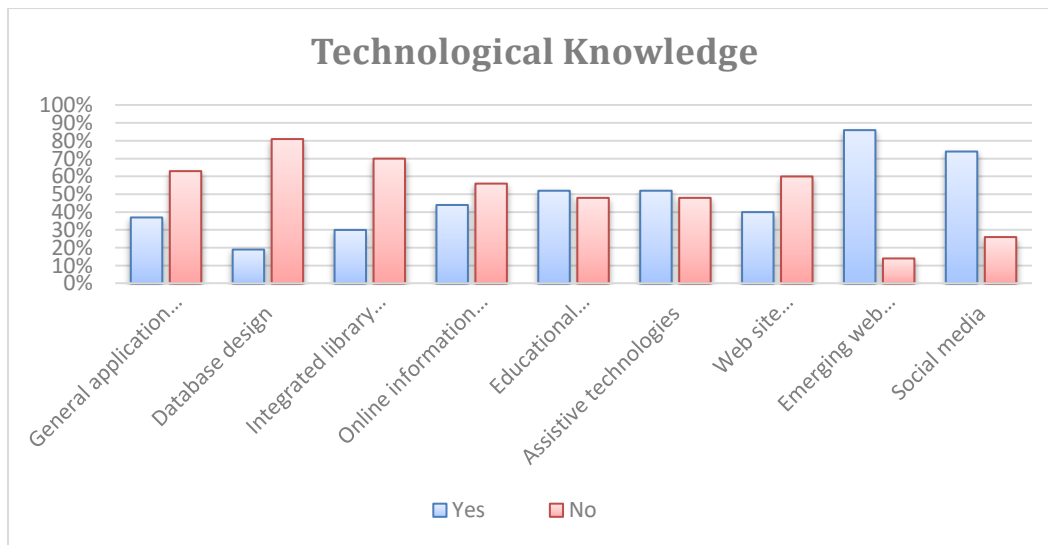
**Figure 33. Technological knowledge and skills,
directors' questionnaire responses**

Discussion

On average, 89% of respondents had interest in professional learning opportunities devoted to technological knowledge and skills (distributed between 96% and 83%). The order of interest was indicated as follows:

1. Emerging web technologies
2. Assistive technologies
3. Educational technologies
4. Database design
5. Integrated library systems
6. Website development
7. Online info retrieval
8. Social media
9. General application software

On average 21% (distributed between 34% to 9%) of respondents participated in professional learning topics a listed in the following order:

1. General application software
2. Online info retrieval
3. Social media
4. Integrated library systems
5. Educational technologies
6. Website development
7. Database design
8. Emerging web technologies
9. Assistive technologies

Again an inverse relationship is demonstrated between potential interests and actual participation. From the general respondents, nine comments were provided with two leading themes recurring: 1) basic programming and 2) cataloguing and metadata. Data richness for these open-ended responses was minimal and therefore not included beyond indicating the themes above.

Highlights

- General respondents indicate a high level of interest across options.
- Actual participation is dominated by general software application training.
- Directors indicate their greatest need for professional learning interventions for their staff would be in the areas of emerging web technologies and social media.

2.8 Comparison of general and director responses for priority areas of professional learning

Results

The top 20 areas of interest for professional learning of general questionnaire respondents were:

1. Staying informed of emerging trends and issues
2. Equitable access
3. Evaluation of Library Services
4. Equity, diversity and inclusion
5. Effective communication
6. Emerging web technologies
7. Conflict resolution
8. Library instruction and information literacy
9. Library advocacy and marketing
10. Team work and collaborations
11. Legal issues, copyright, and intellectual property
12. Intellectual freedom
13. Electronic resources
14. Community liaison, collaboration, and engagement
15. Reference services
16. Leading from any position
17. Planning and Strategy
18. Acquisitions, selection and de-selection
19. Propriety
20. Leadership Development

The bottom 20 areas of interest for professional learning of general questionnaire respondents were:

1. General application software
2. Online info retrieval
3. Grant writing
4. Integrated library systems
5. Financial Management
6. Engaging in research
7. Assistive technologies
8. Preservation and conservation
9. Database design
10. Human Resources Management
11. Professional associations
12. Facilities, health, and safety
13. Fundraising and development
14. Records management
15. Scholarly communications
16. Institutional repositories

17. Circulation
18. Governance, advisory committees, and board relations
19. Formal study in accreditation programs
20. Serials

Interested in	Frequency
1. Staying informed of emerging trends and issues	332
2. Equitable access	301
3. Evaluation of Library Services	292
4. Equity, diversity and inclusion	286
5. Effective communication	283
6. Emerging web technologies	277
7. Conflict resolution	269
8. Library instruction and information	266
9. Library advocacy and marketing	259
10. Team work and collaborations	256
11. Legal issues, copyright, and intellectual	254
12. Intellectual freedom	251
13. Electronic resources	243
14. Community liaison, collaboration, and engagement	243
15. Reference services	242
16. Leading from any position	238
17. Planning and Strategy	235
18. Acquisitions, selection and de-selection	234
19. Propriety	229
20. Leadership Development	227
21. Organizational change and development	221
22. Developing partnerships and networks	219
23. Project management	217
24. Customer service	205
25. Social media	193
26. Cataloguing, metadata, indexing, and classification	188
27. Digital curation and preservation	188
28. Policy and procedure development	183
29. Educational technologies	178
30. Website development	178
31. General application software	174
32. Online info retrieval	170
33. Grant writing	166
34. Integrated library systems	166
35. Financial Management	160
36. Engaging in research	158

37. Assistive technologies	151
38. Preservation and conservation	144
39. Database design	139
40. Human Resources Management	138
41. Professional associations	135
42. Facilities, health, and safety	132
43. Fundraising and development	130
44. Records management	129
45. Scholarly communications	128
46. Institutional repositories	127
47. Circulation	121
48. Governance, advisory committees, and board relations	116
49. Formal study in accreditation programs	116
50. Serials	108

Table 31. Ranking of all specific topics of interest for professional learning, general questionnaire responses

The top 20 areas of actual recent participation for professional learning of general questionnaire respondents were:

1. Customer service
2. Conflict resolution
3. Team work and collaborations
4. Effective communication
5. Equity, diversity and inclusion
6. Reference services
7. Library instruction and information literacy
8. Staying informed of emerging trends and issues
9. Leadership Development
10. Legal issues, copyright, and intellectual
11. Electronic resources
12. General application software
13. Organizational change and development
14. Cataloguing, metadata, indexing, and classification
15. Leading from any position
16. Acquisitions, selection and de-selection
17. Planning and Strategy
18. Equitable access
19. Evaluation of Library Services
20. Facilities, health, and safety

The bottom 20 areas of actual recent participation for professional learning of general questionnaire respondents were:

1. Developing partnerships and networks
2. Human Resources Management

3.   Library advocacy and marketing
4.   Circulation
5.   Engaging in research
6.   Emerging web technologies
7.   Scholarly communications
8.   Policy and procedure development
9.   Digital curation and preservation
10.   Database design
11.   Formal study in accreditation programs
12.   Records management
13.   Institutional repositories
14.   Serials
15.   Financial Management
16.   Preservation and conservation
17.   Governance, advisory committees, and board relations
18.   Fundraising and development
19.   Assistive technologies
20.   Grant writing

Participated in	Frequency
1. Customer service	161
2. Conflict resolution	156
3. Team work and collaborations	148
4. Effective communication	142
5. Equity, diversity and inclusion	107
6. Reference services	100
7. Library instruction and information	95
8. Staying informed of emerging trends and issues	94
9. Leadership Development	89
10. Legal issues, copyright, and intellectual	80
11. Electronic resources	80
12. General application software	72
13. Organizational change and development	70
14. Cataloguing, metadata, indexing, and classification	69
15. Leading from any position	67
16. Acquisitions, selection and de-selection	67
17. Planning and Strategy	66
18. Equitable access	64
19. Evaluation of Library Services	62
20. Facilities, health, and safety	62
21. Propriety	57
22. Social media	56
23. Online info retrieval	52
24. Community liaison, collaboration, and engagement	50

25. Professional associations	45
26. Intellectual freedom	43
27. Project management	43
28. Integrated library systems	43
29. Educational technologies	42
30. Website development	42
31. Developing partnerships and networks	41
32. Human Resources Management	39
33. Library advocacy and marketing	39
34. Circulation	38
35. Engaging in research	37
36. Emerging web technologies	35
37. Scholarly communications	32
38. Policy and procedure development	30
39. Digital curation and preservation	30
40. Database design	30
41. Formal study in accreditation programs	29
42. Records management	27
43. Institutional repositories	25
44. Serials	22
45. Financial Management	19
46. Preservation and conservation	18
47. Governance, advisory committees, and board relations	16
48. Fundraising and development	15
49. Assistive technologies	15
50. Grant writing	9

Table 32. Ranking of all specific topics of participation for professional learning, general questionnaire responses

The top 20 areas that directors indicated they observed knowledge and/or skill gaps that they would like to see addressed through professional opportunities included:

1. Effective communication
2. Planning and strategy
3. Evaluation of library services
4. Emerging web technologies specific to libraries
5. Organizational change and development
6. Community liaison, collaboration, and engagement
7. Library advocacy and marketing
8. Staying informed of emerging trends and issues
9. Leadership development
10. Team work and collaboration
11. Conflict Resolution
12. Developing partnerships and networks
13. Electronic resources

14. Library instruction and information literacy
15. Social media
16. Project management
17. Leading from any position
18. Human resources management
19. Customer Service
20. Equity, diversity, inclusion

The bottom 20 areas that directors indicated they observed knowledge and/or skill gaps that they would like to see addressed through professional opportunities included:
1. Assistive technologies
2. Legal issues, copyright, and intellectual property
3. Facilities, health, and safety
4. Cataloguing, metadata, indexing, and classification
5. Online information retrieval
6. Records management
7. Web site development
8. Acquisitions, selection, and de-selection
9. General application software for documents, spreadsheets, presentations
10. Intellectual Freedom
11. Integrated library systems
12. Institutional repositories
13. Engaging in research
14. Scholarly communication
15. Circulation
16. Preservation and conservation
17. Database design
18. Professional associations
19. Formal study in accredited programs
20. Serials

Indicate knowledge and/or skill gaps that you would like to see addressed through professional learning opportunities	Yes
1. Effective communication	92%
2. Planning and strategy	86%
3. Evaluation of library services	86%
4. Emerging web technologies specific to libraries	86%
5. Organizational change and development	83%
6. Community liaison, collaboration, and engagement	83%
7. Library advocacy and marketing	82%
8. Staying informed of emerging trends and issues	82%
9. Leadership development	79%
10. Team work and collaboration	78%
11. Conflict Resolution	78%

12. Developing partnerships and networks	76%
13. Electronic resources	76%
14. Library instruction and information literacy	74%
15. Social media	74%
16. Project management	70%
17. Leading from any position	68%
18. Human resources management	67%
19. Customer Service	65%
20. Equity, diversity, inclusion	65%
21. Reference services	64%
22. Fundraising and development	62%
23. Grant writing	59%
24. Policy and procedure development	58%
25. Financial management	55%
26. Information Policy, governance, and compliance	53%
27. Governance, advisory committees, and board relations	53%
28. Digital curation and preservation	53%
29. Equitable Access	52%
30. Educational technologies	52%
31. Assistive technologies	52%
32. Legal issues, copyright, and intellectual property	49%
33. Facilities, health, and safety	46%
34. Cataloguing, metadata, indexing, and classification	44%
35. Online information retrieval	44%
36. Records management	43%
37. Web site development	40%
38. Acquisitions, selection, and de-selection	37%
39. General application software for creating and editing documents, spreadsheets, presentations	37%
40. Intellectual Freedom	34%
41. Integrated library systems	30%
42. Institutional repositories	26%
43. Engaging in research	24%
44. Scholarly communication	22%
45. Circulation	20%
46. Preservation and conservation	19%
47. Database design	19%
48. Professional associations	16%
49. Formal study in accredited programs	11%
50. Serials	9%

Table 33. Ranking of all specific topics of importance for professional learning, directors' questionnaire responses

Discussion

The data provided in the above tables can be used to articulate a significant number of interesting questions and conclusions. For the purposes of this report we include some of the most immediate leading observations.

Within the sub-question series there is an overall trend of a sizable difference between the interest and participation of general questionnaire responses, as well as an inverse relation to interest and participation. In other words, general questionnaire respondents continue to participate in professional learning opportunities despite their participation not being well suited to their stated interests and needs. However, when all specific areas across sub-questions are collated and compared the levels of interest and participation level out significantly. For example, with the top 20 topics of participation and interest, all but three do not overlap. This could say more about how the questions were asked than the responses themselves, but it does indicate that further analysis would be helpful.

Equally important is the disparity between director perceptions and general respondent participation and interest trends. These two groups do not appear to share the same or similar priorities. Of the top 20 areas directors identified as having knowledge and/or skills gaps, only 13 of these areas were represented in the participation general respondents reported. The distribution was quite diverse as well—for example the leading topic of training was customer service--however, directors identified this as 19th in order of importance. Director perceptions may be skewed towards their own direct-reports (i.e., Associate Directors) and less on those individuals who may be front-line staff.

When comparing director priorities with general respondent interests and stated needs we again see a leveling out when the sub-questions are compared as a whole. However, the focus of staff seem to be on more foundational topics such as equitable access, effective communication, and evaluation of library services, while directors emphasize more managerial topics such as planning and strategy, organizational change and development, leadership development, and developing partnerships and networks. Customer service did not make it into general respondents' top 20 interests.

Further multivariate analysis would be able to pull out what trends are by library type, employer group, and region.   In the meantime, BCLA and other otganizations supporting the library community, may consider the following leading areas of professional learning importance across both questionnaires (in no particular order): equity, diversity, and inclusion; conflict resolution; equitable access; evaluation of library services; effective communication; library instruction and information literacy; team work and collaboration; electronic resources; staying informed of emerging trends and issues; leadership development; cataloguing, metadata, indexing, and classification; emerging web technologies specific to libraries; community liaison, collaboration, and engagement; library advocacy and marketing; and developing partnerships and networks.

- Within sub-question series there is an overall trend of a sizable difference between the interest and participation of general questionnaire responses as well as an inverse relation to interest and participation. In other words, general questionnaire respondents continue to participate in professional learning opportunities despite their participation not being well suited to their interests or stated needs.
- Equally important is the disparity between director perceptions and general respondent participation and interest trends. These two groups do not appear to share the same or similar priorities
- The focus of staff is on foundational topics such as equitable access, effective communication, and evaluation of library services, while directors emphasize more managerial topics such as planning and strategy, organizational change and development, leadership development, and developing partnerships and networks.
- BCLA , and other organizations supporting the BC library community, would be wise to consider the following leading areas of professional learning importance across both questionnaires (in no particular order):

  Equity, diversity, and inclusion;
  Conflict resolution;
  Equitable access;
  Evaluation of library services;
  Effective communication;
  Library instruction and information literacy;
  Team work and collaboration;
  Electronic resources;
  Staying informed of emerging trends and issues;
  Leadership development;
  Cataloguing, metadata, indexing, and classification;
  Emerging web technologies specific to libraries;
  Community liaison, collaboration, and engagement;
  Library advocacy and marketing;
  Developing partnerships and networks

2.9   Perceived importance of professional learning

General Questionnaire—Questions 1 & 2:
- *Which statement best describes your attitude towards the importance of professional learning?*
- *Which statement, do you feel best describes your current employer's or organization's attitude towards the importance of professional learning?*

Results

	Personal		Employer/Organization	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Very Important	335	74	119	26
Important	106	23	162	36
Moderately Important	11	2	112	25
Of Little Importance	1	0	46	10
Unimportant	1	0	11	2
Total	454	100	450	100

Table 34. Perceptions of the importance of professional learning (personal and organizational), general questionnaire responses
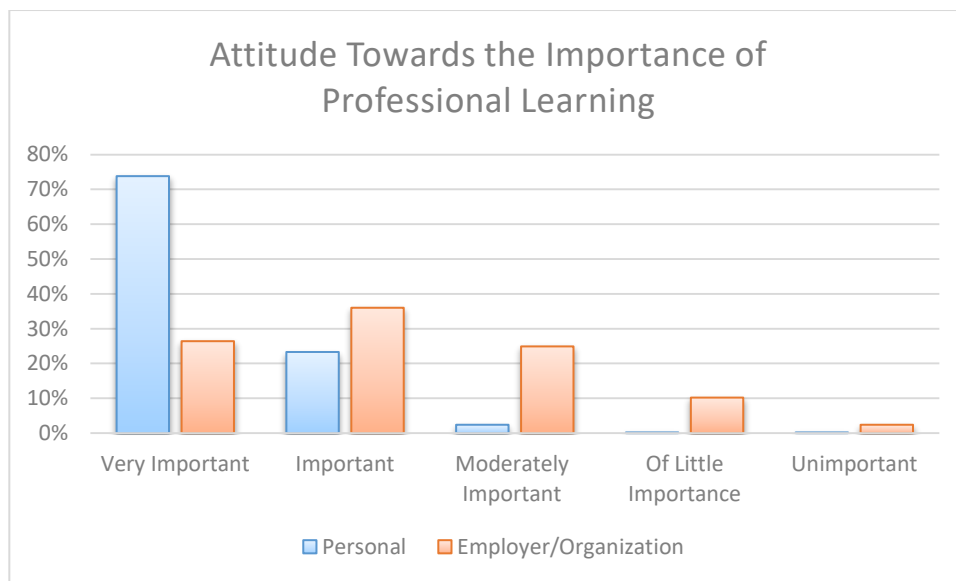
Figure 34. Perceptions of the importance of professional learning (personal and organizational), general questionnaire responses

Directors' Questionnaire—Question 1: Please indicate the importance of professional learning within your organization in relation to the following competing priorities:

Directors' Questionnaire—Question 1: Please indicate the importance of professional learning within your organization in relation to the following competing priorities:	Not important at all	Slightly important	Somewhat important	Important	Highly important
Community engagement	0%	9.10%	18.20%	32.70%	40%
Collections management	3.60%	10.90%	23.60%	47.30%	14.50%
Digital spaces and web services	1.80%	3.60%	21.80%	41.80%	30.90%
Diversity, equity, and inclusion	0%	12.70%	30.90%	32.70%	23.60%
Financial management	1.80%	12.70%	20%	43.60%	21.80%
Health and safety	7.30%	12.70%	30.90%	32.70%	16.40%
Human resource management	1.80%	5.50%	23.60%	45.55%	23.60%
Leadership training and succession planning	0%	1.80%	20%	40%	38.20%
Physical operations and facilities management	7.30%	16.40%	29.10%	34.50%	12.70%
Preservation	21.80%	18.20%	30.90%	18.20%	10.90%
Public services	3.60%	3.60%	10.90%	47.30%	34.50%
Programming	0%	9.10%	16.40%	43.60%	30.90%
Strategic planning	0%	3.60%	25.50%	47.30%	23.60%
Technical services	5.50%	9.10%	27.30%	47.30%	10.90%

Table 35. The importance of professional learning within your organization in relation to the following competing priorities, directors' questionnaire responses
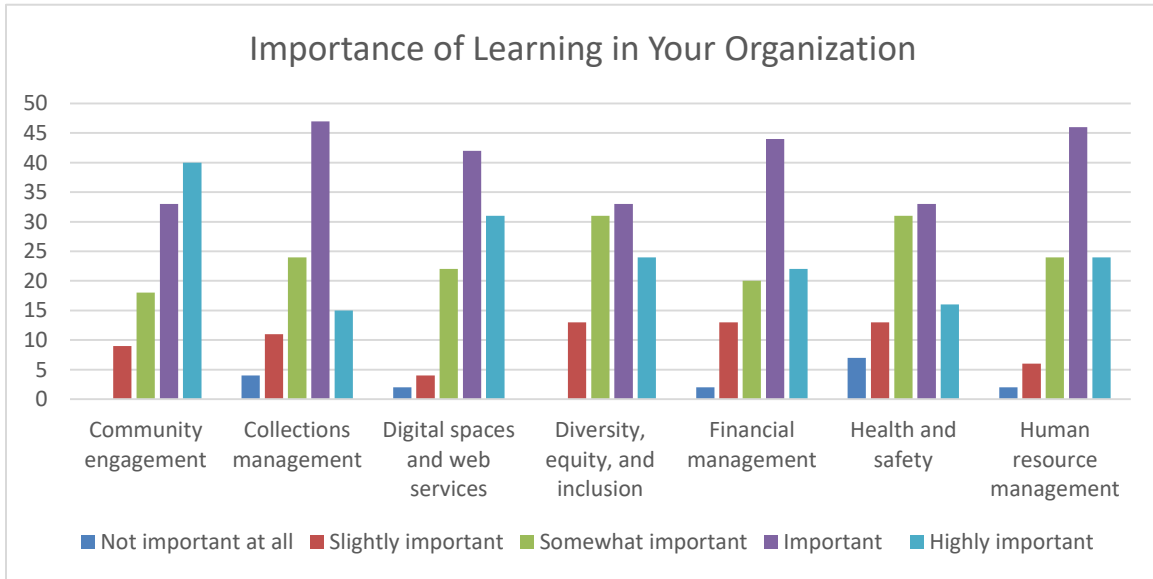
Figure 35. The importance of professional learning within your organization in relation to the following competing priorities, directors' questionnaire responses
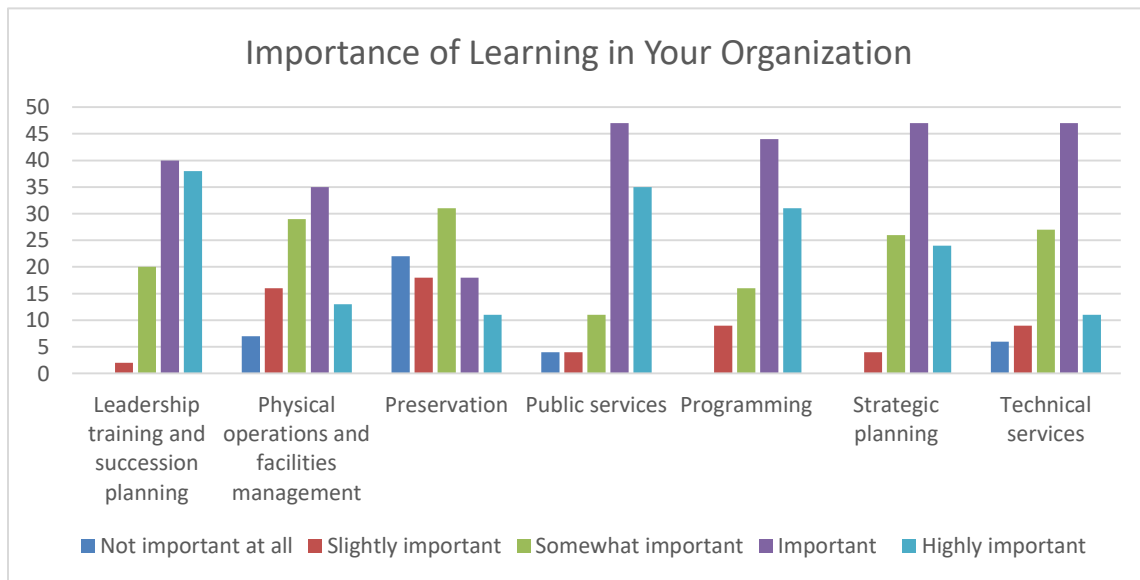
Figure 36. Continuation of table above, importance of professional learning within your organization in relation to the following competing priorities, directors' questionnaire responses

Response	Unimportant		Of Little Importance		Moderately Important		Important		Very Important	
Mainland/Southwest	0	0%	0	0%	6	3%	48	25%	142	72%
Kootenay	0	0%	0	0%	1	9%	3	27%	7	64%
Cariboo	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	25%	6	75%
Vancouver Island Coast	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	8	16%	41	84%
Northeast	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4	100%
Thompson Okanagan	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	6	33%	12	67%
North Coast	0	0%	0	0%	2	67%	1	33%	0	0%
Nechako	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	68%	1	33%
Total	0	0%	0	0%	9	3%	70	24%	213	73%

Table 36. Personal perceptions of the importance of professional learning by geographical region, general questionnaire responses
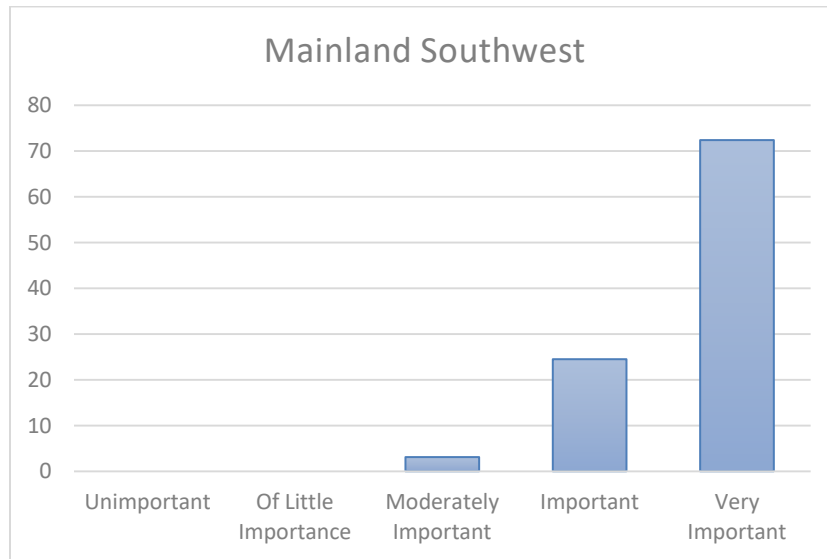
Figure 37. Personal perceptions of the importance of professional learning by geographical region—Mainland Southwest, general questionnaire responses
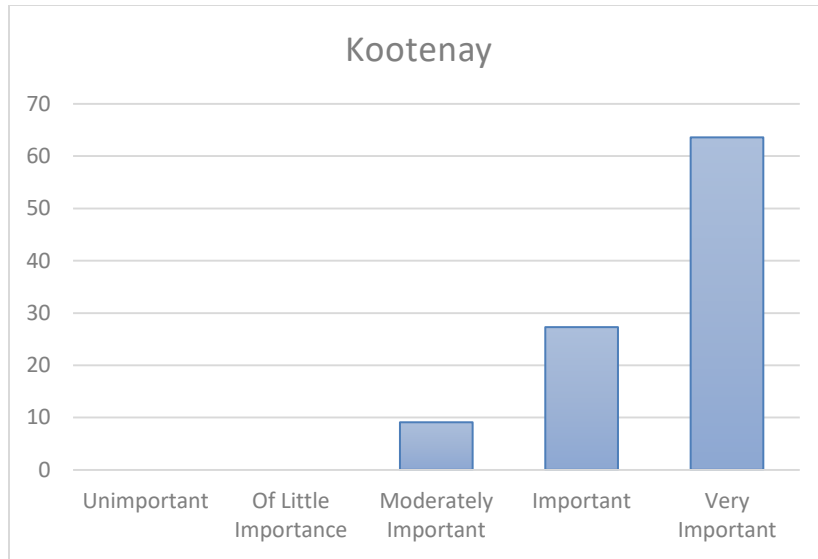
Figure 38. **Personal perceptions of the importance of professional learning by geographical region—Kootenay, general questionnaire responses**
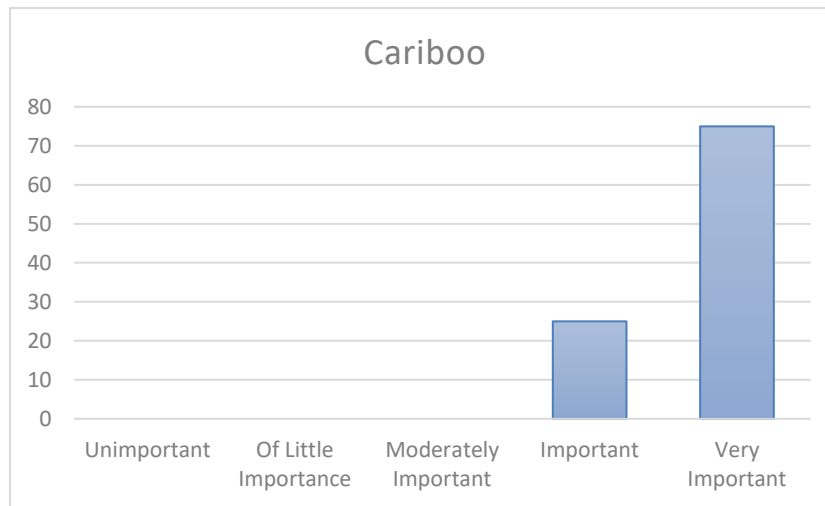
Figure 39. **Personal perceptions of the importance of professional learning by geographical region—Cariboo, general questionnaire responses**
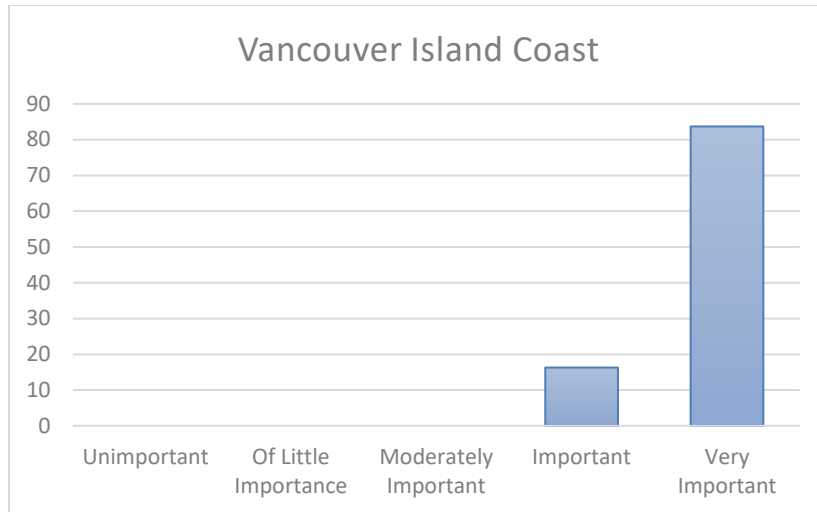
Figure 40. Personal perceptions of the importance of professional learning by geographical region—Vancouver Island Coast, general questionnaire responses
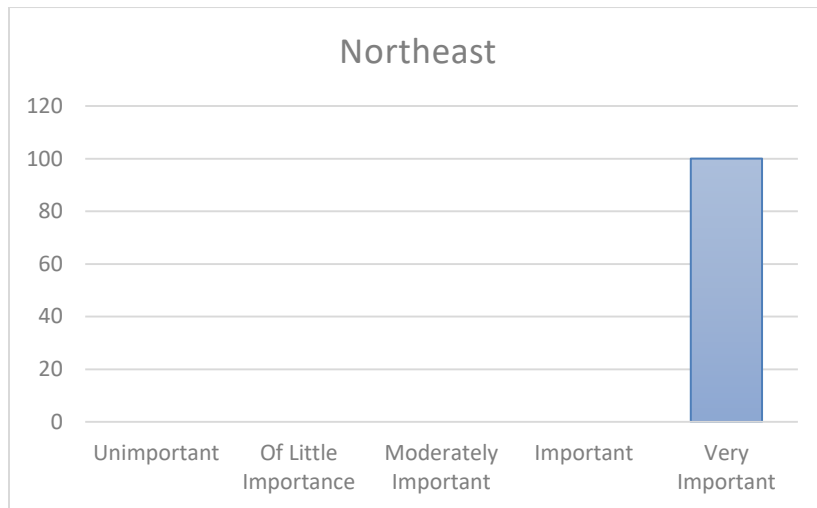
Figure 41. Personal perceptions of the importance of professional learning by geographical region—Northeast, general questionnaire responses
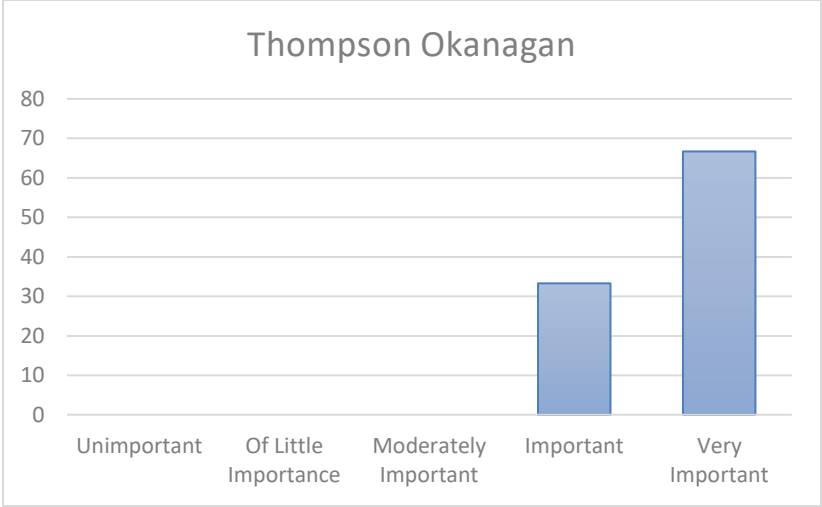
Figure 42. Personal perceptions of the importance of professional learning by geographical region—Thompson Okanagan, general questionnaire responses
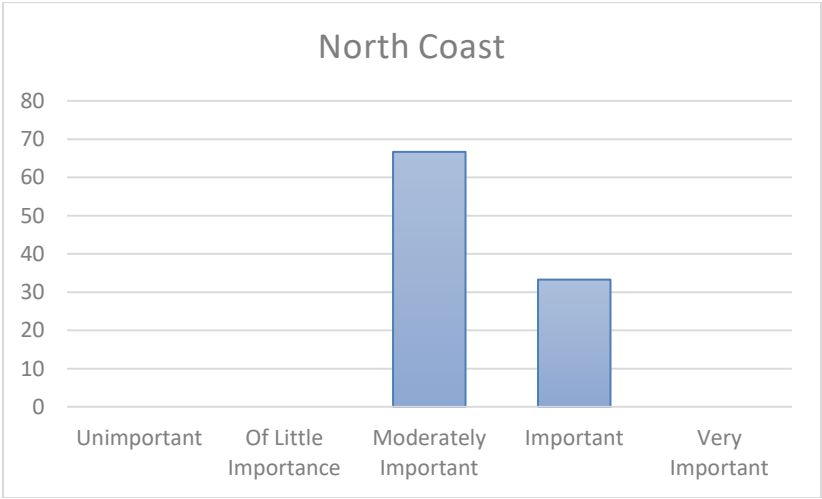
Figure 43. Personal perceptions of the importance of professional learning by geographical region—North Coast, general questionnaire responses
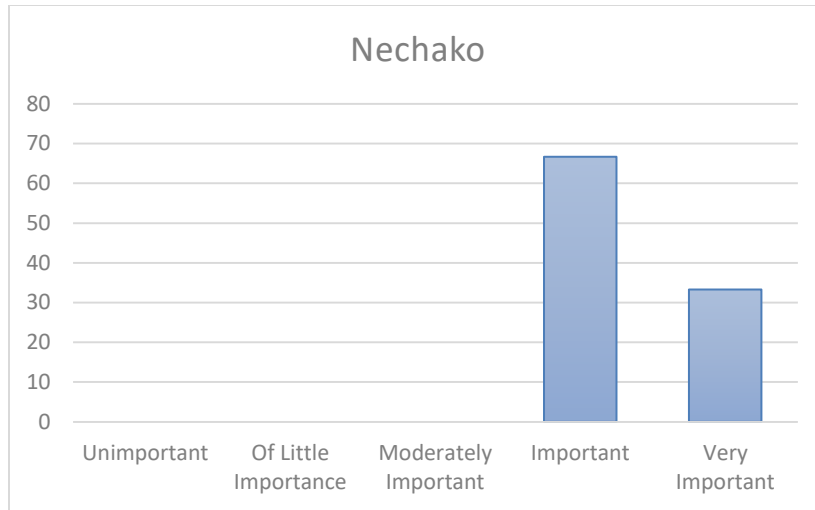
Figure 44. Personal perceptions of the importance of professional learning by geographical region—Nechako, general questionnaire responses

Response	Unimportant		Of Little Importance		Moderately Important		Important		Very Important	
Public	0	0%	0	0%	6	3%	55	30%	124	67%
School (K-12)	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	20%	8	80%
Academic	0	0%	0	0%	2	2%	15	17%	70	81%
Government	0	0%	0	0%	1	8%	2	17%	9	75%
Special	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	17%	10	83%
Other	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	6	100%

Table 37. Perceptions of the importance of professional learning by library type
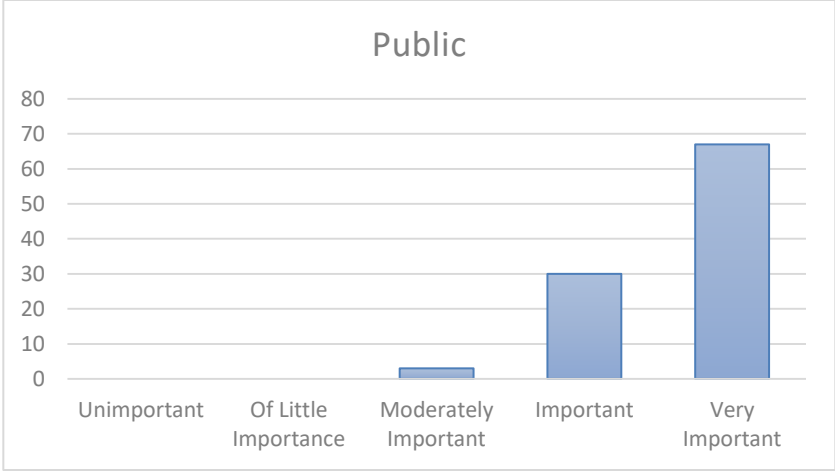
Figure 45. Perceptions of the importance of professional learning by library type—Public Libraries
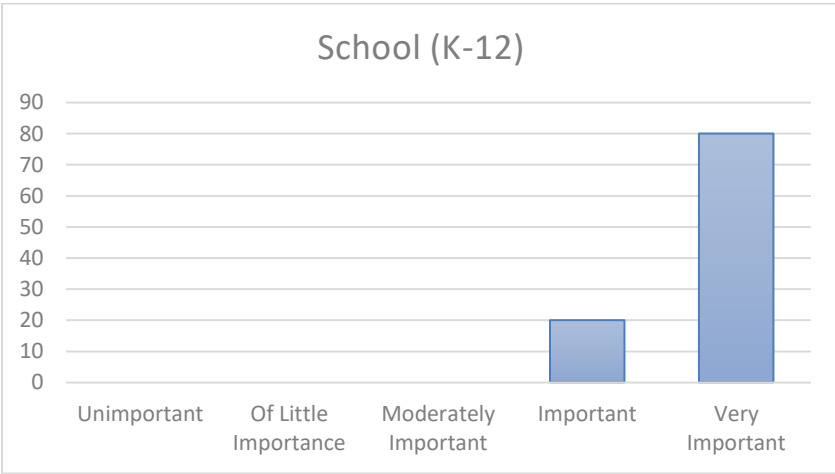
Figure 46. Perceptions of the importance of professional learning by library type—School Libraries
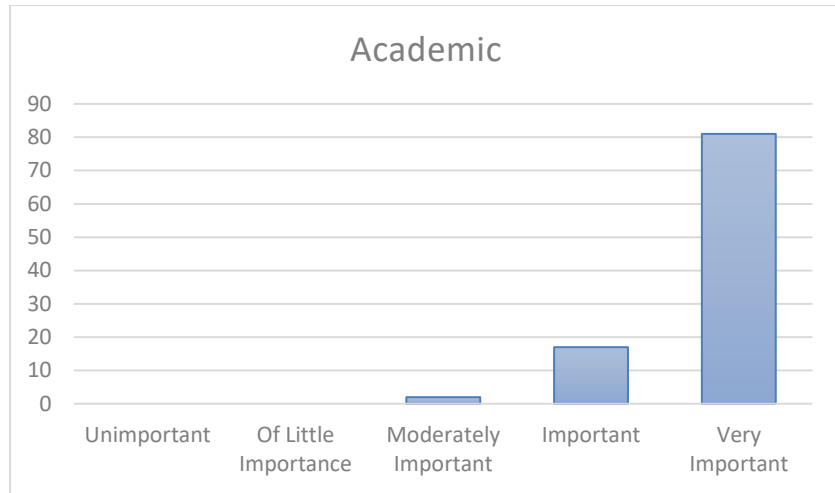
Figure 47. Perceptions of the importance of professional learning by library type—Academic Libraries
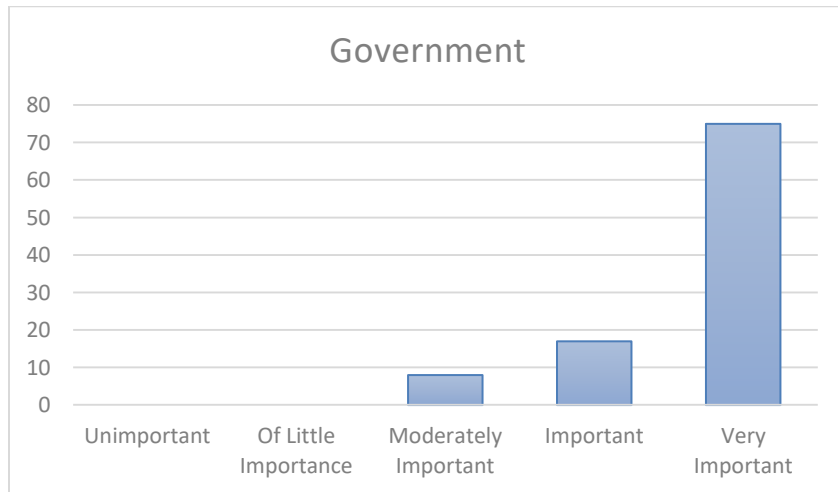
Figure 48. Perceptions of the importance of professional learning by library type—Government Libraries
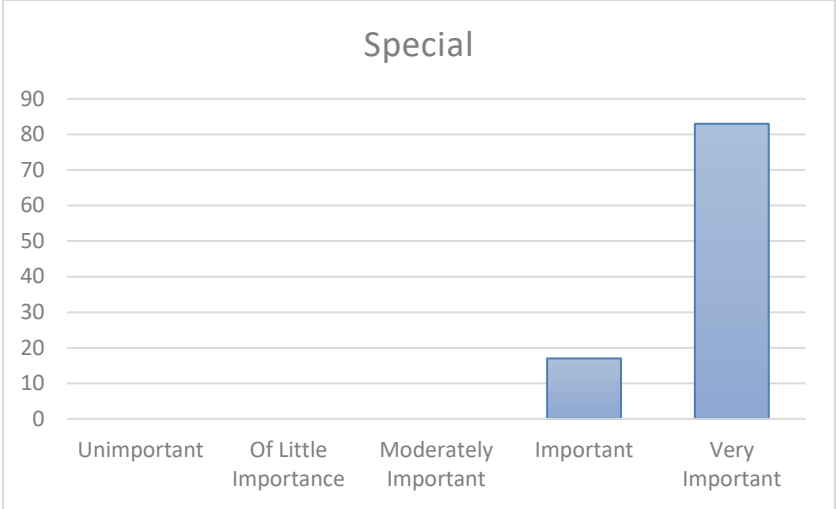
Figure 49. Perceptions of the importance of professional learning by library type—Special Libraries
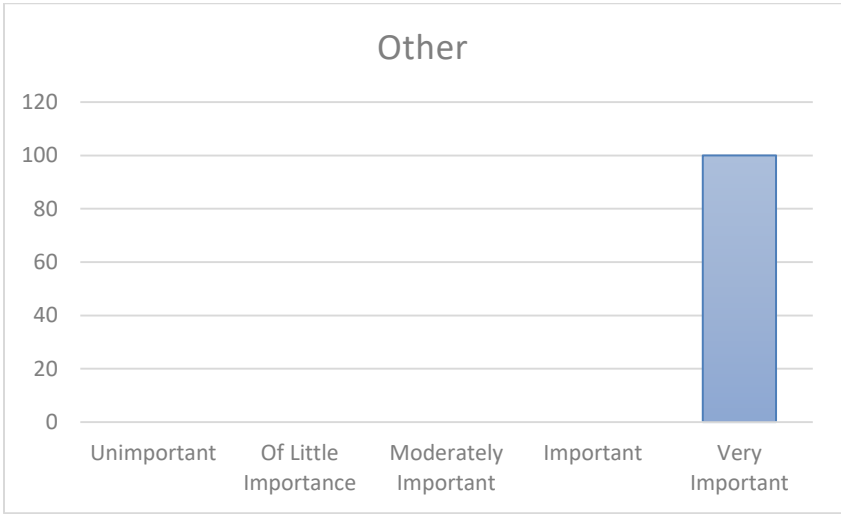
Figure 50. Perceptions of the importance of professional learning by library type—Other Library types, examples were not given by respondents

Discussion

General questionnaire respondents reported they perceived professional learning to be far more important than they perceived their employers felt it to be. 98% of general respondents felt professional learning was important or very important (74% very important, and 23% important), 2% felt it moderately important, and no responses were gathered for of little importance or unimportant. While 12% of directors felt professional learning was of little importance (10%) or unimportant (2%), their positive responses and thus support of professional learning were less enthusiastic than from the general questionnaire respondents. For example, while 26% of directors felt professional learning was very important, most directors agreed it was just important (36%), and 25% felt it was only of moderate importance.

Directors were asked specifically about how they perceived the importance of professional learning initiatives in relation to other competing priorities. The questionnaire wording proved to be somewhat confusing for director respondents; however, the researchers believe the results to this question can be interpreted to mean that directors feel the following are most important:

- Community engagement
- Leadership training and succession planning
- Public services
- Digital spaces and web services
- Programming
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Human resource management
- Strategic planning
- Financial management
- Health and safety
- **Professional learning**
- Collections' management
- Physical operations and facilities management
- Preservation
- Technical services

When the importance of professional learning general questionnaire results was compared geographically, we see that each of the seven regions are inclined towards importance, however, the degree of importance between moderately and very important differs between regions. Very important dominates for all regions except for Nechako, where respondents largely feel professional learning is only important; North Coast was even more distinct, where approximately 60% of respondents felt professional learning was only moderately important.

When the importance of professional learning is compared across library type, parallelism of response is consistent, meaning that all library types are highly inclined (approximately 80%) to professional learning being very important. Public libraries are marginally more inclined to important rather than very important, but the difference is not considerable.

- While both the general respondents and directors were positively inclined towards professional learning being important, the distribution of this importance was distinct. 26% of directors felt professional learning was very important while 74% of general respondents shared this view. Additionally, 25% of directors felt that professional learning was only moderately important. No general respondent felt professional learning was of little importance or unimportant, however, 12% of directors did.
- Directors were asked specifically about how they perceived the importance of professional learning initiatives in relation to other competing priorities. The results to this question can be interpreted to mean that directors feel that professional learning is of moderate to low importance in relation to other competing priorities.
- When the importance of professional learning general questionnaire results were compared geographically, we see that each of the seven regions are inclined towards importance, however, the degree of importance between moderately and very important differ between regions. Very important dominate for all regions except for Nechako, where respondents largely feel professional learning is only important; North Coast was even more distinct, where approximately 60% of respondents felt professional learning was only moderately important.
- When the importance of professional learning is compared across library type, parallelism of response is consistent meaning that all library types are highly inclined (approximately 80%) to professional learning being very important. Public libraries are marginally more inclined to important rather than very important, but the difference is not considerable.

2.10   Methods of involvement in professional learning

General Questionnaire—Question 4: Select how you have been involved in professional learning within the past year.

Results

Response	Count	Percentage
Reading on my own	349	87
Listserv monitoring or participation	254	63
Podcasts online videos webinars/webcasts	214	53
In person classes thru employer organization	212	53
Conferences	209	52
Blog monitoring or participation	182	45
Online classes thru professional association	179	44
Periodical subscriptions/alerts	148	37
In person course thru professional association	81	20
Online classes offered by employed organization	80	20
Informal professional learning	68	17
Online course work for credit	63	16
In person course work for credit	45	11
Total	**403**	

Table 38. Methods of involvement in professional learning, general questionnaire responses
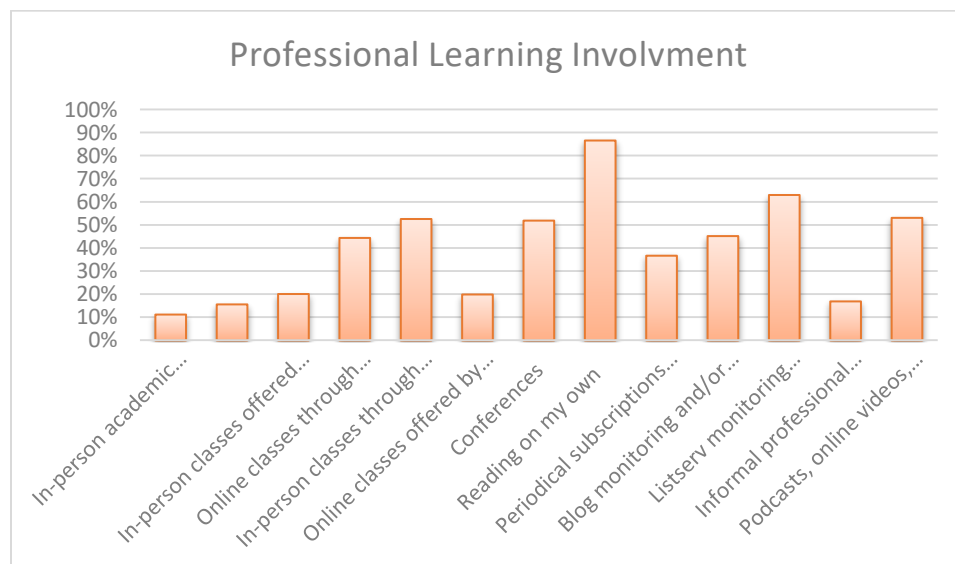
Figure 51. Methods of involvement in professional learning, general questionnaire responses

Directors' Questionnaire—Question 2: Please select the different ways your staff has been involved in professional learning during the past year.

Method of involvement	Percentage
Conferences	87
Online classes offered through professional associations	85
In-person classes offered in-house (e.g. Human Resource workshops, IT workshops, Equity and Inclusion, etc…)	62
Online academic coursework for credit (e.g. university or college courses, etc…)	47
In-person classes offered through professional associations	45
Informal professional learning community organized by the library (e.g., communities of practice, brown bags, journal clubs, etc…)	42
In-person academic coursework for credit (e.g. university or college courses, etc…)	28
Online classes offered in-house	15
Other (listed specifics, cannot include for privacy)	15

Table 39. Methods of involvement in professional learning, directors' questionnaire responses

Response	In person academic	On line academic	In person professional organization	On line professional organization	In person employer	On line employer
Mainland/ Southwest	7%	12%	14%	63%	41%	17%
Kootenay	18%	18%	18%	45%	45%	0%
Cariboo	0%	11%	0%	0%	22%	11%
Vancouver Island Coast	4%	5%	13%	14%	29%	16%
Northeast	17%	0%	33%	50%	33%	33%
Thompson Okanagan	13%	4%	17%	4%	15%	4%
North Coast	0%	0%	0%	17%	50%	50%
Nechako	25%	25%	0%	50%	50%	50%

Table 40. Methods of involvement in professional learning, individual responses to the general questionnaire compared by geographic region

Response	conference	Personal reading	periodicals	blogs	listservs	club	podcast	other
Mainland/Southwest	37%	68%	25%	29%	45%	9%	40%	8%
Kootenay	45%	55%	10%	10%	18%	0%	27%	18%
Cariboo	11%	22%	11%	22%	22%	11%	11%	0%
Vancouver Island Coast	36%	48%	25%	32%	32%	13%	36%	9%
Northeast	33%	83%	50%	50%	50%	67%	50%	0%
Thompson Okanagan	27%	46%	19%	58%	58%	8%	31%	4%
North Coast	25%	75%	0%	50%	50%	0%	50%	0%
Nechako	25%	75%	25%	50%	50%	0%	75%	0%

Table 41. Continuation of table above. Methods of involvement in professional learning, individual responses to the general questionnaire compared by geographic region

General Question 4 – How have you been involved in professional learning within the past year*?*

Response	In person academic	On line academic	In person professional organization	On line professional organization	In person employer	On line employer
Public	7%	9%	13%	29%	34%	15%
School (K-12)	8%	8%	17%	50%	33%	17%
Academic	6%	12%	14%	32%	39%	18%
Government	25%	25%	31%	44%	44%	25%
Special	0%	7%	20%	47%	27%	13%
Other	0%	0%	0%	58%	43%	29%

Table 42a. Methods of involvement in professional learning, general questionnaire responses

Response	conferences	Personal reading	periodicals	blogs	listservs	club	podcast	other
Public	40%	57%	23%	25%	42%	8%	34%	8%
School (K-12)	42%	58%	42%	25%	33%	8%	33%	17%
Academic	29%	66%	21%	31%	42%	11%	46%	6%
Government	50%	75%	44%	44%	50%	19%	44%	6%
Special	40%	60%	13%	40%	47%	7%	47%	0%
Other	29%	71%	43%	43%	57%	29%	29%	14%

Table 42b. Continuation of table above. Methods of involvement in professional learning, general questionnaire responses

For general respondents, informal professional learning methods such as reading on one's own, listservs, and online webinars dominated as methods of professional learning. Conferences, online sessions offered through professional associations, and in-person classes offered through employers were also important methods of professional learning for general respondents. Directors also identified these methods for their staff. Directors emphasized far less the importance of self-initiated methods such as reading on one's own, listserv monitoring, blogs and other social media, and informal networks of peers.

When methods of professional development involvement are compared geographically, we see that online (e.g., webinars and podcasts) and informal methods (e.g., personal reading and listserv monitoring) dominate across all regions. While one might expect to find that online is a more common method for rural library regions, this is generally not the case. Online and in-person methods share a fairly even distribution despite urban or rural settings.

Conferences and in-person employer training remain steadfast in their reach with approximately one third of respondents being involvement in these methods. In-person and online academic methods represent low levels of involvement with the exception of Nechako, where 25% of respondents report involvement. Reading or journal clubs are the lowest method of professional learning involvement, with the notable exception of Northeast, where 67% of respondents report being involved in professional learning in this way.

In-person learning offered through professional associations has no uptake in the Cariboo, North Coast, and Nechako; moderate uptake in the Kootenay, Mainland/Southwest, Vancouver Island/Coast, and Thompson Okanagan regions; and strong uptake in the Northeast. Online professional learning offered through professional associations is a strong method of involvement for the Mainland/Southwest, Northeast, Nechako, and Kootenay regions; less so for Vancouver Island/Coast and North Coast. Thompson and Cariboo report little to no involvement with professional learning offered online through professional associations.

Respondents in government libraries display a consistently high level of involvement across all methods, sometimes with noticeable differences. For example, while all library types report involvement in in-person or online academic participation between 0 and 12%, government library respondents report their academic involvement at 25% for in-person course work and 25% for online academic coursework. Government libraries are consistent outliers of strong involvement for personal learning, especially with regards to academic work, but also all other methods. It would appear that government library staff lead the way in uptake of professional learning. Conversely, special library respondents and academic library respondents both show low to moderate levels of professional learning across method type. Academic library respondents display low to moderate conference participation and a strong preference for informal methods such as personal reading and podcasts. Public and school libraries display unanticipated parallels of involvement, with the exception of public library respondents being low-participants of online professional association methods and periodical readers.

When comparing methods of professional learning by library type we see considerably stronger patterns than we did when comparing region. It appears that unique professional learning

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needs are more relevant to library type than regional distinction. So while geography may be a recurring theme within the descriptive and qualitative data, when we look deeper into the data regarding method of professional learning it appears that library type is considerably more relevant than geography.

Leading methods of professional development across library types include those informal methods such as personal reading, listservs, podcasts, and blogs. Conferences and in-person employer methods remain moderately important, as it did when comparing regions. Online professional association offerings are important across groups, while in-person offerings by the same associations are less important.

Highlights

- For general respondents, informal professional learning methods such as reading on one's own, listservs, and online webinars dominated considerably as methods of professional learning. Directors emphasized far less the importance of self-initiated methods and appeared to be less aware of these options than their staff. It appears that staff are participating in informal professional learning, such as monitoring listservs, while their directors are unaware of this and highlight other initiatives, such as conferences.
- Conferences, online sessions offered through professional associations, and in-person classes offered through employers were important methods of professional learning for both the general respondents and directors.
- Geographical comparisons of methods of professional learning did not exhibit patterns one might expect, such as a preference for online methods. Rural and urban regions did not share patterns one might expect. Online and informal methods dominate across all regions.
- Conferences and in-person employer training remain steadfast in their moderate levels of involvement across regions.
- Government library respondents display high levels of professional learning involvement across professional learning methods.
- When comparing methods of professional learning by library type we see considerably stronger patterns than we did when comparing by region. Unique professional learning needs are more relevant to library type than regional distinction. So while geography may be a recurring theme within the descriptive and qualitative data, when we look deeper into the data regarding method of professional learning we see that library type is considerably more relevant than geography.
- Leading methods of professional learning across library types include those informal methods such as personal reading, listservs, podcasts, and blogs. Conferences and in-person employer methods remain moderately important, as it did when comparing regions. Online professional association offerings are important across groups, in-person offerings by the same associations are less important.

2.11 Percentage of work time in professional learning

General Questionnaire—Question 5: Over the last year, what percentage of your work time did you spend participating in professional learning? This would include conference attendance, workshop participation, reading, etc… (optional)

Directors' questionnaire—Question 3: How much of your professional staff's work time were you able to allocate to professional learning within the past year? (Includes attending conferences, completing coursework, etc.)

Directors' questionnaire—Question 4: How much of your technicians and library assistant's work time were you able to allocate to their professional learning during the past year? (Includes attending conferences, completing coursework, etc...)

Directors' questionnaire—Question 6: Please select the types of resources the organization provides to support professional learning.
- *Release time (allocated time, not vacation)*
- *Partial release time*
- *Reimbursement for travel*
- *Partial reimbursement for travel*
- *Reimbursement for registration*
- *Partial reimbursement for registration*
- *Dedicated staff and/or unit for coordinating professional learning initiatives*
- *Other: _____*

Directors' questionnaire—Question 8: When a staff member participates in a professional learning opportunity, how is that learning shared within your organization? (please select all that apply)

Response	Count	Percentage
None	10	3
0-5%	228	57
5-10%	90	23
11-15%	38	10
16-20%	14	4
21-25%	7	2
26-30%	5	1
More than 30%	7	2
Total	399	

Table 43. **Percentage of work time in professional learning, general questionnaire responses**

When asked how much time librarian respondents had spent at work on professional learning activities, 169 librarians responded. 56% reported having spent between 0-5% of their work time last year on professional learning-related activities, 24% reported having spent between 6-10% of their time, 11% reported having spent between 11-15% of their time, 2% reported having spent between 16-20% of their time, 1% reported 21-15%, 1% reported 30% or more, and 5% reported explicitly having not spent any time on professional learning activities within the past year.

When asked how much time respondents had spent at work on professional learning activities, 138 library technicians or assistants responded. Of these 138, 62% reported having spent between 0-5% of their work time on professional learning; 19% spent between 6-10% of their time; 7% spent between 11-15% of their time; 3% spent between 16-20% of their work time on professional learning activities; 1% spent between 21-25% of their time; 0.5% spent 26-30% of their time; 1% spent 30% or more of their time on professional learning; 6.5% of respondents reported that none of their work time was allocated to professional learning. What was not determined in this question was whether this was supervisor-initiated work-time, employee-initiated work time, or a combination of the two.

When directors were asked about the amount of time they allocated to librarians to engage in professional learning, 49 responded. Of these responses, 44% allocated between 0-5% of librarian time; 41% of director respondents allocated between 6-10%;10% reported allocating between 11-15%; and 0.5% allocated between 21-25% of librarian time. When directors were asked about the amount of time they allocated to professional learning for library technicians or assistants, 52 responded. Of these responses, 58% of directors reported that technicians or assistants were allocated between 0-5% of professional learning time on the job; 23% reported staff were allocated between 6-10%; 0.5% allocated 11-15%; 0.5% 16-20%; and, 18% reported explicitly that library technicians or assistants were not allocated time for professional learning on the job.

Percentage of work time in last year spent on professional learning	Librarian responses to amount of time spent on professional learning at work (n=169)	Library Director responses to amount of time allocated to Librarians for professional learning at work (n=49)	Library Technicians or Assistants responses to amount of time spent on professional learning at work (n=138)	Library Director responses to amount of time allocated to Library Technicians or Assistants for professional learning at work (n=52)
No time spent	5%	n/a	6.5%	n/a
0-5%	56%	44%	62%	58%
6-10%	24%	41%	19%	23%
11-15%	11%	10%	7%	0.5%
16-20%	2%	n/a	3%	0.5%
21-25%	1%	0.5%	1%	n/a
26-30%	0%	n/a	0.5%	n/a
30%+	1%	n/a	0.5%	n/a

When we compare the directors' responses with those responses self-reported by librarians and library technician and assistants, a pattern of reporting discrepancy emerges. With regards to librarians, it appears that more than half (56%) report having spent between 0-5% of their work time on professional learning activities, yet 44% of directors responded to the same question: This is a 12% discrepancy. A further gap is observed with librarians and directors regarding the 6-10% range of time. 24% of librarians self-report having spent between 6-10% of their time on professional learning, however, 41% of directors report allocating that time. This inconsistency may be explained by a difference in perception between directors and the staff they lead, particularly with regards to librarians. Regardless, it appears that between 0-10% is the overwhelming average for amount of time all staff spent at work on professional learning activities.

Directors' questionnaire—Question 9: What is the return on investment of professional learning? What are some of the most effective ways you have observed professional learning enhancing the learning, behavior, and/or services of your organization?

Response	Percentage
Presentation to colleagues	72
A written report	53
Peer-training to colleagues	51
Other:	13

Table 44. How professional learning is shared, directors' questionnaire responses

Figure 52. How professional learning is shared, directors' questionnaire responses

Directors' comments emphasize that the sharing of newly acquired professional learning is challenging, informal, and often not possible. Directors who did respond suggested that hands-on activities had a more lasting impact and changed workflows; though admitted that videos were often necessary.

The director responses to question 9 demonstrate why collecting qualitative data is so helpful, especially in an exploratory study such as this. Directors' comments highlight the benefit of professional learning to their organizations as being: increased staff confidence, enthusiasm, organizational commitment, as well as improved front line service. Below are representative comments from the directors' questionnaire:

- *Real, hands on skills that can be used right now have the best return. Conferences with a combination of high levels ideas and hands on skills get our staff most excited about libraryland.*
- *Increased confidence! Increased creativity and inspiration! Increased willingness to share ideas and take initiative!*
- *Services to users have been improved based on professional learning.*
- *We see new services and tools developed.*
- *More confidence in staff. Better ability to help patrons and other staff. Enhances self-motivation.*
- *Professional learning seems, at the very least, to make the participants more forward looking in their approach to library service, and more aware of what is happening around them.*
- *The ROI depends completely on who is sent and for what purpose.*
- *Employees more excited and engaged; more apt to be enthusiastic about their job; more apt and willing to try new things.*
- *creates change, supports new ideas (many of which are followed up on), increased confidence.*
- *Increased ability to offer new and traditional services well. Increased knowledge and growth in abilities and confidence among staff. Best option for training is short i.e. 4 week online courses at own pace.*
- *Re-energizing the organization. Developing best practices in areas that need improvement. Staff loyalty and goodwill towards the organization*
- *Greater engagement of the staff who participate; increased professionalism; increased commitment to the organization and its mission.*
- *i think it creates excitement about job and renewed possibilities. Increases confidence, skills, and customer service.*
- *Staff come with new ways of doing things, reinvigorated by peers, excited to try new approaches, programs or technologies. We continue to grow, especially during demanding and changing times. We are better able to meet our communities' needs.*
- *Brings new ideas into our organization, helps our staff build their networks, helps us to stay informed about best practices and innovations from elsewhere, re-energizes and rewards staff.*
- *Our environment is changing all the time; our staff need to be learning and developing constantly.*

- *Stimulates creative thought, assists staff in practical skills like handling difficult situations with patrons or first aid, encourages staff to think outside of their defined boxes, keeps staff more engaged in their work, promotes networking with colleagues.*

Highlights

- 60% of general respondents reported they spent either no time or less than 5% of their work time on professional learning. 23% reported having spent between 5-10%, 10% reported have spent between 11-15%, and 9% spent more than 16% of their work time on professional learning.
- When asked how much time librarian respondents had spent at work on professional learning activities, 169 librarians responded. 56% reported having spent between 0-5% of their work time last year on professional learning related activities; 24% reported having spent between 6-10% of their time.
- When asked how much time respondents had spent at work on professional learning activities, 138 library technicians or assistants responded. Of these 138, 62% reported having spent between 0-5% of their work time on professional learning; 19% spent between 6-10% of their time.
- When we compare the director responses with those responses self-reported by librarians and library technician and assistants a pattern of reporting discrepancy emerges. With regards to librarians, it appears that over half (56%) report having spent between 0-5% of their work time on professional learning activities, yet 44% of directors responded to the same question; this is a 12% discrepancy. A further gap is observed with librarians and directors regarding the 6-10% range of time. 24% of librarians self-report having spent between 6-10% of their time on professional learning, however, 41% of directors report allocating that time. This inconsistency may be explained by a difference in perception between directors and the staff they lead, particularly with regards to librarians. Regardless, it appears that between 0-10% is the overwhelming average for amount of time all staff spent at work on professional learning activities.
- Directors' comments emphasize that sharing of newly acquired professional learning is challenging, informal, and often not possible.
- Directors' comments highlight the benefit of professional learning to their organizations as being: Increased staff confidence, enthusiasm, organizational commitment, as well as improved front line service.

2.12   Professional learning costs and funding source

General Questionnaire—Question 6: In the last year what has been the approximate cost of your professional learning activities. This would include conference attendance, workshop registration, etc… (Please enter a dollar amount, e.g., $200).

General Questionnaire—Question 7: How much of the cost from question 6 has been covered by sources other than your own money? (optional)

Directors' Questionnaire—Question 5: If funding is allocated in lump funds, what amounts are applicable?

Directors' Questionnaire—Question 5: If applicable, how much funding is available within your organization per year for professional learning activities? A range and approximations are fine and helpful.

- *Per professional staff member $ _____*
- *Per non-professional staff member $ _____*

General Questionnaire—Question 8: If you had financial support to participate in professional learning, who provided that support?

Results & Discussion

Within the general questionnaire 321 individuals responded with a dollar amount. The range was from $0 to $15,000 with the average being $1191 annually:
- 41 individuals reported having spent $0;
- 21 individuals spent less than $100;
- 24 individuals spent between $100-$199;
- 44 individuals spent between $200 and $399;
- 44 individuals spent between $400 and $599;
- 19 individuals spent between $600 and $999;
- 47 individuals spent between $1000 and $1999;
- 34 individuals spent between $2000 and $2999;
- 17 individuals spent between $3000 and $3999;
- 9 individuals spent between $4000 and $4999;
- 9 individuals spent between $5000 and $5999; and,
- 5 individuals spent between $6000 and $15,000 annually.

106 library technicians or assistants responded to this question, and their responses ranged between zero and $15,000, with an average of $789. If the $15,000 outlier is removed, the average is $654, with the range being between zero and $550; 76% of library technicians or assistants spend less than $600. Those with costs above $600, especially those with $2,500 or more, indicated their fees went towards extra certificates or training and were occasionally covered by unions or employers. 135 professional librarians responded: their range was

between 0 and $7000, with the average being $1243 annually. On average, library technicians or assistants spend 63% less than professional librarians on professional learning activities annually. Directors provided minimal information to question 5 when asked how much funding was available to professional and non-professional staff members. Lump sums ranged between zero and $20,000; several director comments emphasized that funds were allocated based on staff need or application.

When asked how much of the cost from question 6 had been covered by sources other than one's own money, 106 library technicians or assistants answered and their responses varied in two extremes: 35% had between 0 and 5% external financial support while 50% had between 91-100% support; the remaining 15% had moderate levels of external support. When librarians were asked the same question, 133 responded. Of these 133, 22% had between 0-5% of their professional learning costs covered externally and 44% had between 91-100% of their fees covered; the remaining 44% had moderate levels of support typically between the 70-89% range.

Response	Count	Percentage
0-5%	84	25
6-10%	5	2
11-20%	8	2
21-30%	5	2
31-40%	8	2
41-50%	10	3
51-60%	5	2
61-70%	4	1
71-80%	18	5
81-90%	26	8
91-100%	146	44
Total	335	

**Table 45. Employer cost coverage,
general questionnaire responses**

Response	Count	Percentage
Employer	273	91
Grants scholarships	19	6
Professional associations	24	8
Other	29	10
Total	300	

**Table 46. Sources of funding for professional learning,
general questionnaire responses**

"My organization will not support librarians attending conference at which they do not present."

(Respondent comment to general questionnaire, question 8)

"It is probably this number or more and it is my own money, as if you count the holiday time I take to participate in conferences because our employer does not give us paid work time, the cost of the conference itself, food and gas as this is also not covered by our employer. Also if I wanted to take courses online or in person I would need to pay for this myself as well."

(Respondent comment to general questionnaire, question 8)

I participated [in a] committee that involved travelling… - all self-funded.

(Respondent comment to general questionnaire, question 8)

Highlights

- Library technicians or assistants spent an average of $789 annually on professional learning; librarians spent $1243 annually. On average, library technicians or assistants spend 63% less than professional librarians on professional learning activities annually. 25% of general respondents reported between 0-5% of their professional learning costs were covered by their employers, while 44% reported between 90-100% of their costs were covered. This difference is considerable with their extremes.
- When asked how much of the cost from question 6 had been covered by sources other than one's own money, 106 library technicians or assistants answered and their responses varied in two extremes, 35% had between 0 and 5% external financial support while 50% had between 91-100% support; the remaining 15% had moderate levels of external support. When librarians were asked the same question, 133 responded. Of these 133, 22% had between 0-5% of their professional learning costs covered externally and 44% had between 91-100% of their fees covered; the remaining 44% had moderate levels of support typically between the 70-89% range.

2.13 Satisfaction of available professional learning

General Questionnaire—Question 9: How satisfied are you with the professional learning currently available to you?

Results

	Through your organization (e.g. your library and parent organization, if relevant)		Through professional associations (e.g. BCLA, ALA, CLA, etc.)		Through formal, accredited and/or for credit programs (e.g. universities, colleges, or institutes)	
	Frequency	**Percent**	**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Highly satisfied	35	9	14	4	27	8
Satisfied	152	39	112	30	91	26
Undecided	78	20	164	44	172	50
Not satisfied	91	23	61	16	42	12
Not at all satisfied	39	10	25	7	16	5
Total	395	100	376	100	348	100

Table 47. Satisfaction of available professional learning, general questionnaire responses
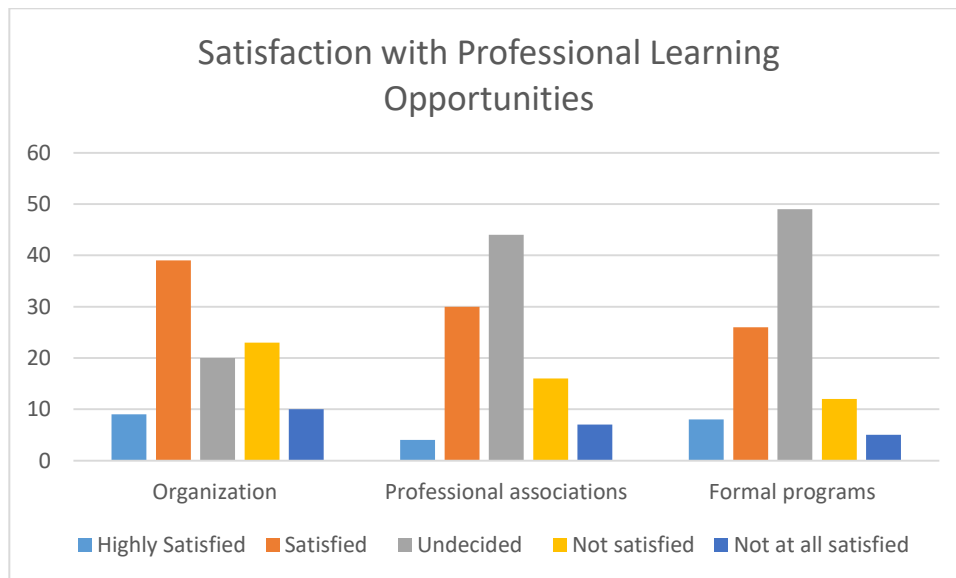
Figure 53. Satisfaction of available professional learning, general questionnaire responses

Directors' Questionnaire—Question 10: How satisfied are you with the professional learning currently available to your staff?

	Through your organization (e.g. your library and parent organization, if relevant)		Through professional associations (e.g. BCLA, ALA, CLA, etc.)		Through formal, accredited and/or for credit programs (e.g. universities, colleges, or institutes)	
	Frequency	**Percent**	**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Highly satisfied	6	11.3	1	1.9	2	3.8
Satisfied	25	47.2	26	49.1	19	35.8
Undecided	12	22.6	21	39.6	23	43.4
Not satisfied	10	18.9	3	5.7	5	15.1
Not at all satisfied	0	0	2	3.8	1	1
Total	53		53		53	

Table 48. Satisfaction of available professional learning, directors' questionnaire responses

Figure 54. Satisfaction of available professional learning, directors' questionnaire responses

Response	Not At All Satisfied		Not Satisfied		Undecided		Satisfied		Highly Satisfied	
Mainland/Southwest	9	6%	13	9%	73	51%	39	27%	9	6%
Kootenay	0	0%	0	0%	7	70%	3	30%	0	0%
Cariboo	0	0%	2	25%	4	50%	2	25%	0	0%
Vancouver Island Coast	0	0%	9	24%	20	53%	8	21%	1	3%
Northeast	0	0%	1	25%	1	25%	1	25%	1	25%
Thompson Okanagan	0	0%	0	0%	6	46%	7	24%	0	0%
North Coast	0	0%	0	0%	1	50%	0	0%	1	50%
Nechako	0	0%	1	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%

Table 49. Geographic comparisons of general question 9 – How satisfied are you with the professional learning opportunities currently available to you?
--Through your organization (e.g. your library and parent organization, if relevant)

Response	Not At All Satisfied		Not Satisfied		Undecided		Satisfied		Highly Satisfied	
Mainland/Southwest	15	9%	37	23%	33	20%	69	42%	10	6%
Kootenay	1	10%	2	20%	2	20%	4	40%	1	10%
Cariboo	0	0%	2	25%	1	13%	5	63%	0	0%
Vancouver Island Coast	5	12%	13	30%	5	12%	15	35%	5	12%
Northeast	0	0%	1	25%	1	25%	2	50%	0	0%
Thompson Okanagan	2	13%	4	25%	2	13%	7	44%	1	6%
North Coast	0	0%	0	0%	2	67%	1	33%	0	0%
Nechako	1	50%	0	0%	1	50%	0	0%	0	0%

Table 50. Geographic comparisons of general question 9 – How satisfied are you with the professional learning opportunities currently available to you?
--Through professional associations (e.g., BCLA, ALA, CLA, etc…)

Response	Not At All Satisfied		Not Satisfied		Undecided		Satisfied		Highly Satisfied	
Mainland/Southwest	13	8%	23	15%	70	44%	46	29%	6	4%
Kootenay	0	0%	2	22%	5	56%	2	22%	0	0%
Cariboo	0	0%	2	25%	1	13%	5	63%	0	0%
Vancouver Island Coast	1	2%	7	17%	22	52%	10	24%	2	5%
Northeast	1	25%	0	0%	0	0%	3	75%	0	0%
Thompson Okanagan	0	0%	1	7%	6	43%	7	50%	0	0%
North Coast	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	50%	1	50%
Nechako	0	0%	1	50%	1	50%	0	0%	0	0%

Table 51. Geographic comparisons of general question 9 – How satisfied are you with the professional learning opportunities currently available to you?
--Through formal, accredited and/or for credit programs
(e.g., universities, colleges, or institute)

Response	Not At All Satisfied		Not Satisfied		Undecided		Satisfied		Highly Satisfied	
Public	14	9%	33	20%	37	22%	70	42%	11	7%
School (K-12)	1	11%	3	33%	3	33%	2	22%	0	0%
Academic	8	11%	21	30%	10	14%	24	34%	7	10%
Government	0	0%	3	38%	1	13%	2	25%	2	25%
Special	3	30%	1	10%	2	20%	4	40%	0	0%
Other	1	17%	0	0%	2	33%	3	43%	0	0%

Table 52. Geographic comparisons of general question 9 – How satisfied are you with the professional learning opportunities currently available to you—Through your organization?

Response	Not At All Satisfied		Not Satisfied		Undecided		Satisfied		Highly Satisfied	
Public	11	7%	21	13%	68	43%	51	33%	6	4%
School (K-12)	1	11%	1	11%	5	56%	2	22%	0	0%
Academic	4	6%	13	19%	29	43%	20	29%	2	3%
Government	0	0%	2	29%	3	43%	0	0%	2	29%
Special	2	20%	0	0%	4	40%	4	40%	0	0%
Other		0%	2	33%	2	33%	2	33%	0	0%

Table 53. Geographic comparisons of general question 9 – How satisfied are you with the professional learning opportunities currently available to you—Through professional associations

Response	Not At All Satisfied		Not Satisfied		Undecided		Satisfied		Highly Satisfied	
Public	4	3%	17	12%	71	48%	45	31%	10	7%
School (K-12)	1	11%	3	33%	5	55%	0	0%	0	0%
Academic	4	7%	8	13%	32	53%	12	20%	4	7%
Government	0	0%	2	50%	0	50%	0	0%	0	0%
Special	2	20%	0	0%	3	30%	5	50%	0	0%
Other	0	0%	1	17%	4	67%	1	17%	0	0%

Discussion

A leading trend for both general and director responses is a high degree of uncertainty across the two questionnaires, with responses to these questions mediocre in nature. All general questionnaire participants were asked about their satisfaction levels from three separate sources: 1) their home organization; 2) professional associations such as ALA, CLA, and BCLA regardless of whether they were members or not; and, 3) formal, accredited and/or for-credit programs. Overall trend lines indicated most respondents (39%) were satisfied with the professional learning opportunities available to them through their organizations. With regards to offerings through professional association, most respondents (44%) indicated they were undecided and 30% were satisfied. Formal programs received the lowest levels of satisfaction by respondents, most (50%) indicated they were undecided and 26% were satisfied.

Satisfaction levels of professional learning opportunities were also compared regionally. It is important to remember that the proportion of respondents from Northeast, Nechako, North Coast, Cariboo, and Kootenay is considerably smaller than Mainland/Southwest, Vancouver Island/Coast, and Thompson Okanagan respondents. Therefore, trend determination from these smaller sample sizes is considerably less conclusive. With respect to professional learning opportunities available through individuals' home organizations, the majority of respondents (between 70%-46%) for six of the eight regions were undecided; approximately one quarter to one third of respondents for six of the eight regions were satisfied. Three regions stand out with unique response attributes. Northeast had equal distribution across 'not satisfied', 'undecided', 'satisfied', and 'highly satisfied'. Northcoast was evenly split with half of respondents being 'undecided' and the other half being 'highly satisfied'. Nechako respondents were definitively (100%) 'not satisfied' with the professional learning opportunities available to them through their organizations. Overall, regions were lukewarm or indifferent in terms of satisfaction with the professional learning opportunities available to them through their home organizations.

Next, regionally compared respondents were asked about their satisfaction levels of professional learning opportunities available to them through professional organizations; respondents need not be current members of these professional organizations. Few respondents from any region were 'highly satisfied', 12% of respondents in Vancouver Island Coast and 10% in Kootenay felt this positive; all other regions were either 6% or 0% highly satisfied. The numbers for 'satisfied' were more common across all regions, except for Nechako. Overall, between one-third to two-thirds of respondents were 'satisfied' with the professional learning opportunities available to them through professional organizations. The 'undecided' category showed some strength as well in three clusters. In the North Coast and Nechako regions 67% and 50%, respectively, were 'undecided', while Northeast, Mainland/Southwest, Kootenay were 25%, 20%, and 20% 'undecided'. Cariboo, Vancouver Island/Coast, and Thompson Okanagan were about 12% 'undecided'. The 'not satisfied' category was consistently

strong with between 20%-30% of respondents in all regions except for North Coast and Nechako being 'not satisfied'. 'Not at all satisfied' was a category not selected by North Coast, Northeast, or Cariboo respondents, but between 9-13% of respondents in Mainland/Southwest, Kootenay, Vancouver Island/Coast, and Thompson Okanagan felt 'highly unsatisfied'. Again, Nechako was an outlier in that 50% of respondents were 'highly unsatisfied' with professional learning opportunities available to them through professional organizations. With Nechako's other 50% being 'undecided' there is clearly a satisfied gap for this region.

The last regional comparison of professional learning source satisfaction was by those opportunities offered through formal, accredited and/or for credit programs. Most regions were largely 'undecided' with the exception of the Northeast and Cariboo having the majority of respondents being 'satisfied' (63% and 75% respectively). The 50% of the Northcoast respondents were 'satisfied' and the other 50% were 'highly satisfied', clearly some formal training is working well for respondents in the Northcoast region. A sizeable proportion (between 15% and 50%) of respondents across all regions but Northeast (0%), Thompson Okanagan (7%), and North Coast (0%) were 'not satisfied'. One-quarter of respondents in the Northeast were 'not at all satisfied' though the other three-quarters were 'satisfied'.his distinction is inconsistent with the overall pattern of the eight regions.

Regional comparison overall indicates that respondents are largely undecided across all three sources of professional learning. Respondents across regions display a standard bell curve for satisfaction levels offered within their organizations. This curve is slightly more centred on 'satisfied' regarding professional association offerings and formal programs. Some unusual splits exist for the following regions: Nechako, Northeast, and North Coast. The Mainland/Southwest and Vancouver Island/Coast display a remarkably even distribution across all categories and mostly mirror one another.

Professional learning opportunity satisfaction was also compared across library type, and the greatest proportion of respondents worked in public libraries, followed by academic libraries. When asked about satisfaction levels of professional learning available through individual home organizations, special library respondents were strongly 'not at all satisfied' (30% of respondents), while all other library types were between 0%-17% 'not at all satisfied'. Regarding 'not satisfied': four of the six library types were between 20%-38% 'not satisfied', 10% of special library respondents felt this way. A considerable proportion of all respondents were 'undecided' (between 13%-33%). Between one-quarter to nearly one-half of all library type respondents were 'satisfied' (between 22%-43%). Half of library type respondents did not at all feel 'highly satisfied'; 7% of public library respondents, 10% of academic library respondents felt 'highly satisfied', and 25% of government library respondents felt 'highly satisfied'. Overall, all library types were subdued with the professional learning opportunities available to them through their organization. Government library respondents were most positive about their satisfaction, though only somewhat, and special library respondents were least satisfied. Public library respondents were somewhat more satisfied than not, school libraries were generally less satisfied, and academic libraries were neither more or less satisfied than not satisfied. 14% were undecided.

With respect to professional learning opportunities available through professional associations, a large portion of respondents across all types were undecided (between 33%-56%). Public, school and academic libraries were somewhat more satisfied than not, though only slightly so.

Government library respondents displayed an unusual spread: 29% were 'not satisfied' and another 29% were 'highly satisfied'. while 43% were 'undecided'. When asked about professional learning opportunities available through formal programs, respondents across library type fell between 'not satisfied' and 'undecided'. Public and academic library respondents were generally more positively inclined while school and special libraries were more negative in their satisfaction. It is important to remember that the proportion of respondents from school, government, and special libraries is considerably smaller than public and academic respondents; therefore, trend determination from these smaller sample sizes is considerably less conclusive.

When directors were asked about professional learning satisfaction, their responses were generally consistent with those of general questionnaire respondents, with the slight exception that directors were more satisfied (49%) with professional learning opportunities available to their staff through professional associations. Of note, most director respondents (43%) were undecided about their satisfaction with formal, accredited programs available for their staff. Directors identified geography as cost prohibitive, the preference being for in-person training but that this comes with higher cost.

Representative directors' comments
- *Being outside of the Lower Mainland puts our employees at a disadvantage because of the cost of participating in in-person activities. I would support an increase in the number of learning opportunities that can be delivered on site or done from a distance.*
- *"Online courses are more available and most seem to be of good quality. Sometimes this is our only option.*
- *The problem is that the library has minimal means to have staff participate in in-person sessions. The webinars, particularly free or low cost ones, are of great benefit.*
- *There are more opportunities now than were available even 5 years ago - an improvement. The struggle is finding the time to participate.*
- *Loss of the BC Community Librarian training program was a serious loss.*
- *We find overall many training opportunities exist, though many of our staff still prefers in-person over online trainings which is not always possible. Though there has been work to address the gap created by loss of the provincial CLTP program, there is nothing as comprehensive to really get boots-on-the ground in smaller communities.*
- *Very satisfied with offerings from ALA and PLA. Satisfied with Education Institute offerings. Not a lot through BCLA in recent years except the conference and really disappointed that program organizers persist with short sessions in which not much can be done but lecture. Would like to see cont ed offerings through UBC iSchool.*

Highlights

- Satisfaction levels with current available training was mediocre in nature across both the general and director questionnaires as well as by library type and region.
- Professional learning opportunities provided by respondents' home organizations were somewhat more satisfactory than those provided by professional associations, but not overwhelmingly. Opportunities provided by formal programs were consistently of least satisfaction to all respondents.

- Directors identified geography as cost prohibitive.
- Public and academic library settings demonstrate consistently similar satisfaction levels.

2.14   Challenges to professional learning

General Questionnaire—Question 10: Which of the following are challenges to your participation in professional learning? (Please select all that apply)

Results

Response	Count	Percentage
Time	254	66
Finances or funding	241	62
Geographical distance	174	45
Insufficient employer support	131	34
Family obligations	118	31
Other	34	9
Health and/or personal mobility	21	5
Total	386	

Table 55. Challenges to professional learning, general questionnaire responses

Figure 55. Challenges to professional learning, general questionnaire responses

Directors' Questionnaire—Question 11: Which of the following are challenges to your staff's participation in professional learning? (Please select all that apply)

Response	Count
Geographical distance	37[a]
Time	35
Insufficient institutional budget	34
Financial	30
Family obligations	22
Personal relevance	16
Other:	10
Health and/or personal mobility	1
	185

[a] Individuals could respond to more than one category

Table 56. Challenges to professional learning, directors' questionnaire responses

Figure 56. Challenges to professional learning, directors' questionnaire responses

Response	Family		Financial		Geography		Mobility		Time		Other	
Mainland/ Southwest	50	21%	99	41%	67	28%	9	4%	56	23%	105	44%
Kootenay	2	18%	7	64%	3	27%	0	0%	4	36%	9	82%
Cariboo	3	27%	4	36%	5	45%	2	18%	2	18%	4	36%
Vancouver Island Coast	13	23%	28	50%	24	43%	1	2%	17	30%	28	50%
Northeast	1	17%	2	33%	2	33%	0	0%	1	17%	2	33%
Thompson Okanagan	6	25%	8	33%	5	21%	2	8%	3	13%	11	46%
North Coast	1	25%	1	25%	1	25%	0	0%	1	25%	2	50%
Nechako	1	25%	2	50%	2	50%	0	0%	2	50%	1	25%

**Table 57. Challenges to professional learning,
general questionnaire responses, comparison by geographic region**
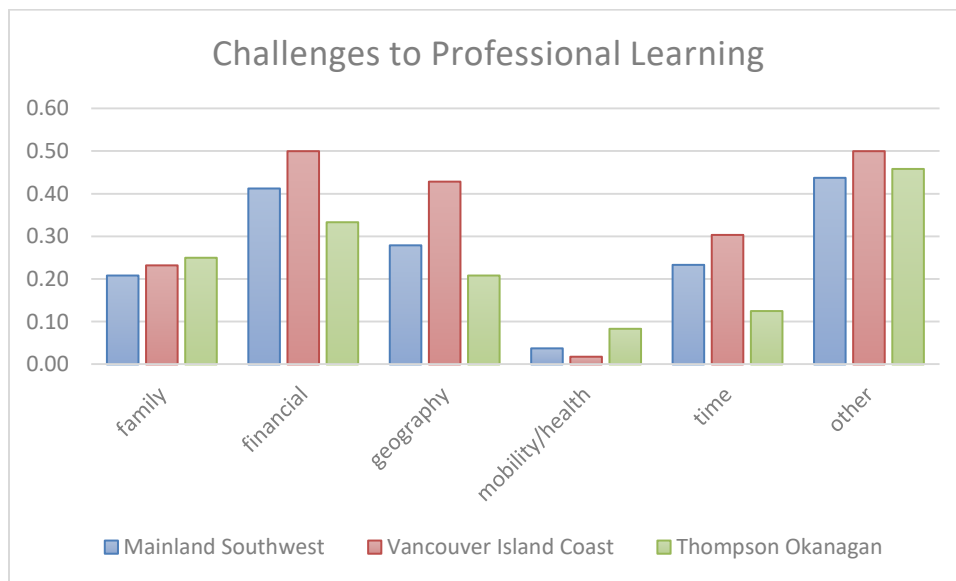
**Table 57. Challenges to professional learning,
general questionnaire responses, comparison by geographic region**

Response	Family		Financial		Geography		Mobility		Time		Other	
Public	45	21%	104	49%	74	35%	11	5%	54	25%	112	53%
School (K-12)	2	17%	4	33%	2	17%	1	8%	4	33%	4	33%
Academic	26	24%	44	40%	32	29%	3	3%	28	26%	43	39%
Government	4	25%	3	19%	3	19%	0	0%	1	6%	5	31%
Special	4	27%	4	27%	2	13%	1	7%	3	20%	6	40%
Other	1	14%	4	57%	3	43%	0	0%	3	43%	4	57%

Table 58. Challenges to professional learning, general questionnaire responses, comparison by library type
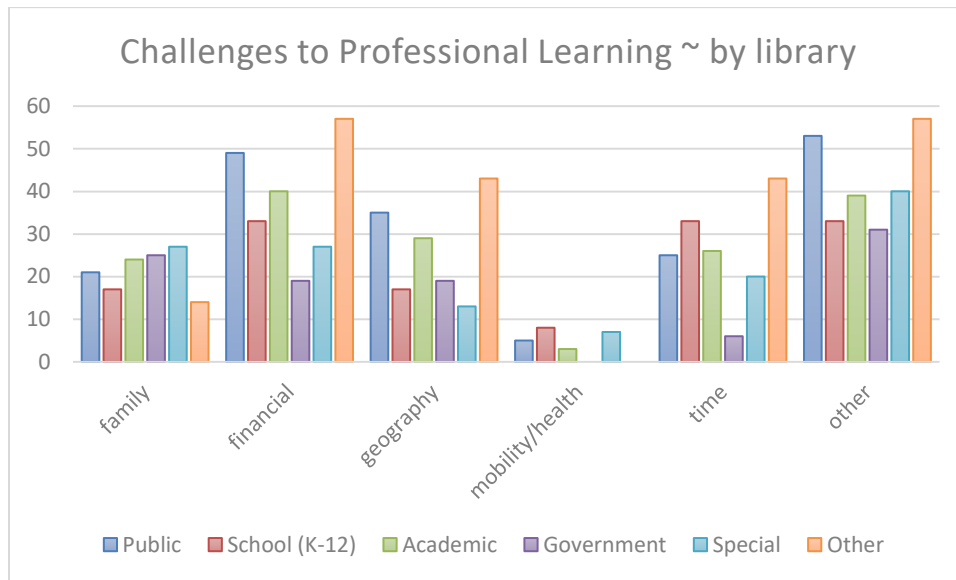
Table 58. Challenges to professional learning, general questionnaire responses, comparison by library type

Discussion

When general questionnaire respondents were asked what their greatest challenges to participating in professional learning were, 386 individuals responded; multiple responses could be selected. Time challenges ranked highest (66%), followed closely by funding challenges (62%). Geographical distance was an issue for 45% of respondents. Insufficient employer support of release time from work accounted for 34% of respondents and family obligation challenges followed closely at 31%. Health and mobility were challenges for 5% of respondents' feedback. Director feedback regarding challenges for their staff to participate in professional learning emphasized geographic distance. Time, insufficient institutional budget, and other financial challenges followed closely behind geography. Family obligations and personal relevance were less pressing challenges.

Regional comparisons were made of challenges to professional learning. Mainland/Southwest respondents were most challenged financially, then geographically, and by time, closely followed by family and finally mobility. Kootenay was most burdened financially, then time, geography, and family obligations. Cariboo was most challenged geographically, then financially, next by family obligations, and mobility and time tied for least challenging. Vancouver Island/Coast respondents were most challenged financially, then geographically, next by time, and finally by family obligations. Northeast respondents found financial and geographic challenges most burdensome. Thompson Okanagan was most challenged by finances, family obligations, geography, and time. Northcoast and Nechako were nearly evenly split across challenges.

As with previous questions, which considered regional comparisons, those regions outside of the Mainland/Southwest, Vancouver Island/Coast, and Thompson Okanagan constitute a considerably smaller sample size. As table 2 indicated, 68% of all general questionnaire respondents work in the Mainland/Southwest, 16% work on Vancouver Island/Coast, and 7% work in the Thompson Okanagan. All other regions combined comprise 10% of general questionnaire responses. Therefore, generalizations of findings based by region should strongly consider these population differences.

Because public and academic libraries comprise such considerable proportions of the general questionnaire sample, it is important not to over-generalize across type. Public and academic library respondents showed considerable pattern overlap for each challenge category, sharing order of challenge as financial, geographical, time, family obligations, and mobility. As with previous questions, academic and public library settings have more in common than may be commonly perceived within the library community.

Directors provided 16 comments illustrating perceptions that many staff were not interested or motivated to attend (this goes back to the question of response rate), difficulty in back-filling front-line staff, and a need to make webinar participation more formalized or participant involved.

Highlights

- Time challenges ranked highest (66%), followed closely by funding challenges (62%). Geographical distance was an issue for 45% of respondents. Insufficient employer support of release time from work accounted for 34% of respondents, and family obligation challenges followed closely at 31%. Health and mobility were challenges for 5% of respondents' feedback. Director feedback regarding challenges for their staff to participate in professional learning emphasized geographic distance; while time, insufficient institutional budget, and other financial challenges followed closely behind. Family obligations and personal relevance were less pressing challenges.

2.15 Improved support for professional learning

General Questionnaire—Question 11: What supports would increase your participation in professional learning?

Results

Code	Count	Percentage
1. Time--During work time	47	*12.10*
2. Regional consideration	40	*10.30*
3. Funding--Undetermined	37	*9.60*
4. Funding--From employer	32	*8.30*
5. More online options	32	*8.30*
6. Paid time to attend professional learning (conferences, workshops, etc...)	28	*7.20*
7. Employer support	27	*7.00*
8. Lessen workload	23	*5.90*
9. Make content available afterwards	21	*5.40*
5% break		
10. More in-person options	13	*3.40*
11. Webinars (live and recorded)	13	*3.40*
12. Employer expectations	9	*2.30*
13. More interesting/relevant topics	9	*2.30*
14. Funding--Grants, awards, scholarships	8	*2.10*
15. BCLA	7	*1.80*
16. Lower conference/workshop fees	7	*1.80*
17. Inclusive of all members of library community	6	*1.60*
18. Back-filling my job during prof learning participation	5	*1.30*
19. Conference program suggestions	5	*1.30*
20. Childcare for in-person professional learning	4	*1.00*
21. More ProD offered by employer	4	*1.00*
22. Options for part-timers and/or unemployed	4	*1.00*
23. Funding--From government	3	*0.80*
24. program/curriculum	2	*0.50*
25. CPTL	1	*0.30*

Table 59. Improved support for professional learning, general questionnaire responses

Discussion

This question was entirely open-ended and therefore responses are analyzed by way of initial and descriptive coding. 215 comments were provided on the general questionnaire, 25 codes were developed (including themes and sub-codes, for example, 'funding—undetermined' and 'funding—employer' are considered two related, but individual codes). Comments can be assigned multiple codes depending on the number of insights provided.

Qualitative codes were then quantified and then sorted by instance from greatest to least. Nine codes occurred within the data 5% of the time or more. In greatest instance, these codes included: Time--During work time (12%); Regional consideration (10%); Funding—Undetermined (10%); Funding--From employer (8%); More online options (8%); Paid time to attend professional learning (conferences, workshops, etc...) (7%); Employer support (7%); Lessen workload (6%); Make content available afterwards (5%).

Highlights

- Respondents had much to contribute to this open-ended question, with 215 individual responses.
- After initial and descriptive coding, respondents felt their professional learning would be better supported :
  If they had more work time, not personal time, to participate;
  if regional challenges could be addressed;
  if there was more funding available from a variety of sources, but specifically employers;
  if more online options were available;
  if staff were paid for the time to participate in conferences and workshops;
  if their employers better supported and encouraged the notion of attending;
  if they had less over-burdened work schedules so they had time for professional learning; and,
  if workshop or conference content was made available afterwards for them to consult at their convenience.

2.16 How BCLA can better serve professional learning

General Questionnaire—Question 12: How can the BCLA better serve your professional learning needs and interests?

Directors' Questionnaire—Question 12: How can BCLA better serve your organization's overall professional learning needs and interests?

Results

Code	Count	Percentage
1. Subject/Theme specific	50	16.10
2. Online options	33	10.60
3. Practical/Hands-on	29	9.30
4. Conference program suggestions	27	8.70
5. Regional consideration	23	7.40
6. Funding--Undetermined	20	6.40
7. Proper library continuing education program/curriculum	17	5.50
5% break		
8. Communication, promotion, advertising	11	3.50
9. Inclusive of all members of library community	11	3.50
10. Children's & YA libraries	10	3.20
11. Library Assistants/Technicians	9	2.90
12. Format variety	8	2.60
13. Academic libraries	7	2.30
14. Advocate to library managers the importance of encouraging professional learning	7	2.30
15. In-person options	7	2.30
16. Public libraries	7	2.30
17. Build community	6	1.90
18. Positive feedback	6	1.90
19. Funding--Grants, awards, scholarships	4	1.30
20. Leadership	4	1.30
21. Librarian focused	4	1.30
22. Part-time/Contract work	3	1.00
23. School libraries/Teacher Librarians	2	0.60
24. Time--During work time	2	0.60
25. Advocate for more and more full-time positions (librarian and non)	1	0.30
26. Conference	1	0.30
27. Future of libraries in BC	1	0.30
28. Options for part-timers and/or unemployed	1	0.30

Table 60. How BCLA can better serve professional learning needs, general questionnaire responses

Discussion

These questions were entirely open-ended and therefore responses were analyzed by way of initial and descriptive coding. 176 comments were provided on the general questionnaire, 28 codes were developed (including themes and sub-codes, for example, 'funding—undetermined' and 'funding—employer' are considered two related, but individual codes). Comments can be assigned multiple codes depending on the number of insights provided.

Qualitative codes were then quantified and then sorted by instance from greatest to least. Seven codes occurred within the data 5% of the time or more. These included members wanting: subject or theme specific offerings (16%); online options (11%); practical methods (9%); to provide conference program ideas (9%); regional consideration (7%); funding support (6%); and, some kind of proper library continuing education program or curriculum (6%).

Directors provided 28 comments which mirror closely the general questionnaire responses above. Some comments are included below to highlight perspectives.

- *Ensuring professional learning is available in all the far flung corners of our province.*
- *Understand and acknowledge the challenges small and rural libraries face. So much activity evolves from larger library's needs and abilities and their access to learning opportunities. Small libraries get left out due to distance, budget restraints and small staff sizes. The libraries that can afford travel expenses, for example, don't have to travel far to attend the BCLA conference. Whereas many small libraries, if at all, can only send one person. It's a little one-sided and unfair. I'd like to see more offered in the North and some of the financial and travel strain lifted for small and rural libraries.*
- *More e-learning opportunities; resources for libraries outside the lower mainland to put on events.*
- *Continue to hold annual conference.*
- *Revive the CLTP program or some sort of equivalent that could serve as accreditation.*
- *Move the conference to the North once every few years :).*
- *"Offer more online sessions throughout the year.*
- *Work with federations so that more in-person sessions can be offered to library staff."*
- *this survey will be a big help - in identifying needs.*
- *By identifying common needs (such as this survey is attempting). Financial assistance.*
- *"Overall, find a way to reinstate the CLTP to support staffing of small libraries. Subsidies for training.*
- *Offer more online that anyone can take when they are available.*
- *I'd love to see short, online workshops and/or courses on a wide variety of topics that I could recommend to supervisors and staff.*
- *Face to face opportunities that aren't offered locally elsewhere.*
- *Provide webinars or courses or workshops at the BCLA conference specifically for very small libraries.*
- *Offering affordable in-person workshops on topics of relevance and importance. Extending length of conference sessions so that some real engagement can take place.*
- *More online courses using learning management tools, youtube, etc.*
- *Bring trainers to smaller regions in the province.*
- *Focused longer programs.*
- *Distributed learning across the province.*

2.17   Effective professional learning exemplars

Results

General Questionnaire—Question 13: What are the most effective professional learning experiences you have ever participated in?

Directors' Questionnaire—Question 13: What are some of the most effective professional learning experiences you have observed your staff members participating in?

Code	Count	Percentage
1. Practical/Hands-on/Workshops	78	18.40
2. Specific schools/institutes/session/workshop	56	13.20
3. Conferences	52	12.30
4. Subject/Theme specific	51	12.00
5. In-person options	40	9.40
6. Online options	29	6.80
7. Other library associations	25	5.90
5% break		
8. Peer networking	19	4.50
9. Non-library themed	18	4.20
10. For-credit academic	11	2.60
11. Retreats/intensive/immersive	10	2.40
12. Informal formats	8	1.90
13. Miscellaneous	8	1.90
14. Engaging/relevant facilitation	7	1.70
15. On the job	5	1.20
16. Certificates	4	0.90
17. Social media	3	0.70

Table 61. Professional learning exemplars

Discussion

These questions were entirely open-ended and therefore responses were analyzed by way of initial and descriptive coding. 220 comments were provided on the general questionnaire, 17 codes were developed (including themes and sub-codes, for example, 'funding—undetermined' and 'funding—employer' are considered two related, but individual codes). Comments can be assigned multiple codes depending on the number of insights provided.

Qualitative codes were then quantified and sorted by instance from greatest to least. Seven codes occurred within the data 5% of the time or more. These included respondents having found the following most effective: practical, hands-on, workshop delivery (18%); specific institutes, workshops, or programs (13%); conferences (12%); subject- or theme-specific (12%); in-person options (9%); online options (7%); and offerings from other specific professional associations, not BCLA (6%).

In the directors' questionnaire, 34 comments were provided by respondents. These were not coded, but mirror the themes found in the general questionnaire responses. Below are some illustrative examples.

- *Beyond Hope conference sessions make a strong impression on them because they hear from staff in other northern libraries. They feel that these viewpoints and experiences are relevant to them.*
- *Beyond Hope in Prince George is wonderful. We've come back from those conferences with tons of great ideas. We love that we can network there with colleagues who understand us and the challenges our library face. On-line webinars and other web-based training have been highly beneficial as well.*
- *BCLA Conference.*
- *Training, seminars and conferences with a specific theme, topic or outcome, rather than general PD.*
- *Online 4-week courses offered by Infopeople (and others), especially when multiple staff are taking the same course. Staff can participate at their own convenience and see how people elsewhere might have a different perspective than theirs.*
- *Attending BCLA conference and on-line academic courses.*
- *CLTP courses, InfoPeople courses and webinars, federation training opportunities*
- *In-person workshops on specific topics where they get hands-on experience and unstructured time to interact with their colleagues.*
- *BCLA workshops; workshops offered outside of the library profession (is HR workshops, tech training).*
- *Hands-on group learning with a facilitator.*
- *A first nations course: Aboriginal resources online. The last course that CLTP did.*
- *ACRL webinars.*

2.18   Leading issues facing libraries

General Questionnaire—Question 14: What do you feel are the most important issues facing BC libraries today which professional learning can help to address?

Directors' Questionnaire—Question 14: What do you feel are some of the most important issues facing libraries in BC today which professional learning can help to address?

Results

These questions were entirely open-ended and therefore responses were analyzed by way of initial and descriptive coding. 196 comments were provided on the general questionnaire, 24 codes were developed (including themes and sub-codes, for example, 'funding—undetermined' and 'funding—employer' are considered two related, but individual codes). Comments can be assigned multiple codes depending on the number of insights provided. Qualitative codes were then quantified and sorted by instance from greatest to least. Six codes occurred within the data 5% of the time or more: technological changes, library advocacy, community engagement, budgeting, assessment, and collections.

Code	Count	Percentage
1. Technological change	53	16%
2. Library advocacy	32	10%
3. Community engagement	29	9%
4. Budget, funding, financials	27	8%
5. Assessment, evaluation, user experience, metrics, analytics	17	5%
6. Collections	17	5%
5% break		
7. Patron education	15	4%
8. Librarianship, vocation, de-professionalization	14	4%
9. Management, leadership, administration	14	4%
10. Marketing	13	4%
11. Professional learning	13	4%
12. Library as place	11	3%
13. Diversity & inclusion	11	3%
14. Library patronage	8	2.5%
15. Workload	7	2%
16. Social aspects, vulnerable populations	5	1.5%
17. Staffing	5	1.5%
18. Foundations of the profession	5	1.5%
19. 'Being everything to everyone'	5	1.6%
20. Innovation or lack of	4	1%
21. Job security	4	1%
22. Succession planning	4	1%
23. Health and safety	3	1!
24. Workplace culture	2	0.5%

Table 62. Pressing issues in BC libraries, general questionnaire

Representative comments on the leading five themes from the general questionnaire include:

Technological change:
- *The advance of technology; this has had big repercussion for libraries, our work is changing. Now we have tasks surrounding digitization and electronic resources, instead of working with paper.*
- *Public libraries: boredom at work. No more reference questions only email help or book searches. Tech help i.e. e-readers. I spend a lot of my time addressing tech questions.*
- *Technology gaps - several staff members do 80% of the work with patrons as other staff members do not seem willing to learn how to use the needed technology.*
- *Incorporating modern technology with the existing ILS and institution's guidelines needs to be addressed. This is very difficult because the libraries throughout the province have chosen a variety of ILS services and they also have a wide variety of guidelines as to how they make the electronics accessible to their users.*
- *New technologies and library systems.*

Library advocacy:
- *Learning is not the issue, the lack of advocacy for the profession is!*
- *Understanding the contributions libraries make to the community and economy*
- *The constant battle against the idea that "everything is on the internet" and that libraries are obsolete. Most libraries are poor at promoting their services, and every year is a struggle for adequate funding.*
- *Understanding and explaining to both the public and local governments/councils that literacy is the most important aspect of a successful society and that libraries will evolve with the communities needs and they are just as important if not more so today than they ever have been. Libraries are truly the heart of the community and both staff and the public need to support them to continue being the cultural hub that they are.*

Community engagement:
- *Community engagement to ensure relevance.*
- *Connecting with our community to do ongoing needs assessment.*
- *Illustrating the value of libraries within communities.*
- *Educating the public as to what libraries can provide, connecting with the community.*

Budgets, funding, financials:
- *Budget constraints - institutions isolated and focused on siloed fund-raising for resources, notably staffing.*
- *Funding; serials crisis, the "big deal", subscribing to rather than owning content, eBook pricing, staff not being back-filled or replaced.*
- *Budget shortfalls. Increasing government pressure to do more with less support.*
- *Doing more with fewer resources and smaller budgets. Trying to be everything to everyone.*
- *Lack of funding and the failing Canadian dollar.*

Assessment, evaluation, user experience, metrics, analytics:
- *Being able to gauge the changing needs of our users and adapt our services to meet those needs.*
- *Measuring outcomes with the view to clearly articulate a library's unique value proposition.*
- *The ability to assess the community needs and respond to them in a timely manner.*
- *Learning how to assess the library's value in other ways than quantitatively (circulation figures) would be a good tool.*

Collections:
- *Evolution of the library's mission from storehouse to agent of self-directed education*
- *Making what's available at the library (services + materials) relevant to the needs of our diverse communities.*
- *Libraries (particularly academic ones) are mostly managing large collections of electronic resources (e-database services, e-books, streaming media) with no additional funding to support these resources ; and we are also compounded by escalating price increases from e-publishers and database providers and aggregators.*
- *E resources and usage.*
- *The demand for electronic materials over printed.*

These questions were entirely open-ended and therefore responses were analyzed by way of initial and descriptive coding. When directors were asked what they felt were the most important issues facing BC libraries, 53 responded and 28 comments were provided. The same 24 codes were used as were developed for the general questionnaire comments to question 14 above (including themes and sub-codes, for example, 'funding—undetermined' and 'funding—employer' are considered two related, but individual codes). Comments can be assigned multiple codes depending on the number of insights provided. Qualitative codes were then quantified and sorted by instance from greatest to least. Six codes occurred within the data 5% of the time or more: technological changes, library advocacy, community engagement, budgeting, assessment, and collections.

Code	Count	Percentage
1. Community engagement	9	16%
2. Technological change	7	12%
3. Professional learning	6	10%
4. Library as place	5	9%
5. Leadership, administration, management	5	9%
6. Innovation or lack of	5	9%
7. Succession planning	3	5%
8. Foundations of the profession	3	5%
5% break		
9. Library advocacy	2	3%
10. Diversity and inclusion	2	3%
11. Assessment, evaluation, metrics, user needs	2	3%
12. Budgets, funding, financials	2	3%
13. Collections	2	3%

Table 63. Pressing issues in BC libraries, directors' questionnaire

Representative comments on the leading five themes from the directors' questionnaire include:

Community engagement:
- *Community engagement to ensure relevance.*
- *Changes in technology and changes in community demographics; need for economic development, community engagement and transforming learning in our communities with the library as a key institution/partner at the table.*
- *Provincial expectations now include the BC Jobs Plan and the BC Education Transformation without any training or model of how to support them or participate. Collaboration between other service groups in the community is also HIGH priority as funders want this and resources are limited. More info about this or training would be timely.*

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Technological change:
- *Rapidly changing technology and our own internal digital literacies gaps within our institutions.*
- *Technology access and understanding.*

Professional learning:
- *We are in desperate need a new "CLTP". Many small town libraries relied heavily on these courses to train their staff as they cannot afford a Library Tech, let alone an MLIS! The course was getting old. If every instructor could have updated the course each time they taught the course, as was done in the last session of the First Nations course that I attended where modules were released as the instructor had updated it. If all of the courses were treated in this manner, the whole program could have been continued, even if costs were to be increased to do so.*
- *The biggest issue is the lack of readily available and easily accessed training available to small/rural libraries. And the funding to be able to take advantage of it! As far as the learning itself, libraries need to be more progressive! While the overall perception is changing, it is changing very slowly. We are not all staying relevant because so many libraries are clinging to outdated ideals and practices that patrons find off-putting.*
- *Provincial expectations now include the BC Jobs Plan and the BC Education Transformation without any training or model of how to support them or participate. Collaboration between other service groups in the community is also HIGH priority as funders want this and resources are limited. More info about this or training would be timely.*

Library as place:
- *How to ensure that libraries do not lose sight of their core mandate as they develop new services focused on the concepts of the library as a community innovation centre.*
- *Space management to address changing library role in community.*
- *Thinking beyond traditional approaches, knowing how to engage with and respond to your community and its needs, knowledge of how to create and sustain great public spaces.*
- *Community engagement and transforming learning in our communities with the library as a key institution/partner at the table.*

Leadership, administration, management:
- *Helping directors to get senior staff to accept sweeping change.*
- *Leadership, primarily related to leading and developing staff. Financial, related to fund development and organizational financial management. Community Development, related to creating and developing deep partnerships that focus on outcomes.*
- *Management - of people, budgets, facilities. MLS programs now offer more of this but graduates still need to learn on the job unless they have these skills from previous work experiences.*

Innovation or lack of:
- *Changing expectations of our services, agility in staying up to date.*
- *Ability to change and adapt quickly.*
- *The need to see beyond the traditional roles while still being strategic about our role as libraries.*

Succession planning:
- *Succession planning for management and senior positions.*
- *Succession planning - building leadership skills.*
- *Too many still don't want to be managers - a naïve presumption at best in the current library work landscape.*

Foundations of the profession:
- *Open access.*
- *Focusing on the importance of the institution vs preserving traditional roles.*
- *How to ensure that libraries do not lose sight of their core mandate as they develop new services.*

Discussion

Both questionnaires included an item about the perception of all respondents regarding the most pressing issues currently facing libraries in BC. This question was not specific to professional learning, but provided some remarkable insight into the state of libraries generally. These question items were open-ended and 196 general respondents provided commentary (44% of total respondents) and all directors (n=53) provided comments. This qualitative data was analyzed by way of initial and descriptive coding; both questionnaire responses utilized the same coding schema.

General questionnaire respondents identified the following six leading themes as being the most pressing issues facing BC libraries today:
1. Technological change
2. Library advocacy
3. Community engagement
4. Budgets, funding, and financials
5. Assessment, evaluation, user experience monitoring, metrics, and analytics
6. Collections

Director questionnaire respondents identified the following eight leading themes as being the most pressing issues facing BC libraries today:
1. Community engagement
2. Technological change
3. Professional learning
4. Library as place
5. Leadership, administration, management
6. Innovation or lack of
7. Succession planning
8. Foundations of the profession

Technological change and community engagement were leading themes common to both general and director questionnaire respondents. These themes are both somewhat vague as they can include a vast amount of sub-themes inherent to libraries. For the purposes of this coding scheme, technological change includes the print to digital shift, the internet, social media, and library systems. Furthermore, many comments from both questionnaires simply included the phrases 'technology', 'technological innovations', or 'changes in technology'. Community engagement is also a very inclusive term, but it is a term used repeatedly by many respondents with similar meaning. It is also used separately, or at least somewhat connected to terms such as advocating libraries and marketing. For this study, 'community engagement' is used to refer to the proactive initiatives libraries take to understand and involve the communities they serve.

Library advocacy was an important theme for both groups, but considerably more so for general questionnaire respondents. Comments repeatedly emphasized the need for communities, funders, government, and patrons to truly recognize the value libraries can have; this was closely related to the idea of necessary funding required to justify and enhance libraries. General questionnaire respondents frequently highlighted the importance of assessment and related activities to demonstrate the importance of library core values and to understand the changing needs of patrons. This was also a theme within the director responses but considerably less so. Collections aspects were important to general respondents as well. These collections aspects include the print to digital shift, collection costs (especially in light of electronic resources and the low Canadian dollar), multiple formats, and ensuring collections are used.

Professional learning was far more important to directors than general questionnaire respondents, particularly in the context of change management and ensuring staff nimbleness with shifting trends. Library as place was an important theme for directors too, but the specifics were omitted. While directors frequently iterated the important role of libraries as the 'hearts' or 'hubs' of the communities they serve, no details were provided. While general questionnaire respondents listed general aspects of library as place less often, they did frequently provide examples of how libraries are 'hubs' and what the specific opportunities and challenges of this role can be. For example, numerous general respondents outlined how libraries served a societal role for vulnerable populations and that fulfilling this role was important to them and their colleagues but they wanted more training or resources to help these populations more effectively.

The theme of leadership, administration and management recurred for both questionnaire response groups, but with less emphasis on the general respondents. General respondents were more focused on the front lines of public serve and wanting support from leadership where it was not perceived to be, such as with community engagement, workload, funding, and professional learning. Below is one representative comment from general questionnaire respondents:

> I think we need to stop navel-gazing about our future and whether we are still relevant and get out and do good work. I think senior management in a lot of organizations get in the way of branch librarians doing this good work. I would like to see more professional development for senior management about leading in a rapidly changing environment, supporting staff, and moving away from strictly hierarchical organizational structures.

Innovation or lack thereof, was a leading theme for directors but not for general questionnaire respondents. It is likely this is not because general questionnaire respondents do not see the importance of innovation in their work, but rather see innovation or a lack thereof in more specific terms and have outlined it in other coding categories such as patron education, which includes reference and user services, library instruction, and literacy. The specificity distinction between general and director respondents is also evident with ideas around 'foundations of the profession'; while most directors only mention this term, general respondents mention specific foundations such as open access, privacy, and equitability.

Succession planning was a preoccupation of some directors but not for general respondents. One director comment highlights this particularly well: "Too many still don't want to be managers - a naïve presumption at best in the current library work landscape." Given the coding theme distribution of general respondents one might conclude that many do not wish to be managers because of the many on-the-ground challenges. There exists throughout this entire project a recurring disconnection between the perceptions, priorities, and experiences between general questionnaire respondents and the directors who lead them.

Highlights

- Both questionnaires included an item about the perception of all respondents regarding the most pressing issues currently facing libraries in BC. This question was not specific to professional learning, but provided some insight into the state of libraries generally. These question items were open-ended and 196 general respondents provided commentary (44% of total respondents) and all directors (n=53) provided comments. This qualitative data was analyzed by way of initial and descriptive coding; both questionnaires responses utilized the same coding schema.

- General questionnaire respondents identified the following six leading themes as being the most pressing issues facing BC libraries today:

    1. Technological change
    2. Library advocacy
    3. Community engagement
    4. Budgets, funding, and financials
    5. Assessment, evaluation, user experience monitoring, metrics, and analytics
    6. Collections

- Director questionnaire respondents identified the following eight leading themes as being the most pressing issues facing BC libraries today:

    1. Community engagement
    2. Technological change
    3. Professional learning
    4. Library as place
    5. Leadership, administration, management
    6. Innovation or lack of
    7. Succession planning
    8. Foundations of the profession

- There exists throughout this entire project a recurring disconnection between the perceptions, priorities, and experiences between general questionnaire respondents and the directors who lead them.

About the researchers

Assistant Professor Todd Milford

Todd Milford is an Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Education at the University of Victoria. Prof. Milford's areas of research include: educational measurement, quantitative methods, teacher preparation, and science education. Todd has a PhD in Measurement and Evaluation (UVic), a MEd in Special Education, and bachelor's degrees in Education and Biology. Todd has published extensively on school effectiveness research, accessibility and disability in education, and survey design in such publications as *Creative Education, Research in Autism Spectrum Disorders,* and *International Journal of Science and Mathematics Education*.

Librarian Pia Russell

Pia Russell is the Education & Children's Literature Librarian at the University of Victoria. Pia's areas of research include: the history of educational publications, libraries and social justice, youth information behaviour, and library assessment. Pia holds a MEd from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto (OISE/UT), a Master of Information Studies (Archival and Library concentrations) also from UofT and a BA in History from UBC. Pia has presented widely at leading international conferences in both education and library studies. She has published in scholarly and professional journals such as *School Libraries Worldwide, The Journal of Mixed Methods Research,* and *Feliciter*.