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## EDUCATION OF TEACHER LIBRARIANS IN POLAND



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**ABSTRACT: Thesis/Purpose of the article** – The article shows the specificity of the profession of a teacher librarian. These employees are librarians (they are required to have librarian competency) and teachers (they need pedagogical qualifications). It discusses the changes taking place in the approach to education in this profession. **Methods** – In writing the article, publications related to the training of teacher librarian in Poland, as well as relevant legal acts, were analyzed. **Results/conclusions** – Double qualifications are required from teacher librarian: those of a librarian and of a teacher. The profession began to take shape in the 1960s and this approach was consolidated over the following years. The education law clearly reinforces this, which is reflected in the training of teacher librarian. Similar provisions can also be found in the international IFLA guidelines.

Employees of school libraries are a specific group among librarians in Poland. Their distinctiveness is evidenced primarily by the fact that they are subject to the education and librarian law and must have double qualifications (librarian and pedagogical). Jacek Wojciechowski stated that „in our school libraries, as in pedagogical libraries, but unlike in all other libraries, professional employees are teachers” (Wojciechowski, p. 1). The profession of teacher librarian does not have a long tradition, it was created when full-time staffing was introduced in school libraries (Andrzejewska, p. 52).

## THE BEGINNINGS OF PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FOR SCHOOL LIBRARIANS

Professional qualifications for school librarians were introduced for the first time by the Ordinance of the Minister of Education of March 11, 1957 (Ordinance of the Minister of Education of March 11, 1957) issued on the basis of Art. 3 of the Decree of April 17, 1946, on the Library and the Care of Library Collections (Decree of April 17, 1946). Although it obliged teaching and educational institutions to create libraries and defined ways to achieve educational goals with the use of books and libraries, including school libraries next to public, general, and scientific libraries in the network of libraries, this document did not precisely define the qualifications of library staff. It assumed that school libraries were to provide students and teachers with the readings needed for school education and instruction. The school library has been recognized as an important institution in preparing teachers and students for self-education. It was not until the Ordinance of 1957 that the right to work in a school library was granted only to persons who had professional qualifications to teach and educate in a given school or educational institution, as well as: having had at least one year as a practicing librarian and completed at least a 6-week

course in librarianship; or completed at least one year's practice as a librarian and passed an exam; or having passed an exam entitling them to hold positions of the 1st and 2nd category in the state librarian service; or passing a librarian's exam before a commission appointed by the Minister of Culture and the Arts. In addition, they could also be persons who had completed higher studies in the field of library science or higher studies with a librarianship specialty. An instruction was issued to the ordinance (Instruction of 13 March 1957), which regulated the salaries of teachers and librarians and introduced the transfer of librarians to teaching positions. According to Jadwiga Andrzejewska and Bogumiła Staniów (Andrzejewska, Staniów, p. 11), it is only from this moment that one can talk about the status of the profession of a school librarian. Mariola Antczak emphasized that "something slowly began to change in terms of qualifications desired by librarians, and in a positive direction. The role they could play in educational projects at school was partially noticed" (Antczak, p. 225). It is also worth noting that the exam for a school librarian has been detailed in the Ordinance of the Minister of Education of December 28, 1960 on the Exam for a School Librarian (Ordinance of the Minister of Education of December 28, 1960), which entered into force in 1961. A person working in a school library had to have an education in librarianship and pedagogy and pass an exam before the state board of Examiners. The issues that were binding on it were also clarified (Ordinance of the Minister of Education of February 28, 1961).

#### CONSOLIDATING THE PROFESSIONAL AND PEDAGOGICAL REQUIREMENTS OF LIBRARIANS WORKING IN SCHOOL LIBRARIES

The Subsequent Ordinance of April 12, 1962 (Regulation of the Minister of Education of April 12, 1962) repeated the qualification requirements for teacher librarians. It stated that a person who has scientific and pedagogical qualifications to teach in a given school has scientific and pedagogical qualifications to conduct library classes in schools, has completed at least one year of librarian practice, and additionally has completed at least a 6-week librarianship course or passed an exam. In addition, persons qualified to hold the position were also considered to be those who had graduated from a librarianship high school or a library department at a cultural and educational and librarianship college, and passed an exam, and those who had completed higher education master's or vocational studies in the field of librarianship or studies with a librarian specialty and completed a pedagogical course. The Subsequent Ordinance consolidated the professional and pedagogical requirements required of librarians working in school libraries. It has been clearly emphasized that librarians

who have completed master's or vocational studies but have not obtained pedagogical qualifications must supplement them. It was proposed that pedagogical courses be completed at teacher training colleges.

At the end of 1968, the Ordinance of the Minister of Education and Higher Education was published on the Rules and Procedure for Running Libraries in Schools and Other Educational and Instructional Institutions (Ordinance of the Minister of Education and Higher Education of December 31, 1968). This document is accompanied by the Instruction on Running a School Library, which specifies the requirements for school library employees: "The librarian, together with all teachers is responsible for developing reading at school, in which he should be the main assistant of the school head. The pedagogical work of a librarian with students consists in:

- familiarizing all students with the rules of using the school library;
- allowing them to freely browse and select books;
- preparation for independent selection of valuable books and other library materials adapted to the needs and development possibilities of readers;

- conducting conversations with individual readers about their reading and providing library, bibliographic, factual and textual advice according to the needs and level of recipients;

- instilling skills in the use of books, magazines and other library materials, using various types of publications and library aids;

- training all students to use public libraries, students of vocational schools to use professional libraries, and students of teacher training institutions to use pedagogical libraries;

- preparing schoolchildren, starting from the last grades of primary school, to use bibliography and other sources of information about printed materials and library materials, and students of the last grades of vocational schools additionally to use the services of technical and economic information centers;

- developing the habit of reading magazines and the press in students" (Instruction on Running a School Library).

Despite specifying these pedagogical tasks, an employee of a school library, being a member of the teaching council, was not a teacher (Antczak, 2009).

## THE STATUS OF LIBRARIAN TEACHERS

The Teacher's Charter of 1982 (Act of January 26, 1982, Teacher's Charter, 1982) granted school librarians the status of pedagogues. As with all teachers, it required them to conduct "didactic, educational and care activities conducted directly with students or pupils or for their benefit; other lessons and activities resulting from the school's statutory tasks, including

care and educational activities that take into account the needs and interests of students; classes and activities related to preparation for classes, self-education and professional development” (Act of 26 January 1982, Article 42.1, point 2). The Teacher’s Charter also established the weekly working time for teachers, which could not exceed 40 hours for full-time classes, as well as their weekly number of hours of obligatory didactic, educational, and care activities, which in the case of teacher librarians was 30 hours.

## PREFERENCE FOR MASTER’S STUDIES IN LIBRARY SCIENCE

It was not until 1982 that the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Instruction (Regulation of the Minister of Education and Instruction of August 24, 1982) reversed the order of entries, recognizing that “a person who has qualifications to conduct library classes in schools and other educational and instructional institutions has completed higher education in the field of librarianship and scientific information and has a master’s degree, or has completed higher education in library science and scientific information, has a master’s degree and has completed a pedagogical course of study” (Regulation of the Minister of Education and Instruction of August 24, 1982, §13.1). It should be recognized that there is a preference here for master’s studies in library science. Of course, the paragraphs that follow list persons qualified to teach in a given school and who have completed post-graduate studies in library science and scientific information or pedagogical studies in the field of librarianship (Regulation of the Minister of Education and Instruction of 24 August 1982, §13.2), and in addition those who have graduated from a library high school or post-secondary librarianship study (Regulation of the Minister of Education and Instruction of August 24, 1982, §13.3). The latter persons had qualifications to conduct librarianship classes in primary schools, in care and education facilities and in pre-school education facilities. Subsequent orders of the ministry regulating the qualification requirements of librarians, specifying the list of subjects necessary to obtain teaching qualifications and the minimum number of hours were published in 1991, 1993, 1999, 2002, 2004, and 2017. The currently applicable Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 1 August 2017 on the Detailed Qualifications Required of Teachers clarifies that pedagogical preparation is “the acquisition of knowledge and skills in the field of psychology, pedagogy and detailed didactics, taught for at least 270 hours in connection with the field (specialty) of education and positively assessed teaching practice – in the amount of not less than 150 hours; in the case of teachers of practical vocational training, the necessary number of classes in the field of pedagogical

preparation is not less than 150 hours; a diploma of graduation or another document issued by a university, a diploma of graduation from a teacher training institution or a certificate of completion of a qualification course proves having a teaching qualification" (Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 1 August 2017 on Detailed Qualifications Required of Teachers).

## EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHERS-LIBRARIANS

Until 1994, there were various forms of educating school librarians: short course training, two-year post-secondary studies, secondary and post-secondary education, as well as higher professional and master's studies in library science (Andrzejewska, 1996, pp. 55-56). Until the 1970s, the role of universities in acquiring librarian qualifications was small, then it gradually increased. In the mid-1970s, librarians were educated at 14 universities. In 1990, school specialization was conducted by 6 universities (University of Warsaw, University of Wrocław, University of Gdańsk, University of Łódź, University of Silesia, University of Szczecin) and 3 pedagogical schools (Kraków, Olsztyn, Kielce). In the academic year 1995/1996 this was done at 7 universities (Jagiellonian University, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, University of Silesia, University of Łódź, University of Warsaw, University of Wrocław, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń) and 4 Pedagogical Universities (in Kielce, Bydgoszcz, Olsztyn and Kraków) (Andrzejewska, p. 56). Therefore, it should be noted that until the 1970s, formats focused on educating professionally active school librarians prevailed in Poland, and in later years (after 1982) specializations in library studies were the preferred format. These were created in centers for educating librarians (universities and pedagogical colleges) (Staniów, 2012, p. 58).

## STANDARDS OF EDUCATION IN PREPARATION FOR THE TEACHING PROFESSION

From October 1, 2004, the rules for obtaining teaching qualifications in full-time and extramural studies began to shape the standards of education. The Regulation of the Minister of National Education and Sport of 7 September 2004 on Teacher Education Standards introduced fundamental changes in teacher education, requiring, for example, the creation of a separate teaching specialization in a given field of study, the obligation to teach two subjects in three-year vocational studies (giving qualifications to work in primary and lower secondary schools), increased the total number of teaching hours, the need to learn a foreign language, and mandato-

ry inclusion of information technology classes. The obligation to teach two subjects was abolished by the Regulation of 17 January 2012 (Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education on the Standards of Education Preparing for the Teaching Profession of 17 January 2012), leaving this option non-compulsory.

Currently, it is the Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education on the Standard of Education Preparing for the Teaching Profession of 2019 that is in force (Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of July 25, 2019). It assumes that in order to work as a teacher, it is necessary to complete first-cycle and second-cycle studies or uniform master's studies in a given field, in the case of librarians in the field of scientific information and library science, because such a requirement appears in the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 1 August 2017 on Detailed Qualifications Required from Teachers (Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 1 August 2017 on Detailed Qualifications Required from Teachers. Journal of Laws, item 1289). It is an attachment to the Announcement of the Minister of National Education of July 1, 2020 concerning the Declaration of the Consolidated Text of the Regulation of the Minister of National Education on the Detailed Qualifications Required of Teachers (Announcement of the Minister of National Education of July 1, 2020 concerning the Declaration of the Consolidated Text of the Regulation of the Minister of Education on Detailed Qualifications Required of Teachers, Journal of Laws 2020, item 1289). It stated that the qualifications for the position of teacher librarian are held by someone who: "has completed studies in library science at the level required to hold the position of a teacher in a given type of school or type of institution and has pedagogical preparation, or who has education at the level required for a position of a teacher in a given type of school or type of institution and has pedagogical preparation, and has also completed:

a) first-cycle studies, post-graduate studies or a qualifying course in the field of library science, or

b) studies at a teacher training center in the specialty of library science or

c) post-secondary librarianship studies" (Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 1 August 2017 on Detailed Qualifications Required of Teachers. Journal of Laws, item 1289, §7.1).

It was also noted that "qualifications for the position of teacher librarian in primary schools are also held by a person who graduated from a teacher training institution in the specialty of library science" (Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 1 August 2017 on Detailed Qualifications Required of Teachers. Journal of Laws item 1289, §7.1 point 2).

The standards assume that education in studies preparing for the teaching profession includes: substantive classes for teaching the first subject (A1), in the case of librarians - library science, psychological and pedagogical (B), teaching in the field of basic didactics and voice emission (C) and didactic for teaching the first subject or conducting the first classes. Studies in the field of scientific information and library science prepare one to run a library, fulfilling basic tasks which include:

- collection, development, storage and protection of library materials;
- user service, especially sharing collections;
- conducting information activities, especially providing information about one's own collections, about other libraries, museums and scientific information centers and cooperation with archives in this respect.

The tasks of libraries may also include the following activities: bibliographic activity, documentation, scientific activity and research, publishing, education, popularization and instructional-methodological activity (Act of 27 June 1997 on Libraries. Journal of Laws 1997 No. 85 item 539.).

Psychological and pedagogical preparation (B) includes: psychology (at least 90 hours), pedagogy (at least 90 hours) and professional practice (30 hours); basic teaching and voice emission (C - at least 60 hours), didactic preparation (D) didactics (at least 150 hours) and professional practice (at least 120 hours). The standards also specify the learning outcomes, both general and specific. It was assumed that in terms of knowledge the graduate knows and understands: the basics of the philosophy of education and pedagogical axiology, the specificity of the main educational environments and the processes taking place in them; classical and contemporary theories of human development, upbringing, learning and teaching or education and their application values; the role of the teacher or tutor in modelling the attitudes and behavior of students; standards, procedures and good practices used in pedagogical activity (pre-school education, teaching in primary and secondary schools, technical and vocational schools, special schools and special and integration departments, in various types of educational centers and lifelong learning); the issue of inclusive education, as well as ways of implementing the principle of inclusion; differentiation of students' educational needs and the school's tasks related to adapting the organization of educational and instructional processes; methods of designing and conducting diagnostic activities in pedagogical practice; structure and functions of the education system - objectives, legal basis, organization and functioning of educational, instructional and care institutions, as well as alternative forms of education; the legal basis of the education system necessary for the proper implementation of the conducted education activities; the legal basis of the education system necessary for the proper implementation of educational ac-

tivities; the rights of the child and people with disabilities; the principles of occupational health and safety in educational, instructional and care institutions and the legal responsibility of the teacher in this respect, as well as the principles of first aid; interpersonal and social communication processes and their regularities and disturbances; the basics of the functioning and pathologies of the speech apparatus, the principles of voice emission, the basics of the functioning of the eye and balance; learning content and typical learning difficulties for students; and teaching methods and the selection of effective teaching aids, including Internet resources, which support teaching a subject or conducting classes, taking into account the diverse educational needs of students. In terms of skills, the graduate is able to: observe pedagogical situations and events, analyze them using pedagogical and psychological knowledge and propose solutions to problems; adequately select, create and adapt materials and resources to the diverse needs of students, including in the field of information and communication technologies, and working methods in order to independently design and effectively implement pedagogical, didactic, instructional and care activities; recognize the needs, abilities and talents of students and design and conduct activities supporting the integral development of students, their activity and participation in the process of education and instruction and in social life; design and implement curricula taking into account the diverse educational needs of students; design and implement educational and preventive programs in the field of content and educational and preventive activities addressed to students, their parents or guardians and teachers; create educational and didactic situations motivating students to learn and work on themselves, analyze their effectiveness and modify activities in order to achieve the desired effects of instruction and education; undertake work with students that stimulates their interests and develops their talents, properly selects teaching content, tasks and forms of work as part of self-education, and promotes students' achievements; develop students' creativity and independent, critical thinking skills; effectively animate and monitor the implementation of team educational activities of students; use the process of assessment and feedback to stimulate students in their work on their own development; monitor the progress of students, their activity and participation in the social life of the school; work with children with special educational needs, including children with adaptation difficulties related to the migration experience, coming from culturally diverse environments or with limited knowledge of the Polish language; responsibly organize school and extracurricular work of the student, respecting their right to rest; effectively implement activities supporting students in making informed and responsible educational and professional decisions; use the Polish language correctly and use the terminology of the subject correctly and adequately with regard to the age of

the students; use the speech apparatus in accordance with the principles of voice emission; provide first aid; and independently develop knowledge and pedagogical skills using various sources, including foreign languages and technology. In terms of social competence, the graduate is ready to: use universal principles and ethical standards in professional activity, guided by respect for every human being; build a relationship based on mutual trust between all subjects of the instructional and educational process, including the student's parents or guardians, and involving them in activities conducive to educational effectiveness; communicate with people from different backgrounds and with different emotional conditions, conflict resolution through dialogue and creating a good atmosphere for communication in and outside the classroom; make decisions related to the organization of the educational process in inclusive education; recognize the specificity of the local environment and undertake cooperation for the benefit of students and this environment; design activities aimed at the development of a school or educational system institution and at stimulating the quality of work of these institutions; and work in a team, perform various roles in it and cooperate with teachers, pedagogues, specialists, parents or guardians of students and other members of the school and local community (Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of July 25, 2019, pp. 8-11). Teacher librarians, as well as other teachers, are required to be teachers and specialists in a given subject, in this case library science.

## OBTAINING LIBRARY QUALIFICATIONS BY TEACHERS

In recent years, post-graduate studies conducted by universities have been a popular means of obtaining librarianship qualifications by teachers. Postgraduate studies at the University of Łódź were launched in 1980, and from the academic year 1982/1983 education was provided as part of the teaching specialization (for teacher librarians) and general studies (for employees of scientific and public libraries) (Kurek-Kokocińska, p. II). At the University of Warsaw, postgraduate studies in Library Science (previously Postgraduate Study of Scientific Libraries, then Postgraduate Studies in Library Science) were established in January 1992 on the initiative of prof. R. Cybulski (Brzóska, 2021). Until 1999, they functioned in the form of 3-semester courses, ten of which were held. Course XI in the academic year 2000/2001 was also the first 2-semester course. The study program has been modified many times in order to provide people employed in various types of libraries with updated knowledge in the field of modern librarianship. At the beginning of 2000, along with the reform of education, the program was adapted to needs related to its requirements. The author of the program was prof. Elżbieta Barbara Zybert, head of studies in those

years (1999-2021). In the academic year 2000/2001, students could choose two variants of study: the first – 180 hours – intended for people working in scientific libraries and tantamount to a course improving qualifications, and the second – 270 hours – designed for people working in school libraries and providing the second teaching specialization. Due to the need to implement the curriculum in accordance with education standards, since 2003 studies have been carried out over 3 semesters (1.5 years), and their total number of hours on the Library path in the education system is 350. In the first (winter) semester, students study such topics as: Libraries in Poland and around the world; Legal issues in the library; Standardization in librarianship; Library statistics with elements of bibliometrics; Organization and management of libraries; Library marketing; Information retrieval languages in integrated library systems; Universal Decimal Classification; Internet as an information service tool; Choosing a computer system for libraries; Functions of national libraries; Library architecture; Policy for collecting and sharing collections in libraries; Information activities of libraries; Collections conservation. In addition, the group following the second variant (270 hours) studied Psychology and participated in the lecture Libraries-media-libraries.

In the second (summer) semester, all attendees participated in the following classes: Searching for information in databases; A computer laboratory for advanced students; and visits to selected Warsaw libraries were organized. Students who chose the Library's specialization in the learning system (180 hours) studied: Special collections and protection of historical collections; Libraries in the science system; USMARC formats and their support; Monographic Lecture. Students who pursued the Library's specialization in the system of education and culture (270 hours) participated in such subjects as: Literature for children and teenagers; The therapeutic functions of the book; Libraries in the system of education and culture, Information problems for education and culture. In addition, students were required to do library practice outside the workplace (65 hours). The block of computer programs included 5 subjects: Internet as an information service tool, Selection of a computer system for libraries, Computer laboratory for advanced users, Searching for information in databases. In 2000 there was a change in the method of obtaining a graduation certificate, the diploma thesis was replaced with a final exam. Postgraduate studies in Library Science have been completed at the University of Warsaw in 34 courses and have been implemented so far, from 2021, under the supervision of Dr. Dorota Grabowska.

## INTERNATIONAL GUIDELINES

The IFLA/UNESCO Guidelines for School Libraries (*School Libraries: IFLA/UNESCO Guidelines*, p. 24) emphasize the role of staff members. They state that the variety and quality of activities undertaken in these institutions depend on them and therefore they must be highly qualified and highly motivated. The guidelines distinguish three categories of staff in school libraries: qualified librarian, library helper and support staff (teachers, technicians, parents and other types of volunteers). It was noted that a qualified librarian should have professional education and teaching qualifications. This category of workers is therefore also required to have a double qualification. Their duties include those related to librarian education, e.g. analyzing the needs of the school community, preparing and implementing services, building a collection policy, cataloging and classifying library documents, carrying out queries, helping students and teachers in using library resources and information technologies, as well as those for which pedagogical qualifications are necessary, e.g. education in the field of information skills or education of library users (*School libraries: guidelines*, 2003, p. 27). *The Guidelines* clearly state that the school librarian is an equal member of the teaching staff and, thanks to cooperation with all school employees, supports the goals pursued. Their knowledge, skills and competencies serve the school environment.

## CONCLUSIONS

The teacher librarian in Poland is a specific profession that requires double qualifications, which affects their education. People working in this profession are most often either librarians who have obtained teaching qualifications or teachers who have obtained librarian qualifications. The tasks of school librarians in modern libraries are not only traditional ones covering organizational and pedagogical activities, as well as those devoted to improving work and marketing activities. They are derived from the various functions of modern libraries, which emphasize the use of the Internet, multimedia, and individual assistance to students in their particular health, school, reading and life needs. The implementation of these tasks and functions requires specific qualifications and keeping up with the development of technology. This requires teachers and librarians to be constantly active, improve themselves, be creative and have special social skills for building relationships between the school library and students, and between teachers and management.

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