

Title of the paper : **The role of public libraries in teaching of health information literacy a questionnaire survey.**

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AIM: The e-health infrastructure may offer many possibilities for public libraries. The aim of paper is to study how possibilities of the health education and information literacy may be implemented for users at the public libraries in Poland in the five different social environments. They are the following demographic data from 2005: two public libraries located in the Upper Silesia Region, Katowice (317.220 inhabitants – 93.618 users of the County Public Library) and Bytom (187.943 inhabitants – 19.694 users of the County Public Library); two – in the Malopolska Region – other names the Lesser Poland or Polonia Minor (Kraków 756.629 inhabitants - 69.679 users of the Provincial Public Library), Chrzanów 38.944 inhabitants – 18.030 users of the County Public Library). One public library is at the district Ochota in Warsaw, the capital of Poland (92.374 inhabitants live in the district – 31.312 users of the district's net public libraries). It is the first questionnaire research on the health information needs of the Polish audience of that kind libraries. The present study is a post-facto analysis of the data. METHODS: The questionnaire study was realized during October and December in 2006. The study was achieved on the spot of those libraries. The suitable sample was based on the once visiting the each library by the users at that same time. The librarians were giving questionnaires to the users in accordance with their agreements to fill in forms. In the questionnaire there were the questions: 1) Do you seek the health information? 2) If you do not it, what it is a reason, while you do not need, or you do not know where it is, 3) If you need the health information where you search - on the Internet at home, or at a public library and other libraries, 4) Which the following resources do you use: medical books and handbooks, encyclopedias, magazines, a TV/Radio broadcast about health, the health care institutions and pharmacies, the Internet resources (e.c. PubMed), the web sites of the medical organizations and associations, 5) What are the reasons of the health information needs, if because of the personal health condition, or family health (children, elder people). Finally the demographic features were completed by the respondents as the following as: age, sex, educational level, the kind of the universities graduation (medical, social, biological, technical studies), the social state (e.c.: a work full-time or part-time, an unemployed, an old age pension, a disability payment). They were used the chi-square - χ^2 , Kruskal -Wallis , and Wilcoxon's tests. It was calculated the sensitivity of information (p). The rates of dependent variables of public and the standard deviation were calculated to comparing the features of studied populations. RESULTS: The data may allow to know what themes on the health, information resources, libraries collections are the most interested by the users, and work out educational tools. They have been shown the population of the Polish public libraries who are interested in the health information. It may be possible to know the characteristics of public at the five libraries. Of the total 1.111 respondents who took part in

the study, 782 individuals said they search information about health, 329 - did not need that kind of information or searched it rarely, ($p < 0,01$). **DISCUSSION:** The representative parameter of the statistic sensitivity $p < 0,01$ is 0,01. It means that 1.0 per cent of the probability is answered by chance. The each library should be analysed independently. It seems to clear why most users of the Council Public Library in Bytom are interested in the health information. Least users, who are not look for and do not have the needs of the health information live in Bytom and Kraków. The following analysis has shown the reasons and relationship between the respondent's age and use the resources at the public libraries to find health information. Finally the demographic features were completed by the respondents as the following as: age, sex, educational level, the kind of the universities graduation (medical, social biological, technical studies), the social state (e.c. : a work full-time or part-time, an unemployed, an old age pension, a disability payment). The age groups: Most of the all respondents in the age 25- 44 are interested in health (335, 75,5%) least - are in 15 years old (17, 43,6%) . The same group of users aged 25 – 44 look to the Internet (77%), but least – are in the group over 60 years (14). The public libraries are those places where most of respondents in age from 25 to 44 years (74 %) look for all resources (books, encyclopedias, magazines). They also use very often the radio and TV broadcasts as the source of the health information (44 answers). Most of people over age 60, usually, and very often, consult a doctor or pharmacist (27%). The analysis of themes allows to learn that all are needed by the respondents also in age from 25 to 44. The resource on the addresses of health care services located in those two towns and three cities is the most interesting theme. The test Kruskal-Wallis's for the five groups of age, $p < 0.001$ ($n=782$ answers of respondents who declared their needs of the health information), may show the demographic features of public. The youngest respondents are in the Provincial Public Library in Kraków, the oldest – in the District Public Library in Warsaw-Ochota, and the County Public Library in Chrzanów. Most of the respondents are women who look for the information about the health (572), men – 210. In every group there are different themes, resources and needs which are interesting for women, or men (e.c.: diseases diagnosis and treatment – more men (55 - 73,8%) than women (164 – 71,3%); dietary more women (177 – 69,1%) than men (64,8%). It is shown that women's and men's answers are similar on the need of pharmaceutical information (women – 55%; men - 54%). The similar answers are for the question about addresses of the health care services (women 277, 51,6%, men – 101, 51,9%). Most of the respondents who completed grammar school live in Bytom , and the most of graduated from universities live in Katowice, Kraków and Warsaw. Least of those persons who graduated from the universities with the degrees for Master of Sciences live in Bytom, and most of them graduated from medical studies. It may be concluded the County Public Library in Bytom takes into consideration the medical information needs. In the surroundings of that public library there is not the medical or research library. **CONCLUSIONS:** The comparative inquiry studies are effective tools to evaluate the modern value of public libraries for the health promoting in a social environment (578 persons – 75% women, 69 % men). The resources analysis may state that public libraries participate in responding to the current needs of their users. The items used in all studied public libraries included books and manuals about health (54% of respondents), the medical services, e.c. PubMed, (46%), magazines (43,6%), encyclopedias and dictionaries (43,2%), a radio/TV broadcasts (47,6%), at a doctor or pharmacy (37,6%). The study is confirmation of the users needs recognition for making electronic resources, or completing printed collections. The similar study should be realized before teaching activities of librarians in a field of the health information. It may be suggested the social role of public libraries to making accessible the health information resources for all groups of public.