

Educational needs and self-perceived skills of teaching librarians – a comparative Polish-Norwegian study

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For Project:



Aim of the study and target group

To investigate self-perceived knowledge and skills and compare and prioritize educational needs among teaching librarians in health care sector in Norway and in Poland

Teaching librarians or reference librarians who teach users in health care sector in Norway and in Poland

Research questions

- * self-assessment of knowledge and skills
- * to identify the hierarchy of deficiencies
- * to identify the hierarchy of importance of knowledge/skills for an ideal teaching librarian
- * about difficulties teaching librarians encounter to upgrade their skills
- * about preferable form/type/format of training
- * background questions

Survey

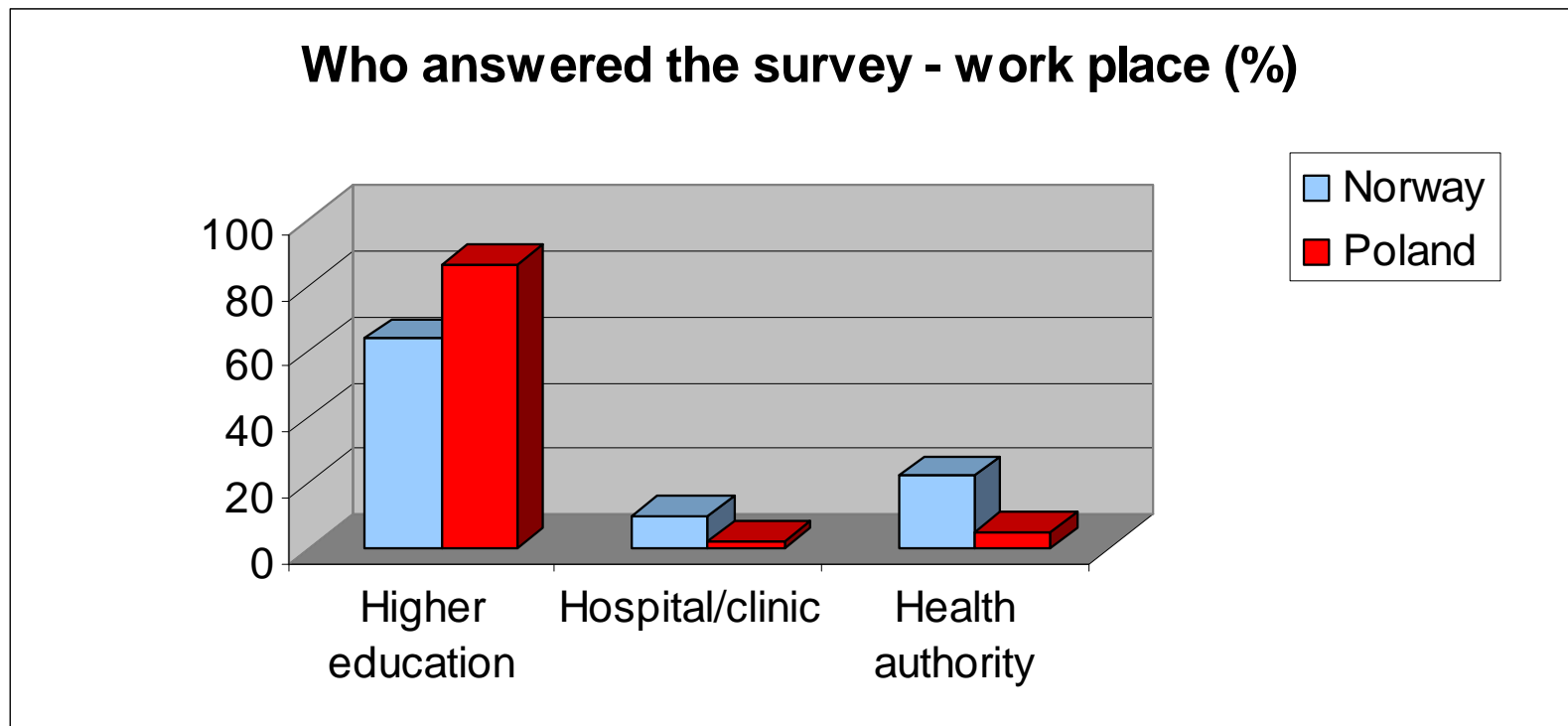
- Invitation to complete the questionnaire

230 emails sent in Norway

165 emails sent in Poland

- 180 questionnaires were completed
- The response rate: Poland 48% (80 answers)
Norway 44% (100 answers).

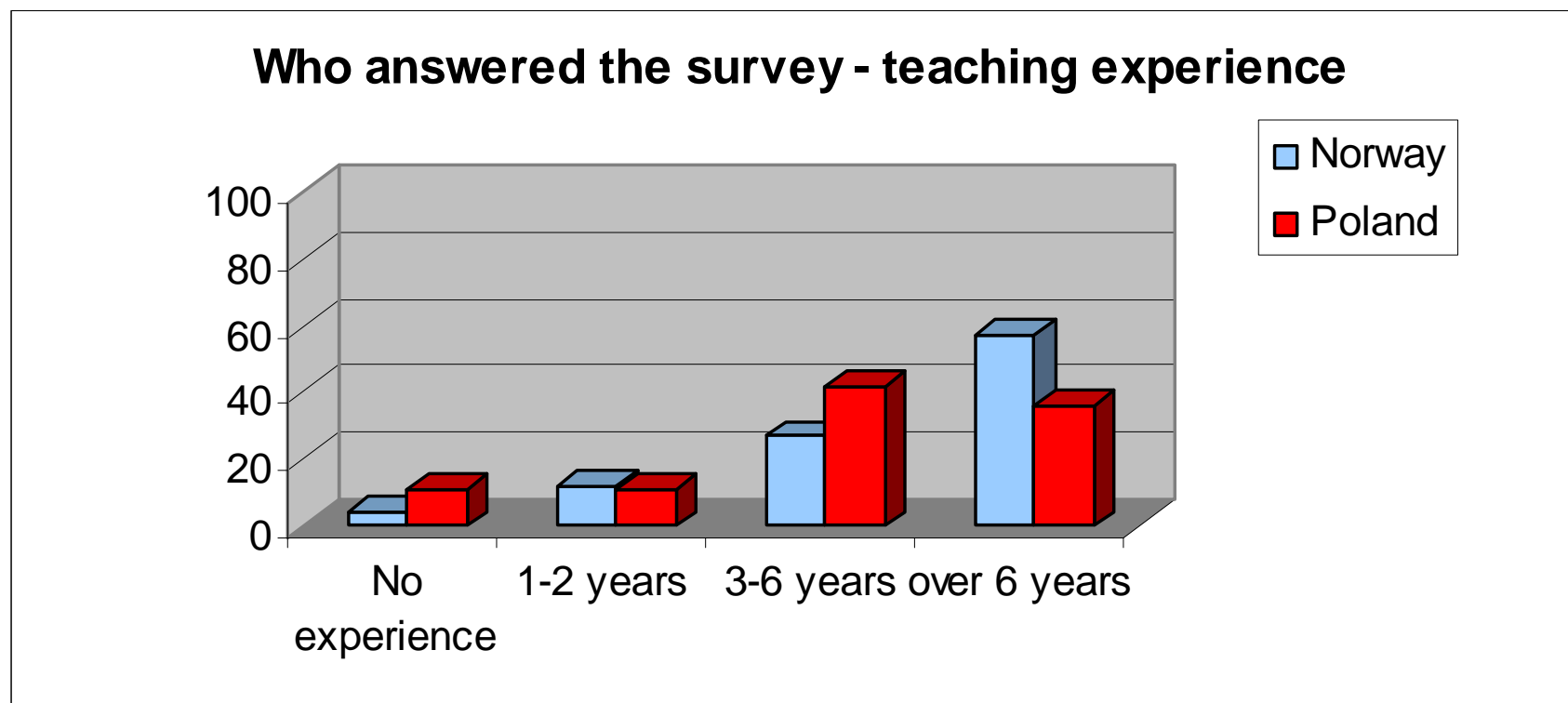
Who answered the survey – work place



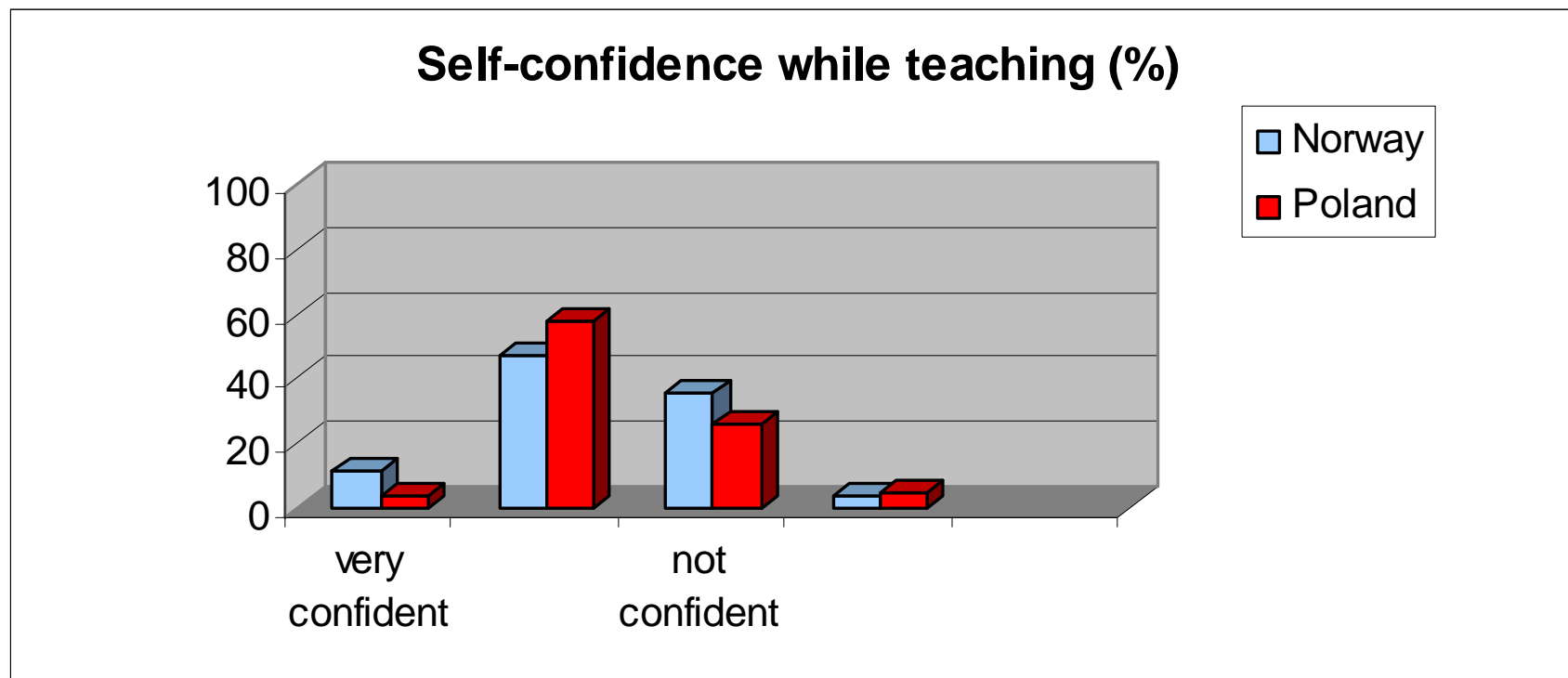
Who answered the survey – work experiences



Who answered the survey – teaching experiences



Confident in giving teaching sessions



Both Polish and Norwegian teaching librarians agree that the most important areas of knowledge and skills are :

- Database searching
- Knowledge of medical terminology and health concepts
- How to use computer software in teaching
- How to communicate/interact with faculty
- Knowledge of information quality assessment tools and ranking criteria
- Knowledge about open access journals and institutional research repositories
- Presentation skills

We differ most in regard to following subjects:

- Terms and conditions of the use of and access to licensed databases
- Quality indicators of information (e.g. Impact factor, peer reviewing)
- Free Internet searching skills (e.g. using Google Scholar)
- Principles of evidence based decision making in health care
- Developing teaching materials
- E-learning applications which can be used in teaching

Areas where respondents claim lack of knowledge *in order decreasing frequency*

- Poland (60%-37% of resp)
 - Research methods
 - Reference programs
 - Principles of EBM
 - Med. decision support tools
 - Marketing
 - Integrating with curricula
 - Critical appraisal
 - E-learning
 - Quality assessment tools
 - EBM sources
- Norway (52%-32% of resp)
 - E-learning
 - Evaluation of teaching
 - Keeping current
 - Programs of med. educat.
 - Research methods
 - Publications (types etc.)
 - Health and medicine terminology
 - Reference programs
 - Integrating with curricula
 - Teaching methods

**What competencies of
a teaching librarian are
perceived as important?**

Know how to search

Both groups see high searching skills as a very important skill for a teaching librarian!

For Norwegians also knowledge of EBM sources is of great importance

For Poles how to search internet is crucial, a skill least important for Norwegians

Know how to assess quality of information

- **Norwegians generally assess higher their knowledge of information quality issues.**
- **They do not care much though for such quality indicators like impact factors. Understanding such measures of quality are very important for Polish librarians.**
- **Importance of knowing research methods is underestimated by both groups, what is strange, considering that both groups say that to know how to conduct „critical appraisal” is important**

Know issues connected with authorship and publishing

In this section Poles assess themselves to be a bit more knowledgeable and are more interested in the subjects.

Both groups of respondents agree that to be knowledgeable in area of open access publishing is important,

Knowledge of access rights to databases is perceived very differently. Norwegians do not see this as relevant, for Polish librarians it is an important area of knowledge (reason problems with access, probably much more restricted in Poland than in Norway)

Know subject field and EBM principles

- Polish librarians claim better knowledge of medical terminology, and medical and health environment (53% say they have at least reasonable knowledge, only 24% of Norwegians say so). They also seem to have less problems with keeping current.

But,

- Poles are far behind Norwegians in regard to acquaintance with EBM paradigm (only 13% say they now what it is about, compared with 42% of N.). Polish librarians also do not perceive EBM as an important area of knowledge.

Know how to teach

- For both groups of respondents it is very important to know how to conduct educational needs assessment among library courses participants
- Presentation skills are also highly ranked
- Both groups do not care much about theory of education
- What is surprising, is that most of teaching librarians do not attach importance to evaluation of their teaching.

Know how to market library courses and how to communicate with patrons and other teachers

- Norwegian teaching librarians generally see this set of skills as more important, and claim more knowledge here than Poles.
- Polish teaching librarians generally lack knowledge and skills helpful in integrating their teaching with curricula. They know little about their organization and do not know how to market their teaching.

Are we very different?

Norwegian librarians were much more moderate in self evaluation of their knowledge and skills than Polish librarians. Poles more often feel they are experts and more often say they no nothing. Difference in temper?

In traditional, probably most often practiced areas of teaching (searching, information quality issues), similar weight is attached to certain skills and areas of knowledge. differences between target groups are insignificant

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Are we very different?

In more rarely taught, less obvious or advanced competencies there are large differences between Polish and Norwegian librarians, i.e . Much more Norwegians attach importance to knowledge of EBM than Poles (83%, 35%). Opposite when comes to knowledge of medicine (60% P and 33% N say it is important)

- *There are areas where Polish librarians say they lack knowledge while Norwegians seem to do better (Principles of EBM; Medical decision support tools; Marketing of library sources). Norwegians are least confident in different areas, of E-learning, Evaluation of teaching, how to keeping current.*

Yes we are different.

Conclusion

- There are significant differences between Norwegian and Polish teaching librarians in regard to what they say they know and what they think is important to know.
- These differences probably may be extrapolated to other countries.
- In the information intensive health field and in the era of globalization such differences should be minimized for the good of health information users.
- This can be achieved by health librarians' education standards and additional guidelines for librarians who teach, which can help make teaching librarians qualifications more unified across countries.

Thank you

on behalf of the MedLibTrain-project



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