

Library and Information Science Education in Japan : Current Status and Future Prospects

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Abstract :

The article discusses current library and information science (LIS) education in Japan and considers issues that might be addressed in the future. First, the general condition of public, academic, and school libraries in Japan is discussed. Second, public library law, including regulations pertaining to certification, is discussed. Third, school library law, including regulations pertaining to teacher librarian certification, is discussed. Fourth, the general condition of academic libraries is discussed. Fifth, LIS education, which is offered as a professional/academic discipline in nine universities, is discussed. Lastly, the article summarizes several issues faced in current LIS education in Japan and proposes some solutions.

1. Introduction

It is not well known that Japan has a great number of libraries of various kinds. At its website, the Japan Library Association (JLA) offers an interesting description of Japanese libraries. This description is available in English.¹⁾ The information, however, is more or less out-of-date and some is not correct.

This article is organized as follows :

Chapter 1 : Introduction

Chapter 2 : Libraries and Library Staffing in Japan

Chapter 3 : Library Law and Education for Public Librarians

Chapter 4 : School Library Law and Education for Teacher Librarians and School Librarians

Chapter 5 : Education and Training for Academic Librarians

Chapter 6 : LIS education as a Professional/Academic Discipline at Japanese Universities

Chapter 7 : Discussion

Chapter 8 : Conclusion

Education and training for special librarians are not included in this article since special libraries are so much complicated. The continuing education of librarians is also excluded, although it is a part of LIS education.

2. Libraries and Library Staffing in Japan

Table 1 shows statistical data about public libraries and their staffing in Japan in 2016. There were 3,280 public libraries altogether, with 58 prefectural libraries, 2,590 city libraries, and 722 town or village libraries.²⁾ All prefectures have their own libraries and 99% of the cities have their own libraries, but only 59% of towns and villages have their own libraries.³⁾ The condition of town and village libraries is recognized as one of big problems in the Japanese library sector from the view point of equal access to information.

Prefectural libraries, which are roughly comparable to state libraries in library-advanced countries, are recognized as public libraries in Japan, and most of them loan library materials to patrons. Children can also visit prefectural libraries and borrow materials, including children's books.

Concerning library staffing in Japanese public libraries, Table 1 shows that there were 1,525 full-time staff in 58 prefectural libraries in 2016, with 895 of them certified as either a public librarian or a public library assistant. Those who have certification as either a public librarian or a public library assistant are regarded as professionals in Japan. The same table shows that there were 8,147 full-time staff in city libraries, with 4,114 of them being certified. And there were 722 full-time staff working in either town or village libraries, with 406 of them being certified. There were 49 full-time staff in privately-established public libraries, with 36 of them being certified.

Concerning the library directors, Table 1 shows that only six directors had certificates of public librarianship in 58 prefectural libraries in 2016. Table 1 also shows that only 649 directors had those certificates in 2,590 city libraries. The situation is almost the same with town, village, and private libraries.

In addition, Table 1 shows that 4,114 professionals were working in the city libraries, which is more than 50% of all staff. At first this seems quite high, compared to the percentage in library-advanced countries. But one of the problems in public librarianship in Japan is that library assistants are also considered to be professionals. Another problem is that there are many public libraries in which no true professionals are working. The third problem is that the staff who hold library certificates are not necessarily employed as professionals. Therefore, though in some libraries more than 70-80% of them hold certificates of public librarianship, there is often no difference regarding

Table 1 Number of public libraries and staff in Japan in 2016

	Prefectural	City	Towns and village	Private	Total
Libraries	58	2,590	613	19	3,280
full-time staff	1,525	8,147	722	49	10,443
Full-time librarians or assistant librarians	895	4,114	406	36	5,451
Directors holding librarian's certificates	6	649	83	5	743

Source : Japan Library Association, *Toshokan Nenkan, 2017 (Library Yearbook, 2017)*. JLA, 2017, p.294.

salaries, including fringe benefits, between these professionals and other staff.

Table 2 shows that there were a total of 1,666 libraries in academic institutions in 2016. Table 2 also shows that 289 of these were located in national universities, and 128 libraries were in prefectural and city universities. There were 1,001 libraries in private universities, 187 libraries in junior colleges and 61 libraries in technical colleges.

Concerning library staff, Table 2 shows that there were 4,705 full-time staff working in the academic libraries in 2016. The table also shows that 1,574 full-time staff were working in 289 national university libraries, with 1,162 people holding public librarian's certificates. 240 full-time staff were working in 128 prefectural and city university libraries, with 172 people holding public librarian's certificates. 2,628 full-time staff were working in 1,001 private university libraries, with 1,981 people holding librarian's certificates. 190 full-time staff were working in 187 junior college libraries, with 153 people holding public librarian's certificates. 73 full-time staff were working in 61 technical college libraries, with 32 people holding public librarian's certificates.

It might sound peculiar to report how many staff in academic libraries hold public librarian's certificates. This is because there are neither laws nor regulations concerning academic librarians. There are no formal education programs for academic librarianship. In other word, academic librarianship in Japan has not been developed yet. Library services in academic libraries in Japan are given by the staff who are employed as clerical staff and have received intensive continuing education, including on-the-job training. It is one of the great problems of librarianship in Japan.

Table 2 Number of academic libraries and staff in Japan in 2016

	National univ.	Prefectural or city univ.	Private univ.	Junior college	Technical college	Total
Libraries	289	128	1,001	187	61	1,666
Full-time staff	1,574	240	2,628	190	73	4,705
Full-time staff holding public librarian certificate	1,162	169	1,659	153	32	3,175

Source : Japan Library Association, *Toshokan Nenkan, 2017 (Library Yearbook, 2017)*. JLA, 2017, p.314.

Table 3 shows that there were 19,945 libraries in elementary schools, 10,225 libraries in junior high schools, 4,927 libraries in senior high schools, and 2,852 libraries in other kinds of schools in 2016. Japan has a School Library Law, stating that a school must have a school library. Therefore, every school has some form of library. In 2016 there were only 13,557 elementary school libraries in which teacher librarians were placed. This means that about 32% of Japanese elementary school libraries have no teacher librarian. There are only 6,663 libraries in junior high schools in which teacher librarians are placed. This means that about 35% of Japanese junior high school libraries have no teacher librarian. There were 4,165 libraries in senior high schools in which teacher librarians were placed. This means that about 15 % of Japanese senior high school libraries have no teacher

librarian. However, high school libraries are well staffed, compared with elementary or junior high school libraries. There were 1,637 libraries in other kinds of school in which teacher librarians were placed. This means that about 43% of those libraries have no teacher librarian.

One of the problems of school libraries in Japan is that not every library has a teacher librarian as stated above. Another problem is that school librarians in most elementary schools must teach all subjects and manage classes just as other teachers do, and school librarians in most junior and senior high schools must teach also specific subjects and manage classes just as other teachers do. They are not full-time librarians, which is quite different from the case in library-advanced countries.

Table 3 Number of school libraries in Japan in 2016

	Elementary schools	Junior high schools	Senior high schools	Other kinds of schools	total
Libraries	19,945	10,225	4,927	2,852	35,097
Libraries having a teacher librarian	13,557	6,663	4,165	1,637	26,022

Source : Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, *Heisei 28 Nendo 「Gakkou Toshokan no Genjou ni Kansuru Chousa」 Kekka ni Tsuite (Gaiyou)*. (*A summary of Conditions of School Libraries, 2016*). http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/shotou/dokusho/link/___icsFiles/afieldfile/2016/10/13/1378073_01.pdf [April 15, 2018]

3. Library Law and Education for Public Librarians and Public Library Assistants

There is a law called the Library Act in Japan, which is a law for public libraries.⁴⁾

The Act states as follows :

(Librarians and Library Assistants)

Article 4. The professional personnel of libraries shall be called librarians (*shisho*) and library assistants (*shishoho*).

2. Librarians shall be engaged in the professional works of the libraries.

3. Library assistants shall assist librarians in their duties.

(Qualifications for Librarians)

Article 5. Those who satisfy one of the following provisions shall be qualified as librarians.

(1) Graduates of academic institutions who have completed library science courses under the provisions of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) Ordinance.

(2) Graduates of academic institutions who have completed the training program for librarians under the provisions of the next Article.

(3) Those who have three or more years of experience in the following positions and have completed the training course for librarians under the provisions of the next Article (Article 6).

Article 5.1. Those who satisfy one of the following provisions shall be qualified as library assistants.

(1) Librarians.

(2) Those who graduated from high school and have completed the training program for library assistants under the provisions of the next Article (Article 6).

(3)... (omitted)

Article 6. Training courses for librarians and library assistants shall be conducted by academic institutions that have been designated by MEXT.

2. The contents of the course of study, credits, and other necessary matters concerning the successful completion of training courses for librarians and library assistants shall be provided by MEXT Ordinance.

3.1 MEXT Ordinance and Certification for Public Librarians and Public Library Assistants

MEXT issued the Ordinance to Partially Revise Enforcement Regulation of Library Act in 2009. The Enforcement Regulation states that those who desire to earn a certificate as a public librarian must complete at least 24 credit hours of library science courses (22 credit hours of core courses and 2 credit hours of elective courses).⁵⁾

Those courses are as follows :

[Core Courses] (Each course is two credit hours)

- *Lifelong learning
- *Introduction to library science
- *Library law, regulations and management
- *Library and information technology
- *Introduction to library services
- *Information services
- *Children's services
- *Seminar in information services
- *Introduction to library and information resources
- *Organization of information resources
- *Seminar in information resources

[Elective Courses] (Each course is one credit hour)

(Two courses must be completed)

- *Special topics in library science
- *Special topics in library services
- *Special topics in library and information resources
- *History of books and libraries
- *Library facilities

*Comprehensive seminar in library science

*Practicum

According to the Ordinance, those who desire to earn a certificate as a library assistant must complete following library science courses.⁶⁾

*Life-long learning (1 credit)

*Foundation of library science (2 credits)

*Introduction to library services (2 credits)

*Reference services (1 credit)

*Reference materials (1 credit)

*Information retrieval (1 credit)

*Library materials (1 credit)

*Organization of library materials (2 credits)

*Seminar in organization of library materials (1 credit)

*Introduction to children's services (1 credit)

*Special topics in library science (1 credit)

3.2 Academic Institutions That Offer Public Librarian Certification Programs

There were 160 universities and colleges that offered public librarian certification programs in 2017. In addition, there were 58 junior colleges that offered the same kind of programs.⁷⁾ The courses offered by most of these universities and colleges are the same as those mentioned in the MEXT Ordinance. There were nine universities and colleges that offered summer intensive training programs for public librarian certification in 2016. There was one junior college that offered the same kind of intensive program.⁸⁾

4. School Library Law and Education for Teacher Librarians and School Librarians

There is School Library Act revised in 2014 in Japan.⁹⁾ The Act states as follows :
(Teacher Librarian)

Article 5. There must be a teacher librarian in a school library who shall be engaged in the professional works of the library.

2. A senior teacher, mentor, or teacher can be appointed as a teacher librarian. In such case, the teacher must have completed the training program for teacher librarians.

3. (omitted)

4. MEXT Ordinance shall describe the courses for the training program.

5. The agency in charge of the school administration should make an effort to employ a school

librarian (*gakkou shisho*)¹⁰⁾ who shall be engaged in the professional works of the library on a full-time basis.

(Supplementary provisions)

Concerning teacher librarians, a school to which the MEXT Ordinance does not apply does not need to employ a teacher librarian. (The schools to which MEXT Ordinance applies are schools that have 12 or more classes. Therefore, a school with fewer than 12 classes does not need to employ a teacher librarian, regardless of the provision of the School Library Act.)

4.1 MEXT Ordinance and Certification for Teacher Librarians

MEXT issued an Ordinance in 2007 that states the regulations concerning the courses for training programs for teacher librarians.¹¹⁾ The Ordinance states that a person who desires to earn a teacher librarian certification must complete the following courses (each course is two credit hours).

- *School administration and school library
- *School library media and their organization
- *Teaching and school library
- *Reading and personality
- *Use of information media

4.2 Model Curriculum for School Librarians Made by MEXT

MEXT developed a Model Curriculum for School Librarians in 2016 as follows (each course is two credit hours) :¹²⁾

- *Introduction to school librarianship
 - *Library and information technology
 - *Introduction to library and information resources
 - *Organization of library materials
 - *Seminar in organization of library materials
 - *School library services
 - *Information services in school libraries
 - *Introduction to school education
 - *Teaching and school library
 - *Reading and personality)
- (Total : 10 courses and 20 credits)

When considering both the School Library Act and the MEXT Ordinance mentioned above, it is

clear that a teacher librarian in Japan is a person who has a teacher's license and has completed at least ten credit hours of school librarianship. And in addition to a teacher librarian, school libraries in Japan are supposed to provide another professional called a *gakkou shisho* ; the reason for this will be explored later in this article.

4.3 Academic Institutions That Offer Teacher Librarian Certification Programs

There were 199 universities and colleges that offered teacher librarian certification programs in 2016, as well as 18 junior colleges.¹³⁾ The courses offered by most of these universities and colleges are the same as those mentioned in the MEX Ordinance. There were 41 universities and colleges, and one junior college that offered summer intensive training programs for teacher librarian certification in 2017.¹⁴⁾

5. Education and Training for Academic Librarians

There are neither acts nor regulations pertaining to academic librarians in Japan. In most academic libraries, there is no librarian certified with professional credentials. It is a wonder that Japanese academic libraries can function with such a personnel policy in the modern age. MEXT's official report compiles statistics about the number of staff in academic libraries who have public librarian certification. The report in the future should compile statistics about the number of staff who have professional or academic librarian certification, such as are always kept in other countries.

There is a MEXT Ordinance that can be understood to refer to academic (professional) librarians. This is *Standards for Establishment of Universities* issued in 2006. The Article 38.3 of the *Standards* states as follows.¹⁵⁾

Article 38.3. A university shall hire professionals and other full-time staff for the library so that the library can function.

This Article can be interpreted to mean that universities are supposed to employ certified academic librarians in their libraries. However, some administrators in the academic community state that the reference to "professionals" in the Ordinance doesn't necessarily apply academic librarians. MEXT should persuade these administrators that the expectation of hiring professionals in the Ordinance also applies to academic librarians. JLA, as a professional body, seems to be also responsible for this misunderstanding. JLA should take some action to correct this ; it has not taken any action on this matter so far.

Even if it were clearly understood that the "professionals" in the Ordinance would include professional librarians, there will be another problem. There are neither documents nor regulations that outline the qualifications for certified academic librarians in Japan. MEXT should be blamed for

the lack of these documents or regulations. JLA also carries some blames for this. JLA has not made any effort on this matter so far. Organizations with institutional memberships such as Japan Association of National University Libraries and Japan Association of Private University Libraries have also made no effort to establish standards for professional librarianship in the academic libraries.

However, there are some universities that provide LIS education as a professional/academic discipline so that their students may pursue their careers in the library sector, including in academic libraries. The following chapter discusses LIS education at these universities.

6. LIS Education as a Professional/Academic Discipline at Japanese Universities

There are about nine universities that offer LIS education as a professional/academic discipline. A “professional/academic discipline” means, in this article, that LIS education is provided as a course of study or a departmental discipline in undergraduate programs, or as a graduate program, excluding the certification program mentioned above. Following are descriptions of the course of study in universities with these programs in 2016-2018.

6.1 Keio University

One of those universities that offer an LIS program as a professional/academic discipline is Keio University, which is a private university. Keio University is the oldest university that has offered LIS education as such a discipline. The School of Library and Information Science of Keio University was set up in 1951. The American Library Association helped in the early days of the program. Robert L. Gitler, who was then dean of the University of Washington library school, was invited to serve as the first director of the School. The objectives of the School were 1) to train professionals for various types of libraries or information-related organizations, 2) to provide continuing education for staff members working in libraries, and 3) to promote research in the field of LIS. The school has produced many leading librarians, information specialists, researchers, and faculty members since its establishment.¹⁶⁾

The School began to offer a master’s degree program in 1967, with emphasis on information science, and a PhD program in 1975. The School has eight full-time faculties, teaching in both undergraduate and graduate programs in 2018. The School accepts from 50 to 60 new students every year in the undergraduate program.¹⁷⁾

The master’s degree program of the School is divided into the two courses of study: the LIS course of study (MA in LIS) and the Information Resource Management course of study. The objectives of the LIS course of study are the advancement of LIS research as well as the training of highly specialized professionals. All courses are at advanced level compared to those offered in the undergraduate program. The LIS MA program is composed of three majors: information systems, information media, and information retrieval and processing.

The Information Resource Management course of study aims at the continuing education of librarians and other information professionals. This course of study was set up in 2004. It emphasizes teaching of both current information and communication technology and administration of information centers. This course of study also emphasizes the development of communication and problem-solving skills through discussions with professionals and the faculty.

It takes two years for students to complete in either course of study, Students are conferred a master's degree when they complete course-works and submit a master's thesis, which is a common practice in the master's programs in Japan. The number of students enrolled in 2016 in the LIS course of study (MA in LIS) and the Information Resource Management course of study is 7 and 18, respectively.

The partial curriculum for a master's degree in LIS includes the following courses :

Advanced information science, Seminar of advanced information science, Advanced information media, Seminar of advanced information media, Advanced information storage and retrieval, Seminar of advanced information storage and retrieval, Advanced information systems, Seminar of advanced information systems, Research methods, Information analysis.

The objectives of the PhD degree program are the advancement of the LIS discipline and training of researchers. The required period of attendance is three years. Under the guidance of a supervisor, a student prepares for a dissertation, together with course work comprising at least four credits each year. Six students were enrolled in the PhD degree program in 2016.¹⁸⁾

6.2 University of Tsukuba

The second university that offers an LIS program as a professional/academic discipline is University of Tsukuba, which is a national university. The University has the College of Knowledge and Library Sciences (as a part of School of Informatics) as an undergraduate program and the Graduate School of Library, Information and Media Studies as a graduate program in 2018.

LIS education at the University of Tsukuba originated in the Junior College of Library Science, established in 1964. The Junior College began to teach information science in 1971, which was called "documentation" at that time. In 1979 the College was restructured into the University of Library and Information Science (ULIS), a national university. ULIS began offering master's and doctoral programs in 1984 and in 1999, respectively. In 2002 ULIS was consolidated with the University of Tsukuba, and the names of its undergraduate and graduate programs were changed to its present form in 2006.

The College of Knowledge and Library Sciences, which is an undergraduate program, has the following three courses of study :¹⁹⁾

1) Knowledge Sciences Course of Study

In this course, students will understand the essence of knowledge, knowledge and information action, and knowledge acquisition. They will also develop the ability to formalize knowledge and learn search and collection technology, methods of communication, the intermediation technique of information and knowledge, and the technique of extracting knowledge while treating data analytically.

2) Knowledge Information Systems Course of Study

In this course, students will learn the classification and construction of knowledge information, offering and sharing technology on knowledge information in the Web, various expressions of knowledge information and database technology for management, information retrieval techniques for extracting useful information from knowledge information, and the advancing technology of a knowledge information system, such as a digital library.

3) Information Resources Management Course of Study

In this course, students will acquire knowledge and methods for planning and managing information service institutions, such as libraries, organizations, and communities. They will also learn the management and application of knowledge information ; designing, building, and managing of a social system of knowledge information ; and the characteristics, culture, and history of various information media.

The College accepts about 100 new students every year. The College, in addition to a bachelor's program, offers both public librarian and teacher librarian certification programs.

The Graduate School of Library, Information and Media Studies of the University offers four kinds of master's degrees : MSc (Informatics), MSc (Library and Information Studies), MSc (English program for Library and Information Studies), and MSc (practitioner-focused program for Library and Information Studies), in addition to a Ph D. program.. The MSc program for Informatics is designed for those who would desire to pursue a career as information system administrators, media creators, and system designers, emphasizing the special studies of information technologies.

The MSc program for Library and Information Studies is designed for those who would like to pursue a career as academic faculty members, professional librarians or archivists who are knowledgeable about issues such as copyright, privacy, security, information distribution, and related social systems.

The MSc English program for Library and Information Studies is designed for international students who would like to pursue a career as information professionals in the global context. This program is provided to offer foreign students an opportunity to learn Japanese advanced information technologies, and resources and management skills. This is a two-year program and may be completed in English only.

The MSc (practitioner-focused) program for Library and Information Studies is designed for those

who are currently working in the LIS sector and would like to advance their knowledge and skills. This program is offered for part-time students. The students in other programs are not allowed to convert to this program because of significant differences in the educational methods.

Focusing on the MSc program for Library and Information Studies, the courses offered in 2018 are as follows :²⁰⁾

Core Courses (each 2 credits)

Nature of knowledge and information, System thinking, Internet and law, Management and utilization of the intellectual property, History of libraries and media, Information seeking and retrieval, Information behavior, Needs analysis and project management, Technical communication, Communication and culture, Seminars in information media (I-V)

Elective Courses (each 2 credits)

Students must elect 20 credit hours of courses listed in the Elective of the Graduate School of Library, Information and Media Studies, including at least 12 credit hours of courses from the list below ; these are in the field of library and information studies.

Text analysis, Digital documents, Digital libraries, Digital archiving, Management of documents, Organization of information media, Metadata, Public management, Public libraries, Library and information services in cultural diverse communities, Administration of libraries, Media education, Administration of school library media centers, Higher education and information professionals, Academic information infrastructure, Development of learning environment, Resources and culture, Classical documents and bibliography

There are 53 students in total enrolled in the four master's programs and nine students in the doctoral program in 2018. A total of 44 faculty members are teaching in both the undergraduate College of Knowledge and Library Sciences and in the Graduate School of Library, Information and Media Studies.²¹⁾

The College is a member of iSchools. It conducts world-class research and provides international education programs. It has also joined CiSAP (Consortium of iSchools Asia Pacific), and promotes collaboration among Asia-Pacific information schools.

6.3 Aichi Shukutoku University

The third university that offers an LIS program as a professional/academic discipline is Aichi Shukutoku University, which is a private university. The Faculty of Human Informatics of the University, which is an undergraduate department, is organized into three courses of study : “Psychonomic Science,” “Information Design and Systems,” and “Library and Information Science.” In the field of LIS, there are seven faculty members. Students make inquiries into knowledge and

techniques of information management in order to grasp the unique nature and properties of human beings from both a psychological and engineering viewpoint, with the goal of better use of information on a higher and more effective level.²²⁾

The partial LIS curriculum in 2016 included following courses :²³⁾

Information processing, Seminar in information retrieval, Introduction to library and information systems, Media studies, Information services, History of information and communication, Information use, Seminar in retrieval of academic information, Children's services, Cognitive information systems, Seminar in subject analysis, Social information systems, Scholarly communication, Academic information systems, Seminar in data mining, symbol processing, Behavior of information retrieval, School management and school library, Musical information services, Digital archives.

The University also offers a Library and Information Science major in the Department of Creativity and Culture, Graduate School of Creativity and Culture. The program was formerly Library and Information Science Course of Study in the Department of Literature, Graduate School of Letters. It was reorganized into its present form in 2013.

The LIS program encompasses a broad range of education and research in such areas as information media, information services, and information systems. Drawing on these theoretical foundations, it also encompasses applications in an array of areas, including research into information media functions and information distribution and services ranging from print to digital media, management of knowledge information resources, searching for information, information search behavior, information systems, knowledge and information processing, human engineering, and computational science.²⁴⁾

6.4 The University of Tokyo

The fourth university that offers an LIS program as a professional/academic discipline is the University of Tokyo, which is a national university. The University has a Department of Lifelong Learning Infrastructure Management within its (graduate) School of Education. The Department consists of three sections : “Lifelong Learning,” “Social Education,” and “Library and Information Science.”

The University of Tokyo has been one of the most productive universities in educating LIS researchers and academic faculty in Japan. LIS education at the undergraduate level is offered in the Division of Educational Practices and Policies. There is one full-time faculty and another joint-appointed faculty ; together they taught one undergraduate, two master's and five doctorate students in 2016.²⁵⁾

The partial curriculum in the undergraduate program includes the following courses :²⁶⁾

Introduction to library and information science, Management of library and information, Media in library and museum, Library services, Reading instruction, Information resources, Organization of information, Services in the academic library, History of library culture, School management and school library, History of books and libraries

6.5 Kyoto University

The fifth university that offers an LIS program as a professional/academic discipline is Kyoto University, which is a national university. The University has the Faculty of Education as an undergraduate program and the Graduate School of Education as a graduate program. The Graduate School is made up of eleven courses of study. One of these is Lifelong Education and Library and Information Science, which has three faculty members. The program of LIS education at Kyoto University offers master's and doctoral degrees, in addition to public librarian and teacher librarian certification programs. Kyoto University has only one professor in the field of LIS. The students majoring in LIS are a few. Kyoto University, however, is one of the few universities that offer both master's and Ph D. programs in the LIS field.²⁷⁾

6.6 Tsurumi University

The sixth university that offers an LIS program as a professional / academic discipline is Tsurumi University, which is a private university. The University set up a Department of Library, Archival and Information Studies as part of its School of Literature in 2004. The Department had only an undergraduate program in 2017, with seven faculty and 271 students enrolled. The features that the Department emphasizes are as follows :²⁸⁾

- (1) Students learn library science, archiving and information studies simultaneously.
- (2) Students are each provided with the latest model PC notebook to use during their four years of studies at the university.
- (3) The curriculum is designed so that students can earn public librarian or teacher librarian certificates.
- (4) Library internships for credit as well as job-hunting support are available.

The partial curriculum of the Department of Library, Archival and Information Studies includes the following courses :²⁹⁾

Library science, Introduction to information system, Documentation, Introduction to networking, Introductory computing, Introduction to databases, Introduction to information services, Library and information resources, Library and information technology, Children's services, Book culture, Foundation of bibliography, Japanese bibliography, Digital publishing, Classic books, Old

manuscripts, Programming, Databases.

6.7 Chuo University

The seventh university that offers an LIS program as a professional/academic discipline is Chuo University, which is a private university. Library and information science education is a major in the Social Informatics Course of the Department of Human and Social Science of the University. Another major in the Social Informatics Course is that of Information and Communication. LIS education at the University is oriented to produce librarians, information searchers, information managers, and systems engineers as professionals. About 50 students were enrolled in the LIS field in 2017, taught by two faculty members.

The partial curriculum in the field of LIS in 2017 included the following course :³⁰⁾

Social informatics, programming, Introduction to social statistics, Introduction to library and information science, Library services, Library and information technology, Design of information systems, Management of library and information centers, Networking technology, Multi-media technology, Special materials, Information services, History of books and libraries, Databases, Artificial intelligence, Processing of natural language, Digital library, Hypertext, School librarianship, Reading and personality, Teaching and school Library, Children's services, Use of information media.

6.8 Kyushu University

The eighth university that offers an LIS program as a professional/academic discipline is Kyushu University, which is a national university. The University set up a Department of Library Science as a part of the Graduate School of Integrated Frontier Sciences in 2011. The University defines “Library Science” as a science in which researchers research a new place (called a library) that secures the user-oriented information management and presentation, and supports the creation and inheritance of new knowledge. A “library” here is meant as a place where a new way of information management and presentation is researched by an integrated methodology, regardless of whether the materials are published print materials or unpublished archival documents.³¹⁾

The partial courses of the graduate LIS program in 2016 were as follows :³²⁾

Information management, Information system, Information services, Information laws, Learning science, Development of digital resources, Communication, Information services and copyright, Preservation of information resources, Library management, Library policy, Reference services, Library resources, Management of documents, Evaluation of information, Data mining, Information security, Seminar in databases.

The Department also offers a doctoral program. There were 12 faculty members, 14 students in the master's program, and 11 doctoral students in the Department in 2016.³³⁾ The University set up a new kind of LIS program since the University was not satisfied with previous LIS programs in Japan. It is expected that the University will be one of the leading universities that offer new kinds of LIS programs in the future.

6.9 Doshisha University

Doshisha University, which is a private university, offers a program of Library and Information Science in the Department of Policy and Management, Graduate School of Policy and Management. The program was established in 2015. The program is unique in Japan since it was not founded upon an undergraduate program. The program is provided by two faculty members, supported by more than 20 adjunct professors.

The partial curriculum in LIS in 2016 included the following courses :³⁴⁾

Library science, Foundation of information theory, Library and information science, Information media, Information society, Library and information technology, Information policy, Public library, Academic library, School library, Special library, National library, Digital publishing and library, Scholarly media, Management of metadata, Social networking, Library services, Information services, Children's services, Library use, Government information, Scholarly information, Library system and open data, Archival studies, Digital humanities, Archival policy, Information literacy.

In addition to the nine universities described above, there are several other universities which offer LIS as a minor within the fields of education, communication, social information systems, etc., excluding the certification programs mentioned in chapter 3 and 4. These programs, however, are omitted in this article.

7. Discussion

There are several problematic issues regarding the present condition of LIS education in Japan. One of these issues is that there are too many public-librarian and teacher-librarian certification programs and that students can earn these certificates even at junior colleges. The graduates of these programs cannot find employments in libraries. It is estimated that about 10,000 students earn a public librarian certificate each year, but only about 200 students find employments in libraries. Although this situation persists, Japanese students are still interested in earning these certificates. Many academic institutions also emphasize in their college catalogs that they offer these certification programs. Why are Japanese students interested in these certificates? And why do many academic institutions emphasize that they offer these certification programs? It is hard to answer these

questions. It seems partly because Japanese students are more or less disappointed with their college education. Therefore they would like to earn any certificate, as a kind of evidence of having received a college education. Another question arises as to why those academic institutions, which attract many students to their certification programs, do not try to raise the level of their programs so that their students may have better chances to be employed as librarians. The answer to this question might be that those institutions are not interested in educating future librarians, but are just interested in attracting and enrolling many new students to their universities. This situation is not good for Japanese librarianship. People in Japanese library fields should make an effort to change this situation in order to establish a high level of professional librarianship.

As far as public librarianship is concerned, as Table 1 shows, only six directors have certificates of public librarianship in 58 prefectural libraries, and only 649 directors are certified in 2,590 city libraries. This is another issue in Japanese librarianship. It means that Japanese society generally believes that public libraries do not need professional staff, particularly in management, although people in library fields do believe that public libraries need professional staff.

The academic institutions that offer public librarian certification programs are required to employ at least two full-time faculty members, according to MEXT's official notice. In other words, MEXT expects that at least two library and information science specialists teach at the program. And two faculty members are indeed listed at the most of those institutions. This means that there are more than 400 faculty members since there were more than 200 academic institutions that offered such programs in 2017, as stated in chapter 3. However, there are not many faculty members who have published articles in academic journals related to library and information science. Therefore, many of them are not qualified to teach in the academic programs.

There are about nine universities that offer LIS education as a professional/academic discipline in Japan, as stated in chapter 6. Considering this number of universities, it seems to be possible that the MEXT Ordinance regarding public librarian certification will be elevated to requiring BA or BS degrees (majoring in LIS). But many faculty members currently teaching in public librarian certification programs will probably oppose to such a revision because they might lose their positions. Such reform, however, is necessary to make public librarianship in Japan comparable to that of library-advanced countries.

Concerning teacher librarians and their education in Japan, one of the issues is whether ten credit hours of school librarianship are enough or not. According to the MEXT Ordinance, the requirement used to be eight credit hours of school librarianship, before its revision in 1998. Since then there has been no discussion in the school library field about whether ten credit hours of school librarianship, as currently required, are adequate.

In addition, there are two more big issues. Thanks to the MEXT Ordinance, there are teacher librarians in almost all the schools that have more than 12 classes. Those teacher librarians, however,

are not working in school libraries on a full-time basis. They are assigned almost the same number of tasks as other teachers. This is the way the MEXT Ordinance is understood by the local boards of education, which have the authority to hire and oversee teachers and other school staff in their school districts. Though MEXT recommends that the local boards of education shall employ full-time teacher librarians, most of them do not follow MEXT's advice. It is not clear whether it is because those boards do not have enough money to employ full-time teacher librarians or whether it is because they just do not understand importance and values of school libraries.

As stated in chapter 4, school library law, revised in 2014, states that local boards of education should make an effort to employ school librarians (*gakkou shisho*), in addition to teacher librarians, who will be engaged in the professional works of the library on a full-time basis. This is a quite different idea compared with that of other countries in which school librarianship is advanced. The author suspects that this revision in 2014 was made because the local boards of education have not employed teacher librarians on a full-time basis. This is a new experiment in the field of school librarianship. If this experiment succeeds in the future, this will be one of the models of school librarianship in the world.

Concerning education for academic librarians in Japan, it was made clear that there are neither acts nor regulations in Japan, as described in chapter 5. The educational system and educational policies in Japan are greatly influenced by the national government. So the MEXT Ordinance has great importance in shaping Japan's educational policies, including library policies. Japanese universities, however, do not need to comply with the MEXT Ordinance as far as their library personnel are concerned. As described in chapter 6, there are about nine universities that offer LIS programs as a professional/academic discipline. So what administrators in the universities should do is to employ those LIS graduates of these nine universities and appoint them as academic (professional) librarians. But they do not do this. They do not seem to understand the value of what academic librarians contribute in their students' learning. They seem to prefer to treat all library staff as university general staff, rather than to professionalize their library staff. The Japan Library Association, as a professional body, should make an effort in order to change this situation.

We can say that there are three levels of LIS education in Japan : certificate, undergraduate (BA or BS), and graduate. While it is expected that the universities that offer LIS education at undergraduate and graduate levels may contribute to advance LIS in Japan in the future, it is found that some of these universities do not emphasize (or even disregard) education for public librarians. The author argues that the most important library in Japan is the public library, which is a social institution based on the democratic principle "of the people, by the people and for the people," aspiring to meet the intellectual, educational, informational and recreational needs of the community. The author also argues that the most important LIS education in Japan should be one for public librarianship.

8. Conclusion

LIS education in Japan, including the state of libraries and library staffing, was described and discussed in this article. It was identified that LIS education in Japan has many problems, compared with those in other advanced countries. The Japan Society of Library and Information Science has also worried about the condition of LIS education in Japan. The Society set up a research project in 2003 called LIPER (Library and Information Professional Education Reform) in order to draw up a blueprint to restructure LIS education. The Society published a final report of the project in 2006 under the title “*LIPER Report*.”

The report’s major findings are as follows :³⁵⁾

- 1) The structure of Japanese LIS education has remained unchanged for last 50 years, and the gap between Japanese and overseas LIS education has ever been increasing.
- 2) The curricula and contents of LIS education in Japan are neither well structured nor integrated into higher education programs.
- 3) Very few people who obtain a librarian’s certificate get employed in libraries.
- 4) Teaching of new areas, including IT and user behavior, is needed.
- 5) Many students seek to earn a public librarian certificate even though employment opportunities for full-time librarians are quite limited.

Many of those findings are the same as the author discussed in this article. What is needed most in today’s Japan seems to be much stronger advocacy programs by JLA, including one by library and information science professors and practicing librarians.

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