

## **Surveys: a tool for professional associations to collect datas. The case of A.P.D.E.N., the French association of teacher librarians**

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### **Abstract:**

*The A.P.D.E.N., Association des Professeurs Documentalistes de l'Éducation Nationale, is the national association of French teacher librarians founded in 1972. Since its creation the association has always used various tools like surveys to provide datas about school libraries and teacher librarians. This paper divided into two parts aims to show how the professional association, the A.P.D.E.N., can provide datas about teacher librarians, first by the achievement of surveys and secondly by the realisation of a dedicated website.*

*First, surveys conducted by the A.P.D.E.N. : a tool to improve teacher librarians' capacity building. The A.P.D.E.N. has always conducted surveys in order to provide datas which reflects the reality of practices of French teacher librarians. Furthermore surveys are strong tools for the association to give significance when advocating with the national institution, like the Ministry of Education and stakeholders. Since 2013, six national surveys had been conducted and published, the last one launched in November 2018, is ongoing analysis and will be published in 2019. On the one hand the A.P.D.E.N. uses the results of these surveys not only to give datas and facts which reflect practices of professeurs documentalistes but also to advocate in a political demand when meeting institutional partners and stakeholders. On the other hand, the A.P.D.E.N. utilizes these surveys to take teacher librarians' practices into consideration and to extend its reflection about their duties like information literacy instruction.*

*Secondly, for the promotion of datas the A.P.D.E.N. launched in 2018 a website called "Profession prof-doc" in order to promote its work and to provide datas about French teacher librarians which gathers, among others, official datas and surveys conducted by the association. The website aims at those, journalists, professionals of the education world, stakeholders, students parents, general public, who wish to inform about the profession of*

*"professeurs documentalistes", to update their knowledge about it and to compare their views with official texts and the reality of practices within schools.*

*The website is organized in 4 sections : "la profession en bref" (the profession in short), "données statistiques" (statistical datas), "Les enquêtes de terrain" (field surveys), and "La parole aux profs docs" (let's teacher librarians speak).*

**Keywords:** Teacher librarian/ *Professeur documentaliste*/ Surveys/ Professional association/ Datas/ France

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## **Introduction**

The A.P.D.E.N., *Association des Professeurs Documentalistes de l'Education Nationale*, is the national association of French teacher librarians of State Education founded in 1972, which played an important role in the creation of a professional body of teacher librarians called "*professeurs documentalistes*" with the creation of the *CAPES de documentation*, the national certificate of aptitude to be a teacher librarian. Since its creation the association has always used various tools like surveys to provide datas about school libraries and teacher librarians.

This paper, divided into two parts, aims to show how the professional association, the A.P.D.E.N., can provide datas about teacher librarians, first by the achievement of surveys and secondly by the realisation of a dedicated website.

## **Surveys conducted by the A.P.D.E.N. : a tool to improve teacher librarians' capacity building**

Although the professional association was established in 1972, the professional body of « *professeurs documentalistes* » was created in 1989. French teacher librarians are recruited by national competitive examination and are assigned in secondary schools, middle or high schools. Within these last 30 years the A.P.D.E.N. has conducted surveys in order to provide datas which reflect the reality of practices of French teacher librarians.

Furthermore surveys are strong tools for the association to give significance when advocating with the national institution, like the Ministry of Education and stakeholders.

The A.P.D.E.N., led between 2009 and 2017, independently or in collaboration with the ANDEP<sup>1</sup> (the French association of teacher librarians of private education) or in collaboration with stakeholders of the training and research field, a series of thematic surveys conducted among practitioners and students, in the goal to better determine specific issues related to the profession, to the state of students' information literacy knowledge, and as a corollary, to the needs of relevant training in secondary schools.

Since 2013, six national surveys had been conducted and published on the A.P.D.E.N. website, the last one, launched in November 2018, is ongoing analysis and will be published in 2019.

## **Issues**

These six surveys deal with three main issues : status of French teacher librarians, information literacy instruction and management of the school library and activities run by teacher librarians.

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<sup>1</sup> Association Nationale des Documentalistes de l'Enseignement Privé

## **Target audience**

Respondents to these surveys are French teacher librarians, civil servant or contract worker, working in state and private secondary schools, except for the survey called « *Connaissances en information-documentation des élèves du secondaire en France* », published in 2013, which was conducted among secondary students.

## **Methodology**

Surveys are launched at the national level, both mainland and overseas France, and are opened to responses within a period, in average, of 1 to 2 months. The survey is widely spread among national and local professional lists and social networks.

Usually the decision of launching a survey responds to a need from the profession in a specific context. For instance, in June 2014 the A.P.D.E.N. undertook a consultation among the profession about a draft decree voted in March 2014 which engaged the revision of teacher librarians' status, in particular the recognition of teaching hours.

As for the organization of the survey itself, usually there are several sections, multiple choice questions and opened questions. There is always a section about the features of the teacher librarian and its school library, its localisation, which allows to better identify the profile of respondents by statistics. Common questions to every survey enable to show significance and objectivity of the work of the association but also to start to understand some trends and evolutions.

## **A political scope**

On the one hand the A.P.D.E.N. uses the results of these surveys not only to give datas and facts which reflect practices of *professeurs documentalistes* but also to advocate in a political way when meeting institutional partners and stakeholders. Indeed during the last five years, the political context has led to the redesign of teachers' status which includes teacher librarians' status with, in 2013 the new reference system for teaching profession, in 2014 the decree about teaching hours count and in 2017 the new mission statement. At the same time, the middle high school reform took place during the year 2015/2016.

Following all these changes, the A.P.D.E.N. realized 3 surveys about the consequences of these new regulations and reform.

In October 2014, the A.P.D.E.N. published the results of the survey about the 2014 teaching hours' count new decree. In February 2016, the A.P.D.E.N. published a co-sponsored survey with the ANDEP, about the concrete application of the 2014 new decree.

Finally, following the middle high school reform, the A.P.D.E.N. published in January 2017 the results of the survey about the effects of this reform on teacher librarians' working conditions. Results of this last survey, for which 15% of the profession responded, put forward statistics about the number of hours per week that teacher librarians dedicated to their instructional mission, but also about teacher librarians perceptions of their working conditions within their school.

These surveys, by the production of statistics, give significance to the professional association when advocating with educational and institutional stakeholders, especially with the French Ministry of Education.

## **A professional scope**

On the other hand, the A.P.D.E.N. utilizes these surveys to take teacher librarians' practices into consideration and to extend its reflection about their duties like information literacy instruction.

As the teaching mission, especially information literacy instruction, is an important concern among French teacher librarians, the A.P.D.E.N. conducted two important surveys about it.

In October 2013, the A.P.D.E.N. published a survey about teacher librarians and information literacy instruction. This questionnaire focused on pedagogical mission of teacher librarians, especially information literacy learnings and the development of an information culture among students. By this survey the A.P.D.E.N., at that time, was conducting a reflection about the construction of a media and information literacy curriculum and wished to take into consideration the professional practices of French teacher librarians.

Following the results of this survey, in June 2015 the A.P.D.E.N. published a diagnostic survey about the state of information literacy knowledge among secondary students. This survey was conducted by a working group composed of six colleagues, two academic trainers and four practitioners, during a period of six years, between 2009 and 2015, among secondary students. The aim was to report back the action of the French system about information literacy instruction and learnings. This survey was conducted among 9000 secondary students in France, on 4 levels, representing 235 secondaries schools in 30 academies and 624 classes. The evaluation of knowledge and skills acquired by students during their school curriculum can bring objectives reference points for French teacher librarians in order to work and to be able to organize themselves as a profession in charge of a specific teaching. Also at that time the datas collected were a point of reflection for the association about the development of an information literacy curriculum.

Finally, in November 2015, the A.P.D.E.N. published the results of a survey about the management of the school library and activities run by the teacher librarians, like reading promotion and cultural opening. This survey wasn't really successful, compared to the previous surveys about working conditions, status and information literacy instruction, which proved that management of the school library and others tasks than instruction, are not issues that are such important for the profession.

These surveys allow the A.P.D.E.N. to refine observations about the profession and its missions, but also to understand evolutions on a long time, with indicators which can be read knowing the profession 20 or 30 years ago. On the short time, the A.P.D.E.N. had collected, on numerous and significant panels, datas which enable to observe some evolutions, in particular, about the hourly volume of teacher librarians instruction time or their involvement within their schools. The regularity of these surveys, on various subjects, from 2013 to 2017, shows more and more numerous answers, which confirms the interest of our colleagues.

The goal for the association is to demonstrate, by the use of surveys, teacher librarians' value and to contribute to the improvement of their work conditions and their teaching mission, goal which fits with the *IFLA School Library Guidelines* objectives.

## **The promotion of datas : the website "Profession prof-doc"**

In order to promote its work and to provide datas about French teacher librarians the A.P.D.E.N. has launched in 2018 a website called "*Profession : prof-doc*<sup>2</sup>" which gathers, among others, official datas and surveys conducted by the association.

Originally, the idea of creating a website about the profession took roots in 2015 when the middle high school reform was launched. Indeed, as within this reform, there was an omission of the teacher librarian role, the A.P.D.E.N., with the collaboration of the ANDEP and the professional review *InterCDI*, wanted to create a platform to advocate for the

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<sup>2</sup> In English : « Profession : teacher librarians »

teaching role of the profession. Finally the project turned to a more sustainable project and was transformed into an advocacy tool in order to promote the profession.

The present website aims at those, journalists, professionals of the education world, stakeholders, students parents, general public, who wish to inform about the profession of "*professeurs documentalistes*", to update their knowledge about it and to compare their views with official texts and the reality of practices within schools.

The website is organized in 4 sections :

- "*la profession en bref*"<sup>3</sup> which is composed of 4 subsections : mission, status, teaching objects, inspection bodies. It gathers official texts and also for each subsection a « What's wrong » page which enables to sort out the truth from the lies about the profession.

## LA PROFESSION EN BREF



### PROFESSEUR.E DOCUMENTALISTE, KEZAKO ?

De *documentaliste* à *dame du CDI*, les appellations erronées sont courantes à propos des professeur.e.s documentalistes, témoignant d'une méconnaissance persistante du métier. Faisons le point. Le La professeur.e documentaliste est une enseignante certifiée, exerçant dans les établissements de l'[enseignement secondaire](#). Dans l'enseignement public, il/elle est recrutée, comme toute enseignante, par [CAPES](#), la [section documentation](#) ayant été créée en 1989. Dans l'enseignement privé, le concours correspondant est le [CAFEP section documentation](#). Le [CAPES](#) et le [CAFEP section documentation](#) s'appuient sur le champ universitaire des sciences de l'information et de la communication, faisant du de la professeur.e documentaliste le La spécialiste de l'information documentation dans l'établissement scolaire.

#### MISSION

La mission du de la professeur.e documentaliste est définie par la [circulaire n° 2017-051 du 28 mars 2017](#) ('Les missions des professeurs documentalistes') selon trois axes complémentaires. Le professeur documentaliste est ainsi, d'abord, 'enseignant et maître d'œuvre de l'acquisition par tous les élèves d'une culture de l'information et des médias' ; il est également 'maître d'œuvre de l'organisation des ressources documentaires de l'établissement et de leur mise à disposition', et enfin, 'acteur de l'ouverture de l'établissement sur son environnement éducatif, culturel et professionnel'.

Ces axes sont issus du [référentiel de compétences des métiers du professorat et de l'éducation de juillet 2013](#). Selon une logique d'imbrication, il définit d'abord les compétences communes à tou.t.e.s, puis précise celles qui concernent les enseignant.e.s en général (dont les professeur.e.s documentalistes), avant de les compléter par des compétences spécifiques aux professeur.e.s documentalistes.

#### STATUT

Le statut du de la professeur.e documentaliste est déterminé par le [décret n° 2014-941 du 20 août 2014](#) portant modification de certains statuts particuliers des personnels enseignants relevant du ministre chargé de l'Éducation nationale, et la [circulaire n° 2015-057 du 29 avril 2015](#) sur les missions et obligations réglementaires de service des enseignants des établissements publics d'enseignement du [second degré](#).

Ses obligations de service hebdomadaires comprennent trente heures en établissement, et six heures de relations avec l'extérieur (hors établissement). Ce service peut comprendre, avec l'accord de l'intéressé.e, des heures d'enseignement, décomptées chacune pour la valeur de deux heures parmi les trente heures en établissement.

[What's wrong ?](#)

Figure 1. Webpage « La profession en bref » from the website « Profession : prof doc »

- "*données statistiques*"<sup>4</sup> which presents official datas from the French Ministry of Education, since 2004, with, for example, the evolution of the number of positions, age pyramids.

This page makes available a set of statistical datas about the profession, provided by the DEPP<sup>5</sup>, the statistical services of the French Ministry of Education, upon request of the A.P.D.E.N. These following datas about teacher librarians are part of the one annually published by the DEPP, among the others subject teachers within the RERS<sup>6</sup>, in the chapter *Les personnels*<sup>7</sup>. On the webpage the A.P.D.E.N. has presented *datas in graphs with general datas, age pyramids, staffing evolution, status repartition, public teacher librarians status and private teacher librarians status.*

<sup>3</sup> In English : « The profession in short »

<sup>4</sup> In English : « Statistical datas »

<sup>5</sup> Direction de l'évaluation, de la prospective et de la performance

<sup>6</sup> Repères et références statistiques sur les enseignements, la formation et la recherche

<sup>7</sup> In English: « Staff »



Figure 2. Webpage « Données statistiques » from the website « Profession : prof doc »

- "*Les enquêtes de terrain*<sup>8</sup>" which provides the full results of the six surveys conducted by the association since 2013. This page provides links which refer to the original publication on the A.P.D.E.N. website.



Figure 3. Webpage « Les enquêtes de terrain » from the website « Profession : prof doc »

- "*La parole aux profs docs*<sup>9</sup>" which gathers expressions from French teacher librarians recorded by the local A.P.D.E.N. Nantes, under the project of a webradio. Indeed, in December 2016, the A.P.D.E.N. Nantes launched a webradio in order to give the voice to teacher librarians. The principle was to interview volunteer teacher librarians about their job and to broadcast their testimonies under the shape of podcasts in order to make known the profession and especially the information literacy instruction. To this day, 12 episodes are available and others are ongoing achievement.

<sup>8</sup> In English: « Field surveys »

<sup>9</sup> In English: « Let's teacher librarians speak »

**EXPRESSIONS DU TERRAIN**



**CONTRE-PLONGÉE : AU COEUR DU MÉTIER DE PROFESSEUR.E DOCUMENTALISTE**

En décembre 2016, les professeur.e.s documentalistes de l'A.P.D.E.N. Nantes lancent une webradio, et son premier format d'émission : "Contre-plongée : donnons la parole aux profs docs". Le principe : interroger les collègues volontaires sur leur métier, et diffuser ces témoignages sous forme de podcasts, pour faire connaître la profession et particulièrement l'enseignement de l'information-documentation. A ce jour, douze épisodes sont disponibles, et d'autres sont en cours de réalisation.

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EPISODE 1 : "ÊTRE PROF"

EPISODE 2 : "ENSEIGNER... (PREMIER CHAPITRE)"

EPISODE 3 : "MA JOURNÉE D'HIER... (PREMIER CHAPITRE)"

EPISODE 4 : "IRD, INFO-DOC, EMI OU SIC ? LA QUESTION DU NOM..."

EPISODE 5 : "ÊTRE PROF, LE REGARD DES ÉLÈVES."

EPISODE 6 : "DEUX PROFS DOCS RACONTENT LEUR SEMAINE"

EPISODE 7 : "CO-ANIMATION, TOUT DÉPEND DU PROJET..."

EPISODE 8 : "PAROLES D'ÉTUDIANT-ES : COMMENT SE PRÉPARER AU CAPES DE DOCUMENTATION ?"

Figure 4. Webpage « Expressions du terrain » from the website « Profession : prof doc »

## Conclusion

By conducting regular national surveys, the A.P.D.E.N., as a professional association, provides datas about French teacher librarians in a political and professional purposes. Indeed these surveys enable not only to define the working conditions of the profession but also to have a point of reflection for the future. Following surveys about information literacy instruction in 2013 and 2014 it led to the building of an information literacy curriculum, published in November 2014 on the A.P.D.E.N. website (*Vers un curriculum en information documentation*).

With the publication in March 2017 of a new mission statement for *professeurs documentalistes* and also the high school reform that will take place in September 2019, the A.P.D.E.N. will watch out about the evolution of teacher librarians' working conditions and practices. In that way, the results of the last survey launched in November 2018 by the professional association will provide datas and insight for the future of the profession.

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