

Study on the Characteristics of Effective Information Literacy Programs for High School Students in Japan

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As of today many schools have conducted and organized information literacy (IL) program. However, despite many programs to promote IL at schools, recent studies show that high school students still lack of IL skills (Gross & Latham, 2012; Murai, 2015). Therefore, this study aimed to examine present characteristics and issues of IL practices for students in Grades 9 through 12 by using two IL models (Guided Inquiry and PLUS model). Two studies were done to examine IL practices at two different types of schools: international high schools (Study 1) and public high schools (Study 2) in Japan because of differing IL concepts at each schools type. Based on research, most of international schools adopted IL concept defined by American Library Association (ALA) and public schools adopted 'the skill to use information effectively' defined by Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT). In addition, the relationship between these two concepts together with 'information skills' concept by Herring was shown in this study. In study 1 web survey and questionnaire methods were utilized. Participants included teachers, teacher-librarian, and school librarian. Three case studies of IL practices at international high schools were collected; 'Independent Inquiry', 'Personal Project', and 'Extended Essay'. Results showed a good point of practice in which during the 'gather useful information' stage students utilized outside experts as main information sources in order to collect reliable information within a limited amount of time. An issue regarding the combination of stage 'build background knowledge' and stage 'exploring ideas' was found. These two stages should be divided as illustrated in the Guided Inquiry. In study 2 a questionnaire survey and face to face interview were utilized to gather data. Three cases were collected in this study; 'Media and Its Characteristics', 'What I Want to Introduce', and 'Expression and Communication' classes. Information for the case study on the 'Media and Its Characteristics' class was collected from interview session and other cases studies were collected from questionnaires. Results showed a good point regarding the evaluation by classmates activity. There is an issue regarding the limited information resources as students mainly used internet to collect data. Activities for skimming, scanning, and understanding meaning of text should also be included. Task initiation activity, using multiple resources and interviewing professionals as shown in Study 1 are recommended for future practices at public schools. The evaluation by classmates activity found in Study 2 is not a typical practice at international schools, thus it is recommended to be included in future IL practices at international schools.

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