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Re-examining Japanese Educational Effectiveness Research: From the Viewpoint of Subjective Well-Being

Norihiro NISHI

Abstract

The aim of this paper is to re-examine Japanese educational effectiveness research from the viewpoint of subjective well-being through an analysis of quantitative research data. From the beginning Japanese educational effectiveness research has discussed educational effectiveness based only on cognitive academic achievement. However, in this research, I use the factor of children's subjective well-being as a non-cognitive outcome to indicate educational effectiveness. There are two research questions in this research.

RQ1: Is there a correlation between academic achievement and subjective well-being? What kinds of social backgrounds have an effect on children's subjective well-being?

RQ2: What's kinds of characteristics does the "Effective School" have from the viewpoint of subjective well-being?

First of all, according to the analysis of these two research questions, there is no correlation between children's academic achievement and subjective well-being. Based on this result, it has become clear that subjective well-being can be an independent outcome indicator for educational effective research. Secondly, having good relationships with family and neighbors increases children's subjective well-being. Thirdly, the "Effective School X" which was utilized as a representative model in the Japanese Effective School Research has some problems from the aspect of well-being. Specifically, there are certain student groups that have low subjective well-being: male groups, no extra-curricular activities groups, and low academic achievement groups. From these results, the model of the "Effective School X" can be deconstructed as just one school which is still on its way to becoming a better school.

Finally, I examined the academic implications of these findings for Japanese educational effectiveness research.

Keywords : educational effectiveness research, well-being, effective school

Action Research on Using Achievement Tests in Elementary Schools: To Explore the Contribution of Educational Sociology to Practices

Shun ITO

Abstract

The aim of this paper is to answer the question, "How does educational sociology contribute to educational practice?" Investigation into this question was carried out through action research in an elementary school. In the area of the sociology of education and educational studies, there is an increasing interest in "clinical studies" and "contribution for educational practice" and we are now facing a growing accumulation of results based on studies utilizing action research which aim to contribute to educational practice.

Thus, in this research I am conducting action research with the ultimate goal of narrowing the gap in academic achievement among pupils in public elementary schools. In the action research, we administer a mathematics test and analyze the results of the test, then give feedback to teachers. Consequently, three possibilities arise. First, the research can provide a common context in the school between teachers and researchers. Second, teachers can be made aware of the pupils' actual condition from various perspectives. Third, pupils can be given the results and an analysis of the test as part of the educational practice of the teachers.

From now it is necessary to undertake two further research tasks. First, since this research uses the data of only one case study, we need to check the possibility of generalizability of the results. Second, though we use the means of quantitative methods in this research, we only have about 30 samples and need to increase the number of samples. To overcome these research problems, we need to conduct action research within the area of educational sociology.

Keywords : sociology of education, contribution, clinical studies, action research, academic achievement

Discovering Coexistence within Artistic Practice: Examples from the Community Dance Movement

Asami KOIZUMI

Abstract

Coexistence is the challenge to live together without judging who possesses more worth than others. Participatory artistic practices, especially community dance have the same end since they pursue the accessibility of artistic experience for all people. While previous research has focused on the instrumental benefits or change experienced by people who are socially excluded, we consider each participant and the change they experience through community dance. Focusing only on the change that takes place within the socially excluded means not to discuss the problem of stigmatization which can easily evolve into the naturalization of discrimination within society. It also fails to recognize the bodily vulnerability which we all possess and should be accepted somehow. This essay introduces the aesthetic/perceptional politics of artistic practice as defined by Jack Rancière. Using examples from fieldwork and narratives from a dancer, we discover the “redistribution of the sensible” in community dance, re-defining what can be said, heard and seen in a new community and reconfiguring who has an ability and a disability. It is also a practice of emancipation as all can investigate their own expression. Here we can see an intersection of artistic practice and a challenge towards coexistence. We can interpret community dance as an activity sharing the ideal of the arts and crafts movements which endeavor to make everyday life rich and open through the joy of creativity. We have to pursue this happiness during artistic practice without judging who has more worth or is better than others.

Keywords : Participatory art, Community dance, coexistence, corporeality, politics

Exploring Methodologies to Understand Masculinities: A Discussion on Hegemonic Masculinity

Shunya OZAKI

Abstract

This paper aims to explore a methodology used to understand masculinities in the field of men's studies. In the context of men's studies, Connell's idea of "hegemonic masculinity" is used predominantly throughout the field as a category of masculinity. Hegemonic masculinity is a category of masculinity which refers to male domination over women. A specific masculinity in Japanese post war society, the "salary-man", is discussed and interpreted as hegemonic masculinity by the author. This paper reviews the notion of hegemonic masculinity, and examines the operationalization of hegemonic masculinity and its relation to the "salary-man." Moreover, effectiveness and limitations related to combining the concepts of hegemonic masculinity and the "salary-man" are examined.

To overcome the conceptual limitations of hegemonic masculinity conclusively, the author suggests employing Messerschmidt's idea of "dominant masculinity". The idea of dominant masculinity focuses on the fluid social process in which men express masculinities and construct male domination, especially in micro social interaction. Combining dominant masculinity and hegemonic masculinity, could be effective in understanding how some types of masculinity relate to hegemony in society. Additionally, as an alternative to the approach of hegemonic masculinity, which intends to understand masculinities from the perspective of hegemony and power, the author emphasizes the importance of recognizing the classification of masculine traits which encompass weakness, powerlessness and vulnerability in the current definition of "masculinity" across the field of men's studies.

Keywords : hegemonic masculinity, salary-man, men's studies

Consideration of the Copyright Issues regarding Educational Resources: The Solution not to Depend on Copyright Limitations

Kotaro YABUNAKA

Abstract

This paper attempts to consider the solution of copyright issues in the educational field from the viewpoint not only of the owner of the resource but also the user (educators).

Specifically, this paper categorizes copyrighted works with a focus on the interests of both the user and the owner in Chapter 3 because it was thought, judging from the results of preliminary research mentioned in Chapter 2, that the differences in copyrighted works used in the field of education are a factor to excessively complicate the argument. In addition, Chapter 4 presents the possibility that the issue can be settled through a community-based creation system of intellectual resources, which is based on the idea that the sharing of information increases the amount of information. This would be easier and more familiar for the user (educators) than the implementation of a copyright law. However, there is a flaw as mentioned in Chapter 5. The system is not usable in some subjects. The reason is that teachers of certain subjects (e.g. languages) have to use copyrighted works which were not created by educators. Even so, this paper suggests that the system would be more helpful compared with other solutions, because the system has many advantages for the user such as a relatively low cost and it is easy to organize.

Keywords : copyright limitations, Article 35 of the Copyright Law, educational resource, commons
