

Development and Implementation of Early Childhood Media Literacy Education Program

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Abstract : As digital technology continues to advance and become more widely accessible, young children are also growing up experiencing various media from infancy. In this changing environment, educating young children on media literacy has become an increasingly important task. With the diversification of media, it has become more necessary for children to understand, utilize, and critically explore the meaning of multimodal texts, which include text, images, and sounds connected to each other. Early childhood is a period when media literacy can bloom, and educational and policy support are needed to enable young children to express their opinions, communicate, and participate fully. However, most current media literacy education for young children focuses solely on teaching how to use media, with limited practical application and utilization. Therefore, this study aims to develop an inquiry-based media literacy education program for young children using topic-specific media content and explore the program's potential and impact on children's media literacy learning. Based on a theoretical and literature review on media literacy education, analysis of existing educational programs, and a survey on the current status and teacher perception of media literacy education for young children, this study developed a media literacy education program for young children considering the components of media literacy (understanding media characteristics, self-regulation, self-expression, critical understanding, ethical norms, social communication). To verify the effectiveness of the program, it was implemented with 20 five-year-old children from C City S Kindergarten, starting from March 24 to May 26, 2022, once a week for a total of 6 sessions. To explore quantitative changes before and after program implementation, repeated-measures analysis of variance was conducted, and qualitative analysis was used to analyze observed changes in the process. Significant improvement in media literacy levels, such as understanding media characteristics, self-regulation, self-expression, critical understanding, ethical norms, and social communication. The developed inquiry-based media literacy education program for young children in this study can be effectively applied to enhance children's media literacy education and help improve their media literacy levels. Observed changes in the process also confirmed that children improved their ability to learn various topics, express their thoughts, and communicate with others using media content. These findings emphasize the importance of developing and implementing media literacy education programs and can help children develop the ability to safely and effectively use media in their media environment. Based on exploring the potential and impact of the inquiry-based media literacy education program for young children, this study confirmed positive changes in children's media literacy levels as a result of the program's implementation. These findings suggest that beyond education on how to use media, it can help develop children's ability to safely and effectively use media in their media environment. Furthermore, to improve children's media literacy levels and create a safe media environment, a variety of content and methodologies are needed, and continuous development and evaluation of educational programs are anticipated.

Keywords : young children, media literacy, media literacy education program, media content

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