

DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION OF AN INFORMATION MORAL LESSON TO PROMOTE AWARENESS IN CHILDREN

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ABSTRACT

In conventional information moral education, lessons often focus only on trouble cases and perpetrators without examining the level of awareness among the parties involved. This is especially apparent among students who communicate over the Internet. For example, one student's perspective of writing ill on the Internet might greatly differ from that of another. Such differences have only confused the Japanese youth regarding the issue. Therefore, this study developed an information moral education lesson and conducted a workshop with a group of junior high school students to promote awareness and identify any incorrect behaviors that occur while communicating over the Internet. According to the survey results, a significant difference was revealed before and after the lesson was conducted.

KEYWORDS

Information moral education, Internet communication, Awareness, LINE, Workshops

1. INTRODUCTION

According to the "2013 Fiscal Internet Environment Survey of Youth" (Published in 2014), 36.6%, 51.9%, and 97.2% of elementary, middle, and high school students possess a mobile phone in Japan, respectively. Recently, opportunities for communication via the Internet have increased among Japanese children. In particular, the communication tool called "LINE" is currently being used by many children, and such an application has made it easier to send messages to friends. However, it has also become a tool to ostracize others, which has become the source of trouble among certain Japanese youth (Takeuchi, 2014). As a result of such problems, information moral education has been practiced in various regions. For example, some IT companies have dispatched employees to schools for presenting lectures and contributing to the development of information morals among Japanese children. However, such information moral education tends to focus only on trouble cases and perpetrators without examining the level of awareness among the students, especially with regard to reviewing their own actions and differentiating between writing negative and hateful comments on the Internet. Therefore, this study aims to develop and evaluate an information moral lesson that promotes awareness among junior high school students and their communication through the Internet.

2. THEORY AND METHOD

In the development of teaching and educational materials to promote awareness among students and their communication through the Internet, two perspectives have been incorporated. First, it is important to recognize the differences between one student's ideas and that of another's. Thus, teaching how each student has different beliefs and characteristics can be an effective approach to promote awareness among students. In the workshop that was developed by the authors, one activity involved comparing various students' opinions and recognizing the differences among them by presenting them in a card format. Second, it is

important that students understand the characteristics of communicating over the Internet. For example, it is sometimes difficult to understand the other party's feelings through the use of characters, which can result in miscommunication between the sender and the recipient. Therefore, it is important to not only communicate but also to consider the other party's situation. Therefore, we have developed a workshop-type information moral lesson for a group of junior high school students (five classes totaling 155 students) in Shizuoka Prefecture, Japan.

3. RESULTS

The survey provided the students with the following three questions: 1) Have you ever harassed a friend? 2) Do you think that you wrote ill about friends? and 3) Have you ever contacted your friends late at night? As shown in Table 1, a significant difference was observed for each of the items before and after the lesson was conducted.

Table 1. Questionnaire results (average value)

Question	Before class	After class	Significant difference
Have you ever harassed a friend?	1.37	1.66	**
Do you think that you wrote ill about friends?	1.47	1.60	*
Have you ever contacted your friends late at night?	2.38	2.71	**

Based on this result, the information moral lesson that we developed for the students provided a certain level of awareness among them. However, it is important to follow up for determining whether this lesson had a long-term effect on the participants.

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