

Title: Research on use of digital movies and images in early childhood teacher education

Abstract

This session will share research on the practices and attitudes of teacher educators and preservice teachers' regarding visual literacy, specifically the use of digital movies and images in early childhood education. Teacher and curricular characteristics necessary to be supportive of young children's first endeavors into the world of digital movies and images is examined as well as the implications of social media.

As the young children of the twenty-first century are increasingly immersed in technology-enabled activities, more and more early childhood educators, parents and caregivers are embracing the use of new technologies in educational contexts. Unlike early technology adopters viewed computers and technology as synonymous, today's recent technology adopters have a broader definition including but not limited to computers, web-based software programs, video, DVD technology, digital peripherals (such as digital cameras, mp3 players, cell phones, electronic whiteboards, scanners, electronic musical instruments) as well as the Internet and its enabled communication tools (e.g., email, Skype and Messenger).

This research examines the use of digital movies and images in early childhood education. Specifically, practices, attitudes and skills related to visual literacy (the ability to understand and produce visual messages) are examined through survey data. This data has implication for teacher-training institutions re-examining the expectations in ICT of teachers who are preparing to work with young children.

Visual literacy is the ability to understand and produce visual messages. It is very important to have the ability to process visual images efficiently and understand the impact they have on viewers. Media literacy is the ability to be responsive to the changing nature of information in our society. Visual literacy and media literacy are learned, just as traditional reading and writing are learned. This session will focus on attitudes and practices of teachers and teacher educators related to (i) using still and moving photography in early childhood classroom, (ii) visual literacy, and (iii) media literacy.

Survey results will be shared to reveal (i) the use of still and moving digital images to increase children's development (language, literacy, and social skills), (ii) the use of still and moving digital images to improve communication with parents, (iii) teacher and curricular characteristics necessary to be supportive of young children's first endeavors into the world of digital photography, and (iii) the use of social media for still and moving digital images (such as TeacherTube) and its implications for young children's developing visual and media literacy.

