

How to Provide Better Training for Teachers on Disaster Prevention Using a Narrative Approach

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March 11th, 2011 at 2:47 pm. The 2011 off the Pacific coast of Tohoku Earthquake that registered as magnitude 9.0, which is the largest ever recorded in Japan, brought unprecedented damage due to the subsequent giant tsunami as well as the nuclear power plant accident. Since this massive earthquake occurred during the daytime when students were in class, the importance of disaster education again became the focal point of society; however, educators have expressed concerns regarding the topic (Nagamatsu, Oki, 2015).

In a curriculum where there is very little space for additional implementations, it is very difficult to teach disaster prevention education in which the teachers themselves have never learned before. There are no teaching materials prepared, and at school, the teachers already have their hands full guiding their students and parents. In most schools, there is only one faculty member assigned to in charge of school safety including disaster prevention at the school, and in essence, that faculty member has to formulate an annual safety plan and a disaster prevention manual prescribed by the School Health and Safety Law by his/herself. Based on this manual, he/she is responsible for implementing disaster prevention education for that school. With the lack of time, experience, and budget, it is unreasonable to think that the faculty is capable of making improvements from the previous year's plan. As a result, only the continuation of evacuation exercises that have become a mere micromachining and a slight modification of the manual remains.

This study was carried out to alleviate such confusion of the school site. We focused on teacher training, especially for disaster prevention education that is aimed to resolve problems mentioned before by introducing a narrative approach. Teachers are introduced to a hypothetical case in which a large earthquake occurred under school management - the expression and behavior of a child, anxiety, and frustration of a teacher is described in detail from a teacher's perspective. Teachers are then asked to write out the risks inspired by reading this, participate group in work with other teachers in charge of the same grade, and to share thoughts in front of other teachers in that school. As a result of the training, it is made possible to raise awareness of tackling disaster safety within the entire faculty, and to visualize risks and reevaluate current evacuation.

Keywords: disaster prevention, education