Collaboration, Social Justice and School Libraries

Abstract

This paper examines the research processes of high school students undertaking a group research task in a New Jersey High school library. The purpose of this task was for students to produce a co-constructed product that represents the group’s understanding of their chosen curriculum topic. The study involved 42 grade 9 students undertaking an accelerated Language Arts curriculum unit that examines a wide range of challenging literature in the genres of short story, novel, drama, nonfiction, and poetry. The course includes independent reading assignments, and stresses critical thinking and speaking skills, study skills, and research strategies. Findings revealed implications for how social justice principles designed and perceived in the information technology based Wiki learning environment impacted student collaborations and resource use patterns. This study provides a methodological example of how social justice principles can be examined in information technology environments.

Keywords: collaborative learning, cooperative learning, social justice, information technology, information environments, methods, school libraries