

## Chapter 17

# On-the-Job Training System to Support Gifted School Activities for In-Service Teachers With Online Video Conferencing


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### ABSTRACT

*In-service teacher training is conducted at schools in Japan to address various educational challenges with the aim of enriching on-the-job training (OJT) at schools through teacher collaboration and off-the-job training (Off-JT) outside of schools. However, in Miyazaki prefecture, OJT does not function well at remote schools or small schools in the mountains, and various conditions make it difficult for teachers to participate in training outside the school premises, even if they would like to. In this chapter, the authors propose a support system that aims to revitalize OJT/in-school training through the effective use of video conferencing technology, and a support system for Off-JT/out-of-school training through the construction of a new training system. This chapter introduces excellent initiatives at small schools in the mountains that make use of the authors' training system. The authors believe this training system can offer many important insights into how teachers are trained in developing countries and numerous countries with various geographic issues.*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Continuous learning is a crucial aspect for teachers; therefore, they require training. Jacob (2013) discusses the influence of teachers' training on student performance as well as the significance of teachers continuing to learn in their capacity as educational practitioners. Linda Darling-Hammond (2017) suggested that systematic planning, implementation, and policies related to teacher education have been prominent factors in the educational success of Finland, Singapore, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Hong Kong, Canada, Australia, and the United States; she also noted the methods used by these countries to support and sustain changes in teacher education. The importance of teacher training in Japan has also increased, especially with reference to various issues such as the training topics covered, curriculum training, and student guidance.

OJT (on-the-job training) refers to activities for the cultivation of one's overall capacities and ability to perform work-related duties, wherein superiors and senior staff in the workplace coach subordinates and junior staff on the skills necessary for the job, through concrete tasks, in an organized, systematic, and continuous manner. On the other hand, Off-JT (off-the-job training) refers to training that is conducted outside the workplace to increase teachers' expertise. Off-JT may include training conducted through compulsory lectures or training that individuals select based on their personal requirements. Adopting such training in a planned and systematic manner allows teachers to develop the ability to solve a wide range of educational challenges. Amid rising educational expectations, issues in Japanese schools, such as the reduction in the number of teachers that has accompanied the downsizing of schools and the increase in teachers' daily duties, are becoming social problems. Therefore, the significance of actions required to promote diligent efforts for mutual learning at schools are being re-examined, and innovative initiatives that will increase the possibility to receive effective training are sought out.

In Miyazaki Prefecture, there are many remote schools and small schools located in the mountains, and OJT in these schools has a challenge due to factors such as the small number of teachers at each school or the presence of only one specialist for each subject area. Furthermore, it is difficult for teachers who are located far from teacher training centers to participate in Off-JT conducted away from the workplace. This Off-JT environment is not convenient for teachers who need to prioritize face-to-face time with their students. Therefore, in this study, we conducted training (online) using video conferences at remote schools and small schools in the mountains far from teacher training centers with the aim of finding solutions to these problems.

Therefore, teachers who have received training under the new system that effectively uses online video conference technology have been able to devise strategies for solving various challenges, and have also increased their drive for self-improvement. OJT in schools has also been revitalized, and a ripple effect has led to the improvement of classes for students through the development of new dynamic learning activities. It has also become possible to assure that small schools can deliver a level of educational quality that rivals that of larger schools.

## **BACKGROUND**

The significance of teachers' ongoing efforts and training have been emphasized for schooling in Japan. One of the present authors, Higuchi (2011) already stated that "teaching is a profession backed by expertise, which is gained through the continuous pursuit of study and training and is essential to the

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