

PUBLIC LIBRARY SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN IN POVERTY: CASE ANALYSIS IN TOKYO, TORONTO AND NEW YORK

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1. Introduction

In recent years, the amount of research concerning public libraries in the context of social inclusion has increased. However, there are few studies focusing on children in poverty¹⁾.

The purpose of our research is to compare and characterise the educational services provided by three public libraries located in cities where child poverty is recognised as a significant societal issue. By evaluating the unique strengths of each library, we seek to raise awareness about the potential role of public libraries in reducing educational inequalities.

2. Method-Case analysis

Cases:

- (1) Shinjuku City Library (Tokyo, Japan)
- (2) Toronto Public Library (Toronto, Canada)
- (3) New York Public Library (New York, U.S)

Document survey:

Annual reports 2018-2022, Strategic plans, Events information on each library's websites ²⁻⁴⁾

3. Results

Library services approaching children in poverty	Shinjuku City Library	Toronto Public Library	New York Public Library
Summer programmes	Special exhibition Collecting stamps reading event	Summer wonder programmes English and French	Reading/Learning Programmes Teen Voices Festival
Afternoon study room	Extensive reading	Youth Hubs From 3:30-7pm weekdays	NYPL Afterschool Open Process Art Afternoon
Homework help	Helping investigating learning	Brainfuse- online For grades K12	Braille Study Group - In Person
Online study materials	Do not have particular resource	Learning resources for 0-5, 6-9, teens	Learning resources for Kids & Teens
Multilingual support	HP can be translated in Eight languages	Mango Languages - online learning covering over 70 languages	Language Learners Reading Challenge
Immigrants help	Korean and Chinese storytelling English craft workshops	Settlement services with a settlement worker	ESOL(English to Speakers of Other Languages)
Others	Developing child book leaders Lectures for peace	Outreach for family shelters MAP (Museums+Arts Pass)	R.E.A.D.(Reading to therapy dogs)
Characteristics	- Strong emphasis on literacy skills - Extensive reading and effective use of books in other languages	- Comprehensive strategic plans for reducing educational inequalities. - Strong emphasis on children's perspectives - Neighborhood Improvement Areas	-Strategic plans emphasised financial status - Large scaled summer learning programmes - 24 hours homework help

4. Conclusion and Future Research

We found that each of the three libraries provides a range of services to children in poverty, with each library exhibiting unique strengths. In the Shinjuku City Library, librarians foster children's learning by encouraging them to develop literacy skills through reading books extensively. The Toronto Public Library places emphasis on comprehensive and specific strategic plans aimed at addressing educational inequalities, while the New York Public Library highly prioritises extensive summer programmes that promote equitable learning opportunities and foster the healthy development of children. It is necessary to further explore the uniqueness of each case, considering the cultural context and political discourses, to reduce educational inequalities and foster a sustainable society.

5. References

- 1) Dalmer, Nicole K.; McKenzie, Pam; Rothbauer, Paulette; Martin-Yeboah, Ebenezer; and Oswald, Kevin, (2022) 'Palaces for the People: Mapping Public Libraries' Capacity for Social Connection and Inclusion'. FIMS Publications, 375. Available at: <https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/fimspub/375>. 2) Shinjuku City Library Annual reports (2018-2022), 3) Toronto Public Library Annual reports (2000-2021) 4) New York Public Library Annual reports (2000-2022), 5) "Main library". Shinjuku City Library. Available at: <https://www.library.shinjuku.tokyo.jp/facility/> (Accessed: 17 July 2023).