

## 27. Study on Internet-Based Seminars

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### (1) Purpose and Aim of Study

Given the need to examine the provision of programs that make use of information technology to enhance training for social education leaders and learning opportunities for local residents, the aims of this study are to survey effective methods of operating Internet-based seminars and to contribute to the development of training systems and manuals for distance learning. The study also surveys and analyses IT utilization at social education facilities throughout Japan, which act as providers of learning opportunities and information, in the aim of assisting investigation of future measures to promote lifelong learning.

### (2) Outline of Research Results

To ascertain the status of IT utilization in social education facilities, we surveyed municipal citizens' public halls (16,182) as well as prefectural libraries (59), museums (135) and lifelong learning centers (47). The results are outlined below.

- On a per-facility basis, prefectural libraries had the highest average number of computers installed, with 82.7, followed by prefectural lifelong learning centers (47.4), prefectural museums (32.5), citizens' public halls in designated cities (12.8), and citizens' public halls in other municipalities (5.5).
- Prefectural libraries were the facilities most likely to have computers connected to the Internet available for their users, with 82.8% of libraries (48 facilities) offering this service. Next were 81.0% of prefectural lifelong learning centers (34 facilities), 71.1% of citizens' public halls in designated cities (133 facilities), 32.9% of citizens' public halls in other municipalities (2,926 facilities), and 32.5% of prefectural museums (40 facilities).
- Citizens' public halls in designated cities had the highest proportion of staff members capable of offering guidance and advice on IT usage (28.8%), followed by prefectural museums (26.5%), prefectural libraries (26.1%), and prefectural lifelong learning centers (24.2%). Around 10% of

staff in other municipal citizens' public halls are able to assist users with IT.

- More than 70% of prefectural lifelong learning centers (88.1%) and citizens' public halls in designated cities (70.6%) use outside instructors or advisors to assist with IT usage, while outside assistance is much less common in prefectural libraries (29.3%), citizens' public halls in other municipalities (26.3%), and prefectural museums (13.8%).
- A high proportion of prefectural lifelong learning centers (88.1%) offer lifelong learning courses that utilize IT. Such courses are offered by 72.2% of citizens' public halls in designated cities, 50% of prefectural libraries, and 32.5% of prefectural museums. For citizens' public halls in other municipalities, the figure is less than 30% (28.4%).
- The study summarized the significance and potential of Internet-based learning under the following two points: i) greater freedom in terms of time and space, and ii) ability to offer greater range of choice in learning opportunities. The study also encouraged learners using the Internet to note the following three points: i) to present clear objectives (intent) for use of the Internet, ii) to consider the individual situations of learners (Internet users), and iii) ability to introduce and use the Internet in a planned, selective and phased manner.