



IMPLEMENTATION OF CO-OPERATIVE LEARNING IN TEACHER EDUCATION

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Abstract

Problems in education have no fixed answers. No teacher education program can prepare teachers for all the situations they will encounter. Teachers themselves will make the final decisions from among many alternatives. Such judgments may be good or poor. Therefore it is important for teachers to constantly reevaluate their decisions. This can be achieved through collaborative and reflective practice in teacher education. Co- operative learning in teacher education can instill in future teacher the value of social interactions.

Present article throws light on co-operative learning and implementation of co-operative learning techniques in Teacher Education Institutions.

Keywords – co-operative learning, Jigsaw

Introduction

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Co- operative learning

Co- operative learning is a team process where members support & rely on each other to achieve an agreed upon goal. The classroom is an excellent place to develop team building skills you will need later in life. Co- operative learning is a successful teaching strategy in which small teams, each with students of different levels of ability, use a variety of learning activities to improve their understanding of a subject. Each member of a team is responsible not only for learning what is taught but also for helping teammates learn, students work through assignment until all group members successfully understand and complete it.

Need of co- operative learning

It is interactive, as a team member, the student teacher:-

- Develops and shares a common goal.
- Contributes his/her understanding of the problem, questions, insights & solutions.
- Responds to, and work to understand, other's questions, insights & solutions.
- Empowers the others to speak and contribute and to consider their contributions.
- Is accountable to other and they are accountable to him / her.
- Is dependent on others & they depend on him / her.

The co-operative learning becomes more effective & productive when there is positive interdependence and face to face interaction between groups or member of groups; Individual and group accountability, Interpersonal & small – group skills and also Group processing is important for the productive work.

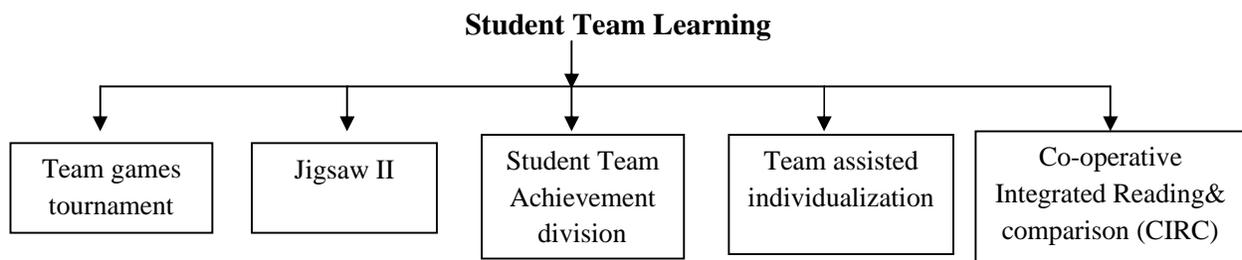
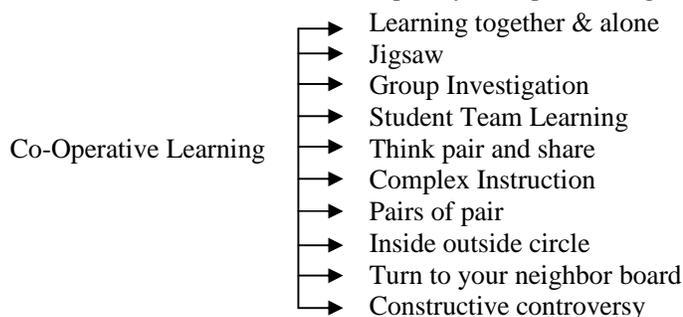
Formation of Good Co – Operative learning Team

For effective co-operative learning, it is very necessary to form a good co – operative learning team. Now days, this approach is used in teaching – learning process. Following instructions for a good co – operative learning team can help the teachers.

- Team activities begin with training in and understanding group process. An instructor begins by facilitating discussion and suggesting alternatives but does not impose solutions on the team, especially those having difficulty working together.
- Three to five people in a team. Larger teams have difficulty in keeping every one involved.
- Teacher assigned groups. They function better than self assigned groups.
- Diverse skill levels, backgrounds, experience.
- Each individual brings strength to a group.
- Each member of the group is responsible to not only contribute his / her strengths, but also to help others understand the source of their strengths.

Class activities for co – operative learning

Most of these structures are developed by Dr. Spencer Kagan & his associates.



We can discuss some activities with examples as follows:

1) Jigsaw

Group with five students are set up. Each group member is assigned some unique material to learn & then to teach to his group members. To help in the learning students across the class working on the same sub section get together to decide what is important & how to teach it. After practice in these ‘expert’ groups; the original reform & students teach each other.

e.g. To study the tests of divisibility, we can make five groups of students. Each group member has a single test to study. We can number the students as 1 to 5 of every group. From every group, the students of first number come together. As they get the same divisibility test (of 2) for



learning, they discuss about it & learn it. Same things happen about 2nd, 3rd, 4th & 5th numbered students. They all came together numbered & discuss about their learning tests (3, 5, 9, 10) as they have same content.

They again reform their original group & teach the content (tests) to one another.

2) Think – Pair – Share

This involves a three step co – operative structure.

- 1) Individual think silently about a question passed by instructor.
- 2) Individuals pair up.
- 3) The pairs share their responses with other pairs / teams / or entire group.

e.g. – Sharing on thoughts of a question ‘Is Television–A curse or boon ?’ Students pair up & discuss about the question.

3) Three – Step – Interview

Each member of a team chooses another member to be a partner. Firstly individuals interview their partners by asking clarifying question. Then the partners reverse the roles. Finally members share their partner’s response with the team.

4) Numbered Heads Together

A team of four is established. Each member is given the numbers of 1, 2, 3, 4. Questions are asked to the group. Groups worked together to answer the question. Teacher calls out a number (two) and each two is asked to give the answer.

e.g. – Properties of triangle.

5) Three – minutes review

Teacher stop any time during a lecture or discussion and give teams three minutes to review what has been said, ask clarifying questions or answer questions.

E.g. Properties of addition & multiplication (6th standard). While teaching about properties, teacher stops during the lecture & give three minutes to teams to review. And then ask various questions about properties of addition & multiplication. Thus he can review about the properties.

6) Round Robin Brainstorming

Class is divided into small groups (4 to 6) with one person appointed as the recorder. A question is posed with many answers and students are given time to think about answers. After the ‘think time’, members of the team share responses with one another round robin style. The recorder wrote down the answers of the group members. The person next to the recorder starts & each person in the group in order give an answer until time is called.

Activity based co – operative learning

We can effectively use co–operative learning through various activities. We can arrange various activities in schools / colleges for co–operative learning.

- 1) Role Play
- 2) Street play
- 3) Projects
- 4) Exhibition
- 5) Group dance / Group Singing
- 6) Dramatization
- 7) Group work
- 8) Group discussion
- 9) Games



Benefits of Co – operative learning approach

The following benefits of co-operative learning approach are identified for teacher education world.

- Promotes critical thinking skills.
- Involves student's actively in the learning process.
- Improves classroom results
- Models appropriate student problem – solving technique
- Personalizes large lectures
- Motivates students in specific curriculum.
- Develops a social support system for students.
- Builds diversity understanding among students & staff.
- Establishes a positive atmosphere for modeling and practicing co – operation,
- Develops learning communities.
- Raises student's self – esteem.
- Reduces anxiety.
- Develops positive attitude towards teachers.
- Utilizes a variety of assessment techniques.

Epilogue

In co-operative learning, learners must work together in order to succeed and personal success only springs from group success. Learner's interpersonal and small – group skill like leadership, Decision – making, Trust – building, communication & conflict – management skills will be enhanced through it. It promotes student's learning & academic achievement, student's self – esteem & positive race relations. It develops skill in oral communication & also social skills, co – operative learning enhance student satisfaction with their learning experiences. So the Teacher preparation courses need to consider the changes in society in order to produce quality teachers as well as quality students, every student teacher must be aware of making use of the technique/ approaches like co – operative learning in the education.

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