

AWARENESS TRAINING OF STUDENT TEACHERS ABOUT VARIOUS ASPECTS OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT APPLYING COOPERATIVE LEARNING PRINCIPLES IN ORGANIZATION OF A GAME EVENT

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Introduction

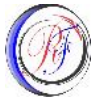
Women empowerment through education is current need expressed in NCF 2005, RTE 2009 and various other documents. Though curriculum of teacher education include the topic, it is essential to provide awareness training to would be teachers through various curricular and co-curricular activities. Also cooperation and collaboration are essential skills for success in any vocation and in life. It is realized now that applying cooperative-learning (CL) principles to curricular and co-curricular programs enhances the quality of education. Training of future teachers for CL is an apt beginning. These objectives were achieved through organization of game event in S.N.D.T. College of education. The game event was organized to train student teachers about various aspects of women empowerment and co-operative learning principles through thoughtful planning and skillful conduct. This paper describes the systematic efforts done for awareness training through the organization of special game event and also impact of it on student teachers.

Considerations while planning the event

1 Background of event: A game event providing opportunity for applying multiple intelligences was organized in year 2010-11 and paper published on it in an international symposium was highly appreciated (Sohani, 2011). It was thought desirable to organize another game event on some different theme based on cooperative principles and study effects. With this aim in mind, in year 2012-13 a game event was organized in S.N.D.T. College of education for women, Pune on the theme women empowerment.

2 Women empowerment: Women empowerment is basically the creation of an environment where women can make independent decisions on their personal development as well as shine as equals in society. Women want to be treated as equals so much so that if a woman rises to the top of her field it should be a commonplace occurrence. This can only happen if there is a channelized route for the empowerment of women. One way is changing societal attitudes and community practices by active participation and involvement of both men and women. Would be teachers are required to be aware and develop positive attitude about various aspects of women empowerment to be able to participate in this social work. It was thought appropriate to conduct awareness training informally through a game event. Student teachers while participating in the event will read, study, think, discuss and express about meaning, aspects, difficulties and remedies related to women empowerment.

3 Cooperative Games: Usually all the educational institutes organize different competitions and game events in annual social gathering. The main purpose is to give opportunity for exhibiting talents through best performance in the competitions and getting relaxation through entertainment. Terry Orlick has developed many cooperative games and sports for children. According to Orlick, “The main advantages of Cooperative games are



that everybody co-operates, everybody wins and everybody has fun”. (Orlick T. 2006, page1). Orliock adds, “Cooperative games provide beautiful occasions of cooperation, challenge, stimulation, self-validation, success and sheer fun” (Orlick T. 2006, page 2).

National curriculum framework of India 2005 advocates cooperative learning not only in formal academic learning but also in other areas of development. While emphasizing the value of interactions the report suggests, “Group learning tasks, taking responsibility and contributing to a task on hand are all important facets of not only acquiring knowledge but also in learning crafts and art.” (National Curriculum Framework 2005, page 18)

Objectives of the game event:

- To organize a game event collaboratively requiring cooperation among student teachers
- To make student teachers aware about various aspects of women empowerment through the game event
- To study the impact on student teachers through feedback

Tools used for feedback:

- All the students wrote their reactions while answering to a feedback questionnaire.
- Detailed oral feedback was obtained from the representatives of groups regarding experiences during the event and what they learnt through it.

Organization of the event

The event was held during annual social gathering in February 2013 involving 110 student teachers from B. Ed. and M.Ed. class of S.N.D.T. College of education for women, Pune. Every year on the occasion of annual social gathering our college organizes various competitions for the student teachers. Usually student teachers form groups with their friends or peers from same subject groups for participating in the group competitions. But a different procedure was deliberately implemented in special game event organized in 2012-13. All the student teachers at B.Ed. and M.Ed. level were assigned to eight groups. Naturally the students of different subjects, students from hostel, and day scholars all were mixed up randomly and had to understand each other in the group and cooperate for winning.

As the theme was women empowerment, all the indoor and outdoor games were organized on the same theme. As the aim was also to provide opportunity to apply cooperative learning principles group games were planned. All the teaching and non-teaching staff members organized the games cooperatively in order to set an example before the student teachers regarding cooperation. The games to be prepared for would be teachers should have some intellectual challenge, emotional appeal and scope for creativity. They should give them new insight and set before them a good example of bringing novelty in co-curricular activities, and applying theoretical principles. All these points were well thought over while designing game events organized.

The event was planned in such a way that all the student teachers had to work together and give their best performances in the event based on the theme women empowerment. But another aim was application of cooperative learning principles. Hence, student teachers were given carefully chalked out instructions as given below: (The cooperative learning principles fulfilled are given in the bracket)

- **Student teachers from given groups will sit together and get acquainted with each other thoroughly.** (opportunity for free interactions and to develop communication skills)
- **Together you have to select students for participating into various games of the game event. The group should assure that every student teacher is participating in three games at least.** (ensuring participation of each and every student teacher)
- **Every game will be scored. Student teachers participating in pairs or in groups will get individual scores for their performances and will be rewarded for their good performances. But all these scores will be added to calculate group score for selecting the best group.** (individual accountability in group performance)
- **The group has to come together and decide its symbol, and present it using various media. All the participants should contribute to this presentation in some way or the other.** (joint responsibility of the group, and opportunity for face to face interactions)
- **Cumulative group score will be displayed from time to time on notice board to know the progress of the group.** (planning for positive interdependence)

Scheme of Game events at a glance:

The game event was implemented on the central theme of Women empowerment. Main purpose was making student teachers aware about various issues, problems, capabilities and dignity of women and constitutional provisions for women. The scheme is given in the table below:

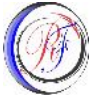
Table showing scheme of game events based on the theme women empowerment

No	Games	Nature
1	Non vocal communication (Group of four to participate)	Rangoli competition on theme: Stree Janma Tujhi Kahani(Woman story of your life)
2	Linguistic ability (Average of two participants of the group)	Completion of a story based on dilemma before a woman about whether give preference to career or family responsibilities
3	Music (Average of two participants of the group)	Competition of songs based on women's Life, feelings, problems, greatness, work
4	Vocal expression (Average of two participants of the group)	Extempore speech based on various issues and problems related to women
5	(group) Poster Presentation	Gender equality, expectations and present situation
6	Group presentation including acting, dialogues, narration, songs, posters, Power point presentation, drawings, poems	Based on life sketch of any successful woman in the world after struggle
7	General Knowledge Quiz (Written Test of the group)	25 multiple choice questions on various issues, laws, constitutional provisions related to women
8	Physical fitness (Group)	Running 100 meters, quickly wearing sari and opening umbrella and again reaching the end point

Feedback

Positive feedback obtained through questionnaire and group leader's interviews:

(The feedback by student teachers is given below in their words)



- We had very superficial idea about women empowerment. But through participation in this game event we became aware about social, political, psychological, economical and legal aspects of women empowerment. We came to know about difficulties in women empowerment.
- We had to collect information from various sources for presenting a successful woman in India or abroad chosen for our group. It was very thrilling experience to play role of struggling woman and present life sketch of the woman through use of different media.
- We all were more creative due to the opportunity for group interactions, especially while preparing theme based Rangoli and Posters based on issues related to women.
- We have got a fair idea now as to how to apply theoretical concepts like cooperative learning even in conducting co-curricular activities.
- Every one of us had a sense of responsibility for preparing well and scoring high in the games in the group assigned to her, because the individual score was to be added to calculate the group score.
- We all had fun working with each other, motivating and giving practice to each other for group performance in drama based on a successful woman. We came to know group members' hidden qualities, which otherwise would have been neglected.

Some complaints from feedback:

- Two three student teachers in four groups did not attend discussions regularly and hence did not contribute much and ultimately the remaining group members had to shoulder more responsibility.
- The groups were formed according our role numbers and hence some of our friends were in other groups and we had to keep our plans secret from them. We also had to compete with our friends and occasionally this created some tension in our minds.
- We became aware about real meaning of women empowerment but we do not have courage to implement all the ideas discussed by our group to bring positive change.

7. Conclusions:

- The objective of making student teachers aware about women empowerment through a game event was fulfilled
- The student teachers got first hand experience of knowing each other and cooperating with each other in a group for a common goal through this specially designed game event. Hence the objective of making student teachers aware about the application of cooperative principles through a game event was fulfilled.

References

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