

ATTITUDE OF PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS TOWARDS COOPERATIVE LEARNING

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Abstract

Co-operative Learning is a pedagogical practice that indicates students gain both academically and socially, when interact with others in order to accomplish shared goals. Cooperative Learning appears to be hindered in the conventional teaching methods, which spends most of the class time with teachers talk and students as passive listeners. The present study was intended to find out the attitude of Prospective Teachers towards cooperative learning. The objective of the study is to find out the significance difference in the mean score in the level of attitude of prospective teachers towards cooperative learning with respect to locale, educational qualification and optional subjects studied. This study adopted normative survey method. The sample for the study comprised of 100 prospective teachers of secondary education from Kanniyakumari district. For the analysis of data, the statistical techniques used were t-test and ANOVA. The findings of the study reveal that there exists no significance difference between the mean scores of attitude towards cooperative learning among prospective teachers with respect to locale, educational qualification, and optional subject.

Key Words: Attitude, Cooperative learning, prospective teachers.

Introduction

Co-operative learning is a pedagogical practice that has attracted much attention over the last three decades. A large body of research studies indicate that students gain both academically and socially, when they have opportunities to interact with others in order to accomplish shared goals. Cooperative Learning appears to be hindered in the conventional teaching methods, which spends most of the class time with teachers talk and students as passive listeners. Educators were concerned that conventional methods of classroom pedagogy were teacher-centred, fostering competition rather than co-operation, favoured by majority of students. The application of cooperative learning in classroom teaching find its root during 1970s when Israel and the United States began to design and study co-operative learning models for classroom context. Now co-operative learning is applied in almost all school content areas and increasingly in college and university contexts all over the world. Cooperative learning (CL) as an instructional strategy is used for small groups in which students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning capacity (Johnson & Johnson, 1999). In cooperative learning classrooms, the students are expected to help, discuss and argue with each other; assess each other's current knowledge and fill the gaps in their understanding process. Christison (1994) states that, cooperative learning is a strategy for the classroom that is used to increase motivation and retention to help students develop a positive image of self and others, to provide a vehicle for critical thinking, problem solving, and encourage collaborative social skills. It is a strategy used within groups of learners and aims to improve their learning experiences and understanding of a learning subject.

Need and significance of the study

Nowadays, Co-operative Learning has been widely implemented in various schools as the teaching-learning strategy. According to Johnson and Johnson (1986), Cooperative Learning makes the students work together in small groups on a structured activity. It is considered as a communal activity in which learning is carried out through exchange of information. (Kagan, 1994). There is a need for teachers' ability in using desired co-operative learning instructional behaviors, such as structuring of positive interdependence and individual accountability, promotion of social skills, and evaluation of group processes that is necessary to create a context, in which students can cooperate. New teaching behaviors, understanding their roles, and how to learn using cooperative learning approaches probably requires teachers to attend cooperative learning training programs (Hennessey & Dionig, 2013). However, learning new teaching methods and behavior is a challenging task that demands time, repeated practice, encouragement, feedback and commitment.

In order to change the educational process, a change in teaching methods, beliefs and material is required and this should happen through personal developmental process in social contexts. As a result, teachers' beliefs, knowledge and experiences should be considered in the process of pedagogical change in the class. Cooperative learning structures in pre-service teacher training is considered an ideal means to qualify and encourage prospective teachers to implement this practice appropriately. Majority of the current teachers have been trained by conventional teaching method and some teachers believe that there is no need of using other methods of teaching-learning process. Therefore, in-service training, or Continuing Professional Development (CPD), is an important way to assist teachers to improve their understanding of new teaching methods and experiences to enhance students' achievement.

In recent years, many educational experiences have been carried out with cooperative learning as its central focus. However, many times the lack of appropriate planning has hindered its proper implementation. Unfortunately, it has been well documented that teachers sometimes incorporate learning in their classes spontaneously, without any previous preparation, which always obstruct its successful implementation at any educational level. A study on secondary education teachers revealed that the lack of interest and organization were the reason for 60% of teachers do not consider cooperative learning

more efficient than conventional approaches .This perception could be related to the teachers scarce or ineffective teacher training in novel methodologies in their professional.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of the study is stated as “Attitude of Prospective Teachers towards Cooperative Learning”.

Objective of the Study

1. To find out the level of attitude of prospective teachers towards cooperative learning.
2. To find out the significance difference between rural and urban area prospective teachers in their attitude towards cooperative learning.
3. To find out the significance difference among prospective teachers based on various subject in their attitude towards cooperative learning.
4. To find out the significance difference among prospective teachers based on educational qualification in their attitude towards cooperative learning.

Hypotheses of the Study

The following are the hypotheses formulated for the present study

1. The level of attitude of prospective teachers towards cooperative learning is moderate.
2. There exists no significant difference between rural and urban area prospective teachers in their attitude towards cooperative learning.
3. There exists no significant difference among prospective teachers based on optional subjects in their attitude towards cooperative learning.
4. There exists no significant difference among prospective teachers based on educational qualification on their attitude towards cooperative learning.

Methodology Adopted

Method Used: Normative survey method was used for the present study.

Sample: The sample for the study comprised of 100 prospective teachers’ studying in teacher education colleges of Kanniyakumari District.

Tool Used: The tool used for the study was attitude scale on cooperative learning, constructed and validated by investigator.

Statistical Techniques Used: The statistical techniques used for the present study were t- test and ANOVA

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Table 1: Level of attitude among prospective teachers towards cooperative learning

Attitude	Count	Percent
Low	25	25.00
Medium	61	61.00
High	14	14.00
Total	100	100.00

From the above Table it is clear that, among the total sample, 25% of prospective teachers have low level of attitudes towards cooperative learning, 61% of prospective teachers have moderate level of attitude towards cooperative learning and remaining 14% of prospective teachers have high level of attitudes towards cooperative learning. It shows that most of the prospective teachers have moderate level of attitudes towards cooperative learning.

Table 2: Significance difference between Rural and Urban area prospective teachers on their attitude towards Cooperative Learning

Locale	Mean	SD	N	t	p	Remark
Urban	92.73	12.04	48	0.740	0.461	NS
Rural	90.81	13.91	52			

From the above Table, it is clear that the calculated p - value is greater <0.05 (5 percent level of significance) Hence there is no significant difference in the mean scores of attitude towards cooperative learning among prospective teachers based on rural and urban area.

Table3. Significance difference between prospective teachers based on Educational Qualification on their attitude towards Cooperative learning

Educational qualification	Mean	SD	N	t	p	Remark
UG	90.97	11.55	35	0.450	0.653	NS
PG	92.14	13.81	65			

From the above table, it is clear that the calculated p-value is less than 0.05 (5 percent level of significance). Hence there exists significant difference in the mean score of attitude towards cooperative learning among prospective teachers based on educational qualification. Prospective teachers who possess educational qualification PG are found to have more awareness on cooperative learning compared to the prospective teachers who possess educational qualification UG.

Table 4: Significance difference Among Prospective Teachers based on subjects in their attitude towards Cooperative Learning

Optional Subject	Mean	SD	Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p	Remark
English	87.87	14.63	Between Gp	1660.64	3	553.55	3.516	0.018	Sig.at 0.05 level
Mathematics	93.48	10.45	Within Gp	15115.07	96	157.45			
Biological Science	98.55	10.23	Total	16775.71	99				
Physical Science	88.78	13.61							

From above table, it is clear that the calculated F-value is greater than 0.05. Hence there is no significant difference in the mean score of attitude towards cooperative learning among prospective teachers.

The result does not help to identify exactly the pairs of groups which differ statistically. Hence Scheffe's Post-hoc multiple comparisons are used for further analysis.

Table :5

Optional Subject	N	Pair	P (Scheffe)	Remark
English	30	A Vs B	0.421	NS
Mathematics	27	B Vs C	0.600	NS
Biological science	20	A Vs C	0.039	<i>Sig. at level</i> 0.05
Physical science	23	A Vs D	0.995	NS
		B Vs D	0.629	NS
		C Vs D	0.098	NS

Significance difference in the Attitude scores of Prospective Teachers based on Subjects of Study

From the above table, it is clear that there exists significant difference in the attitude scores of prospective teachers whose optional subjects' Biological Science and English towards cooperative there exists. There exists no significant difference in the attitude scores of prospective teachers with respect to their optional subject English and Math's, Math's and Biological science, biological science and physical science, English and Physical Science. Math's and Physical Science.

Finding

1. The level of attitude among prospective teachers towards cooperative learning is moderate.
2. There exists no significant difference between rural and urban prospective teachers on their attitude towards cooperative learning.
3. There exists no significant difference among prospective teachers based on subjects of study in their attitude towards cooperative learning.
4. There exists significant difference between prospective teachers of educational qualification (UG and PG) in their attitude towards cooperative learning.

Conclusion

The present study reveals that prospective teachers have a positive attitude towards cooperative learning method. There is a strong negative relationship between Teachers academic performance and their attitude towards cooperative learning method. There is no significant difference between the attitude of locale and educational qualification level teachers in their attitude towards cooperative learning methods. There is a significance difference between the attitude of rural and urban teachers towards cooperative learning method.

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