COOPERATIVE LEARNING AS AN EFFECTIVE MEANS OF EDUCATION AND HOW IT CAN BE ACHIEVED

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Abstract

Cooperative learning refers to teaching strategies where pupils assist one another in their learning while working in small groups. It is the process of learning in which people gain knowledge while working together in small groups. Contrary to our current educational system, which is built on competitiveness, cooperative learning emphasizes collaboration. Humans are most often known for cooperating with one another rather than competing with one another. Love and collaboration are the bonds that bind people together, and it is this trait that underpins the survival of humankind. Although cooperative learning strategies are employed at all grade levels, primary schools are where they are most prevalent. The concept, key elements, its methodologies and theoretical stances surrounding cooperative learning for the primary grades are covered in this article.

Keywords: cooperation, cooperative learning, motivation, interpersonal interaction, cognitive stances.

Introduction

Cooperative learning refers to instructional strategies whereby pupils collaborate in small groups to support one another's academic subject learning. Cooperative learning has been utilized and researched in one way or another in every major topic, with students from preschool to college, and in all kinds of schools. However, they have been especially well-liked in the primary grades, where more latitude in daily scheduling makes cooperative work easier.

Cooperative learning has been the subject of numerous studies that have examined a wide range of outcomes, such as academic performance in many subjects, learning a second language, attendance, behavior, intergroup relations, social cohesion, acceptance of classmates with disabilities, attitudes toward subjects, and more (see Slavin, 1995, 2010, 2013; Johnson & Johnson, 1998; Johnson, Johnson, & Holubec, 2008; Rohrbeck et al., 2003).

Slavin (1995, 2010, 2013) characterized the four main theoretical views on the achievement benefits of cooperative learning as motivationalist, social cohesion, cognitive-developmental, and cognitive-elaboration.

According to the motivationalist viewpoint, task motivation is the learning process's most significant component, while other activities like helping and planning are motivated by

personal gain. Scholars that take a more motivationalist approach concentrate more on the rewards or goal structures that students function under. The social cohesion perspective, often known as the social interdependence hypothesis, contends that group cohesion has a significant impact on the outcomes of cooperative learning.

According to this viewpoint, students assist one another in their academic endeavors because they care about the group and its members and gain advantages to their sense of self-identity from belonging (Johnson & Johnson, 1989, 1999, 2008). Task specialization techniques are an exception to this perspective when students are responsible for particular components of a team assignment (Aronson et al., 1978; Sharan & Sharan, 1992). The two cognitive approaches put a lot of emphasis on how groups of students interact with one another, contending that these interactions improve learning and hence accomplishment on their own. Developmentalists ascribe these outcomes to processes described by researchers like Piaget and Vygotsky under the broad cognitive term.

Cooperative learning from a motivational perspective assumes that task motivation is the most crucial aspect of the process and that motivation drives the other processes as well. Therefore, these researchers concentrate largely on the incentive or goal systems that govern how pupils behave (see Slavin, 1995). According to a motivationalist, cooperative incentive structures set up situations in which group members may only achieve their individual objectives if the collective succeeds. As a result, in order to achieve their own goals, group members must both support one another in doing whatever it takes for the group to succeed and, maybe even more crucially, inspire one another to put up their best efforts.

According to a theory that is partly similar to the motivational viewpoint, the degree of group cohesion has a significant mediating influence on the benefits of cooperative learning on accomplishment. Group cohesiveness is believed to have a significant role in determining the effectiveness of the group's interactions. In essence, because they identify with the group and want one another to succeed, kids will participate in the work and aid one another in learning. This viewpoint is related to the motivational perspective in that it stresses motivational explanations for cooperative learning's instructional success more so than cognitive ones. However, motivational theorists contend that students assist their groupmates in their learning mostly out of self-interest. Contrarily, social cohesiveness theorists highlight the notion that students assist their groupmates.

The cognitive view on cooperative learning is a significant alternative to the motivationalist and social cohesion perspectives, both of which emphasize group norms and interpersonal interaction. According to the cognitive approach, interactions between students will by themselves raise student accomplishment for reasons related to information processing, not motives. Cognitive theorists have devised cooperative approaches that do not rely on the group objectives that are the foundation of motivationalist methods or the emphasis on fostering group cohesiveness that is a hallmark of social cohesion methods. However, there are a number

of quite dissimilar cognitive stances as well as those that share a theoretical standpoint but have evolved mainly in parallel.

There is some evidence to suggest that cooperative group dynamics among students may be successfully structured, even in the absence of group benefits. Meloth & Deering (1992), for instance, contrasted students who worked in two different cooperative settings. In one, students learned particular reading comprehension techniques and received "thought sheets" to help them remember how to use these techniques (e.g., prediction, summarization, character mapping). In the other class, students received team points for each quiz their members excelled on each week. The approach group showed better improvements when the two groups' scores on a reading comprehension test were compared.

Conclusion

In conclusion, despite the exceptional number of high-quality field experiments that have been conducted to study cooperative learning, much more needs to be done. Teachers may increasingly employ cooperative learning to accomplish both conventional and cutting-edge objectives. To allow educators to realize this promise, research must continue to offer the theoretical, practical, and intellectual foundations. The links between the significant factors involved in how cooperative learning operates have been developed in this article into a coherent model. It calls for a shift toward a single theoretical model that may direct ongoing research projects and drive educational policy while providing a framework for discussion and further debate.

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