

Improving Students' Participation Through Cooperative Learning in a Public Elementary School

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Abstract

The study examined the effectiveness of cooperative learning strategies in improving students' classroom participation in a public elementary school. A quasi-experimental research design was employed involving 40 Grade 5 students divided into control and experimental groups. The experimental group was exposed to cooperative learning strategies while the control group received traditional instruction. A participation checklist and rating scale were used to measure students' engagement before and after the intervention. Results showed a significant increase in participation levels among students exposed to cooperative learning compared to those in the control group. The findings suggest that cooperative learning is an effective strategy in enhancing active classroom participation. It is recommended that teachers integrate cooperative structures into daily instruction to promote engagement and collaboration.

Keywords; cooperative learning; student participation; classroom engagement; elementary education; active learning; quasi-experimental design;

1. Main text

Student participation is a key factor in effective learning, particularly in elementary education. Active engagement allows learners to develop critical thinking, communication skills, and deeper understanding of lessons. However, many classrooms still rely on traditional teaching methods where students remain passive recipients of information.

Cooperative learning is an instructional approach where students work together in small groups to achieve shared learning goals. It encourages interaction, accountability, and collaboration. Despite its known benefits, its implementation in public elementary schools remains inconsistent.

This study aims to determine whether cooperative learning strategies can significantly improve students; classroom participation.

2. Review of Related Literature

Cooperative learning is widely recognized as an effective teaching strategy that promotes active participation and collaboration among students. According to David W. Johnson and Roger T. Johnson, cooperative learning encourages positive interdependence, individual accountability, and group interaction, which improve student engagement and academic performance.

Similarly, Robert E. Slavin stated that students who participate in cooperative learning activities demonstrate higher levels of motivation and classroom participation compared to students taught using traditional teaching methods. Cooperative learning allows students to share ideas, solve problems together, and develop communication skills.

Studies also show that classroom participation increases when student feel comfortable interacting with their peers. Group activities encourage shy or passive students to express thoughts and become involved in learning tasks.

This study is anchored on Lev Vygotsky's Social Constructivist Theory, which emphasizes that learning occurs through social interaction and collaboration. According to the theory, students learn more effectively when they work together and exchange knowledge with others.

The reviewed literature suggests that cooperative learning can significantly improve students' participation, engagement, and interaction inside the classroom.

3. Methodology

Research Design

This study used quantitative research approach employing a quasi-experimental design. The study aimed to determine the effectiveness of cooperative learning in improving students' classroom participation.

Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study consisted of 60 Grade 5 students from a public elementary school. The students were divided into two groups:

- . 30 students in the control group
- . 30 students in the experimental group

Research Instrument

The researchers used a Participation Rating Scale and Participation Checklist to measure students' classroom participation before and after the intervention.

The scale used the following interpretation:

- .1 - Very Low Participation
- .2 - Low Participation
- .3 - Moderate Participation
- .4 - High Participation
- .5 - Very High Participation

Procedure

The researchers first conducted a pretest to determine the students' initial level of participation. After the pretest, the experimental group was exposed to cooperative learning activities such as group discussion, peer collaboration, and cooperative tasks for four weeks, while the control group used the traditional teaching method.

After the intervention, a posttest was conducted to measure changes in students' participation.

Statistical Treatment

The data gathered were analyzed using mean and t-test to determine the significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores of the respondents.

4. Results and Discussion

Results

The findings revealed that students exposed to cooperative learning showed a significant improvement in classroom participation compared to students taught using traditional teaching methods.

Table 1. Mean Score of Students' Participation

Group	Pretest Mean	Posttest
Control Group	2.5	2.7
Experimental Group	2.4	4.2

The table shows that the experimental group obtained a higher posttest mean score compared to the control group. This indicates that cooperative learning positively influenced students' classroom participation.

The computed t-value showed a significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores at 0.05 level of significance.

Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Discussion

The results imply that cooperative learning is an effective instructional strategy in improving students' participation. Students became more engaged, active, and confident during classroom discussions and group activities.

The findings support the study of Robert E. Slavin, who stated that cooperative learning enhances student interaction and engagement. The results also align with Lev Vygotsky's theory that social interaction plays an important role in learning.

5. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, cooperative learning significantly improved students' classroom participation in a public elementary school. Students exposed to cooperative

learning became more active and engaged in classroom activities compared to those taught traditional methods.

The study concludes that cooperative learning is an effective teaching strategy that promotes participation, collaboration, and interaction among students.

Therefore, teachers are encouraged to integrate cooperative learning activities into their classroom instruction to improve student engagement and participation.