

CURRENT TRENDS IN EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY : CO-OPERATIVE LEARNING

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Introduction :

Education is changing tremendously in each and every aspects of the society. Today new trends are coming and accepted by educationalist for making education to reach education to each and every corner of the society. In case of non-formal education, cooperative learning giving tremendous contribution to make education easier to each facilitator and learner.

Cooperative learning is a successful teaching strategy in which small groups are included for different levels of ability and use a variety of learning, activities to improve their understanding of a subject. In this type of learning the students interact with each other and build upon their school or college relationships. The main idea behind cooperative learning is to teach the students to be a functional part of a group so that they have grouped responsibilities as well as individual responsibilities. This type of learning not only increases the study skills of a student but also develops the communication skills. Students work through the assignment until all group members successfully understand and complete it.

Objective of Cooperative learning:

Following are the objectives for the cooperative learning.

- To promote student learning and academic achievement
- To increase student retention
- To enhance student satisfaction with their learning experience
- To help students develop skills in oral communication
- To develop students' social skills
- To promote student self-esteem
- To help and promote positive healthy relations

Cooperative Learning Principles :

Many principles have been proposed for cooperative learning. Few of them are discussed below.

1. Heterogeneous Grouping. This principle means that the groups in which students do cooperative learning tasks are mixed on one or more of a number of variables including sex, social class, religion, personality, age, language.

2. Collaborative Skills. Collaborative skills, such as giving reasons, are those needed to work with others. Students may lack these skills, the language involved in using the skills, cooperative learning urge that collaborative skills be explicitly taught one at a time.

3. Group Autonomy. This principle encourages students to look to themselves for resources rather than relying solely on the teacher. When student groups are having difficulty, it is very tempting for teachers to intervene either in a particular group or with the entire class.

4. Equal Participation . A frequent problem in groups is that one or two group members dominate the group and, for whatever reason, impede the participation of others. Cooperative learning offers many ways of promoting more equal participation among group members.

5. Individual Accountability. When we try to encourage individual accountability in groups, we hope that everyone will try to learn and to share their knowledge and ideas with others.

6. Positive Interdependence. This principle lies at the heart of Cooperative learning. When positive interdependence exists among members of a group, they feel that what helps one member of the group helps the other members and that what hurts one member of the group hurts the other members. It is this “All for one, one for all” feeling that leads group members to want to help each other, to see that they share a common goal.

7. Cooperation as a Value. This principle means that rather than cooperation being only a way to learn, i.e., the *how* of learning, cooperation also becomes part of the content to be learned, i.e., the *what* of learning. This flows naturally from the most crucial cooperative learning principle, positive interdependence. Cooperation as a value involves taking the feeling of “All for one, one for all” and expanding it beyond the small classroom group to encompass the whole class, the whole school, on and on, bringing in increasingly greater numbers of people and other beings into students’ circle of ones with whom to cooperate.

Techniques of Cooperative Learning :

Some Cooperative learning techniques have been discussed below.

1. Circle of Speakers

- a. In groups of 2 to 4 students take turns to each for speak. Several such rotating turns can be taken.
- b. Students listen as their partner(s) speak and perhaps take notes, ask questions, or give feedback.
- c. The teacher randomly chooses some students and asks them to tell the class what their partner(s) said.
- d. This technique can also be done with students taking turns to write, or they can write and speak at each turn.

2. Write-Pair-Switch

- a. Each student works alone to write answers

- b. In pairs, students share answers.
- c. Students switch partners and share their former partner's ideas with their new partner.

3. Question-and-Answer Pairs

- a. Students work alone to write one or more questions.
- b. They write answers to their questions on a separate sheet of paper.
- c. Students exchange questions but not answers.
- d. After Students have answered their partner's questions, they compare answers.

Conclusion :

Cooperative learning offers many potential benefits. These benefits include increased self-esteem, greater liking for school and colleges, enhanced inter-ethnic ties, and improved complex thinking. Furthermore, Cooperative learning offers one small ray of hope that we can move away from the all-too-present unhealthy forms of conflict and competition that plague our world today. However, using Cooperative learning may be difficult at first. It requires some initial thought, some long-term vision, and some persistence to succeed. Often, students may not be familiar with or skilled at working together. Fortunately, the Cooperative learning literature allows us to learn from the trial-and-error and effective practices of educators who have come before us. With this assistance, we and our students can come to enjoy and benefit from cooperation in the classroom and beyond.

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