The effect of cooperative learning on the social skills of first grade elementary school girls

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Abstract

The purpose of present study is to determine effectiveness of cooperative learning on the social skills of first grade elementary school girl students. For this reason, 74 students of first grade elementary school (37 experimental groups and 37 control group) were selected by the random taking samples. The method of this study is quasi-experimental method by pre-test-post-test with control group. Research measures are a list of evaluation of social skills (Matson, 1983). In order to analyse the data, independent T-Test on gain scores were used. Finding showed from social skills viewpoint, the experimental group significantly higher than the control group. The results indicate that cooperative learning method in comparison with traditional method has more influence on social skills of students.

Keywords: cooperative learning; social skills;

1. Introduction

Students, who learn by active learning method, not only learn better, but also take more pleasure from learning experience. To Pyne & Whittaker’s mind, one of the main methods of activate students in learning use of studying groups in the class, and provide discussion list, is exchange of views, questioning and answering (Pyne & Whittaker, 2000). It seems that activates students by way of cooperative approach, can be better performed because in this manner, better opportunities will be given students to discuss and exchange their views. Cooperative learning point to a learning method in which students struggle together in the figure of small groups to get a joint (common) aim, moreover, in this manner not only they are liable for their own learning, but also they hold themselves responsible for others learning (Gokal,1995). Foley(2000) points to 6 characteristics on the subject of cooperative learning, on the behalf of Ferend and Kook:

1. Active and voluntarily participation of persons in cooperative activities
2. Active participating of all members of the group in decision
3. Having at least one common aim
4. Holding themselves responsible for the made decisions by all members of the group
5. Using sources to achieve the group’s common aims, which the most important source is time.
6. In case of necessity, making the made decisions proportionate to the group’s common aims.

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Different viewpoints have been brought in connection with the mixture of the group’s members, from the viewpoint of some specialties like race, language, culture, sentimental relations; degree of students’ agreement and educational achievement, which most of them (the viewpoint) put emphasis on heterogeneous of cooperative group’s members. Kagan’s research indicated that most favourite number for the group is four (Kagan, 1998; Morales, 2009; Meerah, 2010). Harvard University’s researches indicate that when each of the members perform their duties before the entrance into the class, learning groups will be effective. Of course this matter depends on the degree of responsibility of the group’s members (Gardner & Jewler, 2000). The research have indicated that cooperative learning cause reinforcement of collaboration, increase of learning interest, and feeling of collectively and individual feeling responsibility, boost students’ morale of criticism and accepting criticize, reinforcement of the ability of listening, the improvement in the emotional relations, increase of trust and mutual respect, reinforcement of anxiety, reinforcement of self-directing skills, and decrease students’ dependence with their teacher (Elizabeth Cohen, 1994; Hung, 2001; Farrell, 1991; Keramati, 1386, on the behalf of Chumaker 2002), and consequently, it prepares a suitable way for development of students’ social skills, because in fact, each of these effects is a kind of social skills, which is acquired by cooperative learning. Accepted social skills, and verbal and non verbal behaviours are purposeful, interconnected, under control and teachable, which often they have transactional aspect and cause the positive and reciprocal relations begin and endure, and increase Pearson’s self-respect and facilitate their social relationship (keramati, 2005).

The research directly of implicitly have emphasized this matter that cooperative learning plays an important role in development of social skills. For example, the results of Keramati’s research (2007) indicated that cooperative learning has had an influence on development of social skills of students in grade five. Tolmie et al. (2009) observed many noticeable improvements of social relations, in their own researches on the heading of “The social effects of cooperative learning in the elementary schools”. In the connection the effects of cooperative learning on social and psychological traits of undergraduate in fundamental mathematics course, Kocak (2008) understood that cooperative learning is effective in reducing the levels of loneliness and social anxiety and increasing the levels of happiness among the participant. The finding of Erdem’s study (2009) indicate that cooperative learning in the group work enabled distributing the tasks within the group, solving the problems occurred friends by talking and negotiating, finding chance to talk, interact with classmate, and using the time effectively. According to what was said, the present study planned to study the effect of cooperative learning in the social skills of female students in grade one.

2. Method

The method of research is a quasi-experimental method by pre test-post test with control group. Independent variable is cooperative learning method, and dependant variable is social skills. The sample consists of 74 female students (37 experimental group and 37 control group) in grade one, who were in two deferent classes. One class was considered as experimental group another was considered as control group. Random method was used in the sample selection. Research measure was a list if evaluation of social skills (Matson, 1983), which assessed social skills persons between 4 and 18 years old. In this research, frequency, mean and standard deviation charts, and t-test on gain scores were used.

2-1. procedure

After selecting sample, implementing pre-test by using the mentioned questionnaire, we assessed the selected student’s social skills. Then experimental group’s teacher was taught subjects of cooperative learning. Then experimental group was taught during 10 weeks, i.e. about 30 sessions which lasted 45 minutes by cooperative learning method and finally after ending mentioned pre-test teaching and implementing, two group were compared with each other.

3. Findings

The following hypothesis was experimented in this research:
3.1. Students whom are taught by cooperative method in comparison with students whom are taught by traditional method, indicate better social skills. This hypothesis consists of two sections:

3.2. The students whom are taught by cooperative method in comparison with students whom are taught by traditional method, display suitable social behavior.

3.3. The students whom are taught by cooperative method in comparison with students whom are taught by traditional method indicate less unsuitable behavior (impulsive & assertiveness)

Table 1. Descriptive statistics for tests

<table>
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<tr>
<th>G</th>
<th>preimpulse</th>
<th>Postimpulse</th>
<th>presocial</th>
<th>Post social</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>94.2432</td>
<td>70.3243</td>
<td>54.2973</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Std.Deviation</td>
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<td>5.69627</td>
<td>5.06549</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minimum</td>
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<td>63</td>
<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>126.00</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>63</td>
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<td>109.1081</td>
<td>66.8649</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
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<td>Maximum</td>
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Table 2. t-test for gain scores of impulsive behaviors among two groups

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<td>-11.774</td>
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</table>

The average of experimental group in impulsive behaviors (23.91), and control group (7.18) that was higher than control group. Thus experimental group scored significantly lower on impulsive behavior (P<0.001), than control group.

Table 3. t-test for gain scores of social behaviors among two groups

<table>
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<th>Std.Deviation</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std.Error</th>
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</table>

The average of experimental group in social behaviors (6.94), and control group (2.13) that was higher than control group. Thus experimental group scored significantly higher on social behavior (P<0.001), than control group.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The results relative to hypothesis of research indicates that the students whom are taught by cooperative learning in comparison with the students whom are taught by traditional method, indicate more suitable social behaviour (table,2) and less impulsive behaviour (table,3), and also they totally have better social skills. Finally, we observed that implementing cooperative learning by teacher in classroom promotes social interaction between students and reduce impulsive behaviours among them.

References


