TEAM TEACHING AND COLLABORATIVE LEARNING STRATEGIES FOR QUALITY EDUCATION

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Abstract
This paper x-rayed the concepts of team teaching and collaborative learning strategies which are veritable techniques for quality education. Team teaching exploits the power of synergy by consolidating the prowess and intelligence of paired-teachers and paired-lecturers to impart learning or study to students. Consequently, the students gain intelligence and learn from more than one brain, as the saying goes: two heads are better than one. Collaborative learning is an umbrella term for a variety of educational approaches involving joint scholarly intellectual efforts of paired-teachers or paired-lecturers to jointly teach students. It is an educational approach that involves group of teachers or students working together to solve a problem, complete an assignment, or create a product. Team teaching and collaborative learning are basic for quality education. Moreover, quality education is the education that best fits the present and future needs of students. Quality education is paramount in the academic world, hence the need for team teaching and collaborative learning to achieve it.

Keywords: Team Spirit; Team Teaching; Collaborative Learning; Quality Education.

Introduction

In the academic world, lecturers and teachers could be paired with their colleagues to teach and impart knowledge to students in a given subject matter, topic or a course. All teachers at their level can group students to learn among themselves of a particular subject matter, topic and skill in teams either during a class work, group discussion or group assignments. The foregoing are succinctly referred to as team teaching and collaborative learning respectively. Team teaching can been defined as a method of education whereby at least two teachers are expected to work together, for all or significant part of the lesson of a group of students (Ferradáns, 2016).Plank (n.d.) defined team teaching as an arrangement whereby two or more teachers, cooperatively plan, instruct, and evaluate one or more class groups in an appropriate instructional space and given length of time so as to take advantage of the special competencies of the team members. We can, briefly, say that team teaching is a systematic arrangement wherein several teachers optimally use technology

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cooperatively, to teach a group of students, varying the size of the groups and procedures with the purpose of instruction, and spending staff time and energy in ways that will make the best use of their respective competencies. Carlo-Olson gave a comprehensive definition of team teaching, according to the author, teach teaching may be defined as an instructional situation where two or more teachers possessing complimentary teaching skills cooperatively plan and implement the instruction for a single group of students using flexible scheduling and grouping techniques to meet the particular instruction". Lee (n.d) opined that team teaching method helps relax and motivate students and enhance their assimilation in class.

According to Marjan and Mozhgan (2012), collaborative learning is an educational approach to teaching and learning that involves groups of learners working together to solve a problem, complete a task, or create a product. In the collaborative learning environment, the learners are challenged both socially and emotionally as they listen to different perspectives, and are required to articulate and defend their ideas. In so doing, the learners begin to create their own unique conceptual frameworks and not rely solely on an expert's or a text's framework. In a collaborative learning setting, learners have the opportunity to converse with peers, present and defend ideas, exchange diverse beliefs, question other conceptual frameworks, and are actively engaged. Dillenbourg (1999) asserted that collaborative learning involves two or more people learning or attempting to learn something together. From these definition, there are three important aspects of collaborative learning: (1) it involves two or more people, as a pair or small group; (2) they learn and acquire new knowledge, that is, they study a particular subject matter and understand the course; and (3) they learn together, this implies interaction between the learners (students) which could be face-to-face learning interaction or computer mediated learning platform. Furthermore, Laal & Laal (2011) and Smith & MacGregor (1993) reported that the collaborative learning is an umbrella term for a variety of educational approaches involving joint intellectual effort by students, or students and teachers together. Usually, students who are working in groups of two or more, mutually searching for clear understanding, solutions, meanings, or creating a product. The collaborative learning activities vary widely, but most center on students' exploration or application of the course or learning material, not simply the teacher's presentation or explication of it.

It should be added that collaborative learning helps students learn more effectively. Although many educationists place a high premium on teaching strategies that go beyond mere mastery of content and ideas, collaborative learning promotes a larger educational agenda, one that encompasses several intertwined rationales.

According to Cerbin (2010) and Panitz (1996), collaboration is a philosophy of interaction and personal lifestyle; it is a personal philosophy, not just a classroom technique. In all situations where people come together in groups, it suggests a way of dealing with people which respects and highlights individual group members' abilities and contributions. There is a sharing of authority and acceptance of responsibility among group members for the group's actions. The underlying premise of collaborative learning is based upon consensus building through cooperation by group members, in contrast to competition in which individuals best other group members. Collaborative learning practitioners apply this philosophy inthe classroom, at committee meetings, with community groups, within the irfamilies and generally as a way of living with and dealing with other people.

Team teaching and collaborative education are indispensable processes for the attainment of quality education. Good quality is very important in education and indeed in any subject matter anywhere. Moreover, Eze (2009) submitted that a good quality in education denotes outstanding standard in education, how good or bad it is, how rich the content is. Quality is

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used on every commodity like automobiles, electronics etc. Education can be of high or low quality. Education is the process by which society deliberately transmits its accumulated knowledge, skills and values from one generation to another. It can also be viewed as the process of facilitating learning, or the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, beliefs, and habits; its methods may include formal or informal discussion, teaching, training, imparting knowledge to learners or students, and directed research. In essence, any experience that has a formative effect on the way one thinks, feels, or acts may be considered educational. According to Kumar & Ahmad (n.d.), education is a purposive, conscious or unconscious, psychological, sociological, scientific and philosophical process, which brings about the development of the individual's potentials to the fullest extent and the maximum development of society in such a way that both enjoy maximum happiness and prosperity. Quality education is the education that best fits the present and future needs of the particular learners in question and the community, given the particular circumstances and prospects. Furthermore, quality education should not be regarded as a process of consumption, but as a process of interaction between teachers and students. Education must aim at giving students the opportunities for personal discoveries, learning, development and self-confidence to adapt to new situations as well as to change these when they find it necessary (Fredriksson, 2004).

Literature Review

The concepts of team teaching and collaborative learning is broadly spreading in various institutions of learnings worldwide, as a method for actualizing quality education through the teaching-learning process. In spite of the fact that it is common in many higher institutions in Nigeria, it is innovative to have two or more lecturers/teachers teach a group of students, or divide the students into study groups to solve a given problem. Succinctly, team teaching is a method of pedagogy delivery where more than one teacher share teaching responsibilities for a particular group of students (Nor *et al*, 2012). The students learn by benefitting from the expertise of different teachers working together – This invariably increase the academic performances of the students. Team teaching emerged as a veritable method of utilizing teachers' prowess to improve the quality of instruction in the school system. Goetz (2000) in Rabb (2009) believed that team teaching could be broadly categorised into two: (1) Two or more teachers collaborating to teach the same group of students, at the same time, in the same classroom, and (2) group of teachers working together but not necessarily teaching the same set of students at the same time or in the same classroom.

According to Nor*et al* (2012), the mandate for quality teaching depends on collective knowledge of teachers and abundance of diverse perspectives which requires the need for collaboration and teamwork in all schools in the country. Hence, the need for building effective teams as a strategic tool for achieving quality education.

Objectives of Team Teaching

The main objectives of team teaching include but not limited to the following;

(i) To enhance the quality of education by collaboration of multiple teachers. According to Rabb (2009) team teaching involves two or more instructors collaborating in a significant way to teach a group of students. Since team teaching involves at least two experts of the subject participating in teaching a specific subject matter or topic, thus they help in enhancing the quality of education and instructions imparted to the students.

(ii) To spark and propel students to attain higher levels of combination on their potentials in their study of new materials (Ferradáns, 2016).

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(iii) To make use of better talents and skills of teachers. Team teaching is composed of more than one teachers to benefits the students by the combination of the irintelligence and expertise in the field of knowledge.

(iv) To increase grouping and scheduling flexibility. The team teaching organisation gives flexibility in the grouping of students as indicated by their interests and aptitudes in the subject.

Guidelines and Principles of Team Teaching

The following are some guidelines and principles of team teaching developed by Dalal(2014),thus, educators, teachers, lecturers and researchers should note the following:

(i) Work on establishing the team and assemble the necessary teaching aids as a team.

(ii) Meet regularly to plan and develop course outlines and materials for the lecture.

(iii) Size and composition: The class size and composition of the group for team teaching should be appropriate in terms of learning experiences and purposes of the group. The size of the group may vary depending on the purpose or the goal of team teaching.

(iv) Time factor: Time should be allotted putting into consideration the credit load of the subject.

(v) Learning environment: Learning environment should be provided by making arrangement of laboratory, library, discussion and viewing rooms.

(vi) Duties assigned to students should be appropriate: Team teaching requires proper distribution of duties to the members of the team. The duties should be assigned on the basis of interest, qualification and personality characteristics of the individual member. Selection of members of team should be made very carefully.

(vii) Level of instruction: The level of team teaching must be appropriate to each learner within the group. The initial behaviour of the learners should be properly assessed.

(viii) Supervision: The nature and extent of the supervision of the group's activities depend on the purpose of the group.

Importance of Team Teaching

Dalal (2014), Nor, *et al* (2012) and Plank (n.d.) outlined some of the benefits of team teaching below:

(i) Quality of instruction. Team teaching enhances the quality of instructions imparted to the students.

(ii) Collaborative planning. Team teaching necessitate planning and designing the lecture contents together and assignment schedule appropriately, which are important for quality education (Krometis*et al.*, 2011 in Plank, n.d.).

(iii) The co-planning process of team teaching inspires teachers to integrate their ideas, which ultimately emerge with the strong, most creative lessons (Ferradáns, 2016).

(iv) By diversifying teaching methods and different teachers' expertise, the students are exposed to various teaching styles and delivery.

(v) It make the teachers and students view the subject matter from different perspectives.

(vi) Opportunity for free discussion. During team teaching, all students are given opportunities to express themselves and fully participate in group discussion. Team teaching gives ample opportunity for freeself-expression to all the students of the team.

(vii) Development of human relations: Students need exercise in good human relations in schools. Our present system does not provide enough opportunity to develop good human relations among the students. Team teaching provides such opportunity and trains students in good human relations essential for social adjustment and interaction.

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(viii) Development of the professional status of the teacher: Team teaching develops habit of studying new professional literature and demands hard work for the development of their professional proficiency.

(ix) It makes room for breakthrough from a rigidly compartmentalized school organization: Team teaching makes more flexible use of staff, equipment and the school building. It is inspired by the determination to get rid of the traditional method of fixed time table.

(x) Economy: Team teaching is economical method of teaching, time and energy are saved by team teaching and maintaining discipline in the class.

(xi) Evaluation: The students can evaluate the different teaching styles of each teacher and can give suggestions for improvement.

Challenges of Team Teaching

Ferradáns (2016), highlighted some challenges of team teaching to include the following:

(i) Adapting to different teaching styles. Experience has shown it is difficult to work with people whose teaching style, philosophy and approach differ from another. However, it could widen one's exposure to blend differences together and learn by incorporating multiple styles into your teaching experience.

(ii) Teaching out of one's comfort zone and sharing the stage with another might be a problem.

(iii) Part of the challenge of team teaching is putting yourself in a position where your own authority and expertise are challenged, and sometimes you have to take a backseat.

(iv) Nor, *et al* (2012) and Plank (n.d.) also added some challenges of team teaching:

(v) Lack of cooperation: Team teaching is based on mutual cooperation among the members of the team which cannot be always taken for granted. Students hesitate to cooperate for the organization of successful team teaching.

(vi) Team teaching necessitates delegation of power and responsibilities which in most schools is not feasible in practice because the administrator does not want to delegate their powers to any other agency.

(vii) Traditional conservative attitude. Generally speaking, students do not want to deviate from the routine methods prevalent from centuries. They may resist any innovation which may bring new responsibilities. Sometimes they fail to adapt themselves to the new situations and find it more troublesome.

Collaborative Learning

Collaboration is a philosophy of association and individual way of life where people are responsible for their actions, including learning and regard the capacities and contributions of their peers. Collaboration is intended to encourage the achievement of a particular result or objective through individuals working together in groups and cooperating to accomplish a task. Collaborative learning is one of the most widespread and fruitful areas of theory, research, and practice in education (Cerbin, 2010). Roselli (2016), opined that collaborative learning is a construct that recognizes a current solid field, both in face-to-face and virtual education intervened by the new technology.

Laal and Laal (2011) maintained that collaborative learning is an educational approach to teaching and learning which involves teachers or students working together to solve a problem, complete a task, or create a product. Jacobs (2004) submitted that collaborative learning is the instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning, it is a techniques for helping students work together more effectively. Holistically, collaborative learning is an umbrella term describing variety of educational approaches involving joint studens intellectual effort among

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teachers or students. Usually students work together in groups of two or more, mutually searching for understanding, solutions, or meanings, or creating a product (Laal and Laal, 2011; Smith and MacGregor, 1992).

Nuggets of Collaborative Learning Strategies

The following are nuggets of collaborative learning strategies:

(i) Think-Pair-Share. This involves explaining ideas or solution to another student. The teacher or instructor ask a question to the class, the students write a response and then share it with their colleague in the class. Students clarify their position and discuss points of agreement and disagreement. The teacher can draw from the several responses of the students to illustrate important points or facilitate a whole class discussion. The technique keeps students to engage in large class participation, it stimulates class discussion and individual learning participation, and target key concepts in a particular subject for the purpose of review (Cerbin, 2010).

(ii) Reciprocal Teaching. In this method, students teach one another in groups, by jointly reading a text or work on a specific task. The students then takes turns to teach the group a segment of the text of task. This assists the students to jointly read a course material and also stimulates group discussion to clarify segments in the course material (Cerbin, 2010).

(iii) Round Robin Brainstorming. In this collaborative learning method, the class is divided into small groups of 4 to 6 students per group with one person appointed as the recorder. A question is posed by the teacher with many possible answers and students are given time to think about answers. After the "think time", members of the team share responses with one another round robin style. The recorder writes down all the answers of the group members. The person next to (clockwise) the recorder gives their answer and the recorder writes it done then the each person in the group in order (clockwise) gives an answer until time is called. This method helps students to think and learn fast.

(iv) Think-Aloud Pair Problem Solving (TAPPS). This technique is primarily used to solving problems. Students work in pairs and alternative roles. For each problems, a student is selected to solve it while the others listen. The solver thinks aloud – narrating his/her reasons process, while solving the problem. Furthermore, the listeners prompts the solver to keep talking and demand for clarifications. The advantage of this method is that emphasizes process to solution rather than the end result. In addition, students practices formulating ideas, identifying gaps and errors in understanding.

(v) Group Writing Assignments. This involves collaborative work that culminates in a group-authored documents. The teacher or instructor assigns students to groups to write and submit course-related topics and create study guides for the course. The technique helps students to develop and revise ideas. It also helps students work in a group with their colleagues.

(vi) Group Minute Review. This method is used when the teachers stop any time during a lecture or discussion and groups the students into groups or teams, to review what has been taught in the class hitherto with their group. Students in their groups can ask a clarifying question to the other members and receive an answer from various point of view.

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(vii) Cooperative learning strategies does not only improve students learning performance, but are also very effective in fostering social development and instilling values of cooperation and interrelationships among students (Sonthara and Vanna, 2009). Thus, these strategies are helpful tool for cognitive and social development. Collaborative learning leads to good quality education. In collaborative learning, students are challenged both educationally, socially and emotionally as they listen to different perspectives from their peers, and are required to articulate and defend their ideas which broadens their intellect. Consequently, the students begin to create their own unique conceptual frameworks and not rely solely on an expert's or a text's framework (Laal and Laal, 2011). Cooperative learning involves more than just asking students to work together in groups, it advance to helping students formulate ideas and develop themselves (Jacobs, 2004). Other significance of collaborative learning for quality education includes the following:

(a) Increased academic learning
(b) Increased critical thinking ability
(c) More time spent on learning tasks (less day dreaming)
(d) Increased student understanding and retention
(e) Increased student motivation to learn
(f) Enhanced student satisfaction with their learning experience
(g) Reduces disruptive behavior in the students
(h) Develops peer relationships among students
(i) Promotes students' self-esteem
(j) Improves students attitude towards school
(k) Empowers the students to share information and effectively communicate orally
(l) Develops listening skills in students

Team Spirit on Collaborative Learning

Team spirit plays an important role in quality education. When different people come together to solve a problem with a common goal in mind is called team spirit. Team spirit therefore is willingness to cooperate and work with people as a team (Emplo, 2017). Team spirit assist in getting successful results in team teaching and collaborative learning. It encourage individuals to work in a group rather than seclusion. Team spirit fosters students in a group to work cooperatively and contribute to the group with ideas, suggestions and effort (Ralea, n.d.). It should be added that when students in a class or group work together to accomplish a task, every member of the group benefits, since they work together, each member contributes to ensure the success of the process. According to Silver (n.d.), team spirit is the sense of unit of enthusiasm for mutual benefits and responsibilities, as planned among a team of individuals, for a given task, cause or endeavour.

Tarricone & Luca (2002) opined that for a successful teamwork to take place, the member should have the following attributes: (1) commitment to the team success and shared goals, (2) interdependence on each other, (3) interpersonal skills, which include the ability to discuss matters openly and frankly with team members, honesty and trustworthiness; (4) vertical communication and positive feedback (5) individual's responsibilities and roles to perform in the team; and (6). Commitment to team processes, leadership and accountability.

Team spirit is a bond among group members which promulgates strength, unit, reliability, trust, and support for the success of the cause for which the group stand to accomplish. Team spirit is the lubrication that ensures the smooth efficient and effective functioning of a team. Team spirit have been a major part of life, not only in teaching or learning but also

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any venture where success is paramount. Some of the benefits of team spirit in collaborative learning outlined by to Silver (n.d.) include the following:

(i) It creates synergy in which the resultant efforts of the teachers or students is greater than the parts.
(ii) It supports a better way for teachers or students to learn and work together to solve a problem.
(iii) It encourage multidisciplinary work and division of labour.
(iv) It fosters dynamism and responsiveness, especially the ability to response to change.
(v) It promotes the sense of achievement, equity and friendship among the students.
(vi) It is the better way for teachers and students to work in a group when properly managed.
(vii) It makes work faster than individual work.

The ability for teachers and students to work together as part of a team is an important skills in education today. Academicians or scholars are alwayslooking for likeminded individuals to pair-together, co-author research articles and also handle class room teaching engagement together. Similarly, students too enjoy studying, learning and working together with their colleagues who can contribute their own ideas to create and develop projects for better quality (Tarricone& Luca, 2002).

Conclusion

This study identified that collaborative learning and team teaching greatly enhance the quality of education. Collaborative learning practice provides opportunities to students to learn together and acquire knowledge in group learning (Sonthara and Vanna, 2009). During cooperative learning activities, each student in a group is responsible not only for learning what is taught, but also for helping team-mates learn, thus, creating an atmosphere of quality education. Furthermore, through group discussion and assignments, students work until all group members successfully understand and complete it. This helps the students togain from each other mutually and carry all group members along in the learning activities. All students are actively engaged in learning task. Consequently, students become more active participants in their own learning, as opposed to passive recipients of knowledge who only listen, observe and take notes. It teaches students to work together with their mates and assist them in group rather than to compete against one another. Collaborative learning helps students who are slow learners among them to become quick learners. Finally, the problems-solving approach incorporated in collaborative learning and team teaching ultimately leads to good quality education, thus, building the intellectual capacities of teachers and students for sustainable development of the nation.

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