

Cooperative Learning: A Case Study on Teamwork through Community Service Project

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Abstract : Cooperative groups through much research have been recognized to churn remarkable achievements instead of solitary or individualistic efforts. Based on Johnson and Johnson's model of cooperative learning, the five key components of cooperation are positive interdependence, face-to-face promotive interaction, individual accountability, social skills and group processing. In 2011, the Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) introduced the Holistic Student Development policy with the aim to develop morally sound individuals equipped with lifelong learning skills. The Community Service project was included in the improvement initiative. The purpose of this study is to assess the relationship of team-based learning in facilitating particularly students' positive interdependence and face-to-face promotive interaction. The research methods involve in-depth interviews with the team leaders and selected team members, and a content analysis of the undergraduate students' reflective journals. A significant positive relationship was found between students' progressive outlook towards teamwork and the highlighted two components. The key findings show that students have gained in their individual learning and work results through teamwork and interaction with other students. The inclusion of Community Service as a MOHE subject resonates with cooperative learning methods that enhances supportive relationships and develops students' social skills together with their professional skills.

Keywords : community service, cooperative learning, positive interdependence, teamwork

Conference Title : ICHE 2015 : International Conference on Higher Education

Conference Location : Rome, Italy

Conference Dates : December 03-04, 2015