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Project CATCH-UP (COOPERATIVE LEARNING: A TEACHING APPROACH IN FOOD AND BEVERAGE SERVICES LESSONS TO UPLIFT THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AMONG GRADE 8 STUDENTS



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**ABSTRACT**

This study was conducted to explore the efficacy of using cooperative learning as a teaching approach in Food and Beverage Services lessons on the select Grade 8 students at Mamplasan National High School. The researcher utilized the one group pretest and posttest research design in which the same dependent variable is measured in one group of participants before and after a treatment is administered. Forty (40) Grade 8 students were randomly selected by the researcher to be the respondents of the study. The researcher utilized every day any of the cooperative learning activities suited to her lessons such as role play, peer tutoring, think-pair-share and gallery walk.

A paired T-test was used to determine whether there is a significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores of the students after using the intervention. After the conduct of the study, it was found that there was a significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores of the students. The result showed that cooperative learning significantly improved the academic performance of the students in Food and Beverage Services. Since this teaching strategy was beneficial to learners so it can be adopted by other TLE teachers if necessary.

**Keywords:** *Academic Performance, Cooperative Learning, Gallery Walk, Peer Tutoring, Role Play, Teaching Approach, Think-Pair-Share*

## INTRODUCTION

It is highly significant to note that a human being's entire existence is commonly based on the amount of knowledge he or she acquires, how much this knowledge is utilized in developing himself, his country, and the world at large. This explains the reason underlying the need for education. The basic thing that one gets from education is knowledge. One gets to know about various things ranging from Mathematics to History, Literature to Political Science [1]. The worldly knowledge we gain from education plays a great role in our future life and helps us to understand the happenings in a much more cohesive manner. Meanwhile, educational success is a measure based on the academic performance of students. (Brew et al., 2021)

Academic performance is the extent to which student, teacher or institution has achieved their short or long-term educational goals. It means that students' academic performance can be estimated for any student by its home environment and learning skills and academic interaction and study habits (Vitug, 2019).

However, when our country is facing the most difficult time due to the threat of the virus, as stated by Montemayor (2020), delivery of education in the country has greatly changed because of the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) pandemic.

It is estimated that for every 30 days that schools are closed, students lose 32 days of learning. Using this estimate, students in the Philippines lost a total of 544 days of learning (Ordinario, 2023).

Consequently, due to learning loss and difficulty caused by pandemic, the researcher who is currently teaching TLE in Grade 8 students, found out that there are 40 students (16% of the 250 students officially enrolled in Grade 8) whose grades in TLE 8 for the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter belonged to Fairly Satisfactory (75-79). This scenario

led the researcher to propose action research about the efficacy of cooperative learning as a teaching approach in Food & Beverage Services lessons to improve the student's academic performance.

Laguador (2014) emphasized that student-centered teaching and learning are the recommended approach to modern day pedagogy especially in the Outcomes-based Education where the teachers served as the facilitator of learning activities rather than performing the traditional lecture method. Learning in various ways through self-discovery or with the help of their peers strengthens the foundation of knowledge which is built from a shared environment. Metzler (2011) defines cooperative learning as a methodology in which "students learn with, from and for their peers". It is an educational methodology based on working in small and usually heterogeneous groups, in which students work together to expand or hone their own skills and those of other group members (Johnson, Johnson & Holubec, 1999; Velázquez, 2010; Velázquez-Callado, 2012).

Foster (2020) also stated that cooperative learning is a classroom instruction presentation model that involves students working together to meet their learning goal in learning teams or groups. In the 1940s, education reformers like John Dewey began to analyze the benefits of students working together in the classroom. At that time, cooperative learning was considered cutting edge compared to the preferred format of individual student learning. In the one room schoolhouse of the 1800s and early 1900s, students of all ages worked on their own learning goals.

In CL, students work in small, structured, heterogeneous groups to master subject content (Dyson and Casey Citation 2016). Working together, students are not only responsible for learning the content themselves, but also assist peers in their learning processes.

Research on CL is extensive, and research from the late nineteenth century shows that working cooperatively effects learning positively (Dyson and Casey Citation2016; Johnson and Johnson Citation2009).

Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934) believes that learning and development is a collaborative activity and that children are cognitively developed in the context of socialization and education. This socialization in education is generally termed as cooperative learning. This method is best understood in terms of how individuals use information, resources and help others to build and improve their mental models and their problem-solving strategies. It is a method reinforced by instructional scaffolding which is also known to be one of the popular constructivist's pedagogies. It is a technique whereby the teacher stimulates the desired learning strategy or task, and afterwards the learners take full responsibility to their own work (Gamit, A., Antolin, J. and Gabriel, A.,2017).

In the other study found that Cooperative learning increased student motivation and attitude in a biology class leading to a higher academic achievement compared to the traditional lecture-based method. This was shown by their level of satisfaction, interest, assessment, and understanding of the lessons that were conducted using the cooperative learning method. The findings of that study also showed the need for teacher training on cooperative learning methods. The implementation of the cooperative learning method was very important for effective learning. Some policy guidelines needed to be formulated to guide both the learners and the instructors on the step-by-step implementation of this method effectively. There is still a need to conduct more studies at different academic levels on this method to confirm its effectiveness in the academic field (Rabgay, 2018).

Casey, and Fernandez-Rio (2019) noted that through the cooperative method, students learned to value both

their own and others' views and solutions, become highly self-reliant on their own minds and ideas, adapt peer group work to suit their own and others' needs within the classroom, and think of academic success and achievement in terms of contribution than just performance in exams. They also noted an increase in positivity, especially self-esteem and motivation in their work.

Ehsan, Vida, and Mehdi (2019) their study concluded that cooperative learning increased student achievement in academics more than the traditional lecture-based system. The students had significantly improved their skills in the topic compared to their counterparts in the traditional lecture-based class. They also realized that student motivation has significantly gone up compared to their counterparts. They also noted that intrinsic motivation came because of cooperative learning.

## METHODOLOGY

This study specifically targeted the selected Grade 8 students. Mamplasan National High School has a total number of 250 Grade 8 students enrolled for the academic year 2022 – 2023. Thus, grade 8 level was divided into six (6) sections, with 40-42 students each.

The researcher formed a special class with 40 students. All participants had a consent from their parents or guardians to take part in this initiative. The participating students for this research were chosen through cluster random sampling in a purposive manner with set criteria by the researcher. The first criterion was the students should be enrolled in Grade 8 level at Mamplasan National High School. Furthermore, they were part of the students of the researcher, so she could comprehensively assess them. Lastly, the respondents were those randomly select students from heterogeneously grouped sections in Grade 8 level. This assured non-biased treatment in implementing the intervention.

The procedure for data collection were summarized below:

### Phase I. Preparation Stage

1. The researcher sought approval from the School Head's office to conduct the research.
2. After the approval, the researcher selected the 40 randomly selected students from heterogeneously grouped sections in Grade 8 level.
3. The researcher asked for parents' permission to utilize their children in the conduct of the research.
4. After the parents' approval, the researcher held an orientation with the respondents to concretely explain the process of the research implementation.
5. The researcher constructed a 40-item pretest and posttest validated by the three TLE experts.

### Phase II. Data Gathering Stage.

1. The participating students took the research-made pretest during face-to-face classes.
2. For the whole quarter, the teacher used any of the cooperative learning activities provided suited to her lesson such as think-pair-share, peer tutoring, gallery walk and role play.
3. The participating students took the research-made posttest during face-to-face classes.
4. The researcher gathered all the scores and input them using Microsoft Excel.

**Phase III. Data Analysis Stage.** Retrieval of all gathered data from the respondents. After gathering the necessary data, the researcher statistically analyzed their pre-assessment and post assessment results with the help of her statistician.

**Phase IV. Summary and Interpretation Stage.** After the thorough processes, the following were the summary of the findings:

1. Mean Pretest Scores of the Students. Based on the given data, the mean pretest scores of the participating students are 14.95 or verbally interpreted as Low Proficient. The highest score is 25 or Proficient while the lowest is 6 or Not Proficient.
2. Mean Posttest Scores of the Students. Based on the given data, the mean posttest scores of the participating students are 29.825 or verbally interpreted as Proficient. The highest score is 37 or Highly Proficient while the lowest is 24 or Nearly Proficient.
3. The proficiency level of the students in the posttest is higher than the result of their pretest.
4. Based on the result, the computed t-value of 23.938 revealed that there is a significant improvement in the test scores of the participating students after using a cooperative learning strategy.

**Phase V. Reporting.** Crafting the final paper including the results and recommendations of the study. Present the result of the study.

### RESULTS

- The mean scores of the participating students in pretest are 14.95 or Low Proficient. Therefore, before the intervention, the students had difficulty to understand or catch-up the lesson.
- The mean scores of the participating students in posttest are 29.825 or Proficient. Therefore, after using the cooperative learning in the lessons, the students acquired significant knowledge and skills for every learning competency.
- The proficiency level of the students in the posttest is higher than the result of their pretest.



- There is a significant improvement in the test scores of the participating students after using the cooperative learning strategy.

## DISCUSSION

The resumption of face-to-face classes in all public schools has been fully implemented. During the onset of physical classes, students encountered various challenges in the classroom. They were suffering from learning loss due to the two consecutive years of distance learning caused by pandemic. Some of them couldn't interact nor participate during class discussion and activities. Other students had difficulty understanding the lesson and were not able to perform the hands-on activities in TLE 8. This poor performance created a negative impact on their academic grades. To address this issue, the researcher applied cooperative learning as her teaching approach in Food and Beverage Services lessons.

Using this teaching strategy in her lessons, the researcher observed some key results. First, cooperative learning activities truly increased students' classroom engagement. Role play tasks and other group work are genuinely enjoyed by the students. All students have contribution and engagement to successfully perform the group task given. They are well-motivated to work as a team.

The second observation of the researcher emphasizes student's learning retention. Active learning and hands-on activities helped improve the knowledge or learning retention of the students. During assessment, most of the participating students are proficient and highly proficient. Every time the researcher conducted a review about the previous lesson, most of the learners actively participated.

Lastly, the researcher also observed that cooperative learning strategy helped students improve their communication skills and build a harmonious relationship with each other. Through cooperative learning activities, the students are enabled to convey

clear ideas about the topic and learned to respect the opinions and perspectives of each other.

The result of this study proves that active engagement and interaction in the classroom is the key element to improve the academic performance of the students.

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