

Significance of Cooperative Learning among Students

Nithin Ninan Thomas

Research Scholar

Christ (Deemed to be) University

Hosur main road

Bangalore

ezharethuakku@gmail.com

Abstract

Cooperative learning is a learning technique or process in which students work together in groups. This form of learning is completely different from individual learning and has its own benefits. In the traditional educational system, more importance is given to competition than cooperation. Students compete against each other with an intention to attain greater academic results or scores. But cooperative learning aims to improve the relationship between students and enhance cooperation among them and also motivates them to work together to attain a common objective or goal. The ability or willingness to cooperate is a quality that each human being should possess. This paper aims to analyze the significance of cooperative learning among students and also focuses on the perception of students towards cooperative learning.

Keywords: Positive interdependence, Individual accountability, Promotive interaction, Personal responsibility, Cooperative relationship.

INTRODUCTION

Cooperative learning has lot of significance in the learning process. Students can either learn individually or learning process can be done with the support of other students. Many students prefer to learn individually within their comfort zones. This is due to their competitive spirit or due to their inability to adjust with other students. Each form of learning has its own merits and drawbacks. In the current scenario, many teachers prefer cooperative learning over other learning methods. Teachers usually ask their students to form groups and to proceed with their learning through discussions and interactions with the other students in the group. These kind of interactions between the students will definitely have a positive impact on their academic life and will facilitate their growth as an individual. A group may comprise of students who are academically brilliant and at the same time there will be students who struggle in their learning process. Mutual cooperation and interaction between the students will benefit them academically and personally.

Cooperative learning has several features. The major feature or characteristic of cooperative learning is interdependence between the students. The interdependence between the students should be positive in order to attain desirable results. Another important feature is face to face interaction between the group members. Group members should have personal responsibility and accountability in order to attain the objectives for which the group is formed. All the members should utilize their skills for the benefit of the group. The major element of cooperative learning should be cooperative relationship.

One of the major factors that affect the quality of educational system is competition. Students compete with one another in order to achieve higher grades or better results. They are not concerned about their friends or their intellectual growth. Parents also have a major role in this. Students are forced to score higher marks or grades than their friends. This kind of competitive nature may create great academic results but won't benefit the student in the long run. Good academic performance alone won't develop a student's personality and create a bright future. Cooperative learning has a significant role in shaping a student's life and character.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The major issue or challenge in cooperative learning is the conflict between group members. A group is composed of different members who belong to different backgrounds and their character, personalities etc. will be different. It is very difficult to coordinate the group members. Every member of the group should give more priority to the



group's interest than their personal interest. Then only a group can exist successfully and generate positive outcomes.

RESEARCH GAP

Previous researchers focused on the cooperative learning methods, various benefits of cooperative learning approach, difficulties faced during the implementation, impact of cooperative learning on student relationships and importance of teacher-student interaction. This study focuses on the perception of students towards Cooperative learning.

METHODOLOGY

This study requires to collect data from the respondents regarding collective learning. Primary data is used for this study. Questionnaire has been prepared for the collection of data and survey method is followed. Questionnaire is composed of ten questions and each question has four options for an answer. Respondents have to select one option from the four options provided. A total of one hundred students is determined as the sample size. Questionnaire has been shared to hundred respondents and their responses were recorded. The students who filled the questionnaire are both undergraduate and post graduate students. Simple random sampling method is used to select the samples from the population in order to prevent bias or prejudice. Printed questionnaires were shared with the respondents. The responses to these ten questions were presented using graphs for better understanding.

RESULT ANALYSIS

1. Are you a person trying to help every single one you are meeting with?

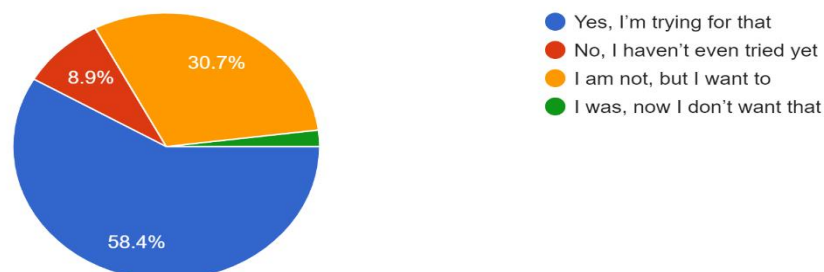
101 responses



The main aim of this question was to know whether the respondents are trying to help every single person they meet. 55.4% of the respondents try to help every single person they meet. 32.7% of the respondents are trying to be like that.

2. What kind of person you are in regard to constantly trying to improve yourself?

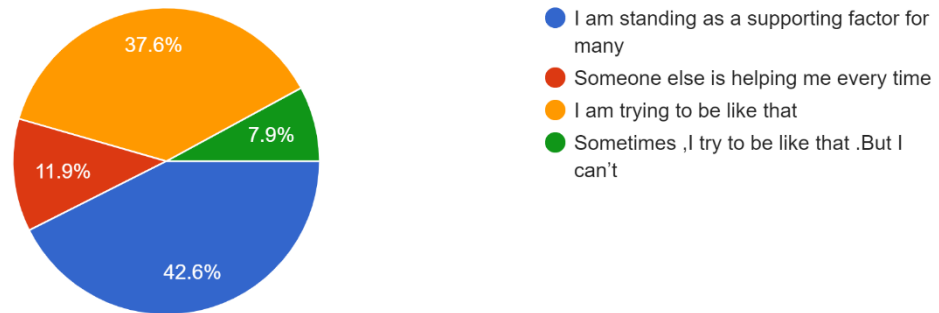
101 responses



58.4% of the respondents are constantly trying to improve themselves. 30.7% of the respondents are currently not trying but they have the desire to improve themselves. 8.9% responded that they haven't tried to improve yet.

3.How you had been trying to stand as a supporting factor?

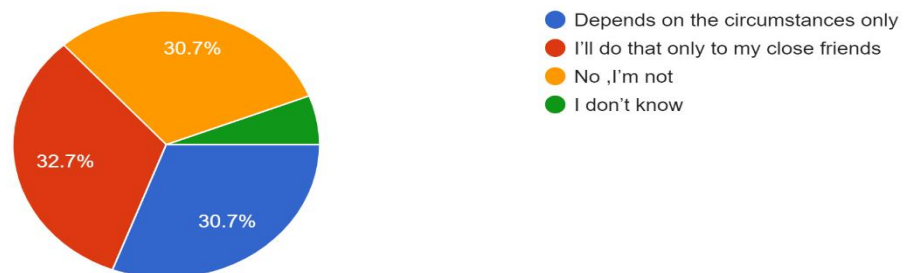
101 responses



42.6 % of the respondents are standing as a supporting factor for many others. As per the data collected 37.6% of the respondents trying to be a supporting factor for others. 11.9% and 7.9% of the respondents are being helped by someone else or they are trying to be supportive but they can't make it.

4.Are you a person, trying constantly, to control others, instead of yourself?

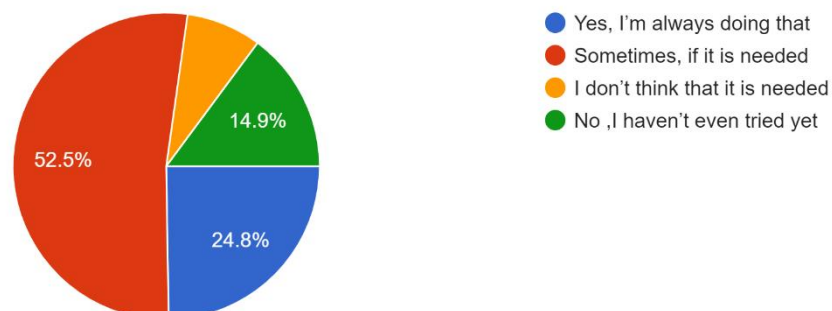
101 responses



32.7% of the respondents try to control others only if they are their close friends. 30.7% of the respondents are constantly trying to control others depending on the circumstances. Another 30.7% of the respondents are not interested in controlling others.

5.Are you a person, who is always, thinking out of the box?

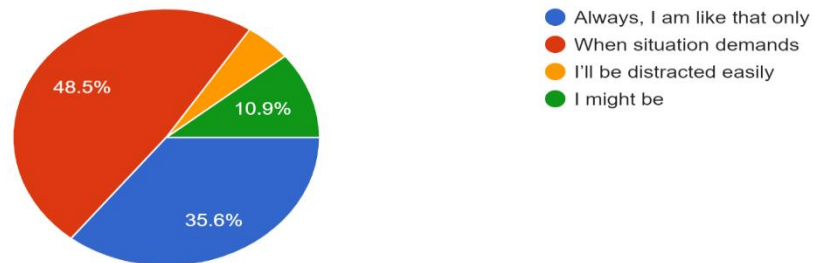
101 responses



52.5% of the respondents think out of the box sometimes, if it is needed. 24.8% of the respondents have the tendency to think out of the box always and another 14.9% haven't even tried doing it.

6. You are a person, who will get involved easily in any work. Are you?

101 responses



48.5% of the respondents will get involved easily in any work when the situation demands. Another 35.6% of the respondents will always get easily involved in any work. 10.9% might be involved in the same.

7. In what ways, you had been a supporter to your peers?

99 responses



28.3% of the respondents support their peers by giving solutions to their questions. Another 24.2% of the respondents will support their peers by being there in every tough situation of theirs. 24.2% of the respondents support their peers by making them feel that I'm there for them, even without saying. Remaining respondents extend their support by providing mental strength.

8. How you had been disappointed while you support someone in cooperative learning environment?

101 responses

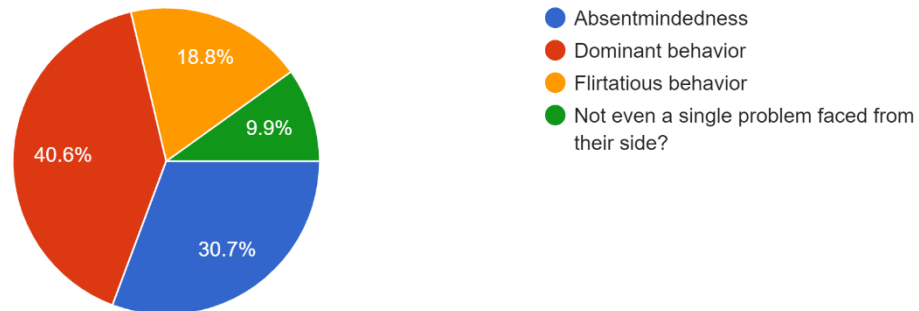


37.6% of the respondents felt disappointed while they support someone in cooperative learning due to their lack of responsibility. For another 35.6% it was due to absentminded people. The remaining percentage of respondents

were disappointed due to making face of peers while explaining important things and 7.9% don't have any disappointment.

9.What is the most significant problem you frequently face when you support the opposite gender?

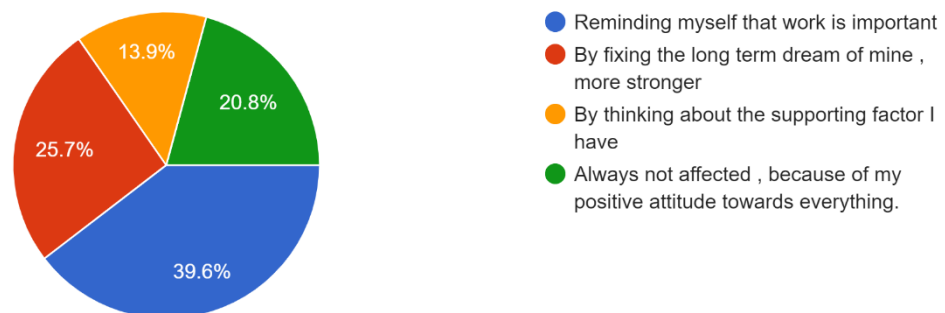
101 responses



40.6% of the respondents believe that dominant behavior is a major problem they face while supporting opposite gender. Another 30.7% of the respondents consider absentmindedness is a major issue. Flirtatious behavior of opposite gender is a significant problem for 18.8% of the respondents and remaining 9.9% of the respondents don't face any issues.

10.How do you encourage yourself when you are fed up with peers when they ditch you?

101 responses



39.6% of the respondents encourage themselves by considering that work is important to them. According to 25.7% of the respondents, fixing of their long-term dream stronger, is a source of encouragement. 20.8% of the population are not affected by the ditch from the part of peers. Remaining percentage of the respondents are always thinking about their supporting factor.

DISCUSSION ON RESULTS

The results shown above indicates the perception of the respondents towards cooperative learning. It also reflects the ability of the respondents to interact with their peers, their desire to control them, willingness to support, ability to think out of the box etc. The questions were prepared to identify whether the respondents can adapt to cooperative learning and a group atmosphere and how they overcome the challenges.

UNEXPECTED FINDINGS

The question regarding control over others has some unexpected findings. A significant percentage of the respondents (30.7%) are not interested in controlling others. One of the major Issue found in various groups is

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conflicting interests of the group members. Most of the members give more priority to their personal interests than group interests. If the acts of other members are detrimental to the interests of a particular group member, then he will try to control them. That's the commonly found situation. But in this survey a significant number of respondents are not interested in controlling others.

SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study focused on the perceptions of the students towards cooperative learning. Cooperative learning is a broader concept. It is a significant form of learning and it is practically difficult or impossible for a researcher to cover all the aspects of it in one particular article. This study had various constraints and the number of questions in questionnaire was limited to ten. Upcoming researchers can focus more on the perceptions of the students and can cover various scenarios or circumstances in cooperative learning which the students have to experience during their academic life.

CONCLUSION

Cooperative learning is an important approach that makes classroom learning productive and effective. This mode of learning showcases the significance of cooperation over competition. Academic institutions have a significant role in the life of a student. The mode of teaching and mode of learning followed have a major impact on a student's intellectual growth and development. Teachers play a crucial role in delivering quality education to students. Cooperative learning method or approach is now widely used across the world. Students are divided into various small groups and they are assigned with various tasks. The members of these groups should benefit from their peers. The skills, abilities and resources of a particular student should be utilized by another student in the same group and there should be mutual interdependence. Teachers should play the role of facilitators and they have to support the students in achieving the group goals. The role of parents is also crucial in cooperative learning. Parents should give more priority to their child's intellectual growth than marks or grades. Cooperative learning approach can be effectively implemented only through the support of all these stakeholders.

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