

Study of the Influence of Cooperative Learning on Social Skills of Students from the Perspective of Ashkanan High School Teachers in the Academic Year 2014-2015

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This study examines the influence of cooperative learning on social skills of students from the perspective of Ashkanan high school teachers in the academic year 2014-15. The statistical population of this study consisted of all Ashkanan high school teachers to the number 148, of which 75 patients (40 females and 36 males) are first-year high school teachers and also 73 patients (41 females and 32 males) are second-year high school teachers. To collect data in this study, developed questionnaire and data entry receipt were used. Content validity of the questionnaire was confirmed by experts using factor analysis test equal to 0.88, and the reliability of the questionnaire was calculated using Cronbach's alpha technique equal to 0.86. The data obtained from the questionnaire were analyzed using indexes of descriptive and inferential statistics. The results showed that cooperative learning is highly effective in developing students' social skills. T test results also showed that there is no significant difference among views of first and second year high school teachers and there is no significant difference between the views of male and female teachers about impact of collaborative learning on social skills of students in the components (communication, language skills, self-expression, responsibility, assertiveness). But significant difference is observed among the perspective of male and female teachers about the impact of collaborative learning on development of students' self- management skills.

Keywords: Cooperative learning, social skills, teachers, high school

Introduction

The progress of any society depends on the quality of education. Education department can provide the basis for a developed society if paves the way for democracy and scientific method. In order to achieve democracy, it is necessary to obey the law, create a positive attitude in this regard and utilize it by individuals in a society, especially the custodians of the vital activity of education. Nowadays, teaching science and technology has developed and evolved alongside with the rapid and surprising changes in science, technology and culture. Scientific surveys indicate the increasing importance of

scientific training methods as the other sciences and surveys. In other words, today the dynamic IT knowledge has traversed the ample ground of development that the only possible way for education is employing accurate training, applying scientific method and utilizing the results of profound and wide scientific research in order to keep pace with the developments of the contemporary dynamic world (Fathi Azar, 2003). Educating not only has high rank in the category of jobs but also is classified as one of the most sophisticated professions (Alaaghe Band, 2002). Of the principal effective behavior and classroom management are the domination of the

teacher on the subjects, learning issues, patterns, social skills, methods, guidelines and teaching techniques. In classroom behavior and teacher relationship with students, the school is one of the social organizations of educational training. Creating learning opportunities is one of the essential characteristics of research on the issue of teacher effectiveness and its consistency with achievement, success, progressive learning and class management (Brophy and Good, 1986, quoted by Hashemi et al., 2012-2013). International studies show that Iranian students have less ability in the high levels of learning, especially functional and process skills compared to students in other countries. Since the content of the curriculum in math and science is somehow the same with other countries, the weakness results in an inappropriate method of learning that leads students to memorize the methods. The results of this study point out the need to review the teaching and learning methods and the shift to new training methods more than ever (Kiamanesh, Noori Bayat, 1997). In this regard, participatory teaching methods and its role in developing the social skills of students is very important, especially at elementary school where students have fundamental requirement to learn social skills and for such acquirement they should benefit any tool such as teaching methods, assessment and so on. Despite the efforts of many researchers, many students have problem in social skills that ignoring them can affect the positive academic background and direct it to a way that would not lead to useful learning. Thus, the study seeks the answer to this fundamental question that to what extent cooperative learning affects students' social skills? There are other researches done on the subject of this study the results of some of which are presented below.

In a research entitled as the study of the relationship between social skills with self-efficacy and academic burnout of male high school students in Qaemshahr, Asghari (2013) resulted that there is a relationship between the social skills with self-efficacy and academic burnout of male high school students in Qaemshahr.

In a study entitled as the specification of the effective elements on social skills viewed by teachers in the junior high schools of Gorgan, Malekan (2012) concluded that the six effective elements in classroom management are classroom environment, students' cooperation in teaching-learning process, using time management in teaching, teachers' awareness of students personal abilities, teachers' awareness of human relation techniques and classroom organization respectively.

In a study issued as the effectiveness of social skills training on self-esteem and self-efficacy of educable mentally retarded girls, Rahnama Zamin (2012) concluded that social skills training was effective on the self-esteem and self-efficacy of educable mentally retarded girls.

In a study entitled as the study of the effects of life skills on students, Ahmadian (2010) claimed that positive effects were seen in patients after teaching the self-awareness, social and interpersonal relationships and anger management skills.

In a survey, Hussein Poor (2009) studied the effectiveness of teaching social skills in a group on the emotional and behavioral problems of elementary school students in Pasargad. The results showed that teaching social skills in groups has reduced children's emotional and behavioral problems. The results of Fahami and Ezzati (2009) show the significant effect of experimental variables i.e. cooperative learning on the development of social skills. The results of the study entitled as the effectiveness of classroom management

styles on the development of cognitive skills of the students, Amin Yazdi and Aali (1387) showed that interactive students and teachers have higher cognitive skills compared to intervener students and teachers.

In a survey, Rahimi, Haghighi, Mehrabi Zade, Honarmand and Beshlideh (2006) showed that assertive training can cause the increase of social skills and assertiveness and the decrease of social anxiety. In a study, Chen (2012) indicated that the interaction between the learner groups causes the realization of cooperative learning elements including positive interdependence, responsibility, social skills and group processing. According to a research, Tolmi et al. (2011) develop a multi-level model of cooperative learning and group skills of students and moderate tensions created by the interactive dialogue.

In a study in connection with the communication skills required for the master's students, Bob Lavlyr et al (2010) came to the conclusion that these skills increase the self-confidence, interaction with others and their flexibility dramatically. Philips (2010) results showed that students feel more positive and valued toward cooperative learning and showed more support to their group members. The results of Nejenga (2010) showed that students who learn in cooperative groups were more involved in learning, more responsible for homework and more organized in their own groups. In a study in relation to the teaching of life skills such as the effective relationship with adolescents, Turner et al. (2008) showed that such skills increase teenagers' abilities to solve problems and the effective use of social support. Boeno (2008) results showed that centralized training focuses on cooperative learning increases social skills.

The main research question:

1. What is the point of view of Eshkanan Secondary School teachers about the cooperative learning effect on the development of students' communication skills?
2. What is the point of view of Eshkanan Secondary School teachers about the cooperative learning effect on the development of students' verbal skills?
3. What is the point of view of Eshkanan Secondary School teachers about the cooperative learning effect on the development of students' assertive skills?
4. What is the point of view of Eshkanan Secondary School teachers about the cooperative learning effect on the development of students' responsibility skills?
5. What is the point of view of Eshkanan Secondary School Teachers about the cooperative learning effect on the development of students' self-assertion skills?
6. What is the point of view of Eshkanan Secondary School Teachers about the cooperative learning effect on the development of students' self-management skills?
7. Is there a significant difference between the point of views of male and female teachers in Eshkanan secondary schools about the effect of cooperative learning on social skills of students?
8. Is there a significant difference between the point of views of Eshkanan primary and secondary school teachers about the effect of cooperative learning on social skills of students?

Methodology

This research studies the effect of cooperative learning on social skills of students. The statistical population

consisted of all Eshkanan high school teachers to 148 people, 75 of which (40 females and 36 males) were primary high school teachers while 73 of them (41 females and 32 males) were the secondary high school teachers. A researcher-made questionnaire and a note taking sheet were used to collect the data of the study. The content validity of the questionnaire was confirmed by experts and using factor analysis test the validity of 0.88 was verified. The

reliability of the questionnaire was calculated 0.86 using Cronbach alpha method. Data from the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

Results

The first research question: What is the point of view of Eshkanan Secondary School teachers about the cooperative learning effect on the development of students' communication skills?

Table1. Teachers' point of views about the effect of cooperative learning on the development of students' communication skills

Overall point of view	Descriptive statistics value					Frequency-percent						results
	Standard deviation	skew	mode	median	mean	Very much	much	moderate	few	Very few	frequency	
much	0.99	-0.42	4	4	3.53	17.46	36.83	30.29	12.29	2.83	communication skills component	

Survey results show that the students will understand the condition of the other students group in cooperative learning, try to have constructive communication with their classmates, respect the opinions of others, express their sincere beliefs and actively participate in class discussions and activities. The results of this research are in the line of the research results of Malekan

(2012), Hussein Poor (2009), Sultani (2005), Qeltash (2004), Nejenga (2010), Boeno (2008), Wells (2005). The second question of the Study: What is the point of view of Eshkanan Secondary School teachers about the cooperative learning effect on the development of students' verbal skills?

Table2. Teachers' point of views about the effect of cooperative learning on the development of students' verbal skills

Overall point of view	Descriptive statistics value					Frequency-percent						results
	Standard deviation	skew	mode	median	mean	Very much	much	moderate	few	Very few	frequency	
much	0.94	-0.62	4	4	3.53	11.13	50.92	22.76	10.29	4.27	verbal skills component	

The results show that cooperative learning has a great impact on the development of students' verbal skills. The background for the development of verbal skills is been

provided according to student participation in group discussions, learning process in the class as well as the explicit expression of thoughts and ideas. The results of this

research are in the line of the research results of Malekan (2012), Rahnama Zamin (2012), Hussein Poor (2009), Sultani (2005), Qeltash (2004), Tolmi et al (2011), Nejenga (2010), Wells (2005).

The third question of the research: What is the point of view of Eshkanan Secondary School teachers about the cooperative learning effect on the development of students' assertive skills?

Table3. Teachers' point of views about the effect of cooperative learning on the development of students' assertive skills

Overall point of view	Descriptive statistics value					Frequency-percent						results
	Standard deviation	skew	mode	median	mean	Very much	much	moderate	few	Very few	frequency	
upper intermediate	1.03	-0.26	3	3	3.23	9.96	35.66	28.9	18.24	6.76	assertive skills component	

The results of this study show that the use of cooperative learning provides the context for the development of students' assertive skills appropriately. In cooperative learning and training activities in the learning process, students will be taught in order to express their thoughts logically, express their thoughts against dissent ones, try to give their opinions on the basis of reason and defend the logic of their ideas courageously.

The results of this research are in the line of the research results of Malekan (2012), Qeltash (2004), Nejenga (2010), Boeno (2008).

The fourth question of the Study: What is the point of view of Eshkanan Secondary School teachers about the cooperative learning effect on the development of students' responsibility skills?

Table4. Teachers' point of views about the effect of cooperative learning on the development of students' responsibility skills

Overall point of view	Descriptive statistics value					Frequency-percent						results
	Standard deviation	skew	mode	median	mean	Very much	much	moderate	few	Very few	frequency	
much	0.97	-0.51	4	4	3.69	22.47	39.37	26.34	9.8	2.02	responsibility skills component	

The results show that cooperative learning has a great impact on the development of students' responsibility skills. The results indicate that there are many practical responsibilities on the shoulders of students in the cooperative learning process some of which are: doing homework, collecting data, planning, creating group and class regulations and obeying them. This causes students to feel more responsible. The

results of this research are in the line of the research results of Malekan (2012), Rahnama Zamin (2012), Sultani (2005), Qeltash (2004), Wells (2005). The fifth question of the Study: What is the point of view of Eshkanan Secondary School Teachers about the cooperative learning effect on the development of students' self-assertive skills?

Table5. Teachers' point of views about the effect of cooperative learning on the development of students' self-assertive skills

Overall point of view	Descriptive statistics value					Frequency-percent						results
	Standard deviation	skew	mode	median	mean	Very much	much	moderate	few	Very few	frequency	
much	0.96	-0.74	4	4	3.72	20.62	46.6	20.45	9.28	3.05	Self-assertive skills component	

Analyzing the results of this research shows that cooperative learning leads to a high and desirable level of attention to itself in group and society and finds the way to express positive and negative emotions. Cooperative learning increases the students' self-confidence by the development of their self-assertive skill in a way that they are able to express their thoughts logically and give their opinions confidentially. The results of

this research are in the line of the research results of Sultani (2005), Qeltash (2004), Tolmi et al (2011), Nejenga (2010), Boeno (2008).

The Sixth question of the research: What is the point of view of Eshkanan Secondary School Teachers about the cooperative learning effect on the development of students' self-management skills?

Table6. Teachers' point of views about the effect of cooperative learning on the development of students' self-management skills

Overall point of view	Descriptive statistics value					Frequency-percent						results
	Standard deviation	skew	mode	median	mean	Very much	much	moderate	few	Very few	frequency	
much	1.01	-0.63	4	4	3.59	19.15	41.89	22.74	11.5	4.72	self-management skills component	

The results of this study show that cooperative learning is desirably and increasingly effective in the development of students' self-management skills. Studying the subcomponents shows that cooperative learning causes the students to be able to manage their social and individual activities, assess their activities accordingly, correct and change their social and individual behavior and develop the spirit of planning and academic and educational activities. The results of this research are in the line of the research results of Malekan (2012), Sultani (2005), Qeltash (2004), Tolmi et al (2011), Nejenga (2010), Boeno (2008), Wells (2005).

The seventh question of the research: Is

there a significant difference between the point of views of male and female teachers in Eshkanan secondary schools about the effect of cooperative learning on social skills of students?

T-test was used with regard to their sex for two independent groups of men and women to compare teachers' perspectives about cooperative learning effect on the social skills of students the results of which are provided in the table above. Note that the given p-value is more than 0.05 in all components except for the Management itself. So, there is no significant difference between the point of view of male and female teachers in cooperative learning effect on the social skills of students in these

components: communication, verbal skills, assertive, responsibility and self-assertive. However, there is a significant difference in the views of male and female teachers about the cooperative learning effect on the self-management of students. The Eighth

question of the research: Is there a significant difference between the point of views of Eshkanan primary and secondary school teachers about the effect of cooperative learning on social skills of students?

component	p-value
communication	0.364
Verbal skills	0.724
assertive	0.414
responsibility	0.645
Self-assertive	0.514
Self-management	0.045

Table 7. Comparing teachers' point of views about the effect of cooperative learning on the social skills of students considering academic grade

component	p-value
communication	0.768
Verbal skills	0.247
assertive	0.813
responsibility	0.187
Self-assertive	0.419
Self-management	0.085

T-test was used with regard to their sex for two independent groups of men and women to compare teachers' perspectives about cooperative learning effect on the social skills of students the results of which are provided in the table above. Note that the given p-value is more than 0.05 in all components of the research. So, there is a significant difference between the point of view of primary and secondary school teachers in cooperative learning effect on the social skills of students.

Conclusion

The results of this research show that

cooperative learning is effective on the development of students' social skills in a great and desirable way. Of the essential needs of students' academic planning and learning is paying careful attention to cooperative learning as an effective factor on the required social skills of students in elementary schools which is confirmed by the results of this research. With the application of cooperative learning, the active role of students in the learning process, their participation in group activities, collecting information and responsibility, all the other students' activities are affected. They will do more

activities, gain more control over their behavior, be able to manage their deeds and are get prepared for the future social life with the development of their creativity in solving their problems and more self-confidence and certainty in their abilities.

Based on the results of this research, the development of self-esteem and interpersonal skills, communication, decision making and problem solving are possible for the students in cooperative learning and are effective in the improvement of their mental health. By having these skills, students feel adequate and gain the ability of being effective, overcoming the difficulties, planning and conducting targeted behavior with the problem. The results showed that in the cooperative learning process, students' academic growth background is provided. The development of social skills, responsibility, self-assertive, assertive and also the development of self-management skill cause the students to avoid passivity and act more actively and flourish in the related social skills.

Recommendations

Due to the effectiveness of cooperative method in the growth of students' social skills which is approved in the present study, it is recommended that cooperative learning method be used as one of the effective practices to develop students' social skills and as an alternative for the traditional and commonly used learning-teaching method in schools. Moreover, teachers should be familiarized with the cooperative learning approach through workshops in order to be used in the classroom continually. With interactive and double faced communication between home and school, parents should get acquainted toward their educational tasks more than ever and associate them in guiding their child in choosing appropriate social skills such as responsibility, making friends, doing tasks and tolerability. Due to

the importance of the growth of social skills in the students' personal and intrapersonal relationships, it is recommended that home and family together have an essential role in the development of these skills and this is only possible through the effective relationship of parents and teachers. Applying traditional, inactive and passive teaching methods do not have a positive impact on students' social skills development and cause the reduction of students' social skills. Therefore, it is recommended that teachers use active and student-centered teaching methods to provide the context for the growth of their responsibilities and self-assertive by assigning them different responsibilities.

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