

Attitude of Secondary School Teachers in Kerala towards Team Teaching Strategy

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ABSTRACT: Team teaching consists of a group of teachers working purposefully, regularly, and cooperatively to help the students learn effectively. Team of teachers together set objectives, prepare lesson plans, teach students, and evaluate the learning outcome. The Team teaching strategy allows for more interaction between teachers and students. Teachers evaluate students on their achievement of the learning goals and students evaluate faculty members on their teaching proficiency and subject competency. Team teaching stresses on both student and faculty development by balancing initiative and shared responsibility. It includes clear and interesting presentation of content and aims at student development with democratic participation. This combination of analysis, synthesis, critical thinking, and practical applications can be done at all levels of education, starting from kindergarten to graduation. Even though Team teaching is highly beneficial for the academic community, there exists several doubts and misconceptions about this innovative strategy. This study was undertaken to find out the attitude of Secondary School teachers in Kerala towards Team teaching strategy.

KEY TERMS: Team teaching, Co-teaching, Innovation, Collaboration

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I. INTRODUCTION

The idea of Team Teaching originated in USA in 1954. It is an innovative teaching strategy in which two or more teachers of a subject collectively teach students. Team teaching is also known as Collaborative teaching or Co-teaching method. Team teaching consists of group of teachers working purposefully, regularly, and cooperatively to teach a group of students. Instructors together set goals for the course, prepare lesson plans, teach students, and evaluate the learning outcome. Teachers share insights and challenge students to decide which approach is better.

Davis (1995) provides this definition of team teaching: “All arrangements that include two or more faculty in some level of collaboration in the planning and delivery of a course” (p. 8). According to David Warwick Team teaching is a form of organization in which individual teachers decide to pool resources, interest and expertise in order to devise and implement a scheme of work suitable to the needs for their pupils and the facilities of their school.

Team teaching strategy is a very flexible one where the requirements of students, schools and other major aspects are given ample importance and both teaching and student evaluation are carried out on a co-operative basis. In Team teaching teachers need to decide their activities by themselves.

Students seem to be highly benefited from team-taught courses (Benjamin, 2000; Harris and Watson, 1997; Johnson, Johnson, Smith, 2000; Smith, 1994). The literature suggests that Team teaching can improve student – teacher relationship, build greater curricular coherence for learners, develop a greater sense of academic community, help to build bridges of understanding across disciplines for both faculty and students and make classes more interesting because of the novelty inherent in it.

Studies on teaching and learning suggest a number of benefits faculty gain from participating in Team teaching (Austin, 2002; Belenky et al., 1986; Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 1992; Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 1993). In Team teaching teachers willingly come out of their comfort zones. They try to learn much about teaching process and thus improve their own teaching. Teachers develop clearer perspective on the differences between disciplines and build professional relationships.

Very often teachers in schools and colleges lack co-operation and friendship among themselves. Even worse a competitive environment is seen among the teachers in some of the institutions. Envy or competition among teachers can have a negative impact on the progress of the institution. With Team teaching, teachers are bound to bond, as frequent discussions and planning are mandatory for the successful conduct of Team teaching.

There are mainly two types of Team teaching. They are Hierarchic type of Team teaching and Synergetic Team teaching. Hierarchic type of team teaching method is just similar to a pyramid where different levels of teachers are organized in a structure from top to bottom. The team leader is placed at the top, mid-level

teachers just below the team leader and normal teachers at the bottom. In Synergetic type Team teaching method, there is no differentiation between teachers. Through the cooperation of two or more teachers working together, Synergetic Team teaching can be effectively organized.

Even though Team teaching seems to be highly beneficial to both students and teachers, it puts forward some difficulties also. There is a general complaint that teachers are not flexible in addressing students' learning styles. There is confusion about learning expectations and disparity in evaluation exists.

Main ingredients of Team teaching strategy are 1. Scheduling 2. Grouping of students 3. Assigning of responsibilities by teachers themselves 4. Classroom re-arrangement 5. Provision of independent time for learners 6. Make use of paraprofessionals.

There exist so many challenges for teachers in implementing Team teaching effectively. Lack of training on group dynamics, problems with overlapping of roles and lack of sufficient time for collaborative work are some of them. There is also a general complaint regarding Team teaching that individual autonomy is lost in it.

Team teaching has both merits and demerits. Usually teachers abstain from this innovative strategy due to various doubts regarding the success of this strategy. It is used very rarely in the schools of Kerala for imparting different subjects. A proper attitude is a must for the successive implementation of this strategy.

II. PROBLEM SELECTED FOR THE STUDY

Attitude of Secondary School teachers in Kerala towards Team teaching strategy

Objectives of the study

- 1 To study the attitude of Secondary School teachers in Kerala towards Team teaching strategy
- 2 To study whether there is any significant difference between the opinion of male and female teachers regarding Team teaching
- 3 To study whether there is any significant difference between the opinion of Government and aided school teachers regarding Team teaching.

Hypotheses of the study

- 1 The sample will have favourable attitude towards Team teaching
- 2 There will be no significant difference between the opinion of male and female teachers regarding Team teaching
- 3 There will be no significant difference between the opinion of Government and aided school teachers regarding Team teaching

Sample selected for the study

The sample selected for the study consists of 488 Secondary School teachers working in different districts of Kerala

Methodology used for the study

Survey method was adopted for the present study

Tool used for the study

An Attitude scale developed by the investigator was used to collect data. There were six statements in the attitude scale out of which four were negative statements.

Statistical techniques used

Mean, Standard deviation and 't' test were used to analyse the data.

Analysis - Attitude of total sample

Table 1
Mean Attitude Score of the Total Sample on Team teaching

Statements	Mean	SD	N
Team teaching is an impracticable idea in terms of contextualized cognitive process	2.86	1.11	488
Team teaching is not idiosyncratic in articulating the intended student learning outcomes	3.14	1.06	488
Team teaching sets the path ways for schematically organization with differentiation and the structuring coherence of instructional aspects	3.99	0.65	488
Team teaching method will adversely affect the standard of students in its' originality and synthesizing of knowledge	3.22	1.09	488
Team teaching promotes conceptual synchronization of themes	4.02	0.70	488
Team teaching is ineffective in the synthesis of knowledge structure	3.23	1.07	488

It is evident from the analysis that the total sample has a mixed attitude towards Team teaching. Even though the total sample strongly supports the benefits of Team teaching; they are suspicious about the practical aspects of this method, as they have the attitude that Team teaching is ineffective in the synthesis of knowledge

structure and Team teaching is not idiosyncratic in articulating the intended student learning outcomes, as the mean scores are higher than the theoretical average of 3.

Analysis - Gender-wise

Table shows the attitude scores of male and female teachers about Team teaching. Attitude scores of both gender were tested for difference using ‘t’ statistics.

Table 2
Mean Attitude Score of the Sample Teachers on Team teaching by their gender

Statements	Male			Female			T	Df	Sig.
	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N			
Team teaching is an impracticable idea in terms of contextualized cognitive process	2.86	1.07	94	2.86	1.11	394	0.030	486	0.976
Team teaching is not idiosyncratic in articulating the intended student learning outcomes	3.12	1.00	94	3.14	1.08	394	-0.185	486	0.853
Team teaching sets the path ways for schematically organization with differentiation and the structuring coherence of instructional aspects	3.95	0.56	94	4.00	0.67	394	-0.743	486	0.458
Team teaching method will adversely affect the standard of students in its’ originality and synthesizing of knowledge	3.23	1.01	94	3.21	1.11	394	0.186	486	0.852
Team teaching promotes conceptual synchronization of themes	3.99	0.54	94	4.03	0.74	394	-0.509	486	0.611
Team teaching is ineffective in the synthesis of knowledge structure	3.26	1.10	94	3.22	1.06	394	0.260	486	0.795

As the significance level of ‘t’ test is greater than 0.05 in the six aspects of Team teaching, it can be inferred that male and female teachers have similar attitude towards all the aspects of Team teaching. Both male and female teachers strongly believe that Team teaching set the path ways for schematically organizing with differentiation and structuring coherence of linguistic elements (Mean score of male 3.95 and female 4.00). They also have the attitude that Team teaching promotes conceptual synchronization of themes (Mean score of male 3.99 and female 4.03). A good number of male and female teachers believe that Team teaching is ineffective in the synthesis of knowledge structure and it is not idiosyncratic in articulating the intended student learning outcomes. The result also shows that the notion that Team teaching is an impracticable idea in terms of contextualized cognitive process does not have much influence on them, as the mean score is less than the theoretical average 3. Thus it can be inferred that both gender has favourable attitude towards Team teaching.

Analysis - School-wise

In the case of institution wise analysis, as evident from Table, the significance level of ‘t’ test in the first, second, fourth and sixth statements are less than 0.05 which indicates that there exist significant difference between teachers from government and aided schools in these aspects i.e. Team teaching is an impracticable idea in terms of contextualized cognitive process (significance of ‘t’ value 0.000), Team teaching is not idiosyncratic in articulating the intended student learning outcomes (significance of ‘t’ value 0.000), Team teaching method will adversely affect the standard of students in its’ originality and synthesizing of knowledge (significance of ‘t’ value 0.003), Team teaching is ineffective in the synthesis of team teaching will adversely affect the discipline of the class (significance of ‘t’ value 0.000). No significant difference were found regarding third and fifth statements i.e. Team teaching set the path ways for schematically organizing with differentiation and structuring coherence of linguistic elements (significance of ‘t’ value 0.962) and Team teaching is ineffective in the synthesis of knowledge structure (significance of ‘t’ value 0.564)

Table 3
Mean Attitude Score of the Sample Teachers on Team teaching by type of school

Statements	Govt.			Aided			T	df	Sig.
	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N			
Team teaching is an impracticable idea in terms of contextualized cognitive process	2.64	1.08	203	3.01	1.10	285	-3.728	486	0.000
Team teaching is not idiosyncratic in articulating the intended student	2.81	1.03	203	3.37	1.02	285	-5.947	486	0.000

learning outcomes									
Team teaching sets the path ways for schematically organization with differentiation and the structuring coherence of instructional aspects	3.99	0.61	203	3.99	0.69	285	-0.047	486	0.962
Team teaching method will adversely affect the standard of students in its' originality and synthesizing of knowledge	3.04	1.10	203	3.34	1.07	285	-3.021	486	0.003
Team teaching promotes conceptual synchronization of themes	4.04	0.65	203	4.01	0.74	285	0.578	486	0.564
Team teaching is ineffective in the synthesis of knowledge structure	2.97	1.08	203	3.41	1.02	285	-4.612	486	0.000

It is evident from the analysis that government school teachers have favourable attitude towards Team teaching. As far as the negative statements are concerned, it is worthwhile to note that their mean scores are below the theoretical average of 3; which shows their disagreement in this regard. Aided school teachers strongly believe that Team teaching is not idiosyncratic in articulating the intended student learning outcomes, Team teaching method will adversely affect the standard of students in its' originality and synthesizing of knowledge, Team teaching is ineffective in the synthesis of knowledge structure. The notion that Team teaching is an impracticable idea in terms of contextualized cognitive process does not get much appreciation of government and aided school teachers. The analysis throws light into the fact that the negative attitude of aided school teachers towards Team teaching, act as a constraint to the modernization of teaching since majority of the teachers working in the state are from the aided sector.

III. RESULT OF THE STUDY

The results show that the sample has mixed attitude ie.both positive and negative attitudes towards Team teaching. Hence the first hypothesis that the total sample of teachers will have positive attitude towards Team teaching is rejected. The second objective was to find out whether there is any significant difference between the opinion of male and female teachers regarding Team teaching. The results show that both genders of teachers have favourable attitude towards Team teaching and hence the hypothesis that there will be no significant difference between the opinion of male and female teachers about Team teaching is accepted.

The third objective was to study whether there is any significant difference between the opinion of government and aided school teachers regarding Team teaching. The hypothesis was that there will be no significant difference between the opinion of government and aided school teachers regarding Team teaching. It is evident from the analysis that teachers from both government and aided schools have the same favourable attitude towards Team teaching and hence the hypothesis is accepted.

IV. CONCLUSION

Working in teams spreads responsibility, encourages creativity, deepens friendships and builds community feeling among teachers. Teachers complement one another. They share ideas, propose new pathways and challenge assumptions. They learn new perspectives and insights, techniques and values by observing one another. Students enter into conversations between them as they debate, disagree with premises or conclusions, raise new questions and point out consequences. Contrasting viewpoints encourage more active class participation and independent thinking among students.

For successfully implementing Team teaching, active involvement of faculty, resources and careful planning is compulsory along with time management. By doing so, Team teaching can enhance both the teaching and learning experiences of faculty and students.

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