

# Inspiring Prosocial Behaviour in the Classroom through Collaborative Learning: A Case Study

Deepthi Karunakaran<sup>1</sup>, Dr. P. B. Beulahbel Bency<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar, <sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor,

<sup>1,2</sup>Department of Education, Mother Teresa Women's University, Kodaikanal, Tamil Nadu, India

## ABSTRACT

The mission of this case study was to analyze whether the collaborative learning environment in the classroom inspires prosocial behavior in students. Prosocial behaviours are intended to help other people, characterized by a concern about the rights, feelings and welfare of others. Behaviours that can be described as prosocial include feeling empathy and concern for others and behaving in ways to help or benefit other people. The sample consisted of a single classroom with 35 students. The analysis was done using sociograms. The sociometric analysis has shown that the prosocial behavior of students has improved while participating in the collaborative learning activities. The findings of the study indicate that the collaborative learning inspires students' prosocial behaviours.

**KEYWORDS:** Prosocial Behavior, Collaborative Learning, Sociograms and Sociometry

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## INTRODUCTION

Prosocial behaviour is a voluntary behaviour intended to benefit another. Thus, it includes behaviours such as helping, sharing and providing comfort to another. Prosocial behaviour is evident in young children but changes in frequency and in its expression with age. Individual differences in prosocial behaviour are caused by a combination of heredity and socialization, Prosocial behaviours can be performed for a variety of reasons, ranging from selfish and manipulative reasons to moral and other oriented reasons. Prosocial behaviour is not performed for material or social rewards, but is based on concern for another or moral values and is usually labelled 'altruism'.

## Prosocial Behaviour

Prosocial thoughts and feeling may be defined as a sense of responsibility for other individuals and a higher likelihood of experiencing empathy both affectively (emotionally) and cognitively. Prosocial behaviour in childhood often begins with questions of sharing and fairness. Prosocial behaviour is relevant to both the quality of close interpersonal relationships and for interaction among individuals and groups without close ties. People as individuals or as members of a group, often assist others in need or distress, as well as others whose need are relatively trivial. Prosocial behaviour, the ability for children to voluntarily act in a positive, accepting, helpful and cooperative manner has been

correlated with positive social interaction skill, positive self-concept, positive peer relationship, peer acceptance, as well as a lower risk of externalizing behaviours and lower levels of problem behaviours at school. These habits are the keystone of development and predict academic and social success. Social skills in early childhood are vital to the trajectory of interpersonal development and have been found to be stable over time. The development of prosocial behaviour is complex as children have to balance their own needs and interest with the development of social bonds.

Collaborative learning is a group learning methodology that transforms the traditional lecture or teacher focused classroom into a student or learning centered class room. Students work together to help each other to understand contest, solve problem or creates projects. It encourages trust building, communication, practical learning or application, and acceptance and enhances problem solving skills (Gerlach, 1994).

According to Global Development Research Centre and a study 'Benefits of Collaborative Learning' published in the Procedia Journal of Social and Behavioral Science outline some advantages as follows:

- Collaboration affects personally: increases openness conscientiousness agreeableness, trust and stability.

- Team work strengthens community bonds, socialization and both written and verbal communication.
- Collaboration increases measures of achievement.
- Group work increases subject matter comprehension efficiency and productivity.
- Group work increases self-esteem.
- Collaborative learning increases student retention.

Behaviours that can be described as prosocial include feeling empathy and concern for others and behaving in ways to help or benefit other people (Jhang & Liu, 2016). The mission of this case study was to analyse whether the collaborative learning inspires pro social behaviour in the classroom.

### Need and Significance of the Study

Schools can foster the prosocial behaviours in students, since a school represents a miniature society. Students in a school are actually trained for their life in the real society. They learn the necessary prosocial behaviour such as helping and sharing though the different occasions while they are in the school. Even though there is a heredity basis of this behaviour, it is moulded and polished in a school environment where the child is spending its most of the time.

Educational researches have shown that collaborative classroom leads students to an exposure to and an increase in understanding of diverse perspective and prepares the students for real life social situations. The present school curriculum insists upon activity-oriented instruction. The investigator utilized collaborative learning method for ensuring the maximum participation of students in her classroom. In different classroom situations it could be seen that students show a tendency to help others while completing a project or an assignment or any other demonstration. This led the investigator to conduct a case study to find whether the collaborative learning methods inspire prosocial behaviour in students. Since the development of prosocial behaviour is a necessity in an era where antisocial behaviour of human beings is increasing at an alarming rate where man is fighting with his fellow beings for even the basic necessities the present study is a need of the hour and is significant.

### Statement of the Problem

Thus, the present study is entitled as 'Inspiring Prosocial Behaviour in the Classroom through Collaborative Learning: A Case Study'.

### Objectives of the Study

1. To analyse the prosocial interaction pattern of secondary school students.
2. To identify the lacking of prosocial behaviour in individuals.
3. To assess whether the collaborative learning methods inspires the prosocial behaviour in students.

### Research Questions

The present case study is a result of some research questions such as:

1. Do all children show prosocial behaviour?
2. How to find the students, who lack prosocial behaviour, at the same time who are not anti-socials?
3. Do collaborative learning methods inspire prosocial behaviour in school students?

### Method of the Study

The investigator used case study method for the present study. This case study method is qualitative in nature.

### Population and Sampling

Population means the total individuals occupying an area or making up a whole. A sample is the small portion of the population that is selected for observation and analysis. In this study the population is the secondary school students of Girls Vocational Higher Secondary School at Pirappancode in Thiruvananthapuram District, Kerala and the sample are an individual classroom with 35 students from this population.

### Tools Used

The following tools were utilized by the investigator for the present study:

- Observation
- Sociogram

### Methodology

In the present study, the investigator has utilized case study method according to the nature of the study.

Case studies are in-depth investigation of a single person, group, event or community. Data are gathered from a variety of sources and by using several different methods such as observations, interviews, etc. But in the present study investigator has utilized observation as well as sociometry as the source of data. Since the investigator's research is based on collaborative learning, she utilized various collaborative learning methods such as Jigsaw method, Think Pair Share method, Concept Mapping method, 5E method and Activity Mapping method in her classroom. During these classes, investigator observed that students in her classroom show cooperation, helping mentality, empathy etc. This led to the present study since the investigator wanted to check whether these behaviours are inspired by the collaborative learning.

The investigator has utilized sociometry for the data collection. At first the investigator provided her class a set of three situations and asked her students to select three of their peers whom they would approach in a situation of need. The situations given were from the real life. By using the set of peers selected by each student in her class, investigator created three sociograms.

Again, the investigator has provided collaborative learning strategies for further classes for a duration of one month. The investigator again checked the prosocial behaviour using a new set of real-life situations and based on the selection of each student's peers she prepared another set of sociograms.

Both the set of sociograms were analysed and interpreted.

### Analysis and Interpretation

Analysis of a qualitative data means studying the organised material in order to discover its inherent facts. The data are studied from as many angles as possible either to explore the new facts or to reinterpret already existing facts. The content analysis and logical analysis are mostly used in analysis of qualitative material. Analysis is among the first of the method which a researcher will call upon in his way to reduce a field size to a manageable data from a change of information.

Analysis of data is the heart of the research report. The mass of collected data through the administration of the tools need to be analysed and interpreted to know what the results show, what they mean, what is the significance and what is the answer of the original problems. It may be considered as the wheels of the search machinery without which data and other material have no specific function to perform. It involves breaking down of existing complex factors in to simple parts and putting these parts together in a new arrangement for the purposes of data which means the study of tabulated materials in order to determine facts of meanings. Thus, analysis gives shapes and form to the study.

Investigator analysed both the sociograms prepared within duration of one month. Analysis of the first set of sociogram has revealed that there were three isolates and no stars and many mutual in the first sociogram. It is interpreted that three students were not at all selected by any one of their classmates in the given situations and there were none of the students who were selected by most of the peers in a situation of need.

In the second set of sociogram, the analysis has shown that the number of isolates was reduced to none and the number of stars was increased to one. Thus, it is interpreted that after regularly participating in collaborative classroom, students were started communicating and interacting with their peers in the classroom and as a result the number of isolates were reduced to none. The result comparison shows that collaborative classroom inspires prosocial behaviour in students.

### Conclusion

The investigator conducted a case study entitled as 'Inspiring prosocial behaviours in students through collaborative

learning: A case study'. The investigator adopted case study method for this study. For data collection, the investigator used some tools such as sociogram and observation. The investigator has utilized qualitative data analysis. The analysis showed that through collaborative learning in the classroom which encourages students' interdependence, responsibility and communication, prosocial behaviours are inspired among the school students.

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