

A Study of Students Felt Need in Completion of Group Project Work in The CBSE Schools of Bhopal

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Abstract

The field of education has seen innumerable changes in the pattern of teaching, learning and dissemination of knowledge. The focus of school education is on overall development of the child by providing all the amenities and using various methodologies of teaching. The project work is given to the students to enhance greater depth of understanding of concepts, improve communication skills, social skills, leadership skills, writing skills and creativity. Students really enjoy doing the project work but they go through various difficulties in the completion of the same. The present research paper is throwing light on the felt need in the completion of the group project work of the students of class 5th of CBSE schools of Bhopal .

Keywords

Group project work, CBSE Schools, Bhopal

I. Introduction

Project-based learning (PBL) is considered an alternative to paper-based, rote memorization and to teacher centric classrooms. Proponents of project-based learning quote numerous benefits to the implementation of its strategies in the classroom including a greater intensity of understanding of concepts, wider knowledge base, better communication and social skills, enhanced leadership skills, increased creativity and superior writing skills. The core idea of project-based learning is that real-world problems capture students' interest and provoke serious thinking as the students attain and apply new knowledge in a problem-solving situation. The teacher plays the role of facilitator working with students to frame meaningful questions, structuring significant tasks, checking the progress of development of knowledge and social skills, and vigilantly assessing what students have learned from the experience. Project-based learning isn't a new phenomenon – it was popular at the beginning of the 20th century.

Definition of Key Words

Group project work : In Group Projects students have to work in a small assigned group of 5 to 8 members. It creates excellent opportunities for students to engage in problem solving with the help of their group members (*Effandi, 2007*).

CBSE Schools: The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) established in the year 1929, the oldest and largest Board of Secondary Education in India. It has more than 16,000 affiliated schools in India and across 24 other countries of the world. The CBSE affiliated schools follow a uniform curriculum with a flexible scheme of studies suitable to the needs of each and every student.

Bhopal : Bhopal is the capital of the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh and the administrative headquarters of Bhopal district and Bhopal division.

II. Literature Review

Project-based learning was most remarkably propounded by John Dewey. He proposed that learning by doing has great benefit in shaping students' learning. PBL is an effective approach and is in line with Dewey's philosophies, to which many educators have attributed for enriched learning (*Dewey 1938*). Evidence exists that through PBL, students become better researchers, problem solvers, and higher-order thinkers (*Gultekin 2005*). Research supports

that students using PBL perform better on both standardized assessments and project tests than students in traditional direct instruction programs, and that they learn not only real-world application of skills, but also analytic thinking (*Boaler 1999*). In Boaler's study of students using a project-based approach in mathematics, students were better able to see the application of their learning and less likely to view math as a set of isolated skills. . In another study, attendance was found to be higher in PBL schools (*Thomas 2000*). Over the years, educationists and other concerned persons in India have felt the need for overhauling of the educational system in general and evaluation system in particular. This concern was also reflected in National Policy on education (NPE) 1986 and Programme of Action (POA) 1992 when the nation focussed on quality of education. One of the recommendations of policy was the introduction of Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) in schools. Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) as the name implies is a developmental process of assessment which emphasizes on two fold objectives - continuity and evaluation on the one hand and assessment of broad range of instructional outcomes on the other. It has been realized with two means; Formative and Summative Assessment. The formative assessment is a tool for a teacher to continuously monitor the progress of a student. In primary classes the formative tests will be in the form of –Dictation, oral test, class test, home work, class work, assignments, Project & Group projects (III to V), (*CBSE Guidelines 12th April, 2005 Circular No: 21/2005*). Group projects can help students develop a host of skills that are increasingly important in the professional world (*Caruso & Woolley, 2008; Mannix & Neale, 2005*). Positive group experiences, moreover, have been shown to contribute to student learning, retention and overall college success (*Astin, 1997; Tinto, 1998; National Survey of Student Engagement, 2006*).

III. Significance of the study

To achieve the objectives of CCE, private CBSE schools are giving group project work to the students in different subjects. The potential learning benefits of group work are significant but simply assigning group work is no guarantee that these goals will be achieved. In fact, group projects can – and often do – backfire badly when they are not designed and supervised. Parents and children face so many problems during the course of group

projects as they require movement, communication, contribution, collaboration, domineering personalities, Conflict between team members and time. Present study reveals the needs of group projects and provides views of different stakeholders.

IV. Objectives

1. To throw light on the difficulty faced by the Class 5th students in the completion of the Group Project Work.
2. To highlight the problems faced by the students in understanding the concept of the assigned Group Project.
3. To find out the difficulty faced by the students in collecting the required material for the Project Work.
4. To find out the difficulty faced by the students in getting guidance from the parents and teachers.
5. To highlight the problem faced by the students in coordinating and communicating the group members.

Tools and techniques

To know the challenges faced by the students in completion of the group project work. A self made questionnaire was developed. Some open ended questions were also kept to know the opinion of students and the parents. Questionnaire includes questions concerning different aspects of the subject of the study.

Sample of the study

The data has been collected randomly from 100 students of class 5th CBSE schools of Bhopal. The questionnaire was distributed to the students and their parents. The questionnaire was explained and filled up within the specified period.

Findings

Responses in the questionnaire were recorded in yes or no. Students of class 5th had given their responses in yes or no. They also expressed their views in open ended questions.

81% students responded that they really enjoy on getting the project work. 19% don't feel excited on getting it. 89% students are able to communicate their ideas to the parents and their parents understand the theme of the project. 95% students are able to understand the topic given for the project and the other information regarding the project. They believe they really learn while doing the project work.

Sometimes they get group project work and they are comfortable in expressing their views in the groups formed by the teachers and they are able to perform the tasks assigned by the group leader. 85% students are comfortable in working in the groups assigned by the teacher. Remaining 15% find difficulty in adjusting with the group members. 77% students are able to coordinate their group members.

83% really enjoy meeting friends by the way of doing the project work. 81% students agreed that their parents cooperate in dropping and picking them from group leader's house. 19% parents are not able to do this because of lack of time and feasibility. All The students easily get money for buying materials for the project. 72% expressed that their teacher check the progress in the work. They get proper teacher's guidance after the assignment of the project. 27% students are not confident to ask the teacher any question in reference to the project. Remaining 73% are comfortable in solving the queries.

65% are aware that material used in the project work like gum, paints, glitter, crayons causing environmental pollution and rest are ignorant about the fact.

62% believe that time allotted to them is sufficient in the completion of the project work and remaining 38% finds scarcity of time. Normally students get 1 week to 2 weeks time to complete the group project. 45% students feel anxiety in finishing the project work and rest of them do it with ease. Apart from the excitement in the completion of the project work 90% students are afraid of losing marks in case of non-submission of project.

56% believe that project assignment disturbs the routine studies and rest of them believe it helps in better understanding of the particular subject. Like in EVS they got one group project on 'Air Pollution' which they really enjoyed and came to understand how bad is air pollution for the survival of human being.

17% students take parents help in completion of the project. But in some cases when parents are not able to handle the project they take help from outsider or expert services.

Parents outlook towards the Group Project work

75% parents feel excited when their children get the Group Project.

All the parents are able to understand the underlying concept. They believe that it enhances the creativity of the child.

All the parents are able to arrange the material required for the project work.

27% parents get stressed on not understanding the topic of the project. They find difficulty in explaining it to the children. 29% find financial constraints in buying the materials for the project. 85% are able to guide their children in completion of the project. They upgrade knowledge for doing the project work. They agree that children learn faster by way of doing the project. They encourage children for taking up the projects.

65% assist their children in project completion. They are comfortable in communicating other children parents.

80% parents are able to devote time for the project work from their busy schedule.

72% take part in the project discussion with the children.

All the parents don't think that doing project work is simply waste of time.

64% agree that material used in the project like colors, paint, crayons, etc is polluting the environment.

76% don't think that students ignore their regular studies because of project work.

92% believe that project work helps in the better understanding of the topic.

Students' recommendations

In open ended questions students have expressed their views on the kind of projects they should get –

*They are interested in making working models in projects related to Science and Maths.

*They would like to do the creative projects in Art & Craft.

*Some wanted to do the projects related with space and plants.

*Some recommended giving projects in social studies to make it more interesting.

*Some wanted to have projects on the topic of environment, water, pollution, electricity, water cycle etc.

Parents Recommendations

Parents have recommended some suggestions to overcome the difficulties faced during the completion of a group project--

*Group projects should be completed during the school hours as it is inconvenient to arrange the meeting of the students after the

school hours.

*Some parents believed that assigned projects should be in the capacity of the child and should not be very difficult.

*Some parents suggested that projects should be given after class 7th.

*Some parents suggested for giving power point presentation in computers.

*Parents appreciated the concept of doing by themselves as it helps in longer retention of knowledge in the memory. The topics of projects should be relevant with the syllabus.

*Some expressed to give the project work during vacations as it helps to keep the children engaged in challenging task.

*Projects should be related with their day –to– day life and associated with the concept in the subject which they are studying currently.

*Students should be encouraged to use the library books for the given topic.

*Projects should be cost effective.

*Teachers should guide the students properly to avoid confusion among the students. Each student should be well aware about the delegated work.

*Group members should be residing in nearby places to facilitate easy communication and completion of the group project.

V. Conclusion

Project Base Learning (PBL) approaches help make learning significant and are useful to students by establishing connections to life outside the classroom. This study has highlighted the benefits and some disadvantages of the project work assignment in the schools. These assignments can be more interesting after incorporating the needs of the students and parents. This study is limited to the challenges faced by the students and parents during the completion of project work in the CBSE schools in Bhopal. This study is useful for other regions too since it provides insights for understanding the difficulties faced by the students in accomplishing the project work.

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