

The Effectiveness of Group Dynamics as an Instructional Tool in Teaching History: A Basis for Enhanced Approach in College Teaching

Pamela V. Zuñiga

National University Philippines

National University Fairview

Abstract— The study investigates the effectiveness of group dynamics such as collaborative strategic reading, jigsaw puzzles, and role-playing as an enhanced approach in teaching social science courses at the college level.

Educational technology advancement in teaching and learning can be an advantage to both teachers and students particularly to college students who would like to explore and discover information from the internet. This can be faster but less memorable learning and can cause less direct social interaction.

In every organization like in the academe, group dynamics pertains to the nature, formation, and how groups contribute to the behavior and attitude of its members. The process of group interaction will determine their roles, functions, and their efficiency. Group dynamics is an important aspect of organizing the class and can be divided into two; intragroup dynamics which presents interactions within a group and intergroup dynamics which explains the interaction between groups.

Developing good and effective group dynamics for student learning is crucial for teachers. Poor group dynamics can adversely affect students' academic performance which can lead to negative outcomes on the common goal.

This paper will present group dynamic activities for tertiary students who are taking history courses and can be used as a reference in developing engaging and interactive college teaching approaches.

Keywords— Collaborative Strategic Reading, Group Dynamics, Jigsaw Puzzle, Role Playing, Teamwork.

I. INTRODUCTION

Groups is very essential in every organizational life. Two or more diverse people who join, interact and psychologically aware with one another to work towards a common goal can be perceived as a group. Dynamics has been characterized as energy or effective action. Group dynamics usually refers to the study of individuals who are interacting in small groups, shares and work on a common objective to achieve the organizational goal. Group dynamics also became a significant component of current day organizations to work on individual designated task to collaborative which improves general outcomes.

Curriculum across all programs in tertiary education offers various social science courses that requires student to develop their critical and analytical thinking skills. Courses under social science are multi discipline subjects that deals with general psychology, history, economics, etc. The study has a vital role for the youth because it provides them knowledge of the past in order to prepare them understand the present and to help shape

the future. Despite this subject's relevant role in life, students had not understood its importance. This can be seen in the increasing number of students who find social science as quite uninteresting.

In this paper, the effectiveness of group dynamics such as collaborative strategic reading, jigsaw puzzle and role playing will be discussed to present how can it be useful in teaching history in college and how students can benefit from these approaches.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The study investigates the effectiveness of group dynamics as an instructional tool in teaching history as a basis for enhanced approach in college teaching.

Specifically, it answered the following questions:

1. Demographic profile of the instructor and student respondents
2. Effectiveness of group dynamics activities as an instructional tool in teaching history in terms of

Jigsaw Puzzle, Role Playing, Collaborative Strategic Reading

3. Significant differences in the performance of the experimental group and control group in the result of their pretest and posttest
4. Implication of the findings of the study to the enhancement of college teaching.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

The researcher considered closely the readings and studies that provide rich background information for this study. "What we hear, we forget; what we see, we remember; but what we do, we understand" (Confucius). This principle states that one learns with the use of mental and physical activity giving the idea that learning is the result of pupil's activities. In Gregorio (2002), Pigford believed that student's involvement was used to make learning more meaningful.

Based on the book of Tria and Jao (2000) they described group dynamics as the interplay of personalities in a group of people. Leadership is basically an expression of group dynamics." It is also explained as the study of methods by which a group or its actions can be influenced.

Group dynamics was a term introduced by Kurt Lewin, a famous psychologist who worked at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He developed the idea that training in human relation skills was an important and essential aspect for human growth and development.

A. Role Playing

Jaime Bulatao, one of the founding fathers of Psychology in the Philippines introduced the science of group process to the Atene de Manila. He was impressed by the involvement that ensued with the use of group methods. He wrote "The Technique of Group Discussion" which is a systematic guideline for the conduct of group discussions. He also mentioned in his book, role playing is a special and interesting side-technique either to get the discussion started or to solve a problem met within the discussion. After the role playing the discussion can go on with the actors giving a report on the way they felt their roles. Also, those students who never acted before in their lives responded readily in role playing.

Cited in the article written by Dr. Joan Tumblety (2004) entitled "evaluating role play in history teaching" that through various studies about role playing everybody

learned that role playing as an excellent way for increasing students participation in discussion and for managing larger seminar groups; that is is ideally suited to increase close engagement with primary source material and it may lead to greater student interest in the topic but almost certainly does not lead to better academic performance in itself.

B. Collaborative Strategic Reading

O'Brien (2007) in his article entitled "Using Collaborative Strategic reading to accommodate diverse Learning and Behavior Needs in General Education Classroom", he introduced the use of CSR which emphasized content acquisition through student-centered collaboration and the use of specific roles that paralleled effective reading strategies. He also believed that CSR is a promising strategy to accommodate academic university in general education. CSR should compose of 5-8 students wherein they play a specific and distinct role in the group such as the questioner, passage master, vocabulary enricher, connector and illustrator. According to William Glasser, "we learn 80% of what we experience personally."

C. Jigsaw Puzzle

Hanze and Berger (2007) compared the jigsaw classroom technique with the traditional direct instruction in a 12th grade Physics class. Students were given a test of academic performance served as pretest and a questionnaire looking at personality variables such as goal orientation, self-concept, and uncertainty orientation. A post-test was given after the learning unit. When comparing traditional instruction and jigsaw classroom, there were clear differences the learning experience, but there were no difference in the academic performances as measured by a test in Physics knowledge. Moreover, the students in the Jigsaw class were seen to be more competent, more autonomous, and more socially related to other students. Carpenter (2006) concluded in his study and stated in his article entitled, "Effective Teaching Methods in Large Classes" that among the different types of active learning methods, Jigsaw puzzle ranks number one. Performance under the Jigsaw puzzle method showed significant improvement as compared to the case study and team project methods.

IV. SYNTHESIS

This study is similar with the study conducted by Arsenia Manzano (2007) et.al. and the prior study of the researcher about group dynamics. Similar to the study conducted by Manzano et.al History were taught among

the respondents in this study since the primordial concern of this study is to determine the effectiveness of group dynamics in teaching history concepts. Dissimilar to the prior study of the researcher about group dynamics wherein she used the descriptive type of research, this study would like to inquire in deeper perspective about group dynamics as instructional tool in history thus, the researcher decided to use experimental type of research to get more qualitative and quantitative results. The researcher was inspired by the findings cited in the related literature and studies upon seeking ways to raise quality of teaching and learning process.

Group	Activity	N	Treatment	Post test
1. A	Random	97	Group Dynamics	Teacher Made Test
2. B	Random	81	Conventional Method	Teacher Made Test

Instrumentation

The major tool used in gathering the data was the self-made questionnaire which was designed according to the problems of this study.

Statistical Analysis

Descriptive statistics, using the percentage method, mean, standard deviation and weighted average was employed to present the profile of the respondents according to their personal characteristics, as well as the general trends of their perception under each item in the questionnaire.

The gathering data were arranged and compiled in tabulated form. These were subjected to statistical analysis to draw out the information needed to answer the specific questions of the study.

VI. SUMMARY

Researcher’s objective is to assess the effectiveness of the group dynamics as an instructional in teaching history: a basis for enhanced approach in college teaching.

the main objective of this study was to measure the effectiveness of group dynamics as an instructional tool for teaching history as measured by the achievement level of the students of a state university students. The respondents of the study were eleven (11) social science instructors and one hundred seventy eight (178) students during the first semester of the SY 2012.

V. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research approach used in this study is experimental design. Specifically, the researcher used the post test control group design wherein it involved at least two groups; subjects were randomly assigned to groups, exposed to the independent variable and post tested. Post test scores were then compared to determine the effectiveness of the treatment. The researcher chose the post test control group design because it controls many sources of invalidity and because random assignment to groups was feasible.

The major tool in gathering the data was a self-made questionnaire which was designed according to the problems set in the study. Statistical analyses were employed in processing the data to achieve the desired results and interpretations.

Findings

1. Jigsaw Puzzle

Based on the result, student respondents realized that the use of Jigsaw puzzle is highly effective as a tool of instruction in studying history. With a computed weighted mean value of 4.76, the student respondents believed that they enhanced their critical thinking skills through the Jigsaw puzzle activity. It also shows that the use of Jigsaw Puzzle Method is effective in increasing the students’ academic performance both in oral and written outputs having a weighted mean of 4.30. Furthermore, the computed over all mean is 4.55 which proves that the use of Jigsaw Puzzle is very effective in learning history as perceived by the experimental group.

2. Role Playing

The result shows that student respondents found highly effective the use of role playing with a computed weighted mean value of 4.80, the student respondents believed that they enhanced their critical thinking skills through the role playing activity and most of them preferred that it should be used often as possible in learning history having a computed weighted mean of 4.43. Role playing has a computed over all mean of 4.65 which depicts that it is very effective in learning history and it helped them to improve understanding and critical thinking towards the lesson.

3. Collaborative Strategic Reading

The findings shows that the students respondents found highly effective the use of CSR with a computed weighted mean value of 4.62, the student respondents believed that they enhanced their critical thinking skills through the CSR activity. It also shows that CSR increases the student respondent's academic performance both in oral and written output. CSR also helps them to ask questions/inquiries without any second thought or hesitations having the same computed weighted mean of 4.37. CSR has a computed over all mean of 4.50 which shows that it is effective in raising the quality of learning process.

VII. CONCLUSION

In the light of the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

The result of the assessment is very significant. It reflects on the greater result in learning and participation of the students. Also, the importance of group dynamics as instructional tools approach in college teaching showed greater teaching performance. It gives greater motivation to study as a group because students increased their involvement in the teaching and learning process. Also, it defied the idea of teacher centered type of teaching but an active student-centered learning system of teaching.

Also the assessment shows very effective in regards with the enhancement of college teaching I using group dynamics as an instructional tool. Therefore, it can be concluded that the greater result in learning and participation of the students showed greater teaching performance of the teacher

VIII. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations were formulated:

1. Since group dynamics is found out to be an effective instructional tool for teaching history, the teachers must use it often in their class as a tool in transmitting knowledge and concepts. Group dynamics allowed students to partake in the teaching and learning process as they involved themselves in group activities to gain and discover new knowledge which makes the process more exciting for them. As what the scientific findings found out that the brain searches for patterns and connections for building meaning thus the students

should be actively engaged in their learning to make learning meaningful.

2. The researcher recommends the teachers to plan things out, thus, teachers should remember the following pointers such as, type of group dynamics to be used must be appropriate to the topic to be discussed, explain thoroughly the activity to the students, its objectives and hoe their performance will be evaluated and lastly, let the students be the manager of their own learning process.
3. Th researcher also recommends that the school administrator must conduct seminars and workshops about other group dynamics.
4. The researcher suggests that group dynamics activities can also enhance their communicative skills as she noticed while writing this paper that the manner of speaking of the students in the experimental group become clearer, thoughts become more organized, more expressive, and they speak with conviction and passion during the presentations and discussions.

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