EFFECTIVENESS OF COLLABORATIVE LEARNING IN ENHANCING SOCIAL SKILLS AMONG STUDENTS: SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

P. NAGALAKSHMI[1] and Dr. CH. BABY PRASUNA[2]
[1]Research scholar, Department of Education, Sri Padmavati Mahila Visvavidyalayam,
Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh.
[2]Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Sri Padmavati Mahila Visvavidyalayam,
Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh.

Abstract

This systematic review explores the effectiveness of Collaborative Learning in enhancing Social Skills among Secondary School Students. Collaborative Learning, a pedagogical approach where students engage in group-based tasks, is grounded in critical theoretical frameworks, including Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, Social Interdependence Theory by Johnson and Johnson, and Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory. These theories highlight the role of social interaction in cognitive and emotional development, which aligns with the collaborative model's emphasis on peer engagement. Social skills like communication, empathy, teamwork, and conflict resolution are crucial for academic success, emotional well-being, and future employability. This review synthesizes findings from various studies that underscore the positive impact of collaborative learning methods-such as Think-Pair-Share, Jigsaw, Peer Tutoring, and Role-Playing-on students' social skill development. Empirical evidence indicates Collaborative Learning fosters inclusivity, enhances interpersonal relationships, and improves communication and cooperation. Challenges such as free-riding and personality clashes are acknowledged, with recommendations for teacher guidance to maximize collaborative effectiveness. The review demonstrates that Collaborative Learning significantly improves social and academic outcomes, preparing students for future civic and professional roles.

Keywords: academic, collaborative, emotional, learning, personality, success, theory

1. Introduction to Collaborative Learning

Collaborative learning is an instructional approach that emphasizes student interaction and group work to achieve learning objectives. Unlike traditional learning, which often focuses on individual achievement, collaborative learning promotes cooperative engagement, where students learn from and with each other. This method encourages active participation, critical thinking, and mutual respect among peers, making it particularly suitable for developing social skills during secondary education, a crucial period for personal and social development.

2. Theoretical Framework

Several theoretical frameworks underpin collaborative learning and its impact on social skills:

a) **Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky, 1978)**: Vygotsky's theory posits that social interaction is fundamental to cognitive development. Collaborative learning aligns with this idea by facilitating peer interactions, allowing students to construct knowledge through dialogue and shared experiences. By working together, students can develop the social skills necessary for effective communication and collaboration.

b) **Social Interdependence Theory (Johnson & Johnson, 1989)** emphasizes the importance of positive interdependence among group members. It posits that when students perceive their

success as linked to the success of their peers, they are more likely to cooperate and engage in constructive interactions. Collaborative learning creates environments where students feel accountable to one another, enhancing their teamwork and cooperation skills.

c) **Experiential Learning Theory (Kolb, 1984)**: Kolb's theory suggests that learning involves concrete experiences, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. Collaborative learning methods allow students to engage in hands-on activities, reflect on their experiences, and learn from peers, contributing to the development of social skills through active engagement.

3. Importance of Social Skills in Secondary Education

Social skills are critical for students' success in academic and personal spheres. They encompass effective communication, empathy, teamwork, conflict resolution, and leadership. As adolescents navigate complex social dynamics, developing these skills becomes increasingly vital. Practical social skills contribute to the following:

a) **Academic Success**: Students with strong social skills are more likely to engage in classroom discussions, work collaboratively on projects, and seek help, which can enhance their learning outcomes.

b) **Emotional Well-being**: Positive social interactions contribute to students' emotional health, reducing feelings of isolation and promoting a sense of belonging.

c) **Future Employability**: Employers value soft skills, including teamwork and communication. Early development of these skills through collaborative learning prepares students for future workforce demands.

4. Collaborative Learning Methods and Social Skills Development

Various collaborative learning methods have been shown to enhance social skills among secondary school students:

a) **Think-Pair-Share**: This method encourages students to articulate their thoughts and listen actively to peers, promoting effective communication and empathy.

b) **Jigsaw Method**: By requiring students to rely on each other's expertise, this method fosters teamwork, accountability, and respect for diverse perspectives.

c) **Group Investigation**: Students work collaboratively to explore a topic, enhancing their problem-solving and conflict-resolution skills as they navigate group dynamics.

d) **Peer Tutoring**: This method allows students to teach one another, which helps develop leadership, empathy, and patience.

e) **Role-Playing**: Engaging in role-playing scenarios allows students to practice social interactions in a safe environment, fostering empathy and perspective-taking.

5. Evidence of Effectiveness

Research consistently demonstrates the positive impact of collaborative learning on social skills development. Studies show that students who participate in collaborative learning experiences report improved communication, increased empathy, enhanced cooperation, and better conflict-resolution skills (Johnson & Johnson, 2009; Gillies, 2007). Furthermore, collaborative learning promotes inclusivity and positive peer relationships, which are crucial factors in the secondary school environment. The collaborative learning environment allowed students to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate ideas. The informal setting encouraged open discussion and interaction, allowing students to learn from each other's knowledge, skills, and experiences. In this context, students were required to go

beyond simply expressing their opinions; they needed to justify their judgments and reflect on the criteria they used to reach those conclusions. As a result, each opinion was carefully examined. Valuing the ability to acknowledge that one's initial viewpoint might have been incorrect or partially flawed fostered a culture of openness and growth (Anuradha, 1995). Compared to competitive and individualistic approaches, collaborative learning offers numerous benefits. It often leads to higher levels of achievement and productivity, fosters caring and supportive relationships, and enhances commitment among participants. Additionally, collaborative learning promotes better psychological health, social competence, and self-esteem. (Laal & Ghodsi, 2012).

The research by Suyato et al. (2024) highlights the significance of collaborative learning in developing 21st-century civic skills. This model fosters cooperation and active engagement, equipping students to collaborate effectively across diverse groups and contribute to positive societal change.

Basari (2023) demonstrated that students exposed to collaborative learning strategies exhibited significantly improved collaborative skills compared to those taught using traditional methods. This improvement encompassed academic and social benefits, highlighting the efficacy of structured collaborative techniques in secondary education.

In the study by Govindarajoo et al. (2023), students expressed favorable attitudes toward collaborative learning, indicating that such an environment could facilitate goal achievement when the roles of teachers and group members were clearly defined. These points discuss the importance of teacher guidance and group dynamics in promoting successful collaborative experiences.

Laksmiwati et al. (2022) found that students engaging in collaborative learning exhibited higher social skills than those involved in traditional discussion-based learning. This study suggests that collaborative approaches offer students more effective social skill development pathways.

Polat et al. (2022) illustrated the impact of group mind mapping on preschool children's social skills. The structured group activities promoted social interaction and enhanced the children's abilities to work collaboratively.

Sarwat Sultan et al. (2020) reported significant gains in social skills and academic confidence among students who participated in collaborative learning compared to those who learned individually. This study emphasizes the role of collaborative settings in fostering a supportive learning atmosphere.

Ghavifekr (2020) explored how demographic factors affected students' engagement with collaborative learning. The study found a strong positive correlation between collaborative learning and enhanced social interaction skills, regardless of gender or family background.

Le et al. (2017) identified several obstacles to effective student collaboration, including a lack of skills, free-riding, and personality clashes. These barriers underscore the need for teachers to address collaborative dimensions and provide more precise guidance.

Law et al.'s findings (2017) indicate that while collaborative learning positively influenced students' knowledge of mobile app development, its impact on self-efficacy and social skills was modest. This study suggests a potential area for further enhancement in collaborative learning programs.

Nugroho (2017) highlighted the success of a collaborative-based Guided Discovery approach in improving students' critical thinking and social skills, demonstrating the effectiveness of structured collaborative methodologies in higher education settings.

Sumadi et al. (2017) found that the Reciprocal Teaching technique positively influenced students' achievements and social skills, indicating that specific collaborative teaching methods can yield beneficial outcomes.

Sulaiman and Shahrill (2015) noted that collaborative learning significantly improved students' understanding of statistics, fostering essential skills for the 21st century. The study emphasized group work's role in enhancing academic performance and collaboration. Lourdes (2006) emphasized the dual benefit of collaborative learning for both teacher candidates and elementary students. The study demonstrated that effective collaboration among teacher candidates not only enhances their pedagogical content knowledge but also improves their students' social skills.

6. Conclusion
The studies collectively suggest that collaborative learning is a highly effective pedagogical approach that fosters academic success, essential social skills, and civic competencies. While challenges to effective collaboration exist, targeted strategies can help mitigate these barriers and enhance learning outcomes. The role of teachers in guiding and structuring collaborative activities is crucial for maximizing the benefits of this approach. The effectiveness of collaborative learning in enhancing social skills among secondary school students is supported by theoretical frameworks and empirical evidence. As students engage in collaborative activities, they develop essential social competencies contributing to their academic success, emotional well-being, and future employability. Understanding how collaborative learning impacts social skill development can guide educators in designing effective instructional strategies that foster a supportive and interactive learning environment.

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