PEDAGOGIK TADQIQOTLAR JURNALI
ISSN: 3060-4923 Impact Factor –7,212

THE IMPACT OF GROUP TASKS ON QUALITY LEARNING: PERCEPTION OF WIUT CIFS STUDENTS

Muzayyana Urinboyeva Dilshod qizi
Toshkent xalqaro Vestminster universiteti
bakalvr bakalavriat talabasi

Kholmurodova Mohinur Kurbonmurod kizi
Toshkent xalqaro Vestminster universiteti
bakalvr bakalavriat talabasi
https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.22056495

Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqolada talabalar guruhli topshiriqlar va ularning ta’lim sifatiga ta’siri haqidagi fikrlari o‘rganiladi. Tadqiqotning maqsadi Toshkent xalqaro vestminster universitetining birinchi bosqich (CIFS) talabalari orasida hamkorlikka asoslangan topshiriqlarning ta’lim jarayoniga ta’siri haqidagi qarashlarni aniqlashdan iborat. Tadqiqotda guruhli topshiriqlarning talabalarga ta’siri, jumladan, ijobiy natijalar, duch kelinadigan muammolar, guruhda ishlash motivatsiyasi hamda individual samaradorlik haqidagi fikrlarga e’tibor qaratilgan. Tadqiqot doirasida 34 nafar CIFS talabasi ishtirokida onlayn so‘rovnoma o‘tkazildi. Olingan ma’lumotlarga ko‘ra, talabalarning aksariyati guruhda ishlash jarayonida muloqotdagi qiyinchiliklar, vazifalarning teng taqsimlanmasligi, baholashning adolatsizligi, jadvallarni muvofiqlashtirishdagi qiyinchiliklar hamda ayrim guruh a’zolarining yetarlicha hissa qo‘shmasligi kabi muammolarga duch keladi. Shuningdek, tadqiqot natijalari guruhda ishlash talabalarning motivatsiyasiga qanday ta’sir qilishini ko‘rsatdi. Bundan tashqari, hamkorlikka asoslangan ta’lim muloqot, yetakchilik va muammolarni hal qilish kabi muhim yumshoq ko‘nikmalarni rivojlantirishga yordam berishi va ushbu ko‘nikmalar kelajakdagi bandlik uchun foydali bo‘lishi mumkinligini ko‘rsatdi. Umuman olganda, tadqiqot natijalari guruhli topshiriqlar samarali tashkil etilgan taqdirda ta’lim sifatini oshirishi mumkinligini ko‘rsatadi. Shu sababli universitetlarga hamkorlik ko‘nikmalarini rivojlantirishga qaratilgan ta’lim mashg‘ulotlarini joriy etish, shuningdek, talabalarning guruhdagi hissasini adolatli baholash uchun tengdoshlar baholashi va individual rivojlanishni kuzatish kabi baholash usullaridan foydalanish tavsiya etiladi.
Kalit so‘zlar: ta’lim sifati, guruhli topshiriqlar, ko‘nikmalarni rivojlantirish, universitet talabalari, muammolar, motivatsiya

Аннотация: В данной статье исследуется мнение студентов о групповых задачах и их влиянии на качество обучения. Целью исследования является изучение мнения студентов первого курса Вестминстерского международного университета в Ташкенте (MBYT) о влиянии совместных задач на их учебный опыт. Фокус направлен на восприятие совместных задач, включая положительные результаты, возникшие трудности, мотивацию к работе в группе и восприятие индивидуальной эффективности. Исследование включает ответы от 34 студентов CIFS, собранные в ходе онлайн-опроса. Согласно полученным данным, большинство студентов, работающих в группе, сталкиваются с проблемами общения, неравного вклада, несправедливой оценки, трудностей в координации расписаний и свободного вождения. Также результаты исследования показали, как командная работа может повлиять на мотивацию студентов. Кроме того, результаты исследования показывают, что совместное обучение может способствовать развитию необходимых мягких навыков, таких как общение, лидерство и решение проблем, которые могут быть ценными для будущей занятости. В целом, результаты исследования показывают, что групповые задачи могут

повысить качество образования при эффективном выполнении. Поэтому университетам рекомендуется интегрировать образовательные сессии по совместным навыкам, а также методы справедливой оценки, такие как экспертные оценки и индивидуальный мониторинг прогресса, чтобы минимизировать негативный опыт студентов в области совместного обучения.

Ключевые слова: качественное обучение, групповые задачи, развитие навыков, студенты университета, вызовы, мотивация.

Abstract: This paper investigates the students' opinion about group tasks and their impact quality of learning. The purpose of the research is to explore the view of the first-year Westminster International University in Tashkent (WIUT) students about the influence of collaborative tasks on their learning experience. Focus is directed to the perception of collaborative tasks, including positive outcomes, challenges faced, motivation to work in a group and perception of individual effectiveness. The study includes responses from 34 CIFS students collected through an online survey. According to data gained, the majority of students working in a group face problem with communication, unequal contribution, unfair assessment, difficulty coordinating schedules and free-riding. Also, the results of study revealed how teamwork can affect the motivation of students. Moreover, the findings suggest that collaborative learning can foster essential soft skills such as communication, leadership and problem solving, which can be valuable for future employability. Overall, the research results suggest that group tasks can enhance the quality of education when effectively implemented. That is why, it is recommended for the universities to integrate educational sessions on collaborative skills as well as fair assessment methods, such as peer evaluations and individual progress tracking, to minimize the negative experience of students from collaborative learning.

Keywords: quality learning, group tasks, skills development, university students, challenges, motivation.

Introduction

1.1. Background Information

Higher education institutions utilize group tasks as a teaching approach, along with individual learning. According to Ryan (no date), groupworks can be divided into three main categories: informal cooperative learning groups, formal cooperative learning groups and team-based learning.

1.2. Specific Information

Factors, such as the learning environment, level of students, and the nature of the have an influence on effectiveness of groupwork process and its outcomes (Wu, 2023). Moreover, individuals are needed certain skills for successful group task accomplishment (Milson et al., 2023). That is why, working in a group can pose both benefits and challenges for students.

1.3. Aim

This research focuses on the opinions of the WIUT foundation-year students about the influence of group tasks on their learning experience, challenges they face while working in a group, and potential skills they may develop through group tasks. Understanding these factors can be crucial for evaluating the role of collaborative learning in success of students.

1.4. Scope

The results of this study may be reviewed by educators to identify the effectiveness of group-based learning challenges, and refine teaching strategies to enhance the learning experience of students. This study covers 34 CIFS students' perception regarding the role of using group tasks in enhancing learning experience of students.

1.5. Outline

In the following sections, literature review, methods, results, and discussion sections are provided, followed by conclusion of the research.

Literature Review

Collaborative learning is a teaching style in which students cooperate in small groups to solve a common task, and it has been shown to improve learner performance (Razmerita & Kirchner, 2014). This type of learning may have a positive impact on students' learning experiences, enhancing motivation and soft skills (Zhang and Ma, 2023). However, the process may also present some challenges, including communication issues, conflicts among team members and unfair assessment practices (Lailiyah et al., 2021; Guan, 2024). This section examines existing literature on both opportunities and challenges of collaborative learning.

2.1. Potential benefits of group tasks

Well-structured collaborative learning may foster soft skills which are essential in both educational and professional settings. Zhang and Ma (2023) in their study examined and compared the effectiveness of both traditional and project-based learning methods using meta-analysis. They concluded that in teamwork students demonstrated deeper affective attitude, being actively involved in the learning process. In turn, emotional engagement enhanced creative thinking and computational thinking skills of students. As a result, such improvements led to better academic performance. Additionally, according to a study on the effectiveness of Project Based Learning (PBL), Wurdinger and Qureshi (2016) found that PBL could help to enhance problem-solving, creativity, communication, responsibility and self-direction. Hussein (2024) in his finding revealed that particularly these skills are highly valued by employers, highlighting the importance to develop soft skills at universities.

2.2. Challenges working in a group

Study, intended to investigate the experience of higher education students in collaborative tasks, by Lailiyah et al. (2021), highlights challenges and obstacles in group tasks from students' perspective. Researchers concluded that students find difficult collaborating with partners, especially in randomly distributed teams. Further, regardless of the effort to communicate and integrate, groupmates cannot eventually compromise and sometimes face internal conflicts. While collaborating with people, speaking up is crucial for both quality of the work and coordinated process; otherwise, either the point of the members will be ignored, or the final work will be incoherent. Moreover, there is the problem of unfair assessment of the team assignment. Even when the project is graded separately for individual performance and for contribution to shared work, the mark for the latter is equal for everyone. Thus, Guan states this method fails to consider the differences in effort and quality contribution of each member, allowing free riders to receive the same credit as active contributors. This can result in students' demotivation, leading to frustration among diligent individuals and weakening the effectiveness of this approach (2024).

The existing literature highlights that group assignments can be beneficial for students' academic performance and enhancing skills that can improve their employability. Nevertheless, challenges such unequal participation and cooperation in impromptu structured groups still remain, causing conflicts and reducing motivation. Collaborative learning is increasingly being adopted in other higher educational institutions in Uzbekistan. Moving forward, this research investigates the effectiveness and challenges of collaborative learning by exploring how group tasks influence the overall quality of education of WIUT foundation students.

Methods

The study examines WIUT first-year students' perception regarding group tasks and their impact on learning experience. The purpose of this section is to provide details on demographic characteristics of participants, ethical considerations, and research instrument implemented in the study.

3.1. Research Participants

In total 34 number of first-year students take participate in survey. 52,9% of them were male and 41,2% female.

3.2. Ethical considerations

Before completing the survey, all respondents were informed about the purpose of the study and confidentiality in the description part of the questionnaire. To avoid misunderstandings and continentality violation, personal questions were not asked.

Furthermore, AI tools such as ChatGPT and Poe AI were integrated to find secondary data and to enhance questions for the questionnaire.

3.4. Research instrument

For research quantitative methods of data collection was used. Created in Google Docs and consisting of eleven questions it was distributed through social media platforms. The questionnaire included demographic, multiple choice, yes/no, direct, and open-ended questions. The survey covered questions about group work preferences, level of motivation, challenges faced, skills development, as well as its impact on academic performance and employability skills. This method allowed reach broad number of students in a short time.

Results

This section explores information on the study's results. In particular, motivation in teamwork, skill development, the relevance of these skills for employability, challenges faced, and effectiveness for all members.

Motivation levels	**N=**	**%**
Motivated as responsible leader	15	44.1
Motivated when encouraged by members	9	26.5
Demotivated because of lack of engagement in the group	7	20.6
Demotivated by pressure from teammates	2	5.9
Other factors	1	2.9
Total	34	100

Figure 1. Motivation level of students in teams.

It was found that students are feel mostly motivated being a leader (44.1%) and also because of encouragement from others students (26.5%). However, 20.6% of respondents experience demotivation due to a lack of engagement within a group, and a smaller portion of students (5.9%) reported that pressure from teammates caused such feeling. Additionally, 2.9% selected "Other factor" option. These findings indicate that while leadership and encouragement can positively influence motivation, disengagement and pressure can demotivate.

4.2 Skill development and their relevance in the workplace.

Skills	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
Communication	3 (8,8%)	2(5,9%)	13(38,2%)	10(29,4%)	7(20,4%)
Teamwork	1 (2,9)	3 (8,8%)	10(29,4%)	6(17,6%)	
Time management	1 (2,9)	6(17,6%)	16(47,1)	7(20,4%)	6(17,6%)

Problem-solving	2(5,9%)	6(17,6%)	9(26,5%)	14(41,2%)	5(14,7%)
Leadership	1 (2,9)	3 (8,8%)	12(35,3%)	13(38,2%)	6(17,6%)
Critical Thinking	2(5,9%)	5(14,7%)	8(23,5)	11(32,4%)	9(26,5%)

Figure 2. Students' perception of skill development trough group work.

The results revealed that the majority of WIUT CIFS students admit that teamwork is the skill they think improved most through collaborative learning, with 20,6% respondents selecting "Agree" and 44,1% "Strongly Agree". In addition, critical thinking (58,9%) is another highest-rated skill. Also, problem-solving, leadership, and communication showed balanced responses, with 55,9%, 55,8%, and 50% of students agreeing or strongly agreeing that working in group

fosters these skills. On the other hand, time management had the most diverse response, with 47,1% students choosing "Neutral" option.

Skills	**N=**	**%**
Communication	8	23,5%
Teamwork	10	29,4%
Time management	1	2,9%
Problem solving	6	17,6%
Leadership	10	29,4%
Critical Thinking	2	5,9%
Other	8	23,5%

Figure 3. Opinion of students on what skills developed through group work can be essential in workplace.

Further, the respondents answered for the open-ended question "What skills developed through collaborative learning, you think, can enhance your employability?". Among the 34 students the most frequently mentioned skills were teamwork (29,4%), leadership (29,4%) and communication (23,5%). Also, the results show that 17,6% of students think problem-solving skills can improve their employability. However, critical thinking and time-management, with the least frequent mentions 5,9% and 2,9% respectively, indicate that these skills are less likely to be applied in their future work. In addition, respondents highlighted listening, flexible thinking, social skills, adaptability, creativity and responsibility as valuable attribute in workplace that can be enhanced through collaborative learning.

4.5. Challenges faced

Types of challenges	**N=**	**%**
Unequal contribution	15	44.1
Free riders	15	44.1
Lack of communication among members	16	47.1
Conflicts between group members	8	23.5
Difficulty coordinating schedules	18	52.9
Unfair assessment	7	20.6
Other	3	8.8

Figure 4. Challenges students encounter in teamwork

Following that, students reported on the main challenges they face in group work. Most of them selected difficulty

organizing schedules (52.9%), lack of communication among members (47.1%), unequal contribution (44.1%), and free riders (44.1%). Additionally, 23.5% of respondents faced conflicts between group members, while 20.6% mentioned unfair assessment as another challenge. Finally, 8.8% of respondents experience other problems.

4.6. Equal effectiveness for each member

Effective equally for everyone	N=	%
Yes	5	14.7
No	29	85.3
Total	34	100

Figure 5. Student's 'opinion on whether collaborative learning is equally effective for each group member.

The results of survey revealed that the majority (85.3%) believed that group work is not equally effective for everyone, while only 14.7% think that it is beneficial for all members equally. The majority of those who disagree with this statement constantly mentioned unequal contribution, different personalities and preferred learning style as a main reason for such response.

The analysis of results showed that while some students feel motivated in teamwork and develop essential soft skills, others face range of challenges that affect their learning experience, and they believe teamwork is not equally beneficial for all group members.

Discussion

In this section it will be summarized, interpreted and compared key findings of the research.

5.1. Skills development.

The results indicate that the more than half of the surveyed WIUT students believe teamwork, critical thinking, leadership, problem-solving and communication skills can be improved through collaborative learning. These findings align with the results of Wurdinger and Qureshi (2016) research, that showed that Project Based Learning can enhance these range of skills. A possible explanation for this result can be that when students work together on a project, they are required constantly communicate, share and take responsibilities, resolve conflicts, and make team-driven decisions – all of which contribute to the natural development of communication, leadership, critical thinking, problem-solving and teamwork.

Further, students highlighted that these skills, except for critical thinking, can enhance their employability. These findings support Hussein's (2024) statement that 'As college graduates transition into the workforce, having a robust repertoire of soft skills can significantly improve their employability and career trajectory'.

On the other hand, it was found that time-management is the least developed skill through collaborative learning, from the perspective of the WIUT students. Similarly, Wurdinger and Qureshi (2016) in their studying did not observe any improvements in participants' time-management skill. It may be because time-management is the type of skill that typically cannot be developed through interaction with other people, but rather through individual habits and self-discipline.

Moreover, despite the importance of time management and critical thinking in workplace as it confirms by other literature, in our research a significantly small number of students mentioned these skills as important to their employability. This can be attributed to the relatively small sample size.

5.2. Challenges

Insufficient communication among teammates was mentioned as one of the most concerning problems faced, by more than half of respondents. Moreover, this issue is observed as one of the factors of reduced motivation among students. The results are connected to the results of the research by Guan (2021). Another, no less questionable challenge is the unequal contribution of students into the work. Also, it was mentioned in the research by Lailiyah et al. (2021) as one of the potential demotivation causes.

5.3. Motivation to work in a team.

Observations show that most respondents felt motivated because of the leader position in the group. Also, there were some respondents that felt involved being encouraged by other members. However, there were students who did not want to be involved as either they were pressured by teammates or could not bring others into engaged group discussion. These can be the reason for students to perceive group tasks equally effective for each student. Moreover, factors such as free riders, unfair assessment and internal conflicts in the group also contributed to such perception among majority of respondents.

5.4. Limitations

The research has several limitations that should be taken into consideration when interpreting its findings. Firstly, the sample size is limited to only 34 CIFS students from WIUT. Secondly, the research focused on the experience of participants from institution and programs. These factors can be barrier in reflecting opinion of a wider range of students. Thirdly, for collecting firsthand data was used questionnaire that does not control the honesty of answers, and which are subject to personal bias, such are overestimation or underestimation of abilities. Considering these limitations in further studies are highly recommended.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The purpose of the research was to explore the opinion of WIUT CIFS students about the impact of group tasks on their quality of learning. The findings suggest that collaborative learning can be effective teaching approach that can improve the quality of education of students. As was found students believe they can improve essential soft skills such as teamwork, leadership, communication, and problem-solving that can be applied in the workplace. However, students face challenges in group work that significantly effect on their quality of learning such as difficulties with coordinating schedules, lack of communication, unequal contribution, or free riders. Also, it was revealed that the majority of participants do not think that group work is equally effective for each group members, highlighting that unequal contribution, different personalities and learning styles being one of the reasons for it.

Analyzing findings, the following recommendations are proposed to develop effectiveness of collaborative learning:

- Universities should provide education sessions on developing students' collaborative skills and conflict resolution before integrating groupworks;
- There should be introduced fair assessment methods such as peer evaluations or individual progress tracking, to avoid free-riding and motivate equal contribution.

Reference List

1. Guan, K. (2024). Challenges in Group Work from the Perspective of College Students. *Lecture Notes in Education Psychology and Public Media*, 45(1), 169–174. Available from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/379951822_Challenges_in_Group_Work_from_the_Perspective_of_College_Students [Accessed 12 February 2025].
2. Hussein, A. (2024). Soft Skills and Their Impact on the Workplace. *Al-Iraqa Foundation for Culture and Development*, 4. Available from

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/383021456_Soft_Skills_and_Their_Impact_on_the_Workplace [Accessed 29 January 2024].

3. Lailiyah, M. et al. (2021). Assessing an effective collaboration in higher education: A study of studentsâ€ experiences and challenges on group collaboration. *EnJourMe: Culture, Language, and Teaching of English*, *6*(2), 152–162. Available from https://doi.org/10.26905/enjourme.v6i2.6971 [Accessed 29 January 2024].
4. Milson, C., Tzavara, D. and Devis, D. (2023). Understanding student engagement in online learning environments: A review of theories, frameworks, and models. *International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education*, 20(1), 1–21. Available from https://educationaltechnologyjournal.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s41239-022-00379-x [Accessed 23 February 2025].
5. Ryan, M. (no date). Groupwork in higher education a practitioner's guide. *Department of Quality Teaching and Learning*. Available from
6. https://tus.ie/app/uploads/AcademicServices/Quality/Handbook/VOL6/2_Group-Work-in-Higher-Education-A-Practitioners-Guide.pdf [Accessed 29 January 2024].
7. Wu, Y. (2023). Explore the Effectiveness Factors and Improvement Strategies of Collaborative Learning. *Lecture Notes in Education Psychology and Public Media*, 21, 266-272. Available from http://dx.doi.org/10.54254/2753-7048/21/20230168 [Accessed 29 January 2024].
8. Wurdinger, S and Qureshi, M. (2014). Enhancing College Students' Life Skills through Project Based Learning. *Innovative Higher Education,* 40(3). Available from http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10755-014-9314-3 [Accessed 29 January 2024].
9. Zhang, L. and Ma, Y. (2023). A study of the impact of project-based learning on student learning effects: a meta-analysis study. *Secondary Educational Psychology*, 14. Available from https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1202728 [Accessed 29 January 2024].