EMPLOYMENT OF ACTIVE LEARNING IN CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT AND IT'S EFFECT ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Battal ODABAŞI, Güliz KOLBURAN

Assistan Proffesor, İstanbul Aydın University, Faculty of Education , Turkey

battalodabasi@aydin.edu.tr

Assistan Proffesor, İstanbul Aydın University, Psychology Department Faculty of Science & Literatıre, Turkey

sahidegulizkolburan@aydin.edu.tr

Abstract

The employment of active learning in classroom management, which centers individual and values the self-creation in educational process, and the effect of this method on students have been analysed in this study. As the method of the study, action research procedure of qualitative research method is employed.

The acquired-data of the study have been analysed by SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) for Windows 17.0 programme. The descriptive norms (numbers, percentages) are used during the process of data evaluation. In the comparison of quantitative data, in order to identify the differences between two groups t-test was used and for more than two groups one way anova test was used to compare parameters between groups. The findings out of the study are interpreted in %95 confidence interval and %5 level of significance.

It has been ascertained that the students expressed a positive opinion about the necessity of active learning method in the classroom management. Moreover, it is also cleared up that active learning makes a major contribution in academic success.

Key-words: Active learning, academic success, student

Introduction

In modern society, change and development can been observed in every step of life. Under favour of mass communication, the interaction between societies in every fields is increased and innovations are spread fast, the universal knowledge, which is the product of interactions between socities, replaces the solid knowledge belonging to only one society. These changes and developments are also in individual's life. The adoption of the individuals into the enviroment where he lives becomes a major problem. The development requires individuals that are also evolved and changed. As a result, quantity of the attitudes that people must learn become more complex and are increased both in quantitive and qualitive ways. Some stereotype practices, facts and rules can be changed in the time. For this reason, people must learn how to use the knowledge instead of memorizing it. Moreover, it is rather important that individuals have unique structure and coding system of the knowledge that they use. The increase in information (knowledge) and solidity in manners cause a caos. It is pretty tough to transfer all these attitudes and knowledge to the students. This rapid change may even make the knowledge we have learned invalid and make it meaningless. The important thing is individuals should structure their own knowledge with their own effort, in order to achieve this purpose they should be taught how to obtain knowledge by using science and technology tools and instruments. In other words, this method is a sort of guide of learning. This guidance process can help individual to use the knowledge he has learned in his life and can help him to level up to higher attitude and intelligence phase.

In the educational systems that try to keep up with these features of the information age learning programmes, which are student-orianted, mutual interactive, based on problem solving and also have elective lessons , has emerged. In this system, students learn how to use the knowledge in their real life and improve the auto-learning abilities for life-long.

Piaget says '' if an effective school give students opportunities to do something as they wish not for they have to do and if it has students do genuine studies by using their own intelligence instead of learning knowledge that has been prepared by someone else , we can say that the rules of intelligence are respected ''. According to Piaget, duties of the traditional educational system and teachers are not suitable for the intelligence structure of the children, they put boundaries for them. The teacher is active but students are passive. As for Piaget, education is a process that improves the things that a child has hereditary by activities appropiate for his intelligence structure (Büyükkaragöz, 1999).

Montessori suggested that students should decide what they want to learn. Dewey value the discovery of the knowledge by students. Although these opinions are accepted as vital, the collection of ampiric evidence and their practice in life was performed in the last decade. The researches and practices about active learning in developed countries are conducted as big project with governments supports (Açıkgöz, 2008). The future is going to be a century when we experience change and development in every field of life. The children of our country should also be involved in these change and development at very early age. Starting from pre-school education in every level of education active learning programmes should be used in order to raise children who learn things empirical instead of parrot fashion. (Büyükkaragöz,1999).

Students have the role of a teacher, who is dominant in traditional educational systems, in active learning method. A student is not a passive learner that records the knowledge transfered by someone else and learns them after several revisions. But he is a person that researches, questiones, discovers the knowledge and he also reproduces the knowledge by his own unique strategies. '' without a doubt, it is not that easy to achieve this and take the responsibility of a learning process that is pretty tough. For instance, while a passive student repeats the features of the seasons by their stereotype adjectives and general descriptive sentences, the active student can determine the pros and cons of each seasons through these defined features (Açıkgöz, 2008; Odabaşı, 2005)

Stundents are not passive learners, they are individuals who shape their life by learning. He states that learner must be active in order to learn active learning approach. In this method, debats, conversations and problem solving activities are used excessively. .(Lubbers & Gorcyca,1997; Harrnın,1994).

Active Learning;

It is a learning process where the learners are given oppurtunities to make decisions about various phases of learning activities and they are forced to use their intelligence abilities during learning process.

As it can be clearly understood from the previous lines, it is emphasizd that students make decisions and thinking ability (reasoning) is activited. According to active learning approach, learner should decide how the learning is going to happen, how much knowledge has been learned and what are the missing parts of the learning. If needed, student can ask for help from the teacher but learner is the one who must think about the subject and must take responsibilities. Humanbeings have the capacity to perform these activities. The researches also support this opinion. For instance, subjects, who learn active, are aware of when they act strategically and when they do not. The other important side of active education is that it is a concept that is beyond ''participating learning process actively''. Active participation is required for active learning but it is not enough. Not only does active learning include signs of active participations such as asking questions, explanations etc, it also includes activities such as planning and revision of the learning process.

Moreover, in some circumstances active learning may cause misunderstandings; some teachers share the subjects among students and have them lecture about these subjects in the classroom and by doing this practice they think that they have active learning in their class. This practice is not even close to active learning. On the contrary by making students,who have insufficient knowledge about the subject, do the task that must be performed by the teacher the efficiency is decreased . (Açıkgöz, 1992)

Active learning method give students oppurtunities to speak, listen, read, write and think. The content of the lesson is learned through activities, which have students practice the knowledge, such as problem solving, informal buzz groups, simulations, case studies, drama etc. For this purpose the practice of active learning in educational enviroments is crucial.

Students directing and evaluting the learning process realize their own and develop their learning strategies. Active learning is an approach that provides meaningful learning and learning how to learn. Active learning affects every segments of the education programme. After appropriate programme development process for active learning aprroach, lectures must be held for teachers, parents and princiles in order to get

benefit from the method where teachers and students exchange their roles.

Some researches about the impact of active learning on learning and students should be conducted. Active learning also brings the concepts such as learning how to learn and life-long learning. Because the student, who can participate in decision-making phase of his learning, direct and evaluate his learning experiences, can control his learning and carry on this learning for a long time after he graduates school. (Koç, 2000).

The student-orianted approach in educational systems is a must to raise qualified people. Thus, various researches and practices about active learning is significiantly important. This study has been done to analyse the effects of active learning —in classroom management as a teaching method and technique— on the students.

Problem

Active learning method is way more effective than traditional methods in long lasting learning, students participation and socialization terms.

Sub-Problems

1.   Active learning method is more effective than the traditional one in terms of students' participation to the lessom.

2.   Active learning method is more effective than the traditional one in terms of students' socialization and cooperation tendency.

3.   Active learning method is more effective than the traditional one in terms of permanent learning.

Method

Action research method is used in this study. Not only does action research method include qualitative research method, but it also includes survey that is qualitive way expression. In this study, frequency and t-test are done to determine students' opinions about active learning and effect of active learning on academic success. The common exam consists of the former KPSS questions. It has been prepared according to table of specifications.

According to Education Dictionary action research; 1-teachers' own teaching methods, their systematical researches to gather informations about how students learn best and how the evaluation is done, 2-school and classroom based research that aims to improve educational practices and conducted by teachers, mostly (Demirel, 2005). This sort of researches help educators to get systematical information about their methods and give them opportunity to analyse their methods' success by using research techniques. (Ferrance, 2000).

Action research is conducted by individuals that are involved in the research personally such as school principals, teachers, educational specialist or engineer, administrator, planning specialist, human resources

specialist in other sectors. It is a research design that contains data acquisition and data analysis to understand and resolve a problem or it is way to find out the problems of the research process conducted by the implementer himself or with his co-worker. (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2005).

Furthermore, the test, which was conducted to understand students' opinions about lesson method, was done one month after the lesson had been finished. Getting students' opinions about active learning method is significiant as being cold evalution. Students have stated their thoughts about the current education strategies without being concerned about grades or other things.

Finding and Resaults

Table 1. Students' Opinions About Active Learning Method

Students' Opinions	Strongly Disagree	Rarely Agree	Neither Agree Or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Lesson are more fun in Active Learning Method	0	0	2 (%5)	22 (%50)	20 (%45)
Active Learning Method make me understand the subjects better	0	0	2 (%5)	16 (%36)	**22 (%59)**
We do group work/we hash out	0	0	0	12 (%27)	**32 (%73)**
I attend the lesson pretty unreluctantly	0	2 (%5)	4 (%9)	**32 (%73)**	6 (%14)
I pay utmost attention	0	0	8 (%18)	12 (%27)	24 (%55)
I understand better/ it helps me to understand.	0	0	4 (%9)	2 (%5)	16 (%36)
Subjects sticks in my mind more. It helps me to remember.	0	0	6 (%14)	18 (%41)	20 (%45)
It's much easier to learn with that method/ I comprehend the concepts quicker.	0	0	10 (%23)	16 (%36)	18 (%41)
It helps to teach the subject better.	0	2 (%5)	4 (%9)	24 (%55)	14 (%32)
Everyone do researches about certain parts/We cooperate and share our knowledge.	0	0	2 (%5)	16 (%36)	**26 (%59)**
We learn the things that we do not know from each other.	0	4 (%9)	2 (%5)	20 (%45)	18 (%41)
We come up with alternative ideas.	0	2 (%5)	0	16 (%36)	**26 (%59)**
We compare our opinions.	0	2 (%5)	6 (%14)	14 (%32)	24 (%55)
Active Learning Method can be employed in other lessons	0	2 (%5)	2 (%5)	12(%27)	**30 (%68)**

As it can be understood from the table above, students have stated that having active learning method in classroom management makes a major contribution to have them participate in lessons more actively, have them work in groups and make the lessons more fun and charming. Moreover, they have also agreed that this method help them to have meaningful and permanent learnings and it also helps them to remember concepts.

They have positive opinion on using active learning not only in classroom management but also in other lessons.

Table 2. Comparison of Control and Experimental Groups' Academic Success Standings

	Ranks			
	VAR00002	**N**	**Mean Rank**	**Sum of Ranks**
VAR00001	Experimental group	48	59,27	2845,00
	Control group	36	20,14	725,00
	Total	84		

Test Statistics[a]

Mann-Whitney U	59,00
Wilcoxon W	725,000
Z	-7,357
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,000

As it can be seen in the Table.2, there is a difference in quality of education between experimental group and control group as a result of ''t'' analysis (U= 59,000; p<0,05). Moreover, when averages are considered, experimental group is more successful than control group (avg experimental=59,27> avg control=20,14).

Conclusion and Evaluation

As a conclusion, using active learning in classroom management gives full satisfaction to the students. Moreover, it has been determined that students that have had active learning method in their lessons are more succesful than students of traditional learning system. This statistically significant determination is also confirmed in the opinion survey. Students that have active learning method in their lessons states that not only does this method cultivate amusing and interactive atmosphere but it also helps them to remember and keep knowledge in their mind and this method is vital for their academic success.

Active learning both maintaines permanent learning and it is also an effective approach to keep students' motivation high. There are plenty of studies on this matter. These studies proof that effects of active learning is quite operative in development of metacognition and learning through social interaction (Açıkgöz,2008; Johnson ve Johnson,1991; Koç,2000; Slavin,1990). This study also supports the similar studies. Active learning method should be encouraged and generalized in our educational system as a teaching strategy.

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