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Collaborative Learning in Higher Education: How Effective Is It?

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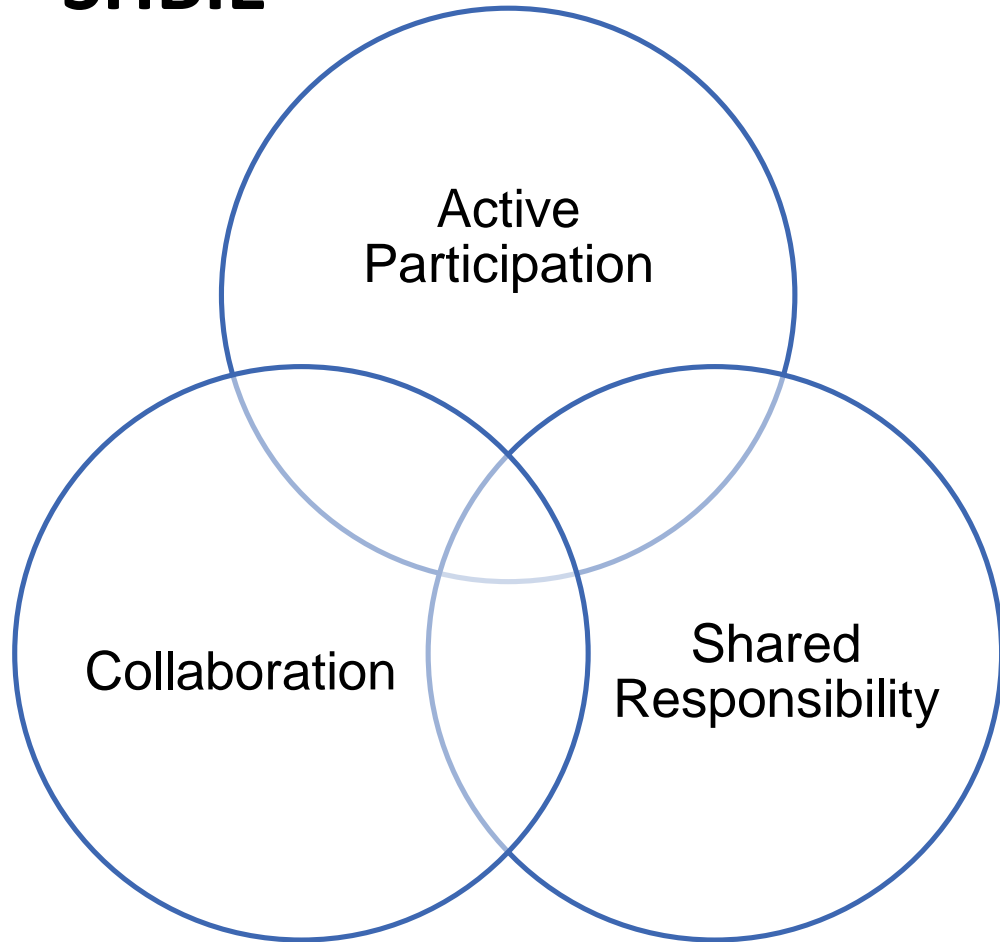
Background and Rationale

The Role of Collaborative Learning in Higher Education

- Higher education plays a vital role in preparing individuals for the demands of the twenty-first century.
- The realisation of the importance of critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills in today's rapidly evolving world.
- Therefore, institutions of higher education are key players in fostering these essential skills (Yang, 2023).



Collaborative Learning at SHBIE



- Collaborative learning is an integral part of the Master of Teaching (MTeach) degree program.
- The focus is on active participation, collaboration, and shared responsibility among students.
- We emphasise on developing essential interpersonal skills for future educators (Wood et al., 2015).

Benefits of Collaborative Learning

- Enhanced critical thinking, interpersonal abilities, and student involvement (Duraman et al., 2015).
- Opportunity for exchanging ideas, critically examining viewpoints, and deepening comprehension.
- Development of teamwork and cooperation skills essential for professional success (De-Hei et al., 2015).

Challenges in Collaborative Learning

- Difficulty in achieving equitable involvement from all group members.
- Challenges in managing group dynamics and resolving conflicts.
- Complexities in evaluating individual contributions within a group setting (StrauB & Rummel, 2020).

Strategies to Address Challenges

- Establishing clear standards and criteria for collaboration within groups.
- Employing approaches that promote active participation from all individuals (Er & Gašević, 2021).
- Fostering a conducive and considerate environment for sharing thoughts and experiences.

Importance in Teacher Preparation Programmes

- Collaborative learning as essential for prospective educators.
- Acquisition of crucial skills such as collaboration, communication, and problem-solving.
- Insights into various teaching strategies and approaches for effective classroom management.

Research Question

How effective is collaborative learning in the context of higher education?

Methodology

- Participatory action research approach.
- Planning, implementing, observing, and reflecting for ongoing improvement.
- Researchers as participatory observers.
- Collections of students' work.

Collaboration: Rubric

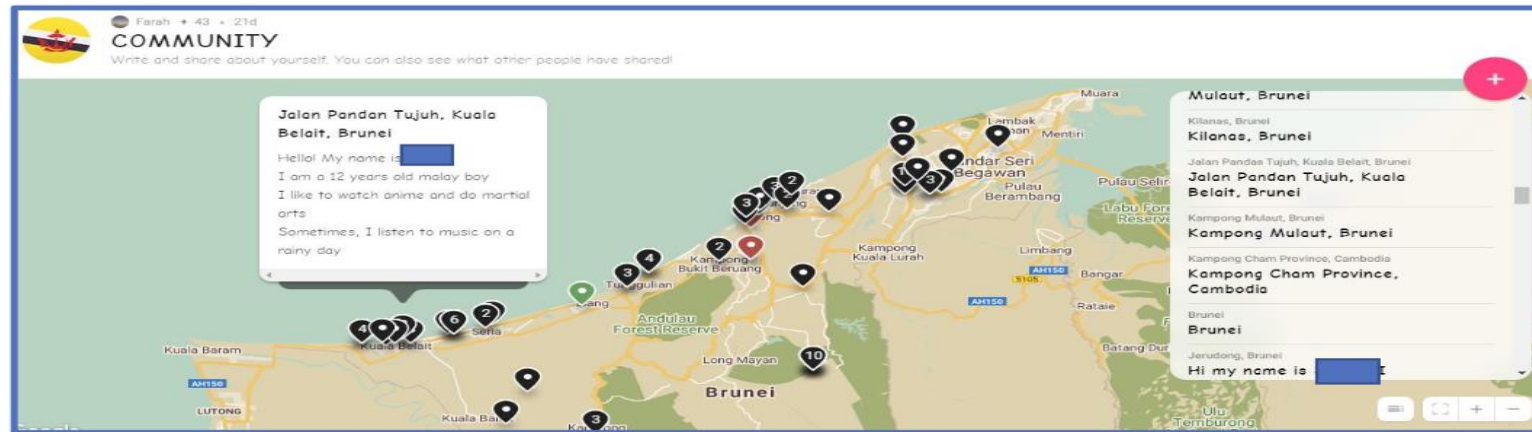
In this learning activity,

- 1**
 - Students are **NOT** required to work together in pairs or groups.
- 2**
 - Students **DO work together**
 - **BUT** they **DO NOT** have shared responsibility.
- 3**
 - Students **DO** have **shared responsibility**
 - **BUT** they **ARE NOT** required to make substantive decisions together.
- 4**
 - Students **DO** have **shared responsibility**
 - **AND** they **DO** make **substantive decisions** together about the content, process, or product of their work
 - **BUT** their work is not interdependent.
- 5**
 - Students **DO** have **shared responsibility**
 - **AND** they **DO** make **substantive decisions** together about the content, process, or product of their work
 - **AND** their work is **interdependent**.

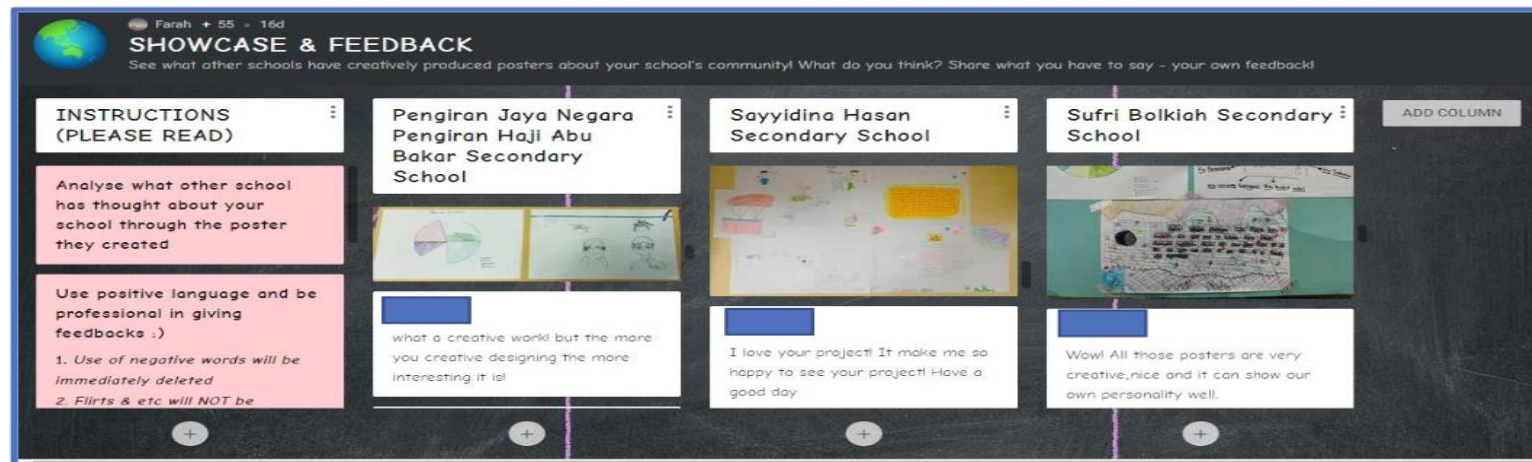
Discussion of Findings

- Notable improvement in student teachers' creativity observed in collaborative learning project (Examples in next slides).
- Significant impact of facilitator involvement on the effectiveness of collaborative learning, as highlighted in the study by Shahrill & Sulaiman (2015).
- Prevalent obstacles such as different perspectives, conflicting opinions, and free-riders.
- Effective facilitators involvement in mitigating the difficulties associated with collaborative learning.

Sample of students' data input onto Padlet for community lesson activity



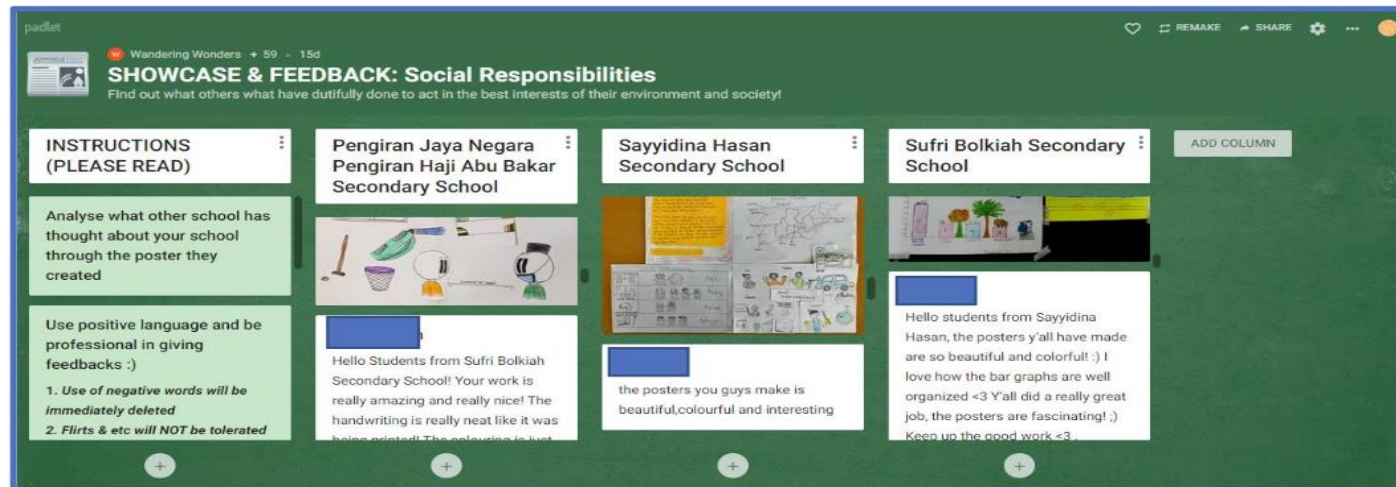
Sample of students' feedback on other school community's poster on Padlet



Sample of students' data input onto Padlet for social responsibility lesson activity



Sample of students' feedback on other school's social responsibility's poster on Padlet



Conclusion

- Continuous improvement of collaborative learning methods for better student success.
- Importance of evidence-based practices and thorough research in enhancing effectiveness.
- Institutions' role in fostering a supportive atmosphere for student growth and development through collaborative learning.

Recommendations For Future Studies

- Investigation of novel approaches for improving collaboration.
- Addressing obstacles in group dynamics.
- Assessing enduring effects of collaborative learning on student achievements.

Policy Recommendations

- Prioritising continuous professional development for educators.
- Incorporating technology for virtual collaboration.
- Encouraging collaborative learning practices to accommodate diverse learning styles.

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