

**THE BENEFITS OF PEER COACHING METHOD FOR TEACHERS' CLASSROOM EFFECTIVENESS (CASE OF INTERNATIONAL LIGHT COLLEGE, MADAGASCAR)**

Part-2 ( EDUCATION)

Chapter-II

October/Vol.6.0/Issue-1



### Research Article

ISSN CODE: 2456-1045 (Online)

(ICV Impact Value): 2.31

(GIF) Impact Factor: 1.272

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Journal Code: ARJMD/EDU/V-6.0/I-1/C-2/OCT-2016

Website: www.journalresearchijf.com

Received: 14.10.2016

Accepted: 19.10.2016

Date of Publication: 31.10.2016

Page: 06-10



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#### Citation of the Article

*Koça Abdurrahman. (2016, October 31). the benefits of peer coaching method for teachers' classroom effectiveness (case of international light college, Madagascar). Advance Research Journal of Multidisciplinary Discoveries. Part-2 ,Vol. 6.0, C2, PP. 06-10.ISSN-2456-1045.from <http://www.journalresearchijf.com/>*

#### ABSTRACT

Supervision of all the teachers is difficult process for principals or supervisors of the schools. Principals cannot interact with all teachers on daily basis and cannot supervise them. Similarly, teachers in schools also get very busy that they cannot/may not report and meet supervisors in daily basis or frequently. To overcome this issue, peer coaching method – which can be described as a system of reciprocal learning and support – can be used. With the implementation of peer coaching in schools, teachers get the opportunity to observe, share and offer suggestions to each other's. After participating in peer coaching, teachers can learn from teaching techniques of their peers and also get benefit in seeing how their peers are performing certain functions. In addition, peer coaching enables teachers to give understanding of different methods that can be used for helping students in resolving their issues. This study is designed to overview the benefits of peer coaching method for enhancing teacher's classroom efficiencies.

#### Key Words :

Peer Coaching,

Teacher's efficiency,

Classroom effectiveness

## I. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Problem

Supervision of all the staff is difficult process for principal or supervisor of the school. Principals cannot interact with all teachers on daily basis and cannot supervise them. (Zepeda, 2012). Similarly, teachers in schools also get very busy that could not report and meet supervisors daily. In order to fulfill the gap, which gets created in efficiencies of teachers, peer coaching method has been introduced (Charteris & Smardon, 2014). With the implementation of peer coaching in schools, teachers get the opportunity to observe, share and offer suggestions to each other's. Peer coaching is an effective technique that helps teachers in enhancing their classroom efficiencies.

After participating in peer coaching, teachers can learn from teaching techniques of their peers and also get benefit in seeing how their peers are performing certain functions. In addition, peer coaching enables teachers to give understanding of different methods that can be used for helping students in resolving their issues (Zepeda, Parylo, & Ilgan, 2013).

Peer coaching make the learning process and scope wider for teachers. Often teachers are considered as isolated source of action however they don't realize that teachers do not use their full resources just because not visiting and sharing their experience with their peers (Stormont, Reinke, Newcomer, Marchese, & Lewis, 2015). If teachers get allowed to adopt peer coaching, they can more effectively perform their all classroom functions. Present study is conducted in order to identify the impact of peer coaching on teacher's classroom effectiveness.

### 1.2 Literature

Peer coaching is a procedure through which teachers help each other to augment their abilities. Peer coaching framework empowers educators to acquire necessary abilities and techniques, for example, aptitudes with respect to innovation and instructional systems or strategies, etc., which need to consolidate in improving the efficiency of teachers. Diverse sorts of aids can be given through Peer coaching which incorporate co-arranging learning exercises, displaying successful instructing, watching partners, teaching, and reflecting what they observe (Zepeda et al., 2013). Peer coaching supports progressing teachers' cooperation, which concentrates on improvement of students' learning. It offers educators learning in regards to classroom efficiencies through which they can enhance learning of students and teachers. Furthermore, it also supports steady development and innovation of schools.

In addition, Zepeda, Parylo, & Ilgan (2013) state that : "Peer coaching can be described as a system of reciprocal learning and support. In the peer coaching process, support is delivered in safe environment "for the purpose of improving instructional skills"....Peer coaching provides the coaching pair with a very practical and powerful way of learning about their own and each other's teaching" (p.113).

As indicated by Charteris and Smardon, (2014) professional-adapting requirements for schools can likewise be accomplished by peer coaching approach (Charteris and Smardon, 2014). According to Nolan Jr. and Hoover, (2011) old methods that were utilized for upgrading educator's abilities and aptitudes incorporate instructional meetings, workshops, courses, gatherings and other activities. However, peer coaching is generally new and the best method among them that enhances instructor's aptitudes in least time and with minimum cost (Nolan Jr. and Hoover, 2011). Method of Peer coaching has a wide range of advantages, which significantly does not require much time for preparing, and no tremendous expenses as workshops and classes.

Peer coaching has been characterized in different ways. Parker et al., (2015) propose that there is a lot of confusion regarding the idea of coaching and mentoring, and different associations, which are interested in the methodology, try to see its different aspects and interpret it in a number of ways. Their examination concerning 13 distinctive formative connections proposes that some percentage of the key attributes of peer coaching, e.g., giving input, helping, supporting, is for lateral and bi-directional purposes (Parker et al., 2015).

According to Bowman and McCormick, (2000) there are some central standards of peer coaching. Peer coaching acts as helpful, now and again proportional, relationship between two individuals who cooperate to set objectives and accomplish them. The term defines a learning relationship, where the members are interested in new learning; they get together for learning from experts (Bowman and McCormick, 2000). This approach focuses on encouraging one another's leadership learning advancement and wellbeing where dialog is the substance of coaching and the simultaneous change of practice.

Showers and Joyce (1996) used to remove verbal input from their coaching structure as they found that when the educators in their setting attempted to give each other feedback the coordinated effort between the associations regularly given way as the instructors felt their practice was being criticized (Zwart et al., 2007). Furthermore, input that contains productive feedback for instance can be useful and warrants further examination. Healthy feedback always welcomes coaching. Two other key segments of peer coaching which must be recognized and examined are trust and reflection. The significance of constructing a peer coaching relationship in light of trust is obviously distinguished in previous studies. Another critical element of peer coaching is reflection. Vacilotto and Cummings, (2007) recommends that training is characteristically an intelligent attempt, and all the members should be talented in reflection. Reflective practice along these lines should be obvious in any peer coaching.

**1.3 Goal of the study**

The goal of this experimental study was to find out the benefits of peer coaching method for teachers’ classroom effectiveness. Correspondingly, two research questions were asked:

- 1) Can PC (peer coaching) alter the effectiveness of teachers in the classroom?
- 2) What are the benefits of teachers from peer coaching method?

**II. METHOD**

Prior to study, participants were given detailed information about peer coaching both oral and written. Before the study, all 10 participants were interviewed with same questions. There were 12 different questions to be asked to each participant teacher. Next, all participant teachers met again to learn how to observe and give feedback. The selected practices from the effective teacher training (such as classroom management, lesson plan, motivation etc.) were reviewed for participant teachers to concentrate on their observation. Teachers chose their coaching partners themselves and the study were ready to start.

During the study, teachers entered to classes with their peers. Teachers were allowed to videotape their teaching performance. It was not for evaluation or outside analysis, but for teachers’ own use only. After each lesson, they had a feedback session of about 5 minutes; talking about their observations and mutual advises. Each participant had about 10 lessons with their partners. The total number of lessons was 56.

After the study, everyone met again and talked about the peer coaching and their positive and negative experiences. Each participant was interviewed again.

**2.1 Setting and Participants**

The study was held in Ivato, Antananarivo, Madagascar. The name of the school was International Light College. It is a private secondary and high school with about 300 students and 41 teachers. It is an international school; students were from 13 different countries. School administration was informed about the study and they supported it. The study started on October 6, 2014 and ended on December 12, 2014, total 10 weeks, 43 school days.

10 participant English, Mathematics and Science teachers have been selected for gathering data regarding peer coaching in International Light College as a source for enhancing teacher’s efficiencies in classrooms. Moreover, in these 10 participants, 4 were females (3 Malagasy and 1 Turkish) and 6 were males (2 Malagasy, 1 South African, 2 Turkish and 1 French). They volunteered to participate in the study. Ages of the participants were between 27 and 39. They were experienced teachers with at least 5 years of teaching experience. All 10 participant teachers taught to 11 different classes and total number of students in the classes was 191.

**2.2 Instruments**

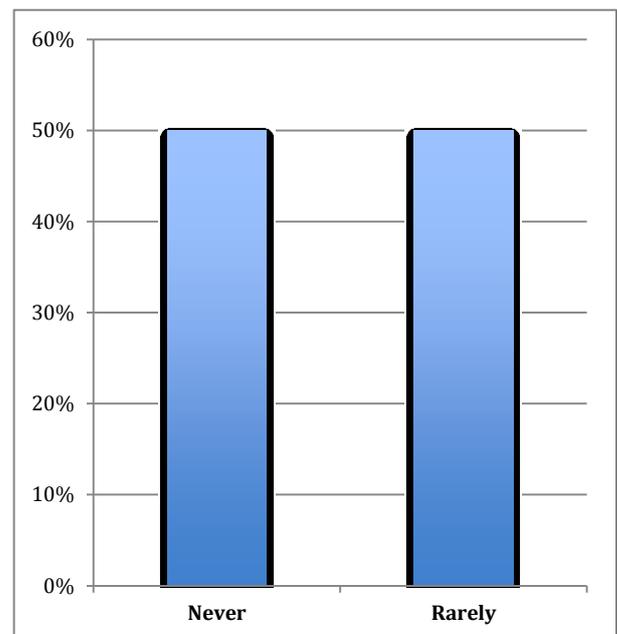
In this study, interviews were used to gather data. All participants were interviewed before and after the study. Process of interviews contains different questions and interviewees are allowed to give their views and arguments in it. The major advantage of interviews is that it provides detailed form of data however it would be difficult to analyze but subjective form enhances the information for participants (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

**III. RESULTS AND CONCLUSION**

From the data that has been gathered from participants of International Light College, it has been identified that teachers of International Light College adopt peer-coaching approach. Analysis of the data show that peer coaching technique, which has been adopted by International Light College teachers, is not efficient. Significant improvements need to be done in order to enhance efficiency of peer coaching technique of International Light College. Moreover, analysis reflects that teachers of International Light College are in great favor of adopting peer coaching approach, as it is an efficient approach that enhances the effectiveness of teachers in performing their classroom purposes.

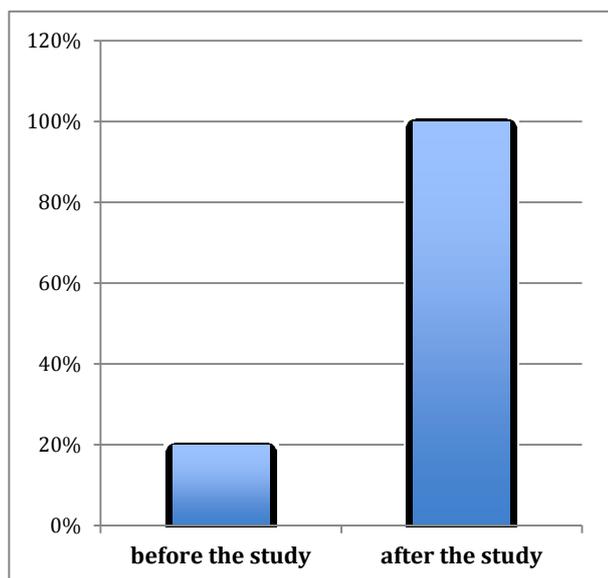
Before the study, teachers were asked how often they were observed in the classroom setting and 50 percent said ‘rarely’ and other 50 percent said ‘never’.

Figure 1. Teachers observed in the classroom (before the study)



Before the study, 20 percent of teachers said that they received some feedback on their instructions and this number was 100 percent after the study. It clearly shows that peer coaching increased the teachers’ opportunities for feedback and observation on their classroom experiences.

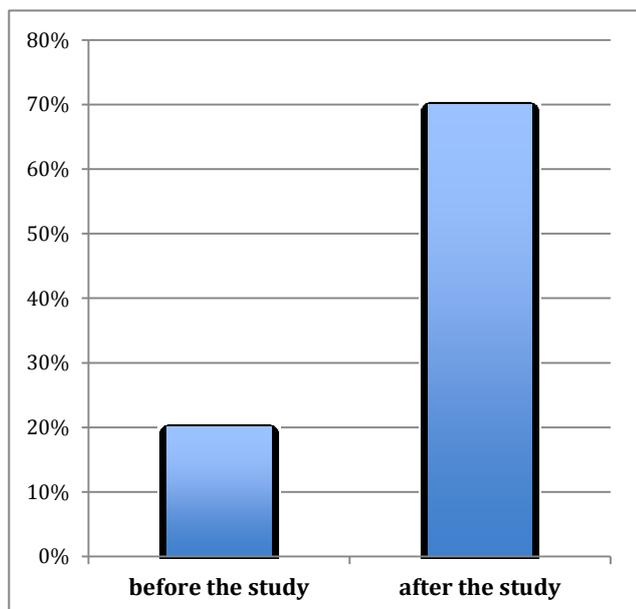
Figure 2. Teachers received feedback on their teaching



Before the study, 10 percent of teachers said that the feedbacks they get were 'very helpful'. But after the study 80 percent said it was so. Apparently, collegial sharing during the peer coaching produced helpful interaction between colleagues.

Before the study, 20 percent of the participants said that they had discussed the effective teaching and new methods with their colleagues and the number was 70 percent after the study.

Figure 3. Teachers discussed teaching techniques with colleagues



After the study, 40 percent of the participant teachers said that they have noticed 10 to 15 ineffective classroom behaviors of themselves where other 40 percent noticed 5 to 10 and 20 percent noticed 0 to 5. 100 percent reported that they tried to reduce these ineffective behaviors with the help of their peers.

The peer coaching increased teacher to teacher interaction in International Light College. Teachers reported that they had been sharing their experiences, teaching ideas and classroom difficulties during the lunch, in the hall and in teachers' room. One of the participants said 'We were teaching and learning from each other'.

**IV. DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Peer coaching is a process through which teachers provide their assistance to each other. They give their expertise, feedbacks, support and guidance to each other in order to make themselves better (Cox, Bachkirova, & Clutterbuck, 2014). It is an effective approach for enhancing classroom effectiveness of teachers. From present study, it has been identified that International Light College teachers believe in enhancing their competencies through adopting peer coaching technique. Furthermore, according to Parker et al (2013) it has been identified that, while adopting peer coaching, teachers or peers do not advice other teachers to perform functions however they make them to understand questions and support through collaborating in finding answers for their issues (Parker, Kram, & Hall, 2013). Renner (2015) discovers that peer coaching is a structured process that reflects and helps in learning of teachers. It significantly contributes in enhancing classroom effectiveness of the teachers (Renner, 2015).

Present study has also identified that through integration of peer coaching technique, ineffectiveness of teacher's behaviors in classrooms get reduced. Due to peer coaching approach, ineffective classroom behaviors of teachers have been reported to reduce 15%.

According to Goldman et al (2013) it has been described that peer coaching process takes place in highly supportive and non-threatening environment which majorly focused on enhancing professionalism of the teachers (E. Goldman, Wesner, & Karnchanomai, 2013). It emphasize on thinking out of the box and resolving issues. In addition, Parker et al (2014) defined that assistance which can provided by one teacher to another in order to develop their skills and competencies can be known as a process of peer coaching (Parker, Kram, & Hall, 2014). Teaching skills, techniques and strategies get improved through peer coaching support which ultimately impact on effectiveness of the teacher's performance (Camiré, Trudel, & Forneris, 2012).

Present study has revealed that teachers can enhance their problem solving skills while improving observation and collaboration skills through peer coaching approach. These benefits can enhance the effectiveness of the school for long run. Furthermore, according to E.F Goldman et al (2012) it has been identified that interpersonal skills and non directive interpersonal skills can also be learnt through effective implementation and adoption of peer coaching approach in a school (E. F. Goldman, Wesner, Karnchanomai, & Haywood, 2012).

Peer coaching sessions could contain different lectures, practices for observations, conferences, role playing practices, demonstrations, presentations, outside readings, group discussions and opportunities for reflections (Hopkins & Harris, 2013). Peer coaching process get accomplished after completing four stages or cycle which include preconference, classroom observation, posit observation conference and follow up sessions (Avalos, 2011).

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