TEAMWORK SKILLS AND THE ROLES OF TEAMWORK IN STUDENTS' LEARNING

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Abstract:

The article presents research results on teamwork skills and the roles of teamwork in students' learning. Through the survey of lecturers and students of Mien Tay Construction University, it is possible to make comments on the current situation as well as solutions to enhance teamwork in teaching and learning in order to improve learning quality.

Keywords: *teamwork skills, group learning, student, Mien Tay Construction University.*

170 TẠP CHÍ KHOA HỌC & CÔNG NGHỆ – TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC XÂY DỰNG MIỀN TÂY
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1. Issue

The use of team by organizations has been described as a "spectacular explosion" in recent years. Is there somewhere in the world where team structure makes no sense? The answer is: "No!". Everyone can see that the power of the team is great and the tendency to strengthen, strengthen, and promote the team is spreading everywhere. So, is a team simply a group of people gathered together?

2. Contents

2.1 Concepts

There are various concepts given by experts and researchers:

- A team is an organization consisting of two or more individuals who interact and depend on each other to achieve specific goals [1].

- A team is a group of individuals with complementary skills who are committed to taking responsibility for a common goal [1].

• *A team is a collection of individuals with clear roles and responsibilities, with common rules that govern each other, who regularly interact with each other and work together to achieve the team's common goals.*

• *Teamwork skill is the ability to interact among members in a group to develop the potential and capacity of all members and promote work efficiency.*

In order to achieve teamwork skills, each individual must ensure the following three factors:

- First, the ability to interact with team members. According to John C Maxwell, the way to build and develop groups is that individuals must interact with each other like a series of chemical reactions [2]. The team's important issue is not how many members there are, but how they interact. The real team must be a group of individuals who always know how to cooperate, support, help each other, create motivation to develop together. The interaction is a catalyst that strongly influences the thoughts and actions of each individual in the team. Only interaction can create the greatest strength of the team. Therefore, it has great significance for the success of each member as well as of the whole team.

- Second, the development of the potential and capacity of oneself as well as that of all team members. A person who knows how to develop his or her own and teammates' potential and abilities is considered skilled in teamwork. The team work environment is a place for each member to express, explore, and learn about themselves and others so that they can promote their strengths, limit their weaknesses and improve themselves.

- Third, the promotion of work efficiency. A good member always puts work efficiency first. Therefore, they are willing to accept the group's constraints on rules, authority, duties, responsibilities; commit to taking action, doing your best to make the work progress and achieve the desired results. A team cannot

succeed if each member does not know how to focus on work performance but is distracted by external factors.

2.2 Benefits of teamwork

People are born to cooperate with each other. Good relationships bring us joy, happiness, interesting experiences, and help improve each person's self-worth as well as the value of life. Many studies have shown that a team is better at solving a problem than individuals. If there are many answers to choose from, the team will give more accurate answers. Benefits of teamwork are listed below:

– Satisfy each member's need for self-expression and self-affirmation (It's hard to do alone).

– Break the ego and promote the friendliness and openness.

– Exciting and motivating environment.

– Create many ideas and develop opportunities.

– Work done better: broader knowledge and experience, ability to solve problems quickly and effectively.

– Be ready to react to changes and risks.

– Share and delegate work effectively.

2.3 Build a working team

* Define goals, assign clear tasks and responsibilities

– **Defining the goal:** In order for the team to fully believe in the feasibility of the goal, it is necessary to define the goal according to the SMART principle:

• Specific: specific, clear, easy to understand

• Measurable: measureable
• Agreed: to be agreed
• Realistic: feasible
• Time bound: a definite duration.

Determining the right goals brings practical meanings:

• Help team members see what needs to be done, the milestones that need to be reached, and guide the team from being off-target;

• Help the team focus resources to achieve goals, avoid distractions, neglect, and waste of resources;

• The process of striving to achieve goals helps the team understand clearly about the capabilities, skills, experiences, unique characteristics of the team and also what is going on around to know who the team is, the team needs to continue how to keep striving;

• Each team member is inspired with excitement, dynamism and enthusiasm to act with all their might for the goal and believe in the future.

– **Clear assignment of duties and responsibilities:**

A classic question that is often applied in the case of extremely difficult, complex tasks is "How to eat an elephant?" The answer is "Cut it into bite-sized pieces". In order to complete a large amount of work or to achieve great goals, it is necessary to break the work into small pieces. Large goals need to be broken down into many small goals, each small goal must be divided into many smaller tasks, and at the

same time, allocating available resources (time, implementer, cost, equipment, etc.)

Everyone needs to understand that in order to achieve big goals, it is necessary to accomplish small goals; And in order to accomplish small goals, it is necessary to perform the smallest tasks. Of course, each task will be assigned and entrusted to the most suitable member. Mistakes in this can waste time and resources, even seriously affect the final result. Therefore, when assigning tasks, the following criteria should be kept in mind:

• Each task should be assigned to a specific person so that he/ she is fully responsible for the work.

• It is necessary to understand the strengths and weaknesses of each member, assess the skills they possess. Only then can we ensure that the task assigned to the member is the most suitable and feasible.

• When assigning tasks, assign the necessary resources and the right to determine the work of the team members. They will show more enthusiasm and enthusiasm for work when they feel more in control with favorable conditions.

• It is necessary to review whether any member is in a state of overload and is not assigned enough work. Everyone must contribute and enjoy the same benefits. Fairness brings peace of mind, trust and promotes work efficiency.

• If a member is not qualified to take on the task, retraining should be conducted. If the situation cannot be improved, the team must think about firing the incompetent member and hiring new people.

2.4 Conflict and conflict resolution
* Conflict in the team

Conflict is inevitable in any team environment. Conflict is understood as a disagreement, antagonism or dispute between two or more parties (individuals against each other, individuals against groups, groups against each other). The cause could be:

- Objective causes (due to the organization, the surrounding environment): There are many factors coming from the environment that affect the team's relationship and work results, causing conflicts in the team. The most common factors are listed below:

• Limited resources: In conditions of scarcity of resources such as money, time, space, equipment, power, social position.

• Characteristics of the team: Each team has its own characteristics in terms of goals, size, principles, standards, information, level of clarity, degree of dependency, reward system, leadership style, etc.

• Information shortage: Conflicts resulting from lack of information or incorrect information are also common in the team.

* Measures to resolve team conflicts

- **Withdrawal**: When encountering conflict, turtles often withdraw to avoid confrontation and collision. They stay away from potentially conflicting

situations. If a conflict occurs, they avoid, withdraw or let the other side decide, accepting all outcomes, including giving up their goals to be in peace. This measure should be applied when the problem is not important, the consequences of solving the problem outweigh the benefits (for example, taking time to solve a small unnecessary problem).

– **Overwhelming**: Often used to suppress, crush, preemptively, even threaten others to force them to comply with his or her measures. For this type of person, solving problems is more important than preserving relationships. So this is considered a one-on-one competition. This approach is most often used by managers when they know that they have the ability to impose their orders on others. Thus, choosing this measure is effective when the problem needs to be resolved quickly, the imposter has full confidence in his or her right decision.

– **Soothing:** Likes gentle affection, this type of person values maintaining a good relationship rather than achieving goals or interests. Therefore, this person often accepts losses to please others and keep the peace between the two sides. Apply this measure when you want to bring satisfaction to others and to be loved and liked by others, and realize that the problem is more important to others than to yourself. Teddy Bear is different from Turtle: Turtle is indifferent to the problem or the other party, Teddy Bear comes from caring about the other person.

– **Compromise**: In situations that are quite important, time is limited but both parties want to achieve the goal and maintain the relationship, compromise is appropriate. The user of this method must accept to sacrifice a part of his rights and mobilize the other party to act like him, otherwise the consequences will be more serious than the concessions of both sides. For example, the Board of Directors of the Company and the Trade Union use compromise measures in negotiations and negotiations, each party needs to give up a part of its own interests to reach an agreement in the Labor Contract.

– **Cooperation:** Resolve conflicts by trying to satisfy the parties involved. For conflicts stemming from misunderstandings or language barriers, which are unique to the group, this measure is highly effective. Conflicts that are important but not urgent in terms of time should also apply this measure because the parties involved have more time to sit together, gather and clarify points of view, sources of information in order to the optimal solution. In this way, we need to go through the following steps:

• Step 1: Analysis: Determine the content of the conflict as specifically as possible, without labeling, without denouncing;

• Step 2: Exchange: Listen and evaluate each other's opinions;

• Step 3: Understand the situation: Try to understand the other party's situation, put yourself in the other party's shoes;

174 TẠP CHÍ KHOA HỌC & CÔNG NGHỆ – TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC XÂY DỰNG MIỀN TÂY
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• Step 4: Agreement: Find a solution that is suitable for both parties. Flexible and willing to cooperate

2.5. Effective group management

One of the secrets to becoming a good manager is to learn how to manage a team. Building, managing, and inspiring to be productive and successful will greatly contribute to your own and your team's success. However, becoming a good manager is not easy. A set of people working together other than a group. Teams often have a binding commitment to a common goal and work together to overcome challenges and obstacles to achieve that goal. They have the potential to come up with creative and effective solutions rather than a group of individual individuals working towards their own goals. Here are some tips for effective team management:

- Self-awareness
- Understanding.
- Develop goals, standards and rules.
- Clearly define roles and responsibilities.
- Training and guidance.
- Be a role model.
- Always acknowledge and respond to each member.

3. Actual situation of teamwork in learning of students at Mien Tay Construction University

To find out about students' teamwork skills at Mien Tay Construction University, we conducted a survey of 160 freshmen studying at the school. The survey period is from September 2022 to November 2022. The research method is to use student questionnaires and directly interview lecturers who teach at the school.

The survey includes 20 multiple choice as well as open-ended questions to learn about knowledge; method, level of excitement and effectiveness brought about by teamwork; difficulties students often encounter; suggestions from students on this issue.

Through the survey, students' opinions about participating in teamwork in studying at the school are expressed through the following contents:

Firstly, about the awareness of the importance of teamwork

Table 1: Perception of the importance of students' teamwork skills

No.	The importance of equipping teamwork skills	Quantity	Percent
1	Improve the efficiency of knowledge acquisition	47	29.38%
2	Increase individual motivation to learn	75	46.88%
3	Develop the ability to analyze and synthesize	94	58.75%
4	Develop creativity	46	28.75%
5	Develop communication skills	137	85.63%

6	Develop initiative and confidence	151	94.38%
7	Develop individual responsibility for the collective	124	77.50%
8	Know how to cope with difficulties to perform common tasks	95	59.38%

Table 1 shows that students relatively understand the importance of teamwork skills. The highest level is 94.38% for the content "Developing initiative and confidence" and the lowest level is 28.75% for the content "Developing creativity". Thus, in general, students have high evaluation of "Teamwork" for learning.

Secondly, the frequency of students' teamwork

Table 2: Student's level of teamwork

Level	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
Quantity	5	44	91	18
Percent	3.12%	27.50%	56.88%	11.25%

The results show that up to 70% of students "Rarely" or "Never" participate in teamwork for studying at the university. This proves that most students do not have good learning methods and have not fully promoted all activities to improve their own learning efficiency.

Thirdly, the difficulties that students face when participating in teamwork

Table 3: Causes affecting students' teamwork process

No.	Causes	Quantity	Percent (%)
1	Unsuitable facilities	93	58.13%
2	Large number of students	107	66.88%
3	Unsuitable course content	110	68.75%
4	Teacher's pedagogical capacity	24	15.00%
5	Students' limited teamwork skills	69	43.13%
6	Unreasonable processes in organizing teamwork	109	68.13%
7	Not enough time allowed	138	86.25%
8	Other causes	27	16.88%

The table above shows that there are many factors affecting the effectiveness of students' teamwork. The main reason is "Not enough time allowed" accounting for 86.25%, reaching the highest rate according to the survey; Only 15% came from "Teacher's pedagogical capacity". In addition, the cause comes from "Inappropriate course content", "The number of students in the class is too large" and "There is no reasonable process of organizing group work" which also accounts for a relatively high percentage. 68.75%, 66.88% and 68.13%. Not every subject or class can easily organize group activities because the subject content is

176 TẠP CHÍ KHOA HỌC & CÔNG NGHỆ – TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC XÂY DỰNG MIỀN TÂY
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difficult to discuss or because the number of students is too large (the lecturer has to divide into groups of 8-10 students). Therefore, teamwork is also ineffective if the number of students is large.

Fourthly, the learning effectiveness of teamwork

According to the survey, the effectiveness when studying in groups has the following results: 54.38% of opinions rated "Normal"; only 34.37% at the level of "Effective", while the rate of "Not effective" or "Very effective" accounts for very little.

Table 4: Students self-assess the effectiveness of their participation in teamwork

Level	Ineffective	Normal	Effective	Extremely effective
Quantity	2	87	55	16
Percent	1.25%	54.38%	34.37%	1%

4. Discussion and recommendations

4.1. Discussion about teamwork

Through the results of studying the program content, interviewing lecturers and surveying students, we realize a number of issues that need to be paid attention to in teaching and learning applying the teamwork method:

- The content of the module in the training program at the school is still not suitable for the teamwork method. It's also heavy on theory. The knowledge and exercises are still highly academic, not much to the application to specialized practice. It has not yet created a connection between students to support students to develop knowledge and skills. Students' learning is often just self-study, not applicable to research and practice.

- The students' basic knowledge of teamwork skills is still weak. In the training program of the disciplines, students mainly approach theoretical and specialized subjects, so they are not familiar with dynamic and active learning methods. This motivates lecturers to change course content to be closer to reality as well as to find appropriate teaching methods to increase students' interest in learning and impart knowledge to students in a complete and correct manner and easy to understand

In our opinion, the causes of the above problems are:

- Current high school curriculum mainly teaches theory, not skills.

- Most of the students of Mien Tay Construction University come from remote and isolated areas with not really developed economic conditions, so they are not active in studying and working. In addition, most students' family economic conditions do not meet their study needs well (most students have to work part-

time to earn extra income). Therefore, it is very difficult for each student to spend a lot of time participating in teamwork as well as self-study. Through the survey, more than 70% of students work part-time to earn extra income.

- The university training program at the university has many subjects that focus too much on theory, the content is not suitable for active teaching methods; Teachers are also passive in innovating teaching methods.

4.2. Some solutions to enhance teamwork in teaching and learning

Aware of the above limitations and causes, we see that the current urgent requirement is to immediately implement some solutions to enhance the effectiveness of teamwork in teaching and learning, focusing on the following contents:

- Lecturers need to redesign the teaching content such as reducing the academic, increasing the practicality and application, especially the application to scientific research. At the same time, some practical lessons are added to facilitate students to practice the necessary skills. Students need to be trained to strengthen the skills of cooperation, self-study, document research and information exchange to complete learning tasks. Lecturers need to combine theory with practice right in the classroom. After teaching theory, lecturers introduce exercises and

content associated with practical topics; then ask students to explore, research and practice discussion;

- Strengthening support for students to increase collective activity in their self-study process through extracurricular activities of the club, creating conditions for students to share learning experiences and exchange information; actively supplement and train study support skills. Enhance and improve the quality of students' facilities and learning materials; expanding the computer room, self-study room as well as reference materials at the library;

- Scientific research activities among students should be interested and promoted. In particular, students need to carry out research projects in groups to support each other to achieve better results;

- For students, they need to understand the importance of teamwork skills to promote efficiency. In the learning process, students need to promote the spirit of cooperation, self-study, self-research, dynamism, creativity, knowledge acquisition and creative application of knowledge, forming logical thinking, improving problem-solving skills. In addition, for effective teamwork, each student needs to respect each other, get rid of their ego, integrate with everyone in the group, try to complete their tasks well, work happily and seriously. ... The group needs to choose a leader who

has the ability and good attitude. The team leader needs to monitor and grasp the status of the group. This person also needs to know how to make everyone work well together, promote everyone's work ethic, etc.

5. Conclusion

Teamwork is one of the important and essential skills in studying and working. The results of a survey of students at the Mien Tay Construction University show that teamwork is a relatively difficult skill and requires many requirements and principles. Therefore, lecturers need to design reasonable teaching content to improve teaching and learning efficien-cy, namely increasing practice hours, training teamwork to enhance skills of cooperation and coordination among students. In addition, students need to regularly innovate learning methods, coordinate and support each other to or-ganize relevant academic activities and scientific research. In addition, the orga-nization needs to increase investment in facilities (computer room, learning ma-terials and self-study space) and have policies to encourage students to partic-ipate in scientific research activities. We believe that the above solutions will be effective in motivating students to study in groups more actively and with higher results.

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