

Chapter: VI

Findings and Discussion on Findings

6.0. Introduction:

This chapter presents major findings and themes emerged out from the data analysis and data interpretation depicted in the previous chapter. This chapter is divided into two sections as per the major research questions and objectives proposed for the present study.

The first section presents findings pertaining to three phases of field work. The first part includes strategy to heterogeneous grouping as an essential prerequisite for cooperative learning tasks implementation, the second part depicts findings on exploring and understanding the process of development of soft skills under two phases i.e. Strategy implemented based on select CLM in two parts, i.e. Cooperative Learning Methods Based Practice teaching Plan [CLMPTP] and CLM based tasks sessions i.e. Cooperative Learning Methods Based Instructional Plan [CLMIP]. The second section of the chapter depicts the discussion on major findings, followed by concluding notes.

6.1. Findings of the study:

The major themes and findings are depicted under the following heads. This includes findings with regard to Student-teacher's Profile, understanding and exploring process of development of four soft skills, strategy on CLM and practice teaching phase, soft skills' components-wise performance of participants, Observation- reflective diary, Cooperative learning Rating scale, Opinionnaire.

6.1.1. Findings pertaining to Heterogeneous case selection through student-teacher's profile:

- I. From analysis and interpretation of the student-teacher's profile, it is found that most of the participants selected for the present study had English either as second or first language at their schooling education. Although all select participants were female and belonged to English method group, there was greater heterogeneity found in terms of second method course opted by student-teachers.
- II. It is found that the average age of the participants was 26 years, as the range started from 22 years to 33 years. Thus, the target group consisted of youngsters.

- III. It is also noticed that out of fourteen, nine participants had English literature as one of the subjects at undergraduate level. One participant had science at graduation whereas four participants had commerce background. This heterogeneity helped the investigator to form groups which was the first necessity of CLM tasks.

6.1.2. Findings pertaining to exploring the phenomena of process of enhancement of select soft skills:

- I. The strategy has been evolved by integrating CLM based tasks, using various texts selected from English literature and English classics, in order to assess select soft skills is found feasible. Although the researcher had to make a few modifications in the strategy as per the needs arose, overall the plan was executed throughout well as noted down by the investigator in his field notes.
- II. The greatest difficulty found by the investigator was the absence of participants during CLM based tasks sessions and therefore the progressive assessment of individual cases was hampered in a few task. Although the participants who could not attend sessions, they did not find much difficulty in tasks because each task had exclusive separate content to learn and each session was also different as the steps of selected CLM varies from one another.
- III. It is found out from the interaction analysis of Video sessions on CLM tasks at CLMIP that the participants considered the select subject matter the most interesting as it included short stories, poems, grammar topics and composition too. The participants also gave positive feedback on selection of Cooperative learning methods as learning through activity and group work provided them a new learning experience.

IV. Major themes emerged from video sessions transcripts are as follow:

- a.) From the views expressed by the participants on the process of development of select soft skills, it is observed that most participants had positive opinion for the enhancement of select soft skills.
- b.) Some of the soft skills mentioned by the participants were beyond the scope of the present study. In most of the CLM task sessions, participants confessed that they could develop reading comprehension, silent reading, analysis of text,

interpretation, questioning, writing skills, grammar, thinking skills, probing skills and speaking skills as well.

- c.) It is also found that none of the participant had expressed views on CTS, specifically in their oral feedback at the end the session. No one gave any comment on the development of Critical Thinking skills' through selected CLM. Although in some CLM sessions, some participants confessed to have developed thinking skills in general.
- d.) On the theme of CL methods selected, all participants had given positive feedback that the CLM selected were loaded with fun and learning. A perusal of the excerpts listed in previous chapter, reveals that all the participants liked each selected CLM tasks. Most participants found that CLM tasks helped them make friends, improve their relations with classmate, and help develop many other skills and personality traits. It is noticed that most participants accepted that they enjoyed the tasks and there was learning with fun.
- e.) On the theme of content selection, a close look at the quotes mentioned in the previous chapter, it is observed that most of the participants had positive opinion for subject matter selected for tasks. The participants mostly praised the selected stories, poems and grammar topics. Participants also commented positively on genres selected for the study as mostly the content was chosen from classics of English literature either prescribed in the textbooks or found in anthology on classics of literature. Almost all participants liked all grammar topics very much as they confessed that the grammar topics were of intermediate level but CLM task made them very easy. Although selected topics were known to them, they learnt many new rules about the grammar topics with fun through CLM tasks.
- f.) On the theme of task designed, team formation and group/pair work used during CLMIP, it is found that most participants had expressed positive comments on grouping, team building, pairing and grouping during CLM tasks. Tasks designed for each CLM had interesting steps; and the group formation was based on heterogeneity, therefore participants enjoyed learning through CLM tasks. Also they were happy with their decision to join and stay with CLM programme. It is observed that the pairing and grouping formed in each CLM task had been appropriate as they helped them cope up with challenges of task and further their adjustment capacities.

6.1.2.1. Findings pertaining to Practice teaching phase:

- I. Based on the Self -Evaluation sheet for CLM based lessons delivered during practice teaching, it is found that all of the participants prepared the lesson plan well but CLM was given a secondary place in lesson plan as they had followed their lesson format provided by the institute. Most of the participants found difficulties with management of time. This might be because the CLM activities required more time to operate and process in classrooms as the participants could get only a period of 30 minutes lesson in school time table. Most of them couldn't monitor the class well.
- II. Based on Peer Lesson Observation Schedule, it is found that all participants viewed that their peer wrote CLM lessons well. The objectives of the lesson were clear to their peer. All participants viewed that the lesson was properly executed. All participants found that the school students enjoyed learning activities. All of the student-teachers needed improvement in time management.

6.1.2.2. Findings pertaining to enhancement of select four soft skills as per their components:

- I. It is found on the basis of researcher's observation that overall most of the select participants were of intermediate in the beginning of CLM based strategy implemented with regard to reading comprehension skills and grammar skills and at lower intermediate level on written communication skill in the context of use of English language.
- II. On Self-assessment of four soft skills during practice teaching phase, it is found that P2, P5, P8, P9 who assessed themselves at Very Good level on RCS, WRC, TMS and at Satisfactory level on CTS at the beginning of the practice teaching stage, the same participants i.e. P2, P5, P8, P9 were found progressing at end of practice teaching lessons, and had achieved the level of Excellent on RCS, WCS, and TMS whereas attained Very good level on CTS. It is noted that P1,P3, P4, P7, P11,P12,P13 and P14 assessed themselves at level of Good on RCS, WCS, TMS; they could progress at Very Good level on the same three skills whereas they assessed them on CTS at Satisfactory level, they could find them achieving level of Good at the end of practice teaching. The rest of two participants P6 and P10 assessed themselves at satisfactory

level on RCS, TMS, and WCS in the beginning but could achieve level of Good on the same skills but made little progress from Poor to Satisfactory level on CTS at the end of practice teaching phase.

- III. It is observed that participants overrate themselves on all four soft skills while using Self-assessment; as their scores did not match with their actual achievements during the CLMIP tasks where the researcher made performance assessment of the participants on basis of task observations and written documents submitted.
- IV. On the basis of the comparison of Prior Performance tests[Entry behaviour tests] on RCS, CTS, GS, WCS with that of Posterior Performance tests[Terminal behaviour tests], it is found that P1, P2, P3, P5, P8, P9, P12 could progress at all components of all four skills achieving level of Good or Very Good whereas P4, P7,P11 could achieve level of Satisfactory from Mediocre or Very Weak level on RCS, TMS,WCS and attained level of mediocre from Insignificant level on CTS on all components. Two participants P6 and P10 were found to be negative cases as they could not make significant progress on all components of CTS, WCS and little progress on RCS, TMS achieving Mediocre level.
- V. It is found during CLM Tasks that on first five components of Reading Comprehension Skill i.e. comprehension, analysis, Interpretation, Relating text to the context and understanding Genre and using reading strategies; P1, P2, P3, P5, P8, P9 reached at the level of Very Good whereas P4, P7, P11, P12, P13, P14 reached at the level of Satisfactory and P6 and P10 could reach at Mediocre levels. On the last component of critical reading, i. e. Critical reading; P2, P5, P8, P9 reached at the level of Good whereas P1, P3, P4, P7, P11, P12, P13, P14 reached at the level of Satisfactory and P6 and P10 could reach at Mediocre level.
- VI. On all components of Critical Thinking Skill i.e. Interpretation, Analysis, Evaluation, Inference, Explanation and Self-regulation; P2, P5, P8 and P9 reached at the level of Good whereas P1, P3, P11, P12, reached the level of Satisfactory. P4, P7, P13, P14 reached at the level of Mediocre but P6 and P10 could not make any progress and remained at level of Very Poor.
- VII. From all components of Written Communication Skill i.e. structuring, Content, style, grammar and mechanics; except component of WCS3 (style),

P2, P5, P9 could reach at the level of Very Good whereas P1, P3, P8, P12 could attain the level of Good. The rest of the participants P4, P7, P11, and P14 reached at the level of Satisfactory and P6, P10 and P13 could reach at Mediocre levels. On component of WCS3, P2, P5, P9 reached at the level of Good whereas P1, P3, P8, P12 could reach at level of Satisfactory. P4, P7, P11, P13, P14 reached at the level of mediocre whereas P6, P10 could not make any progress.

- VIII. Overall on all components of Time management Skill i.e. Time utilization, Observing Deadlines, Adjustment due to procrastination, Quality of work within time limit, Punctuality and Getting Task organized; it was P2, P5, P8, P9 that could reach at the level of Excellent, whereas P1, P3, P11, P12 could get the level of Very Good. P4, P7, P13, P14 reached at the level of Good whereas P6, P10 could progress to Mediocre level. Time management skills was found gradually improving during CLM sessions as they could do assigned task in stipulated time frame.
- IX. As grammar component was part of WCS, most participants could progress during CLM task no. 10, 11, and 12 which were exclusively based on grammar topics. P5 reached at the level of excellent whereas P1, P2, P3, P7,P8,P9, P11,P12 reached at the level of Very Good and P4, P13,P14 reached the level of Good but the rest P6 ,P10 remained at the level of Very Poor.
- X. Overall, on the basis of the results of all select participants during all CLM tasks, it is found that all participants could progress on RCS, WCS, TMS, and GS as compared to CTS. Majority of participants could reach at Good, Very Good or Excellent levels on RCS, TMS and WCS whereas most of participants could reach at Mediocre or Satisfactory level on these four skills except CTS. The rest of the participants (P6, P10) could make little progress on RCS, TMS but the same remained insignificant or Very Poor on CTS and WCS.
- XI. As a whole, the most progressive participants were P2, P5, P8 and P9 who made remarkable achievement on all components of all soft skills whereas P6 and P10 were found to be negative cases as they did not perform well on all soft skills as their academic achievement was very poor across all CLM tasks.

- XII. Much of the writing skills of most of the participants except P6 and P10, were developed as they improved in writing their worksheets, reports, task sheets and evaluative rubrics.

6.1.2.3. Findings pertaining to perception towards Cooperative learning tasks:

- I. Based on the **Cooperation Learning Self-assessment Rating Scale**, it is found that all participants liked to help others. About 78% participants saw their group members as ‘resource’ for sharing a common goal. All participants agreed that celebration/reward encouraged them to do the task in best way. About 85% participants liked to share ideas freely with others. About almost 93 % participants agreed that CL methods have helped them to gain mastery over the contents. All participants agreed that Collaborative skills have helped them develop thinking skills but not particularly CTS. All participants liked each CLM task selected.
- II. All CLM tasks provided the participants a new experience of learning as they seemed to have enjoyed the pair or group activities with different interesting literary classics selected in each new tasks.
- III. It is noticed by the investigator that most of the participants had positive attitude towards CLM task and roles and work assigned to each of the member of the groups. Most participants are found to have changed their personal attributes (as they are attributes of cooperative and collaborative skills) such as Listening Others; Working with Others; Adaptability; Level of Commitment; Level of Cooperation; Distribution of workload; Focus on Task; Clarity of Roles, responsibilities and duties; Leadership role.
- IV. **Themes emerged from Researcher’s Observation cum Reflective Diary:**
During all CLM tasks it is noted from the Researcher’s Observation cum Reflective diary that P6 and P10 didn’t make any attempt to be leader of the group in any task. P1, P2, P5, P8, P9 had greater level of contribution compared to the rest of the participants. P1, P2, P5, P8 and P9 were found most sharing in the group tasks. Majority of participants were observed to have manage communication and resources but P6 and P10 were noticed to have less interest in communication within group. Most participants were found to have managing themselves and given time well in all tasks.
It is also found that effects of administrative factors, ambience on the process of learning was higher. It would be easy to manage and observe small numbers

of participants in groups. Expectations of maturity in thinking and behaviour in adult learners is higher on the part of the researcher. Audio-video recording had also affected learning process negatively. Learning readiness got increased with content having variety and interest. Initial hesitations to mingle with other group-mates got removed with more difficult tasks and difficult content.

6.1.3. Findings pertaining to opinions of the participants towards CLM based strategy on Opinionnaire:

- I. Most of the participants found that the Cooperative Learning programme was helpful in the development of their overall personality. Most of the participants opined that the CLM programme helped them in the development of overall command over English language. It is noticed that more than half of the participants found Cooperative Learning methods helpful in improving their English grammar. All participants opined that their vocabulary had enriched and increased. Majority of participants positively agreed that they actually preferred to work in groups or teams. All participants opined that the tasks or activities assigned had been interesting and joyful.
- II. All participants agreed that they enriched reading comprehension skill in English. Half of the participants strongly agreed for development of critical thinking skills through CLM tasks. All agreed that they had actually improved in writing skill and management of time.
- III. Almost all participants had become aware of the videography during every CLM task.
- IV. A large number of participants disliked to work alone rather than in team or group. Converting the same statement into positive indicated that 78% participants like to work in groups as they found that they learnt more in groups rather than learning alone.
- V. Majority of the participants disagreed that the content selected for the activities was not in variety. This means that the content was in variety.
- VI. A significant number of participants were disagree on item- 'Time limit given on each task has not been sufficient'. Converting double negatives into positives, this showed that most of the participants had sufficient time to complete the task. This can be inferred that the participants had utilized and managed time properly.

VII. It is found that a large number of participants had shown disagreement that they could not assess their individual performance properly which means only 21% participants could understand the processes of self-assessment. Half of the participants found worksheets writing a tedious and time consuming task.

6.2. Discussion on Findings

The main purpose of the present study is exploration of a phenomenon that evolved in natural set up. Another goal is to describe the understanding acquired about how participants could enhance select soft skills through CLM tasks. There were twelve CL methods selected and each was presented with new content and genres as a separate task during implementation of CLM based strategy. Thus, the present study was an attempt to explore the phenomenon of development of soft skills under CLM environment setting. Multiple aspects made the phenomenon more complex hence the researcher has used multiple tools to capture the events.

The researcher in the present study has aimed to study a complex phenomenon therefore it required multiple tools to collect a very rich data so that a thick description can be provided. This idea to incorporate variety of aspects was supported by a few studies carried out earlier. The findings of **Armstrong (1999)** described ‘collaborative learning’ as a multifaceted, complex process that can be understood in terms of knowledge construction, relationships, and participants’ role in facilitating their own and others’ learning experiences. Thus the present study has incorporated multiple aspects such as soft skills, ESL, CLM and secondary teacher education. During the present study, it is observed that-

- Incorporating many aspects would require greater time and energy on the part of researcher and participants.
- Researcher faced great difficulties to keep a check over time frame for data collection and analysis of many tools demanded greater time.
- Researcher was dependent on participant’s presence during CLMIP but submission of artefacts, documents did not create much issues.
- Less no. of skills, may be one or two could have been focused in far better way with two to four fixed CLM on repetition basis, since the observation on the spot of the performances of all participants during a given task on all components of four skills created greater difficulties for researcher.

- Switching between more than two phases of data collection (practice teaching phase and CLMIP) produced greater difficulties for the researcher in terms of managing time, tools, method of inquiry and variety of data.

While preparing the CLM task based strategy, it was thought by the investigator that inclusion of texts from popular English literary texts might pose questions of selection. In the present study, the investigator had to rely on literary classics of English literature which are available in variety of resources especially English textbook readers of various school boards of different mediums of instruction. The investigator was initially skeptic for using English literary texts as base of subject matter because the target group selected had different methods and subject background. On the contrary it was surprising to find in the Opinionnaire, where participants opined that selected subject matter was most joyful and enjoying. Thus, the selection and inclusion of English literary texts were found feasible in the CLM based strategy. This finding is supported by a study carried out by Chen, Mei- Liag (2007). **Chen, Mei-ling (2007)** conducted study to explore and analyse Taiwanese university students in the effectiveness of cooperative learning strategies in the acquisition of English. The frequency of participation in cooperative learning strategies had a moderately strong relationship with English language acquisition proficiency. It is revealed that learner factor of motivation, anxiety, language aptitude, social distance, and learning strategies had a strong positive and significant relationship with English language proficiency. Thus the present study attempted to devise CLM tasks based strategy to study soft skills enhancement, was found meaningful.

The findings of the present study suggest that the CLM strategy is found effective in enhancing the communication and thinking skills of the participants. The findings of the present study have several supports from various studies conducted at national and international levels. **Chien, Ya-Chen (2004)** carried out a study on Cooperative learning strategies and its results suggested that CL based strategies had been found effective in English as foreign language technological university classes in Taiwan. Its result showed that all the classes improved over time as determined by the gain scores in pre-test and post-test, which indicated that cooperative learning groups could perform and improve English skills as well as traditional learning groups in an EFL setting. Similarly **Sadler (2002)** carried a study with the purpose to examine the

effectiveness of cooperative learning as in instructional strategy to increase academic achievement in biology. Both studies had positive results about CL strategy.

In the present study, CLM strategy incorporated group and pair work. It is found out by many of researchers that group work facilitate learning especially language skills. It is supported by study conducted by **Moore (2005)**. In this study, result support current research for using constructivist-learning environment with extensive group work. Krejci, Katherine T (2010) also supported the idea of implanting CLM strategy. Result of the study by **Krejci (2010)** suggested that higher education and employers should continue to develop cooperative education programs and improve ways of measuring student's learning outcomes.

The present study has devised a CLM strategy in which first phase focused on practice teaching. This idea, although seemed impractical to implement to study enhancement of soft skills, it was a risk to incorporate practice teaching in the study. The investigator himself had faced many difficulties regarding monitoring the CLM lessons delivery in schools so the investigator had to devise a self-assessment rubrics for performance assessment. The study has support from **Gwyn (2002)** who conducted study on 'Construction of competency with cooperative learning by pre-service teachers as observed in supervisory conversations'. It is a qualitative study, which used a socio-constructivist framework to explore an aspect of learning to teach, describing the process by which a group of pre-service teachers construct their understanding of and develop ease with an unfamiliar teaching approach during student teaching. The participants have been able to develop their competence with the approach.

As far as research on soft skills is concerned very few studies have been conducted so far. Therefore, the investigator initially found it very difficult to justify the selection of the topic and the study of soft skills. Now, the present study is supported by a few studies like the study on soft skills carried by **Agrawal, Arvind (2013)**. He studied developments and challenges involved in soft skills training in professional colleges. Based on his research, the researcher proposed the following definitions for soft skills- "Soft skills are insights, skills, traits, values and virtues that help to deal with self and others, situations and communication, work and organization, and finally, with technology and surrounding". This definition provided a great help to the investigator to arrive at conceptual and theoretical framework on soft skills. Most of soft skills selected have been also common in ESL and most of

skills selected have standardized or institutional designed rubrics for assessment and some soft skills selected had components that are available in related literature in various resources. e. g. components of RCS were published by an educational organisation named VALUE, Delphi report had given components of CTS etc.

The findings of the present study regarding process of development of select soft skills suggest that participants have improved in all select soft skills significantly except CTS. Although the inclusion is supported by **Owe-Ewie, Charles (2008)** who carried out a study on ‘Enhancing the thinking skills of Pre-service teachers: A case study of Komenda Teacher training college.’ The findings of study reveal that enhancing thinking skills of learners was a secondary concern in pre-service teacher training. The investigator has found that CTS is rather very difficult for assessment on both parts i.e. participants and researcher. The participants have also found it difficult to answer certain questions in worksheet on CTS. The following reasons are observed by the investigator for this situation:

- The students are habituated to learn through chalk and talk method, most of the students rely heavily on cramming and they mostly have short objective to get good scores in exams, hence CTS is neglected.
- Students have less habit of extra reading i.e. other than prescribed curriculum on language arts courses
- The base of English of most of the students in general has remained poor from schooling especially in the case with Gujarati medium schools
- Critical thinking skills enhancement require more practice and training of mind

It is observed and experienced by the investigator that the observation of participants’ performance on CTS based on all components during tasks posed many difficulties and challenges. It is also found challenging to keep records of observation for CTS during task because in some tasks the investigator himself had to be one of the participants to fill gap in group formation due to absence of more no. of participants in the task session.

The findings on Opinionnaire towards CLM strategy reveal that the strategy was helpful in many ways to the participants. CLM tasks, and selected content was found interesting, joyful and rewarding by the participants. Findings on self-assessed

cooperative learning reveal that the CLM tasks helped participants develop cooperation, sharing, friendliness, and many other values and personality traits.

6.3. Conclusion:

The present study aimed at exploration of a complex phenomenon that evolved in natural set up so the type of research design adopted was emerging and the method of inquiry was Explorative Case study. During different phases of the study, a variety of instruments have been employed to capture the phenomena to provide a thick and vivid description of events. The medium of instruction was English and the subject matter was selected based on classical value of English literature and was incorporated with CLM based tasks to assess the enhancement of soft skills. Student's Profile helped in forming heterogeneous groups during CLM tasks. It is found that variety of tools have given a comprehensive scenario of the development of select soft skills under CLM strategy having two phases i.e. practice teaching and CLMIP at the research site. The findings of the present study have some supports from the studies conducted earlier by other researchers. Overall, the findings of the present study suggest that the strategy using CLM is found feasible to explore a complex phenomenon of process of enhancement of certain select soft skills among secondary student-teachers.