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The Values of Integrating Project-Based and Collaborative Learning in Professional Training

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Abstract

The concept of Collaborative learning and School as Learning Community can be integrated to make professional training culturally meaningful especially in 21st century. These concepts cultivate professional training to provide rich and meaningful experience to music education students. Collaborative Music Community Project was developed to provide experience for music education students to apply theories into practice effectively. This study was aimed to find how Collaborative Music Community Project could 1) infuse collaborative learning virtues among 32 undergraduate and ten graduate music education students and 2) enrich sense and meaning of sharing to the music learning community in the area. Using Design Thinking Process including Empathize, Define, Ideate, Prototype, and Test, college students conducted panel discussions, specified needs, designed six 45-minute rotating sessions, created lesson plans and teaching tools, rehearsed in microteaching sessions before launching the sessions with school graders. College students with diverse instrumental and music teaching background collaborated in peer sharing along with advisor's co-mentoring guidance in order to ensure that they were ready to give clinic sessions to school graders, who will perform in a concert at the end of rotating sessions.

The qualitative data by means of personal response and reflection were gathered by individual and group interviews whereas collaborative behaviours were observed and documented. Quantitative data collected by questionnaires showed school graders' appreciation toward the project. Interview records showed that both undergraduate and graduate students actively participated in a collaborative learning environment throughout the process. Sense of responsibility to music community was introduced in a real-life situation making the emotional attachment and positive memory. Findings implied that the project was an effective approach to merge undergraduate and graduate music education students to collaborative learning. Undergraduate students learn practical and management skills from graduate students while graduate students needed hand on support from undergrad students. College students grasped the meaning of how to teach and how they can contribute to the class and community. Primary and secondary students were inspired and motivated by the project. School directors and music teachers appreciated the process of cooperative workshop sessions as well as the final open-house concert product. Implications to professional music teacher training includes applicable collaborative action plan and responses and suggestions from participants.