

Notes on changes made from version 1 to version 2: while version 1 considered a scenario where some "naïve" participants were not told that research was happening, this version has been modified to allow that all participants are able to be aware of the project. This time, there are "direct" participants who are actively taking action to develop the use of collaborative play in teacher planning meetings, "indirect" participants who are part of the planning group but are not asked to take such actions, and "observers" who are not part of the planning group but openly observe the process and take notes that will be used for evaluating the results.

0a. The "change" (action/program/policy/curriculum/practice/treatment/difference/etc.) whose effectiveness needs to be evaluated is...

The practice involves taking action that will introduce the use of collaborative play in teacher planning in order to better prepare teachers to create more effective lesson plans and activities for students. My suggestion is that in situations when teachers have an opportunity to work together to create lesson plans and are structured to do so anyway, they use collaborative play as a methodology to help them 1) learn from each other's strengths and teaching styles, 2) develop lesson plans and activities that are creative in the sense that they involve combining ideas of diverse practitioners that might not be considered by one teacher doing own planning in isolation, and 3) they allow lesson plans and activities to be developed which exhibit greater continuity across different classes, since the plans would be reflective of multiple teachers and the process of creating them would allow teachers to become more aware of each other's goals and needs, which could help support consistent environments for students between different classrooms.

0b. Interest or concern in the effectiveness of the change arises because...

In many "collaborative" teacher planning meetings, I have noticed that this planning very often manifests in the form of a discussion, involving a cycle of brainstorming, evaluation, and decision, where the teachers themselves do not participate in direct experimentation but instead theorize "best practices" and then commit to lesson plans without further inquiry. Particularly in many of my past teaching situations, I feel that use of collaborative play would have helped me to learn and reflect more about what I was actually doing while allowing the practical work to get done.

1a. The group or person(s) that sponsors the evaluation of the change are...

I am the main sponsor within my own environment, which is too small for a statistically significant sample, but within a larger institution, the administrators/directors might be the main sponsors as they seek to improve the collaboration of teachers in the school or center.

1b. The people they seek to influence with the results are...

I seek to influence primarily the other teachers in my school environment (in my specific case, this might be the team of teachers responsible for planning toward youth education). A

secondary influence would ideally occur with the students, who are the beneficiaries of the teachers who do use collaborative play.

1c. The actions/decisions/policies those people might improve or affirm concern...

The teachers might improve or affirm the need for scheduled and organized planning, the role of facilitation in teacher planning, and the allowance for developing ideas that need not always be fully worked out at the end of a specific planning session.

2a. General Question: The comparison needed to evaluate the effectiveness of the change is between two (or more) situations, namely a. a comparison of...

The two situations being compared are the teacher planning sessions in which no member of the group takes particular interest in collaborative play, and those sessions in which at least one person does take interest in collaborative play and attempts to integrate it into the planning approach.

b. with respect to differences in the general area of.....

In the latter situation in which some planning group members do advocate use of collaborative play, the main action to be considered, planned, and evaluated is the taking of steps that encourage collaborative play to happen. For example with my specific situation, I would consider what actions would I need to take before, during, and after teacher planning with certain groups, and I would not take such actions with the "control" groups. As well as the actual actions taken by teachers, another difference would be that some outside person or party would be present to observe the interactions of the teachers during planning and note observations that could be used to help the evaluation of collaborative play integration.

3. Specific observables: To undertake that comparison, the effects of the change will be assessed by looking at the following specific variable(s) in the two (or more) situations...

Across a large number of teacher planning groups, "control" groups would go on as always, and "treatment" groups would be the ones to utilize collaborative play. Within the treatment group, there would be "direct participants" who are actively involved in introducing collaborative play into the planning sessions, and then "indirect participants" who do not specifically plan for collaborative play. The direct participants would adhere to a set of common "collaborative play" actions that they would take before, during, and after teacher planning, and they would not necessarily reveal that they are doing to others in the whole group. At first, these collaborative actions might be developed in a common form by those actually implementing them, although it seems likely that the flexibility would be needed to be allowed for them to evolve. The "before" and "after" actions would help the direct participant him- or herself prepare for and reflect upon collaborative play individually, and the "during" actions would involve more direct collaborative play while actually engaged in the teacher planning. Alternately, the treatment group might contain all direct participants and no indirect participants, meaning that the entire process would be transparent to all involved, and everyone would be taking the actions to invoke play. This

might necessitate forming groups that don't typically meet with each other for planning. In more "natural" planning groups, teachers in a same grade level or teaching a similar subject might typically meet, and in these cases, it might be realistic that only certain members of the group are open to acting as direct participants.

Variables would include the following:

- 1) The number of planned actions that were either taken or not taken by the direct participants
- 2) The expressions of acceptance or resistance made in response to the collaborative play actions "during" the teacher planning (as made by the indirect participants) in a planning group
- 3) Over time, the number of instances when indirect participants start to introduce collaborative play approaches themselves
- 4) Time spent and actions taken during periods of collaborative play, i.e., when experimentation of proposed learning activities is happening between teachers such that they are expressing enjoyment and finding freedom to explicitly and personally try the activities without expectation of specific results.

4. The methods to be used to produce observations or measurements of those variables are...(survey, questionnaire, etc.)

Methods would require that third-party observers take notes during teacher planning meetings and actually record the instances of the variables above. Part of the observations would be to note a quantitative count of instances of particular behavior as mentioned above, and part of the observation would be to provide a narrative account of the sense of play observed. In order to avoid creating anxiety of the teachers in the face of being "scrutinized" by the observers, the observers might have to be present in the role of being simply note-takers on the collaborative play experiment. Some observers would remain with the same group over successive planning sessions. Some observers would alternate between sessions either within the control groups, or within the treatment groups. Some observers would alternate between sessions and also between the control and treatment groups. In my specific case of teacher planning for example, I might ask for a center director of administrator to participate to join in under the role of a person taking notes on behalf of the rest of us.

5a. The people who will be observed/measured are...

The teacher groups will be observed, and this would include both the control and treatment groups. With the control groups, the observers will measure the same variables, determining when these things happen spontaneously, since those groups will not have any direct participants.

5b. The observing/measuring is done in the following places/situations... or derived indirectly from the following sources...

The observations will be made during the structured teacher planning meetings that have been previously established. Separate observations might be made in the form of individual interviews of the various teachers by one of the third party observers or by another administrator.

6. The observations/measurements will be analyzed to determine whether the two situations are significantly different in the following manner...

With respect to the variables above, variables 1,2, and 3 will be directly compared over several months of time to quantitatively determine whether collaborative play is successfully being introduced into the teacher planning. The final variable might depend upon a more qualitative analysis of how collaborative play seems to develop differently in control and treatment groups.

7a. Given that people who will interpret (give meaning to) the analysis are...

Those interpreting the meaning of the analysis might be school administrators and other teachers who are not participating in any collaborative planning groups.

7b. the analysis will be summarized/conveyed in the following form...

A summary will be created which indicates which of the "before", "during", "after" actions seem to be most closely related to the emergence of collaborative play. These will be made available to teacher and administrator groups who are developing future guidelines for planning sessions. Also, a summary of specific instances of collaborative play will be compiled as a resource for demonstrating to teachers different kinds of alternatives for ways of behaving in their planning.

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When the results are available, the following steps can be pinned down. In the design stage, you should lay out different possibilities.

8a. The results show that what has been happening is...

Possibilities include that the "before", "during", and "after" activities each show some amount of influence on the increase in collaborative play used during teacher planning. For each level of activity, it is also possible that it shows no effect on the level of collaborative play, or even is shown to be detrimental to collaborative play. Results might be inconclusive altogether because of other factors not observed in the teacher planning, such as the influence of personalities or differences in interpreting "play" by the direct participants or observers.

8b. This will be reported through the following outlets...

This will be reported in institutional annual reports, new staff orientation materials, and individual meetings between teachers and administrators.

9. What has been happening is happening because...

Will be determined by the study, but one possibility is that collaborative play is shown to be possible in teacher planning and an acceptable use of time and effort, meaning that the school as a whole might become more willing to create the environment that allows play to happen and encourage all teachers to develop the "before", "during", and "after" actions that are useful.

10. The lessons learned by sponsors of evaluation are that...

Lessons to be learned might include a deeper evaluation of why collaborative play does not happen more often, such as lack of time, feeling of apprehension, or lack of real and practical benefit. Also, the specific "before,during,after" actions might be appropriate only under certain circumstances and might need to be customized very specifically to each teacher planning group in a way that is appropriate. Future cycles of action research would likely pay great attention to the fine-tuning of the actions and even framing them in a way that allows them to evolve through the direct decision of the teachers actually carrying them out.

11. What the sponsors should now do differently is...

One possibility is that sponsors should consider how to expose the benefits of collaborative play mores teacher planning process and consider different presentations of these ideas as a way of allowing teachers to view them in ways that are most acceptable. For example, if certain teachers resist the very notion of "play" in a rigid way because they believe that it allows for silliness and makes them appear to not be serious about their work, the idea of play might be presented in alternate form, such as as "experiential planning".