

Peer Coaching in Early Childhood Education: A Literature Review

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Abstract : Experts agree that teachers of young children need a solid grounding in child psychology and early childhood education. This is because the qualities of the instructor in charge of early childhood education programs directly affect the quality and success of those programs. Children from underprivileged backgrounds have needs in these areas. Since early childhood educators are frequently held responsible for the children's outcomes, it is incumbent upon them to give the children and families relevant educational experiences. This paper summarizes the results of a review on peer coaching in early childhood education. According to the findings of this analysis, peer coaching is identified as one strategy that supports early childhood educators meet targeted skills for quality instructional practices. Teachers of young children benefit greatly from peer coaching because it allows them to try new things, talk to colleagues about their work, solve problems together, observe, and reflect on their practices. Despite the lack of numerous studies on peer coaching, the few studies reviewed showed that peer coaching is an effective way for teachers to advance their careers in early childhood education. These findings emphasized the importance of using the fundamental coaching processes for peer coaching to enhance early childhood educators' professional development. The impact of peer tutoring on a child's success in early childhood settings is an important area that needs further study.

Index Terms : Peer coaching, Peer Education, Children Education, peer, early childhood educators, coaching

I. INTRODUCTION (HEADING 1)

The idea of peer coaching has been the subject of several investigations. Nevertheless, there appears to be no consistent definition of peer coaching since each research characterizes it differently. There is no "one size fits all" framework for peer coaching; instead, it must be tailored to each unique set of circumstances. This literature analysis was conducted so that the researcher could identify a definition suitable for a study that aimed to determine whether or not college students participating in field-based initial teacher education programs benefited from having a peer coach [1].

One characteristic of an effective peer coaching model is open and frequent communication between peer coach partners. Peer coaching partnerships thrive when there is an open and honest dialogue between the partners. The most effective peer coaching partnerships are based on trust, open dialogue, and freedom of judgment [2]. Interpersonal problems can arise when teachers engage in peer coaching because they must assess each other's practice. However, this problem is avoided through peer observation, and the resulting relationship between teachers is built on trust [3]. The idea of peer coaching is not for instructors to judge each other [3, 4] but rather to foster cooperation for enhanced classroom instruction. This element, along with others like trust and reflection, is crucial to the idea of peer coaching. As said, trust and reflection are also crucial aspects of peer coaching that need to be explored.

Peer coaching has been constructive in increasing pre-service teachers' skills in classroom organization [5] and teachers' use of developmentally appropriate teaching behaviors [6, 7, 8, 9] in language and literacy [10] and complex communication needs [11]. Peer coaching relationships thrive based on trust, which is repeatedly emphasized in studies. Trust in a peer coaching partnership grows over time in the same way that trust grows in a community of practice as members get to know each other better. Some authors argued that it takes time for trust to form in a peer coaching relationship; thus, it is essential to factor that waits time into the equation [2, 12]. Reflection is also an essential part of peer coaching. Participants will need to be proficient in reflection since peer coaching is inherently a reflective endeavor. Therefore, it is essential that any training in peer coaching incorporates reflective practices [13]. Conversational participants are usually eager to relay their perspectives and anecdotes, which does not necessarily lead to a contemplative or acceptable resolution of the subject. In conclusion, effective peer coaching relationships need trust, introspection, and strong communication skills, including the ability to offer non-evaluative criticism. If peer coaching partnerships are to be successful, these factors must be considered and fostered.

Purpose of study

This study reviews the current practices in peer coaching delivery by outlining the identified processes used in the studies. In addition, the review seeks to address (1) the type(s) of peer coaching models used across studies, (2) To what extent peer coaching helps educators by analyzing effect sizes reported, and (3) identifying peer coaching processes used across studies.

II. METHODOLOGY

This section details the processes of selecting the articles for this review (see Figure 1)

Databases searched : The author conducted searches from EBSCOhost, Academic Search Complete, Academic Search Premier, APA Psych Info, Education Full Text, Education Research Complete, ERIC, Professional Development Collection, Psychology, and Behavioral Science Collection.

Inclusion criteria: The author included early childhood, peer-to-peer studies, studies between the years 2000 and 2020, and peer-reviewed journals.

Exclusion criteria: The author excluded studies conducted before 2000, studies on coach-parent dyads, and studies on elementary educators.

Keywords: The search in the databases was based on three keywords: peer, early childhood educators, and coaching.

The total number of studies selected for this review was fourteen (14).

Figure 1: Search Process map

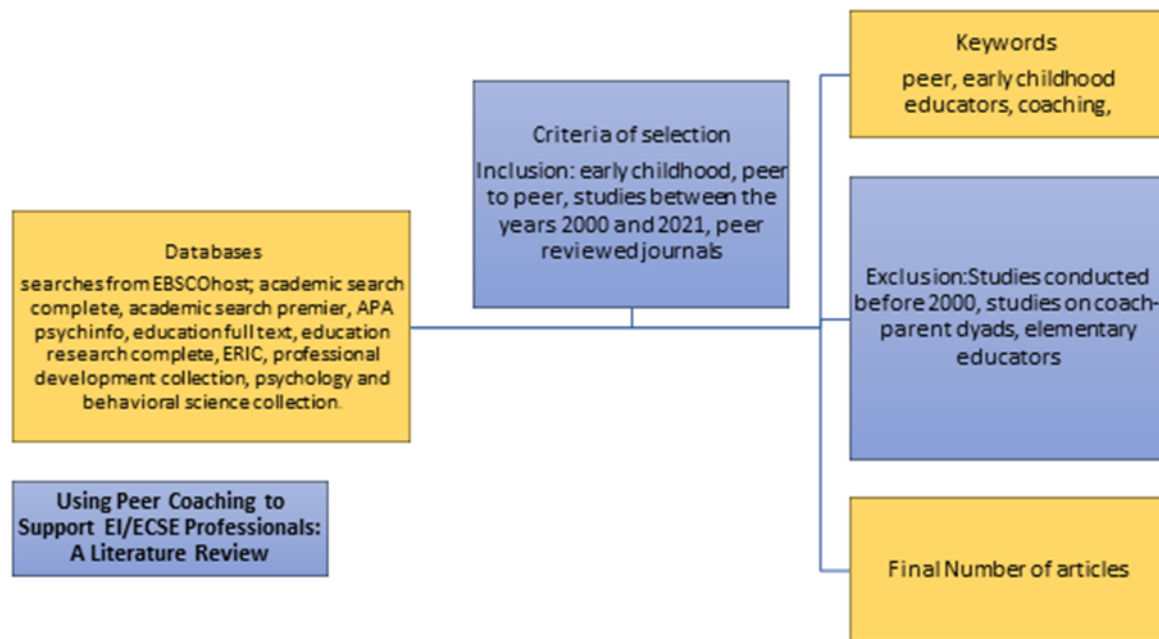


Figure 1 Search Process map

III. RESULTS

Type(s) of peer coaching models used in this review: In this review, the fundamental coaching models observed were video-based and traditional. Specific details of the models used can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1 Peer Coaching models

Reference	Coaching model
[9]	Teacher-selected peer coach
[14]	Director-selected peer coach
[15]	Personnel preparation model
[16]	Reciprocal peer coaching
[11]	Performance-based peer feedback/Reflective practices
[17]	Paraprofessional-facilitated peer network intervention
[18]	Peer coaching-based personalized learning approach
[5]	Bug-in-ear peer coaching
[6]	Colleague Observation and Coaching (COACH)
[19]	Video-modeling-based performance feedback
[20]	Performance-based peer feedback
[7]	Teacher-delivered professional development
[10]	Mentor-Teacher approach
[21]	Early literacy peer-coaching professional-development
[21]	NS (Peer coaching on responsive statements)

NB: NS (Not Specific)

Effectiveness of peer coaching: The effect size observed across the studies reviewed ranged from .02 to .5. This shows that peer coaching was effective. However, only four studies reported effect sizes. [7, 19, 5, 18]. Other studies reported a functional relationship between peer coaching and participants' use of targeted strategies [18, 15, 5].

Peer coaching processes identified in this review: In this review, we identified some standard peer coaching processes across studies. Almost all studies reported on observation, provision of feedback, and reflection as part of their peer coaching processes (as shown in Table 2).

Table 2 Peer Coaching Steps used in the studies reviewed.

Reference	Peer Coaching Steps
[9]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participating teachers received coaching from a teacher-selected peer coach. Feedback was provided following each coaching session in written and verbal format on the coaching form. Coaching occurred across various classroom routines Coaches completed a coaching form during each peer coaching session.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faculty identified and mentored the HIP peer coaches.

[14]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The training session reviewed the HIP model and peer coaching strategies. Throughout the semester, students and coaches communicated electronically using university-issued e-mail and the course management program hosted by the university.
[15]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction of a new practice, teaching teams were instructed to focus coaching and feedback on the new skill and to provide limited feedback on the previously coached practices.
[16]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peer coaches observed and transcribed as many details as possible of their partner's 15 –20-minute lesson. TCS verbally reflected on the examples provided by their coach and planned to improve future lessons. TCS conducted a peer coaching cycle, teaching and observing one lesson, then returned for a class day on campus. Reviewed the peer coaching process and procedures with candidates, particularly the need to be objective and reflective. Partners met with their UBTE at midterm after both peer coaching cycles were completed to discuss the peer-coaching process and TC's plans for improvement.
[11]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observed the setting in which the peer network would be established Setting up the peer network involved (a) a collaborative planning meeting, (b) training for the facilitator, and (c) an initial orientation meeting.
[17]	<p>The online personalized learning process consists of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting and greeting virtual team members General content learning and peer diagnosis. Personalized content learning and peer experience learning. self-revision Peer revision Raising questions and exchanging ideas

Table 3 Continued.

Reference	Peer Coaching Steps
[18]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An overview of high-quality coaching strategies and BIE coaching. Teachers were instructed to provide at least one prompt or praise to their co-teacher per min so that sufficient feedback could be received each session. Co-teachers practiced using the BIE technology with each other during the training.
[5]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required teachers to both provide and receive coaching to improve student-teacher interactions. Teachers were provided with worksheets to guide observations, self-reflection, and coaching feedback.
[6]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Candidates used hand-held HD video cameras to capture as much of their teaching. Multi-tiered supports (universal, targeted, and intensive) and multidimensional supports were used to increase the candidate's targeted skills.
[19]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the structured group, students were given an observation and feedback form to list specific teaching categories and teacher behaviors while providing peer feedback. The semi-structured group was given an observation sheet that provided a format for peer feedback without specific teacher behaviors.
[20]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explained the rationale for peer support arrangements and outlined implementation steps associated with peer support arrangements Each mentor/teacher duo kept in touch via phone or e-mail to schedule visits and discussed ideas, strategies, or differentiation.
[7]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mentors conducted three in-class observations per term with each of their assigned teachers. Groups receiving the CLUE curriculum were provided lesson plans and training on curriculum implementation.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each teacher was asked to self-evaluate himself/herself using the ELLCO. In cases where the ELLCO was challenging to read, or the terms were unfamiliar, the codirector helped the teacher complete the self-evaluation.

[10]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each teacher used information from the ELLCO to set a goal to focus on between late spring and before the first meeting with his or her literacy coach.
[21]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early childhood special education teacher review peer coaching steps. Head start teacher review observation of early childhood special education teacher. Early childhood special education teacher develops a plan for improving her teaching behaviors Early childhood special educator gives general feedback Early childhood special education teacher defines responsive statements and gives specific feedback Head start teacher develops a new plan for improving teaching behaviors

Summary of Results: Research shows that partnered teaching is beneficial for both student teachers including their host instructors during practicums, with more satisfaction expressed by student teachers (87%) than host teachers (62%). Students who were happy with their practicum experiences overwhelmingly wanted to do it again (83%). Moreover, the research uncovered elements or behaviors and principles that affect the efficacy of partnered teaching. Preparation for the practicum, briefing, debriefing, getting off to a good start, having a conducive learning atmosphere, evaluating students somewhat, and encouraging creative problem-solving in pairs were all mentioned. Other procedures included considering the school setting and giving the host teachers enough time to prepare for the practicum. The success or failure of the paired instruction was dependent on these factors. If these concerns were adequately handled, then partnered instruction might be effective. The study uncovered not only everyday habits but also the underlying ideas that contributed to the overall success of partnered instruction by integrating the coaching processes into peer coaching models.

IV. DISCUSSION

Teachers interact with each other as they provide mutual support and friendship in a safe, non-competitive environment, thanks to peer coaching [16]. According to research, coaching for early childhood education comprises two primary components: promoting the development of abilities based on evidence and strengthening the application of relevant skills through instructional techniques [20]. Both factors suggested that coaching should be grounded in research and that educators who engage in coaching should make sure to depend on research to gather the information they can use to foster suitable abilities that will improve the child's educational objectives. Independent and collaborative observation and action primarily defined by modeling and guided practice, reflection, feedback, and assessment of the mentoring relationship are all critical components of coaching in ECE. It is important to emphasize that this assessment is based on the coaching process and not the individual instructors' methods. Coaching appears to have all the makings of a viable strategy for enhancing classroom performance [17]. On the contrary, there is a severe lack of empirical study on topics such as peer coaching, teacher credentials, and development in early life.

V. CONCLUSION

Following this evaluation, policymakers must improve early childhood educators' access to and understanding of child development and early education research. To achieve successful professional development, however, courses in early childhood education should be supplemented with peer coaching since research has shown that delivering such training to practicing teachers alone does not result in a substantial gain in knowledge.

Secondly, practicum students should be encouraged to engage in partnered teaching. Two student instructors can engage in partnered teaching and peer coaching. Student teachers may have a more favorable impression of the partnered teaching experience if they are allowed to select their partners, as evidenced by one research finding. Due to the lack of student agency in the pairing process, this research suggests that student instructors should be given discretion in selecting their peer coaching partners.

This paper presents the idea of peer coaching, outlines its essential features, and discusses the practice's long and storied history in education. This analysis aimed to arm practitioners with the knowledge, tools, and assurance they need to use peer coaching within their classrooms, which has been shown to improve students' academic performance.

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