



Lecturers' Practices of Collaborative Lesson Delivery at Health Tutors' College-Mulago, Uganda

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Abstract: *This qualitative case study explored the practices of implementing collaborative learning in health tutor education in Uganda. Using a qualitative research approach and case study design, the study specifically examined the collaborative practices enacted by lecturers during lesson delivery at Health Tutors' College Mulago. Following purposive sampling, data were collected through in-depth interviews with lecturers, focus group discussions with the students and non-participant observations of lessons conducted by the lecturers interviewed earlier. Data analysis involved thematic analysis using both deductive and inductive approaches, with the assistance of the Nvivo14 data analysis software. Regarding collaborative lesson delivery practices, the study revealed that lecturers used various strategies, such as co-teaching (team teaching), students' group discussion and presentations, peer teaching, as the practices of collaborative lesson delivery. The study further illuminates a mismatch between knowledge and practice regarding the delivery of collaborative learning, whereby the lecturers' self-reported practices of co-teaching as a collaborative lesson delivery strategy were evidently missing in the observed lessons. By illuminating the collaborative practices regarding lesson delivery at Health Tutors' College Mulago and proposing actionable recommendations, this study makes a remarkable contribution to collaborative learning research, curriculum development and implementation in health tutor education in the Ugandan context. The study also recommends specific college-based feasible interventions such as training programmes for both lecturers and students to adopt and optimize collaborative lesson delivery practices to improve health tutor education in Uganda.*

Keywords: *Collaborative Lesson Delivery, Collaborative Learning, Health tutors, Lecturers, Education*

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1. Introduction

Collaborative learning has been described as a student-centred and innovative approach to teaching and learning that gives learners more responsibility for their own learning through various activities (Babu et al, 2017; Laal & Mohammad, 2012; Moges, 2019; Almajed et al., 2016). Laal and Mohammad (2012) and Sotto (2021) describe collaborative learning as an educational approach to teaching and learning that involves groups of learners working together to solve problems, complete

tasks, and/or create products. It also refers to an instructional method in which learners at various performance levels work together in small groups towards a common goal (Sotto, 2021). Mugabekazi et al., (2025) further contend that collaborative learning, an instructional approach where students work together to achieve shared learning outcomes, is increasingly recognized for its potential to enhance both academic and interpersonal skills.

In the collaborative learning contexts, the learners are challenged both socially and intellectually as they listen to different perspectives, and are required to articulate and defend their ideas (Nkomo et al., 2025). Furthermore, Babu et al. (2017) argue that because collaborative learning is student-centred, it gives learners more responsibility for their own learning through various activities. Scholars such as Chandra (2017) contend that collaborative learning is a personal philosophy and not just a classroom technique. Therefore, collaborative lesson delivery entails the strategies that facilitate learners to work together collaboratively towards a common learning goal.

Scholars argue that students of health sciences must be taught and guided to learn collaboratively during their school education, so that later in clinical practice, they can be able to work in teams in their field of work (Sampieri-Cabrera et al., 2019). Hence, this study aimed to explore the collaborative lesson delivery practices among lecturers in health tutor education in Uganda, by answering the following question.

1.1 Research Question

The study was guided by one question.

What collaborative lesson delivery practices are used by lecturers to facilitate students' collaborative learning at Health Tutors' College Mulago?

2. Related Literature

2.1 Teachers' Practices of Collaborative Lesson Delivery

Teachers' practices of lesson delivery for collaborative learning have been widely studied (De Hei, 2016; Moges, 2019; Nayan et al., 2010; Nkomo et al., 2025; Ofojebe et al., 2018; Pozzi et al. 2023; De Hei et al. (2025, 2016); Wameko & Abera, 2019). The aforementioned scholarship illuminates various practices used by teachers to facilitate collaborative learning among students, including discussions, group work, team teaching, group presentations, collaborative writing, debate, peer teaching, among others (Moges, 2019; Nayan et al., 2010; Ofojebe et al., 2018; De Hei et al., 2020, 2016; Wameko & Abera, 2019).

Additionally, several scholars (Mugabekazi et al., 2025; Sotto, 2021; Van Leeuwen and Jansen, 2019) posit that teachers need to employ a variety of interactive activities including pair work, group discussion and dialogue, group work, student led discussions, group discussions, study groups, peer teaching, collaborative writing, debates, problem and project based learning, among others; where the teacher's role is to facilitate, guide, monitor and provide feedback. In addition, scholars such as Van Leeuwen and Jansen (2019) further recommend

that during collaborative lessons, teachers should emphasize the skills of explaining, elaborating, questioning, clarifying, sharing, negotiating, helping others and giving positive feedback among their students. Furthermore, scholars contend that in order to realize the desired collaborative learning outcomes, collaborative lesson delivery requires the teachers to play an active role in guiding and supporting students to collaborate, seek and offer assistance to their peers (Nkomo et al., 2025; Mugabekazi et al., 2025; Van Leeuwen & Jansen, 2019). The current study thus sought to explore the collaborative practices used by lecturers to facilitate collaborative learning at health tutor training college in the Ugandan context.

The prevalence of quantitative surveys and particularly teachers' self-reports about their practices of delivering collaborative lessons is evident in previous research (Ofojebe et al., 2018; Ruys et al., 2010; Wameko & Abera, 2019). While this has provided some insights into collaborative lesson delivery, it has largely been from the insider and/or teacher's perspective. The current study thus, in addition to lecturers' interviews, took up lesson observations and students' FGDs to ascertain how lecturers deliver lessons to facilitate collaborative learning from the outsider's (etic) perspective.

Furthermore, while dominant research has focused on teachers' perspectives as regards collaborative lesson delivery (Moges, 2019; Nayan et al., 2010; De Hei et al., 2025, 2016; Wameko & Abera, 2019), there is a paucity of literature on learners' perspectives in this regard. The current study thus sought to extend research in this field by eliciting students' experiences and perspectives regarding collaborative lesson delivery by their lecturers, in order to plug the identified gaps and explore ways to optimize collaborative lesson delivery basing on the views of students. Therefore, students' FGDs were also conducted to illuminate the lesson delivery practices experienced by the students in their classrooms to obtain a more detailed picture of collaborative lesson delivery practices in health tutor education.

In the Ugandan context of health tutor education, there is a paucity of studies focusing on collaborative learning in general and collaborative lesson delivery in particular. Therefore, this study focused on collaborative lesson delivery and sought to establish the collaborative lesson delivery practices used by lecturers in training health tutors at in Uganda.

2.2 Theoretical Perspective

This study is anchored in the theory of social constructivism as proposed by Lev Vygotsky (1978). Vygotsky (1978) believed that isolated learning cannot lead to cognitive development and he firmly maintained that social interaction is a prerequisite to cognitive development and effective learning (Nkomo et al., 2025). Vygotsky (1978) argued that knowledge is socially

constructed and learning occurs as a result of interactions involving more than one person. Hence, in this context, teachers' practices of lesson delivery should aim at facilitating social interactions among learners in order to promote effective learning. This implies that in order for learners to develop cognitively, there is need for social interaction (Nkomo et al., 2025). Hence, teachers need to guide and empower learners to develop cognitively and socially by providing learning activities and environments that encourage social interactions among learners (Nkomo et al., 2025).

Furthermore, Vygotsky's concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) and scaffolding illuminates two important aspects of students' learning which are; the weaker learners are assisted by their more capable peers or teachers to attain higher levels, while the more capable learners gain new insights through social interactions and develop a qualitatively better way of understanding (Nyikos et al., 2014; Nkomo et al., 2025). Hence, collaborative lesson delivery by lecturers can assist students to realize the above mentioned aspects of ZPD and scaffolding through active social interactions with their peers and/or teachers (Mugabekazi et al., 2025; Nkomo et al., 2025; Sotto, 2021). The concept of ZPD underscores the importance of social interaction and the critical role of a more skilled instructor in facilitating students' learning (Nkomo et al., 2025). The current study therefore used the social constructivist lens to

examine the collaborative lesson delivery practices among lecturers in facilitating the students' learning at Health Tutors' College Mulago in Uganda.

3. Methodology

This study followed a qualitative research approach, adopting a case study design which allowed for the exploration of lecturers' collaborative lesson delivery practices, with data typically collected from the lecturers and students within the selected college premises where collaborative lesson delivery takes place (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Kalu & Bwalya, 2017; Yin, 2018). The selection of Health Tutors' College Mulago as a case study, the lecturers and the final year tutor students for this study was done purposively.

3.1 Selection of Lecturers

Six lecturers were purposively selected from the four subject departments, because of their roles as key facilitators and implementers of collaborative learning among students. The lecturers provided detailed information regarding their perspectives and experiences of collaborative lesson delivery at Health Tutor's College – Mulago.

Table 1: Lecturer who participated in the study

Number	Pseudonym	Sex	Department	Subject specialty	Teaching experience
1	Kisa	Male	Nursing	Nursing, Pharmacology,	12 years
2	Seku	Male	Allied Health	Clinical teaching, Orthopaedics	12 years
3	Nasa	Female	Midwifery	Public health, Research, Gender,	12 years
4	Lujo	Male	Pedagogy	Philosophy of educ.	8 years
5	Joma	Male	Pedagogy	Curriculum studies	35 years
6	Sela	Male	Allied Health	Physiology	15 years

3.2 Selection of Students

Four groups, each comprising of six students from the finalist (BME III) class belonging to each of the four subject domains (departments) making a total of 24 students, consented to participate in this study. Finalist students were selected for this study because they had experienced collaborative learning at the college for the

previous three years and had the highest experience of collaborative learning at the college. Hence, they would give the most holistic account of their perspectives regarding collaborative lesson delivery during their study at the college. Six students per FGD were purposely preferred because scholars recommend that FGDs should consist of 6 to 10 individuals (Dzino-Silajdzic, 2018). The student participants in this study are shown in table 2.

Table 2: Student participants

FGD Number	Number of students	Gender (Male: Female)	Department	Subject specialty
1	6	4: 2	Allied Health	Dentistry, Pharmacy, Clinical medicine,
2	6	3: 3	Nursing	Nursing
3	6	0: 6	Midwifery	Midwifery
4	6	6: 0	Combined (Pedagogy)	Allied Health, Nursing, Midwifery

3.3 Data Collection

Through in-depth interviews with lecturers, lesson observations and FGDs with tutor students, the researcher collected and triangulated data regarding lecturers practices of collaborative lesson delivery using

an interview guide, a lesson observation guide and an FGD guide respectively. The process of triangulation, that is, using the three data collection methods namely, lesson observations, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, enhanced the credibility of the findings regarding lecturers practices of collaborative lesson delivery at Health Tutors' College Mulago.

Table 3: Summary of data collection methods and participants

Methods	Participants	Number
Interview	Lecturers	six
Lesson observation	Lecturers & students	Six lessons
FGD	Students	24 (four groups)

3.4 Ethical considerations

In order to access the study site, the researcher obtained official permission using an introductory letter from Kyambogo University to the Principal of Health Tutors' College Mulago, explaining the purpose and objectives of the study and requesting for permission to carry out the study at the college. The researcher then sought voluntary and informed consent from each participant by requesting them to read and fill in an approved consent form, explained the purpose of the study and the voluntary nature of participation. In addition, confidentiality and respect for privacy of the participants was ensured by using pseudonyms to safeguard participant disclosure. Concerning the ethical principle of reciprocity, the participants were appreciated with a modest token of twenty thousand UG shillings (for each lecturer) and ten thousand UG shillings (to each student) for accepting to participate in this study. The researcher also requested for the participants' permission to record all the interviews and focus group discussions, which was granted. These measures were crucial to upholding the integrity of the research and safeguarding the rights and well-being of the participants (Kakooza et al., 2025).

3.5 Researcher's role and reflexivity

As the principle investigator, my experience as a tutor trainer for more than ten years, my bias towards qualitative research and my deep interest in constructivist pedagogic approaches may have influenced the selection of the study participants and the way the findings of this study have been interpreted (Secules et al., 2020). My contextual proximity to the lecturers and students at Health Tutors' College Mulago (where this study explored practices of collaborative lesson delivery) could have influenced the way the study participants responded to the interview and FGD questions respectively.

3.6 Data Analysis

The researcher conducted thematic data analysis systematically following the specific steps as suggested by Clarke & Braun (2017)

Familiarization: In this phase, the researcher manually transcribed the interviews and FGD recordings and then transferred the transcripts into the Nvivo 14 data analysis software. The researcher then read and re-read the transcripts and the lesson observation notes several

times, to get immersed in the data, in line with the main research question of the study.

Generating initial codes: Using the Nvivo 14 software, all the transcribed data were coded deductively by selecting phrases, sections of words and categorizing them in line with the lecturers' practices of collaborative lesson delivery.

Searching for themes: Because of the explorative nature of the study the transcripts were again re-read to identify more themes inductively, for instance the benefits and constraints to collaborative learning as experienced by the lecturers and students.

Reviewing the themes: This involved re-reading through all the themes to refine them and to ensure that they could form a coherent pattern in relation to lecturers' practices of collaborative lesson delivery.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Results

This section presents the findings regarding the practices taken up by lecturers to facilitate collaborative lesson delivery; and also as was *perceived or realized by students during lesson delivery. The study revealed that the delivery practices enacted by lecturers to facilitate collaborative learning among students at Health Tutors' College Mulago included co-teaching, students' discussions and presentations, peer teaching, and the traditional teacher centred practices

4.1.1 Co-teaching (team teaching)

The practice of co-teaching, where two or more teachers attended and facilitated students' learning in one class at the same time, was used by lecturers as a strategy of collaborative lesson delivery. Co-teaching as reported by lecturers, was intended to facilitate students' collaborative learning, but also promoted the acquisition of more competencies among lecturers, as Seku, a male lecturer in the Allied Health Department, explained:

Yes, actually at Health Tutors' College we have a habit of co-teaching... and we co-teach and, we are also being given ... more knowledge and more skill and more attitude on how to handle certain things.

Team teaching was also taken up to leverage on external expertise to support lecturers' collaborative delivery of lessons. As Nasa, a female lecturer from the Midwifery Department explained saying, "I normally invite other colleagues of different specialties so that they ... give good guidance to these students." Furthermore, lecturers' co-teaching was also used to support students' microteaching, where pedagogy experts were invited and teamed up with the college lecturers to give more guidance to students who were being trained to teach others (through microteaching), as revealed by Nasa saying "Sometimes ... when we are doing let's say

microteaching, we still invite colleagues who are specialists in especially pedagogy to come and you know, give better guidance to these learners on how to teach in the different environments" These findings indicate that lecturers used co-teaching for different reasons which may have not been exclusively to facilitate students' collaborative learning

However, findings also revealed that in some cases during co-teaching, the presence of another lecturer in a class could scare a given lecturer and indeed threaten collaborative lesson delivery. This was revealed by Kisa when he reflected that "teaching class when the two of you are actually there, that fear I think is, is general to all teachers, because you would wonder how the other teacher or the other lecturer feels about your content delivery." Moreover, the data obtained from FGDs and lesson observations disclosed that lecturers individually gave instructions and guided students during lesson delivery, apparently implying that co-teaching was not a very common practice among lecturers at Health Tutors' College Mulago. Findings further revealed that co-teaching was sometimes marred with the challenge of lack of cooperation among lecturers. For instance, Nasa complained that some colleagues were not good team players which made it difficult to practice co-teaching during lesson delivery.

Working with other colleagues to deliver the content ... would be the best, but some individuals ideally are not good team players, so it becomes very challenging to sit down with them because you never get them so you end up doing the work alone.

Overall, while the practice of co-teaching was taken up by some lecturers (as revealed by their own self-reports) as a collaborative delivery strategy to facilitate students' collaborative learning and to enrich the guidance they gave to learners during the delivery of lessons; there were some notable challenges, such as lack of cooperation and busy schedules among lecturers that constrained the implementation of co-teaching as a collaborative lesson delivery strategy. These challenges could possibly explain why the implementation of co-teaching is missing in the lesson observation data. From the findings in this section, it is evident that that as far as the lecturers' lesson delivery practices were concerned, co-teaching as one of the collaborative teaching approaches was only practiced as head knowledge. Its application was limited by various obstacles.

4.1.2 Students' group discussions and presentations

According to the interviews, FGD and lesson observation data, lecturers instructed students to form groups (or formed the groups themselves), allocated tasks to those groups, gave instructions, supervised discussions of the given tasks, moderated group presentations and provided

guidance to promote collaborative lesson delivery and learning. For instance, Nasa explained during her interview that she assigned particular tasks to her students in groups to look for the material, discuss and then make presentations in class, with herself making contributions and offering guidance where necessary:

I normally employ some of the methods like ... group work, where you involve students, ... you assign them particular areas to cover, then the students of course have to look for this material and at the end of the day come and present ... with the teacher also making contributions and guiding the students you know, in areas where they need to focus more. So I use group work and discussion a lot when it comes to the classroom delivery of content.

Indeed, this was corroborated by students during FGDs, as a female student during FGD 3 concurred by affirming that lecturers instructed them to form groups, assigned them group tasks and supported them during presentations:

Our lecturer could ask us to form a group and he will give us a topic for each group of which we go and read and make our notes and we come and present as we are presenting he will be correcting us where we have not maybe got the information right, he will be directing you on what you are supposed to do as you are presenting and which literature you have got that information.

Additionally, lesson observation data confirmed that during lesson delivery, some lecturers instructed students to congregate in their groups, read out tasks for group discussion, called upon students to discuss the tasks, supervised group discussions and moderated group presentations. As for the students, they were observed writing down their tasks, discussed in groups and later made presentations following lecturers' instructions and guidance. In some classes, students had already prepared presentations which they just delivered during class time, confirming that they had been given the tasks earlier and prepared their presentations prior to class time.

From the interview data, lecturers appraised the use of group discussion by pointing out its benefits to students. For instance, lecturer Seku observed that students could consult, teach one another and learn a lot during group discussions: "Students learn a lot from their peers, they can teach one another, they know how to consult one another. So, they network and in that networking they learn a lot." Similarly, Nasa too, emphasized that students learn from one another as they sit in their groups to discuss the tasks given to them by lecturers, "But again group work helps them to learn from one another as students, because as they are seated in their smaller groups ... they are learning from one another." In agreement, students testified that group discussions helped them to learn and get more experience from one another, as a male student elaborated during FGD 2

saying: "Collaborative learning also it has helped us to learn from one another getting more experience from one another. Because by doing that ... I will also learn and I will never forget from my friend I will also be active and I don't forget."

In addition, acquisition of teaching skills among students was another benefit from group work, as a female student in FGD 3 explained that every member of their group was encouraged to make a presentation, which also enabled them to acquire teaching skills. "We discuss in groups and sometimes they encourage every member of the group to have a presentation whereby that one encourages you to get more information and to get the confidence to learn and get skills of teaching."

Furthermore, students reported that learning with their peers made the difficult subjects to become easier, citing the example of Biochemistry where group discussions made it easier for students to eventually learn on their own, as one student recounted during FGD 4 that: "When we sit down and share knowledge, you find most of the subjects that we feel are hard like bio-chemistry, your colleague can make it a little bit easier and you feel now you can perform on your own." Group work thus provided opportunities for students to support one another in learning and hence, from the social constructivist perspective, these findings illuminate the aspect of scaffolding, where some students were assisted to learn certain subjects better from their peers.

Similarly, lecturers acknowledged that this form of collaborative lesson delivery (students' group work) provided them with peace and opportunities to learn from their students as well. For instance, Lujo explained his realization of the peace as well as an opportunity to learn from his students by disclosing that "Collaborative learning gives me peace as a teacher not to think I'm the icon of knowledge in class, but it gives me room to learn from my learners. I get a lot of content from my learners."

Regarding lecturers' guidance during group discussions, findings show that lecturers appreciated students' work, corrected their errors and advised them to do better, as one female student testified during FGD 2 that: "We are always being guided by the teachers, they keep on correcting different groups basing on the topics that have been given to us. I think that's another method that these lecturers have been helping us to come up with actually what we are supposed to cover." In the same vein, a male student during FGD 4 explained that the lecturer of Physiology was present in class appreciating students contributions and also advising them to do better, by asserting that: "The lecturer for physiology was there within the class to critique, in this case it was positive ... he was guiding like, much as you have said this, this is also helpful in terms of 'physiology or something like that.'" Indeed, lesson observation data showed some lecturers moving to groups, asking some questions and

giving advice to students where necessary. It is evident from the findings above that lectures in this study used relevant strategies and skills for facilitating students' collaborative participation in the group discussions and plenary presentations. Consequently, inclusive and active participation by all learners in the group was often achieved and this enhanced learners' appreciation of group work activities. From the theoretical perspective, these findings align with the aspect of scaffolding, where students are assisted to learn better by the more knowledgeable others, in this case their teachers.

However, some students decried the lack of guidance, pointing out instances where lecturers did not provide any guidance or feedback to students during presentations. For instance, a male student during FGD 4 complained that some lecturers did not give feedback on students' work and instead focused on having all groups completing their presentations, leaving students without the required teachers' guidance: "There are also scenarios at which some lecturers do not give critique on what we discuss. It is like yah, please, the next person should come and discuss we have no time something like that. So, we miss on the guidance of the lecturers and I think this has been a challenge."

Relatedly, lecturers too acknowledged the challenge of insufficient guidance to students, as Nasa revealed that students have complained about lecturers' failure to provide guidance during presentations. "So sometimes the students actually have come and complained that you know, this teacher just comes and sits and it is only us who are, who are presenting or who are teaching." Nasa further argued that if students are not guided well with clear objectives, they may not realize the intended learning outcomes.

Sometimes if not guided well, students sometimes tend to miss out the main objectives when they are delivering the content and then if you don't give clear objectives as per what they should cover in their groups and come and share, most of the time they look for irrelevant information and that is what they have and then you end up wasting time, that a student presents and then, in that one hour they have presented, whatever they have presented is not the key things that should be covered.

Moreover, lesson observations showed cases of group discussions and presentations where lecturers only provided some guidance to students by clarifying certain ideas during presentations than during group discussions. Notably, there were also limited student-student interactions during group presentations and also lecturers dominated in making comments about the presentations than the students.

The findings indicate that all the three sets of data in this study (FGDs, interviews with lectures and observation notes) affirmed that there were instances of both adequate and inadequate lecturer guidance during lesson

delivery for students' collaborative learning. In cases of adequate lecturer guidance, students appreciated this mode of learning; while in cases of inadequate lecturer guidance, some students were dissatisfied with the strategy of group work for collaborative lesson delivery. Nevertheless, the practices of group discussion and presentation were the most prevalent in collaborative lesson delivery, whereby students in some cases discussed and made presentations with lecturers' guidance and in other cases without lecturers' guidance.

Findings in this section further indicate that students' group discussions and presentations with the lecturers' guidance provided better opportunities for students learning than when there was no lecturers' guidance. Hence, from the students' perspective, collaborative learning can be effective and beneficial with adequate teacher guidance but may be disliked and seen as ineffective by the students without sufficient teacher guidance.

4.1.3 Peer teaching

Another collaborative delivery practice identified was peer teaching. Findings show that some lecturers identified and encouraged those students whom they perceived to be more knowledgeable in certain areas to teach the whole class, as Nasa explained:

Sometimes ... you can invite a student who is very good in that aspect and actually sometimes, you as a teacher, you know very little about that but when you know this student who is experienced, then you encourage them to come and teach the whole class and then all of us benefit you know, from one another.

In addition, the use of peer teaching in collaborative lesson delivery was also intended to enhance collaboration among students, as Nasa explained saying: "Of course because as you know we are talking about collaboration, we want to involve the students more, you have activities within that session pre-planned that will make the learner ... very active during the lesson." Lecturers further appraised the practice of peer teaching by pointing out its benefits to students. For instance, lecturer Seku observed that students could consult, teach and learn a lot from their peers. "Students learn a lot from their peers, they can teach one another, they know how to consult one another. So, they network and in that networking, they learn a lot." Indeed, peer teaching was observed during the lessons conducted by some lecturers (for instance Seku, Sela, and Lujo), as students were seen explaining to the whole class (their peers) while lecturers observed attentively. Both students and lecturers appreciated peer learning because it facilitated teamwork, knowledge acquisition, active participation, inclusive learning and content mastery.

Hybrid (mixed) lesson delivery practices

The study findings (especially lesson observations) also

revealed the prevalence of the “mixed” lesson delivery practices, where lecturers used the collaborative practices and the traditional teacher centred practices in delivering their lessons. In such cases, it was observed that some lecturers used more of the traditional teacher centred strategies to deliver their lessons. For instance, Joma a male lecturer in the Pedagogy Department, spent the entire lesson period projecting and explaining his prepared notes, while the students listened and some were copying a few things from the projected notes.

Furthermore, during Kisa’s lesson delivery, the lecturer introduced and presented the lesson in the traditional lecture style for most of the time, while the students observed and listened quietly. He only gave the students some group tasks at the end of the lesson. Similarly, during Sela’s lesson delivery, students made presentations in four successive groups and at the end of each presentation, it was only the lecturer to give comments about the presentation. The students were not encouraged to make comments during and after the presentations, which made lesson delivery more teacher centred despite students making presentations.

The aforementioned findings contradict what the lecturers had stated during the interviews and illuminate a mismatch between knowledge and practice in the implementation of collaborative learning.

4.2 Discussion

Practices of collaborative lesson delivery at Health Tutor’s College - Mulago

This section discusses the practices of collaborative lesson delivery enacted by lecturers at Health Tutors’ College Mulago in comparison with previous studies and illuminates findings unique to this study.

The findings of the current study revealed that the “collaborative” lesson delivery practices enacted by lecturers included co-teaching (team teaching), students’ group discussion and presentations, peer teaching and the traditional teaching practices. These findings, depicting various practices of collaborative lesson delivery, resonate with those of previous researchers, such as Sotto (2021), Mugabekazi (2025) and Warsah et al. (2021), who reported that collaborative learning can be achieved in a wide range of group learning activities such as whole class, large group or small group learning. The practices of collaborative lesson delivery revealed by the current study are discussed below.

4.2.1 Co-teaching by Lecturers

From the lecturers’ perspectives, co-teaching promoted the acquisition of more knowledge and competencies such as teamwork among lecturers, as they worked closely with their colleagues to facilitate students’

learning. This finding aligns with those of earlier scholars such as Cordie et al. (2020) and Tachie (2022), who established that co-teaching among teachers enriched their knowledge of the subject and skills for teaching. Similarly, previous scholars such as Buckingham et al. (2021) and Salifu (2021) established that co-teaching contributes to professional development among teachers as they learn from each other and consequently improve their own practices.

Lecturers’ perspectives in the current study further revealed that co-teaching was also taken up to leverage on external expertise to support collaborative delivery of lessons to students of different medical backgrounds such as nursing, midwifery, pharmacy, dentistry and laboratory technology. Hence, the internal lecturers teamed up with external lecturers of different specialties to give the appropriate guidance to the students. This finding aligns with those of earlier scholars such as Bacharach et al. (2008), who established that faculty (academic staff) within teacher preparation programs operated collaboratively to incorporate content, pedagogy and clinical experiences, providing for their pre-service candidates a strong foundation of theory and practice in education. Bacharach et al. (2008) concluded that the use of co-teaching in teacher preparation is a promising practice for fostering collaborative skills, increasing student participation, and improving classroom instruction and professional growth for all participants. However, the findings of the current study indicate that lecturers used co-teaching for various reasons such as promoting teamwork among themselves and supporting students’ micro teaching, rather than facilitating students’ collaborative learning. From the theoretical perspective, the findings of lecturers’ co-teaching in the current study mirror the social constructivist views of facilitating learning through social interactions.

Furthermore, lecturers’ co-teaching practices in the current study also enhanced students’ micro teaching, whereby pedagogy experts were invited to give support to the tutor students who were being trained to teach others. In this case (of supporting students’ micro teaching), the different experts who were invited to work as co-teachers assisted students to acquire specific competences in areas such as lesson preparation and lesson delivery. In this context, students in the current study were assisted to acquire various teaching skills in aspects such as lesson preparation, delivery and assessment, from the different lecturers working as co-teachers. This finding resonates with those of previous scholars, such as Rooks et al. (2022), in which students learnt better from co-teachers than they learnt from a single teacher. From the social constructivist perspective, these findings align with the principle of scaffolding which postulates that students learn better with assistance from the more knowledgeable others (Vygotsky, 1978).

On the contrary, the current study also revealed that in some cases during co-teaching, the presence of another lecturer in a class could scare a given lecturer and even interrupt the collaborative lesson delivery process. This finding, coupled with the reported non-cooperation among lecturers, contrast the findings of Rooks et al. (2022), but aligns with those of other scholars such as Salifu (2021), who established that some teachers disliked the presence of fellow teachers in their classes. This revelation could also imply that there was lack of awareness among some lecturers in the current study regarding the beneficial aspects of co-teaching to both teachers and students, which were emphasized by Buckingham et al. (2021). From the theoretical perspective, the above findings tend to contrast the social constructivist views of learning. Therefore, interventions such as sensitizing the lecturers more about co-teaching can help to improve collaborative lesson delivery in health tutor education. Furthermore, the absence of co-teaching in the lesson observation data (during all the 6 lessons observed) in the current study could imply that the practice was not as commonly utilized as was reported by the lecturers during in-depth interviews. This finding, coupled with the reported non-cooperation among lecturers, contrast the findings of Rooks et al. (2022), but aligns with those of other scholars such as Salifu (2021), who established that some teachers disliked the presence of fellow teachers in their classes.

The current study thus illuminates a mismatch between knowledge and practice, whereby the lecturers' self-reported practices of co-teaching were evidently missing in their observed lessons. This particular finding implies a knowledge-practice gap among lecturers, regarding co-teaching as a practice of collaborative lesson delivery and calls for more sensitization and support for lecturers to optimize co-teaching as a collaborative lesson delivery strategy, as was also recommended by Kelly (2018). Moreover, since co-teaching is one of the strategies that can be used to effectively develop collaborative skills among students, Bacharach et al. (2008) recommend that both teachers and students need to undergo some training regarding the concept and practices of co-teaching, in order to optimize its application in collaborative lesson delivery due to the many benefits accruing from it.

Overall, the current study revealed that while the practice of co-teaching was taken up by some lecturers (from their own self reports) as a collaborative delivery strategy to facilitate students' micro-teaching and to augment the lecturers' guidance to students during lesson delivery, there were some notable challenges such as lack of cooperation and busy schedules among lecturers that constrained the implementation of co-teaching as a collaborative lesson delivery strategy. This meant that the lecturers did not realize all the benefits of co-teaching and the said challenges could possibly be the reasons why the implementation of co-teaching is missing in the lesson observation data.

4.2.2 Students' Group Discussions and Presentations

The practices of lecturers assigning students tasks in groups to search for the required information, discuss and then make presentations to the whole class, as revealed by the current study, are also documented in previous research studies (Almajed et al., 2020; Muuro et al., 2014; Pozzi et al., 2023; Sotto, 2021; Warsah et al., 2020). The aforementioned practices enabled students to interact closely and learn better during group discussions than in the traditional teacher centred individualistic approaches. From the theoretical perspective underpinning this study, these findings are consistent with the social constructivist views of individuals learning better through social interactions (Vygotsky, 1978).

In the current study, lecturers sometimes monitored the students' discussions, moderated the group discussions and offered guidance to students as they discussed. They also encouraged all members of each group to participate in the discussions to ensure that all students in a group actively participate in the discussions. These findings align with those of previous research, which illuminate collaborative lesson delivery through students' group discussion and presentations, with the teachers monitoring and providing guidance to their students (Lee & Yang, 2020; Noh & Yusuf, 2018). The findings of the current study on the lecturers' role in facilitating students' collaborative learning during group work are also in agreement with those of previous scholars such as Kaendler et al. (2015) and Le et al. (2018). These scholars posit that facilitating effective collaborative learning requires far more from the teacher than simply placing students in groups and instructing them to work in groups. Hence, in agreement with the recommendations of previous scholars such as Van Leeuwen & Janssen (2019), some lecturers in the current study monitored group discussions and provided some guidance to students during group discussions and presentations.

In this study, the lecturers' mediation role was significant in encouraging equal participation of all students in their group discussions, which also enabled lecturers to address any disagreements among the students during group work. In addition, the lecturers' guidance and constructive feedback to students regarding their presentations was highly appreciated by the students, as this helped them to improve their work. These findings are consistent with those of previous scholars such as Kaendler et al. (2014) and Van Leeuwen and Janssen (2019), who established that teachers' guidance and mediation ensure effective collaborative lesson delivery among students. Thus, the significance of lecturers' guidance during students' group work mirrors the findings of previous research, in which teacher guidance was highly recommended for ensuring the effectiveness of students' collaborative learning (Kaendler et al, 2014;

Van Leeweun & Janssen, 2019). These findings also resonate with the recommendations of previous scholars, which emphasize teachers' close guidance and support to students for effective collaborative learning (Almajed et al., 2020; Lane, 2016; Van Leeweun & Janssen, 2019). From the social constructivist perspective, these findings align with the principle of scaffolding which postulates that students learn better with assistance from the more knowledgeable others such as their teachers (Vygotsky, 1978).

In the current study, the practice of students teaching and learning from one another during group work promoted teamwork and interpersonal skills, as was earlier reported by Nouhi et al. (2019). In addition, Wicacksono (2024) established that collaborative learning in higher education enabled students to work together to share diverse perspectives, tackle complex problems and develop solutions that reflect a collective understanding. Wicacksono (2024) further argues that collaborative learning in higher education not only enhances individual learning outcomes but also prepares students for real-world professional environments where teamwork and collaboration are key. Hence, collaborative lesson delivery by students' group work in the current study is also believed to have prepared the tutor students for the world of work. Additionally, the development of various skills such as communication, critical thinking, problem solving among students, as reported in the current study, corroborates previous research which reports the development of several 21st century skills among students through collaborative lesson delivery (Nkomo, 2025 & Sidgi, 2022).

However, the insufficient lecturers' guidance as reported by some students in the current study significantly constrained collaborative lesson delivery and students' learning. This finding corroborates those of previous research, where students decried the lack of teachers' guidance as a significant challenge to their collaborative learning (Almajed et al., 2020 & Muuro et al., 2014). In other studies, moreover, Van Leeweun and Janssen (2019) reported that students' performance in collaborative tasks was much better in situations where teacher guidance was more frequent, than those situations where teacher guidance was minimal. Hence, as recommended by Kaendler et al. (2014) and Van Leeweun and Janssen (2019), the provision of sufficient guidance by teachers to students during collaborative learning needs to be optimized. In addition, the training of teachers regarding the provision of guidance can also help to optimize collaborative lesson delivery and students' collaborative learning (Van Leeweun and Janssen, 2019). In this context, lecturers in the current study need specific training and support towards providing guidance to students for collaborative learning. These findings illuminate the need to explore students' perspectives in the implementation of new innovative pedagogies, rather than taking only the teachers' views

Overall, the current study revealed that collaborative learning lesson delivery using the group discussions and presentations strategy was adequately experienced by the learners and in alignment with the scaffolding aspects of the social constructivism theory in cases where students discussed and made presentations with lecturers' guidance. Collaborative learning in the context of students' group discussions and presentations was remarkably constrained in cases where lecturers' guidance was inadequate, coupled with other contextual challenges. Hence, from the students' perspective, collaborative learning can be effective and beneficial with adequate teacher guidance but may be seen as ineffective without sufficient teachers' guidance.

4.2.3 Peer Teaching

This practice enabled students to teach their peers in class, as the lecturers observed and provided guidance and corrections where necessary. These findings corroborate previous research findings (House et al, 2016; Kavanoz & Yuksel, 2010; Rusli et al, 2020), in which peer teaching was reported to promote students' collaboration, teamwork and better learning outcomes. In the current study, peer teaching was also intended to promote collaboration and peer learning among students leading to better learning outcomes, which concurs with the findings of Rusli et al., (2020). Further, the peer teaching and scaffolding among students as reported in the current study also corroborate previous research that illuminates peer teaching and peer mentoring among students to enhance learning outcomes (Sidgi, 2022). Furthermore, the peer to peer interactions during group work in the current study encouraged and enabled students to consult and learn from one another as they discussed the given tasks, a benefit that is well documented in collaborative lesson delivery literature (Nouhi et al., 2021 & Sidgi, 2022). Nouhi et al. (2021) established that peer support is one of the key benefits of collaborative learning. In this context, peer support enabled group members to rely on each other and share experiences which enhanced their learning outcomes. Peer support also enabled students use each other's knowledge and expertise as a learning resource, as well as providing positive emotional support (Nouhi et al., 2021).

The above findings indicate that lecturers facilitated students to learn collaboratively through providing them with peer teaching opportunities. The findings further indicated that collaborative learning through peer teaching was intentionally utilised by lecturers due to the learning opportunities that were associated with it. Both students and lecturers appreciated peer learning because it facilitated teamwork, knowledge acquisition, active participation, inclusive learning and content mastery.

4.2.4 Hybrid (mixed) collaborative lesson delivery practices

Findings of this study also revealed that some lecturers spent most of the lesson time lecturing to the class and then called upon the students to give their input and/or ask and answer some questions towards the end. These findings align with previous research findings, such as those of Moges (2019) research, which established that some of the university lecturers in Ethiopia used both the traditional teacher centred and the collaborative approaches to facilitate learning of their students. Additionally, students in Moges (2019) research appreciated their teachers' use of lecturing followed by group discussion as having been very helpful in their learning. Furthermore, Nkomo et al. (2025) contends that integrating collaborative learning practices into the traditional curriculum can enable educators to help students develop the critical 21st Century skills, such as critical thinking and problem solving, preparing them for future academic and professional success.

In the current study, the observed traditional practices of lesson delivery could be partly attributed to the experience and preference some lecturers had in teaching using traditional teacher centred approaches for a long time and probably lack of training regarding the collaborative lesson delivery practices, as was also observed by Moges (2019). Lane (2016) also found that lecturers who were trained using the traditional teacher centred practices found it had to adopt the student centred collaborative practices of lesson delivery. These findings resonate with those of several research studies, where the most observed practices of "collaborative" lesson delivery are more of the traditional teacher centred practices than the collaborative approaches as always claimed by teachers (Moges, 2019; Nayan et al., 2016; Wameko & Abera, 2019). Further, Ruys et al. (2010) established that although collaborative learning was being used in teacher education at Ghent University, most teacher educators were using traditional teacher centred approaches. Hence, Ruys et al. (2010) recommended continuous professional development for both teachers and students in teacher education, so as to inculcate the paradigm shift from the traditional to the more learner centred and innovative practices of collaborative lesson delivery. The aforementioned findings contradict what the lecturers had stated during the interviews and illuminate a mismatch between knowledge and practice in the implementation of collaborative learning.

Overall, in consistence with previous studies, such as Mugabekazi et al. (2025) and Sotto (2021), the current study has established that there are several strategies that can be used by lecturers for collaborative lesson delivery. However, the practices of students' group discussions and presentations were the most widely used in both the current and previous studies as well (Almajed et al., 2020; Muuro et al., 2014; Pozzi et al., 2023; Sotto, 2021; Warsah et al., 2020). Teacher support and guidance to students played a crucial role in facilitating effective collaborative learning in both this study and in the

previous studies (Almajed et al., 2020; Kaendler et al, 2014; Van Leeweun & Janssen, 2019). However, the lecturers in the current study provided inadequate guidance and support, as indicated by some students. The study further illuminated a mismatch between knowledge and practice regarding the implementation of collaborative learning, whereby lecturers' self-reported practices of co-teaching were evidently missing in the observed lessons. Hence, the urgent need to address the mismatch, for example by training teachers regarding the practices of effective collaborative lesson delivery, as was also recommended by previous scholars (Almajed et al., 2020; Kaendler et al, 2014; Mugabekazi et al., 2025; Van Leeweun & Janssen, 2019). Both lecturers and students in the current study experienced some remarkable benefits from collaborative lesson delivery, as well as notable challenges that could have led to the prevalence of the traditional teacher centred (non-collaborative) practices in the delivery of collaborative lessons. Hence, the need to train and support lecturers regarding collaborative lesson delivery practices, in order to optimize the benefits of collaborative learning, as was also recommended by some previous scholars like Nkomo et al. (2025). In contrast to previous studies, the current study illuminated the practices of co-teaching as a strategy used by lecturers to enact collaborative lesson delivery, but majorly focusing more on supplementing lecturers' content delivery, than focusing on developing students' collaborative skills. This finding also highlighted the need for continuous professional development of the in-service lecturers regarding collaborative lesson delivery practices in order to optimize the benefits of collaborative learning in health tutor education.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

The study revealed that lecturers used various strategies, such as co-teaching (team teaching) students' group discussion and presentations, and peer teaching to facilitate collaborative learning among students. The practices of students' group discussions and presentations were the most prevalent strategies of collaborative lesson delivery in the current study. The co-teaching strategy majorly focused more on supplementing lecturers' content delivery, than focusing on developing students' collaborative skills. Furthermore, the guidance and support provided by the lecturers to promote students' participation in group work tasks in the current study were inadequate, yet teachers' guidance plays a crucial role in facilitating students' collaborative learning. The study further revealed a mismatch between knowledge and practice regarding the delivery of collaborative learning, whereby lecturers' self-reported practices of co-teaching were evidently missing in the observed lessons. This study further illuminates the need to explore students' perspectives in the implementation of new innovative

pedagogies, rather than taking only the teachers' views. The study further revealed some gaps in the lecturers' collaborative lesson delivery practices that need to be addressed, so as to optimize collaborative lesson delivery at Health Tutors' College Mulago.

5.2 Limitations

This study, being a qualitative case study, has got non-generalizability limitations.

First, the findings and conclusions of this study cannot be fully generalized to other contexts or institutions of higher learning. The study was conducted at a single institution using a small sample size and therefore the findings may not represent the context of other health tutors' colleges in Uganda.

5.3 Recommendations

1. This study recommends that all lecturers and students at Health Tutors' College Mulago should undergo some training and be supported to embrace and adopt the co-teaching that focuses more on facilitating students' collaborative learning activities, providing guidance in the aspects of peer teaching, scaffolding among students and encouraging peer interactions and discussions in and outside class.
2. There is thus need to conduct quantitative or mixed research studies to capture a bigger sample size and to make the findings more easily generalizable to other institutions of higher learning, such as the schools of education in different universities and Uganda National Institute for Teacher Education in Uganda.
3. In the 21st Century learning context, the practices of collaborative learning can be explored among teachers and students in other institutions of higher learning, such as universities and other teacher training colleges elsewhere, to illuminate how collaborative learning can lead to development of the 21st Century skills among students.
4. Furthermore, comparative studies on collaborative learning between two or more institutions of higher learning can be conducted to examine the barriers and facilitators of collaborative learning in different education contexts within and outside Uganda.

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