Covenant University
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Covenant University, Km. 10 Idiroko Road, Canaan Land, Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria

Theme: ‘RECITE’ APPROACH FOR THE ATTAINMENT OF VISION 10:2022
PROMOTING POSITIVE PEER INFLUENCE AND INTERACTIONS AMONG STUDENTS

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OBJECTIVES

- understand the significance of good peer influence for personal growth and academic achievement;
- identify practices and classroom cultures which are detrimental to promoting positive peer influence;
- provide some basic principles for enhancing peer influence and interactions;
- outline a framework for supporting students with peer problems;
- introduce some strategies for promoting good peer influence and interactions.
The Problem of Deviant Peer Influences

- Placing a high-risk youth in an unstructured group setting with deviant peers has the potential to worsen his or her problems.
- Deviant adolescents become more deviant by associating freely with deviant peers.
RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What is the nature of peer influence and interaction?
- What contributes to the formation and functioning of enduring influences and interactions among students?
- What is the impact of peer influence on developmental outcome?
• Difficulties with peer interaction skills
  • lead to behavioural inhibition and even social phobias.
• Positive and negative peer influence
  • predict later adaptive and problematic outcomes, respectively.
• Positive teacher–student influence
  • increase students’ connectedness with school and improve classroom discipline.
NEGATIVE PEER INFLUENCE/INTERACTIONS

• Negative peer influence:
  • bullies and victims.

• Negative peer interactions and influences:
  • negative outcomes
Social Learning Theory (social behaviour thro’ modeling)

Social Ecological Theory (social & historical changes)

Contextual-Developmental Theory (culture’s values)

Cognitive Developmental Theory (adaptation & cognitive growth)

Ethological Theory (evolutionary purposes)

Attachment Theory (predicted by infant-taker attachment)

Group Socialization Theory (behavioural genetics research)

PEER RELATIONSHIPS THEORIES
One useful way of explaining the inherently complex dynamics of relationships is through the lens of a motivational model. The motivational model holds:

- **Social partners** promote development by supporting fundamental human needs for relatedness, competence, and autonomy.
  - **Relatedness**
    - the need to be connected to others or belong to a larger social group;
  - **Competence**
    - the need to feel effective in interactions with social and physical environments;
  - **Autonomy**
    - the need to express one’s authentic self and be the source of action.
TEACHERS AND PEERS AS SOCIAL PARTNERS

- In the classroom, teachers and peers are social partners who can meet (or undermine) a student’s needs via three pathways:
  1. *relatedness* is promoted by *warmth* or undermined by *rejection*;
  2. *competence* is promoted by *structure* or undermined by *chaos*; and
  3. *autonomy* is promoted by *autonomy support* or undermined by *coercion*.

- When a student’s needs are met, he or she is more likely to be engaged in classroom activities.
THE SELF-SYSTEM MODEL OF MOTIVATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Teachers Parents Peers

CONTEXT → SELF → ACTION → OUTCOME

- Warmth vs. Rejection
- Structure vs. Chaos
- Autonomy Support vs. Coercion

Relatedness

Competence

Autonomy

Nature of Academic Work

Engagement vs. Disaffection

Coping and Reengagement

Learning and Achievement
HOSTILE, CHAOTIC, AND COERCIVE INTERACTIONS

- **Hostile** or rejecting interactions with peers erode feelings of belonging.
  - Indeed, research has found that hostile, rejecting, or detached friendship groups make adolescents feel lonely and alienated and promote social anxiety and distress.
- **Chaotic**, confusing, or unpredictable interactions with peers make it difficult for students to feel competent and in control in the classroom.
  - (e.g., telling lies, teasing, emotional outbursts, exclusion)
- **Coercive** interactions devalue a student’s genuine preferences and diminish his or her sense of autonomy.
  - (e.g., manipulative, controlling, or enmeshed)
WARMTH – KEY FEATURE

- *Warmth* is a key feature of high-quality peer relationships and highly functional classroom climates.
- When students have opportunities to:
  - talk and listen to each other,
  - provide emotional support,
  - share learning experiences, and
  - develop respect,
they are more likely to feel that they belong and are understood and cared for by their peers.
- Warm interactions with classroom peers create a climate of comfort and help meet students’ need for relatedness.
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<th>STAGES</th>
<th>STRATEGIES</th>
<th>PROMOTING POSITIVE PEER INFLUENCES AND INTERACTIONS AMONG STUDENTS (OMOGBADEXGUN, 2016)</th>
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| Understanding and identification | Talk to the students involved as a mediator.  
Stand by the students involved as a mediator.  
Identify the problems by using the “ten important questions”.  
Find out in which social skills the students are deficient.  
Identify appropriate practices to help the students change, such as problem solving, mediation and negotiation. |
| Learning                    | Get the students to exchange their views on the issues concerned.  
Look for alternatives and identify new behaviour to be performed.  
Anticipate consequences.  
Teach new skills, such as social-emotional skills.  
Substitute pro-social behaviours for negative social behaviours.  
Do role-plays in contexts in which the students feel safe to practise the skills to be learned. |
| Action                      | The students use the skills to participate, cooperate, communicate and validate, for example by smiling at, looking at, or encouraging other students.  
Choose two or three students who are willing to form a support network for these students. |
| Reflection                  | Help these students to review what they have done and to learn from their experience.  
Understand the causes and effects of old and new behaviours.  
Identify new problems and go back to Stage 1. |
SKILLS TO BE TAUGHT BY TEACHERS

- Teaching social-emotional skills
- Teaching conflict-resolution skills
- Teaching problem-solving skills
- Getting students to learn in groups
- Creating a classroom climate of positive peer relationships

DEVELOPING STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING POSITIVE PEER INFLUENCES & INTERACTIONS
CONCLUSION

• Students who have good influences and interactions with their peers:
  • able to establish a sense of togetherness, belongingness, self-worth and self-acceptance.
  • promote purposeful and responsible behaviour and lead to effective learning.
• In contrast, those who relate poorly to their peers tend to:
  • experience more tension,
  • stress and depression, and
  • they have difficulty in learning, even when teaching is effective and student-centred.
• Successful development of peer influences and interactions is important to future development.
1. There is a clear evidence that some young people may be vulnerable to the influences of extremist organisations or individuals during their time at university. As a university administrator in the Department of Student Affairs, how do you expect university authority to safeguard vulnerable young people from radicalisation and recruitment by terrorist organisations?

2. “Current disciplinary practices in public and private universities are largely based on punishing and removing students from school. There has been a near epidemic of suspensions over the past decade for relatively minor or vaguely defined student offenses. “A New Model of School Discipline by engaging students and preventing behaviour problems” has been recommended by Student Affairs Professionals to cut down cases of rustication. Identify and justify ten (10) key components of the proposed model.

Submit your solutions by email to: zacchaeus.omogbadegun@covenantuniversity.edu.ng
RESOURCES

- National Centre for Culturally Responsive Educational System: http://nccrest.edreform.net/subject/peerrelationship
- Special Connections: http://www.specialconnections.ku.edu/cgi-bin/cgiwrap/specconn/main.php?cat=behavior&section=main&subsection=classroom/main
THANK YOU FOR LISTENING