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DEVELOPMENT CENTRE**
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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 highrisk 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?

POSITIVE PEER INFLUENCE & INTERACTION

- 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

PEER RELATIONSHIPS THEORIES (ROHRBECK AND GRAY, 2014)



RELATEDNESS, COMPETENCE, AND AUTONOMY

- 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

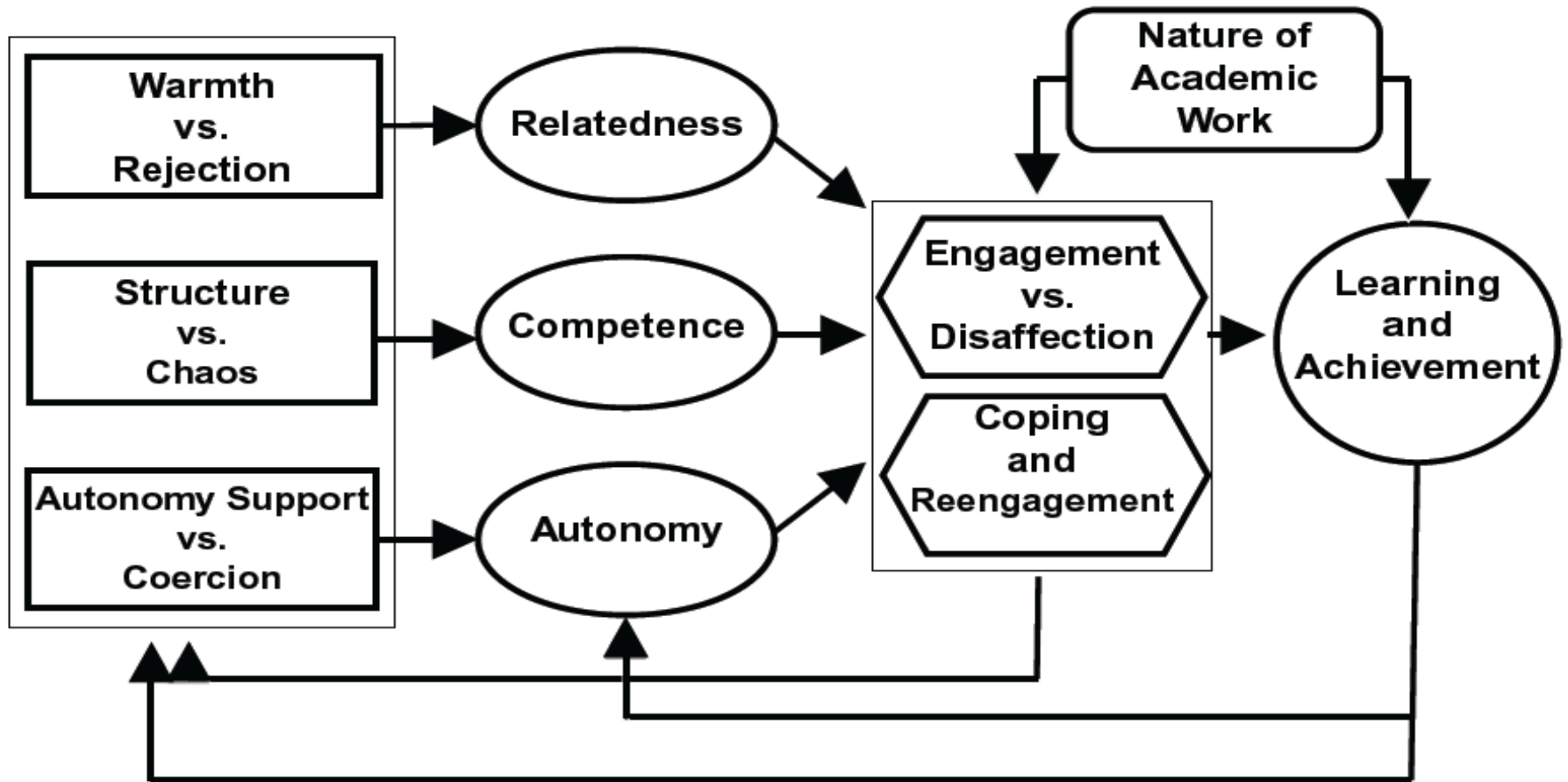
- In the classroom, teachers and peers are social partners who can meet (or undermine) a student's needs via three pathways:
 - (1) *relatedness* is promoted by *warmth* or undermined by *rejection*;
 - (2) *competence* is promoted by *structure* or undermined by *chaos*; and
 - (3) *autonomy* is promoted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



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.



STAGES	PROMOTING POSITIVE PEER INFLUENCES AND INTERACTIONS AMONG STUDENTS (OMOGBADEGUN, 2016) STRATEGIES 05/08/2016
Understanding and identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk to 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.

TAKE-ME-HOME ASSIGNMENT

- 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

- ✖ Dupper, David R (2010), *A New Model of School Discipline: Engaging Students and Preventing Behavior Problems*, Oxford University Press, UK
- ✖ Furrer, Carrie J; Skinner, Ellen A.; and Pitzer, Jennifer R (2014). The Influence of Teacher and Peer Relationships on Students' Classroom Engagement and Everyday Motivational Resilience, *National Society for the Study of Education*, Volume 113, Issue 1, pp. 101-123, Teachers College, Columbia University.
- ✖ Merritt , D.H. & Snyder, S.M (2015), *The impact of positive peer relationships, school experiences, and future outlook on behavior scores for abused and neglected youth*, Society for Social Work and Research conference.
<https://sswr.confex.com/sswr/2015/webprogram/Paper24337.html>
- ✖ Ming-tak, Hue (2008). Promoting positive peer relationships (2008), In H. Ming-tak & L. Wai-shing (Eds.), *Classroom management: Creating a positive learning environment*. Hong Kong, University Press.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.5790/hongkong/9789622098886.003.0007>
- ✖ National Centre for Culturally Responsive Educational System: <http://nccrest.edreform.net/subject/peerrelationship>
- ✖ Roffey, S (2011). Developing positive relationships in schools. In S. Roffey (Ed.), *Positive relationships: Evidence based practice across the world*. New York: Springer. http://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-94-007-2147-0_9
- ✖ Rohrbeck & L.S. Gray (2014). Peer relationships: Promoting positive peer relationships during childhood. In T.P. Gullotta & M. Bloom (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Primary Prevention and Health Promotion*. New York: Springer.
http://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007/978-1-4614-5999-6_137
- ✖ Special Connections: <http://www.specialconnections.ku.edu/cgi-bin/cgiwrap/speconn/main.php?cat=behavior§ion=main&subsection=classroom/main>
- ✖ Yibing, L; Lynch, A.D; Kalvin, C; Liu, J; & Lerner, R.M. (2011). Peer relationships as a context for the development of school engagement during early adolescence, *International Journal of Behavioral Development* 35, 329–342.
<http://jbd.sagepub.com/content/35/4/329.short>

✕ THANK YOU FOR LISTENING