

Educator's Attunement and Social Dynamics Management to Promote Inclusivity in Classrooms

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Abstract

Today's classrooms are more diverse than ever before, and schools and teachers are placing more emphasis on pupils learning how to form positive peer relationships and control their emotions. The primary mechanism through which teachers' invisible hands facilitate constructive student adjustment is through their engagement with their students. Teachers assist pupils in meeting a variety of socio-emotional and academic requirements, so it is important for them to be aware of social dynamics management in order to support each student's involvement and adjustment to promote inclusion and learning.

KEYWORDS: Inclusion , Social Dynamics Management & Teacher Attunement

Introduction

Parents, administrators, and teachers are increasingly seeing the general education classroom as a setting that needs to provide assistance for a wide variety of learners (Alderson, 2018; Collier & Thomas, 2014; Cross, Frazier, Kim, & Cross, 2018). These initiatives have helped to raise awareness of the social needs of students and the vital social development opportunities provided to kids and youth when they attend school with peers who are different from them in terms of their skills and their racial, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds (Carter, 2018; Dare & Nowicki, 2018; Gottfried, 2014). For instructors, managing the academic, behavioural, communicative, and social requirements of children can be difficult, especially in diverse classrooms with students who have a variety of needs. For instructors, managing the academic, behavioural, communicative, and social requirements of children can be difficult, especially in diverse classrooms with students who have a variety of needs. (Gest, Madill, Zadzora, Miller, & Rodkin, 2014; Shin & Ryan, 2017; Vollet, Kindermann, & Skinner, 2017) Positive adaptation of socially vulnerable kids is linked to teachers' efforts to manage the classroom ecology (i.e., monitor, guide, and assist students' social experiences). Teachers are more likely to create a social environment that supports students with a variety of needs when they are tuned into (i.e., accurately aware of) the social responsibilities and interpersonal interactions of students and other learners within the learning environment (i.e., social dynamics) and use this knowledge to help guide instructional practises and classroom behaviour management (Hamm, Farmer, Dadisman, Gravelle, & Murray, 2011; Norwalk, Hamm, Farmer, & Barnes, 2016).

Inclusive education

Elevating participation of every student and adult while eradicating exclusion, discrimination, and obstacles to learning and engagement is the goal of inclusive education, also known as inclusion. As stated by Loreman and Deppeler, "Inclusive Education means the complete inclusion for students with various skills in all respects of schooling that their peers are able to access and enjoy." The concept of "inclusion" describes a way of thinking or a commitment to

accepting differences and believing that all children can benefit from the best educational experience possible in an integrated school. The term "inclusion" refers to a mindset or dedication that acknowledges differences and accepts that all students may receive the best education possible in a common school. Accepting, comprehending, and addressing student variety and differences, which might include physical, cognitive, scholarly, social, and emotional issues, is the key to successful inclusive education. Numerous factors determine whether inclusive education is successful in any given setting. To assure the level of students' inclusion in the educational setting, teachers actually are a crucial component. Teachers have everyday contact with pupils and are very important in deciding how those interactions play out in the classroom.

Social Dynamics Management in Class

According to Farmer, Dawes, et al. (2018) and Trach et al. (2018), students' social placement and adaptation in the classroom society can be viewed as a system of variables that involves the interaction of social structural features (such as peer groups, social hierarchies, and norms), students' individual social functioning characteristics (such as roles, reputations, relationships, and interaction patterns), and institutional context factors. It often becomes necessary for teachers to manage and be alert to classroom social dynamics while keeping an eye on how institutional variables may contribute to or be impacted by these dynamics in order to ensure the effective inclusion and adjustment of learners with various needs. Teachers actively manage the social dynamics in the classroom, Teachers may have a significant impact on peer dynamics and students' social behaviour, whether intentionally or unintentionally (Vollet et al., 2017; Wentzel et al., 2017). Teachers have an impact on the classroom environment and how other students see particular pupils by their own behaviour, interactions with students, and methods for setting and enforcing regulations (Hendrickx et al., 2016; Hughes et al., 2014). Teachers must be aware of students' strengths and vulnerabilities in addition to their peer relationships and social roles. They must design activities and experiences to help students feel more at ease and capable of cooperating with peers who are different from them.

Attunement

Attunement is the ability of guardians and children to effectively read each other's indications and respond appropriately. It is described as the state of being in harmony or bringing about harmony; feeling "at one" with another being.. By offering a reciprocal affect and echoing reaction, attunement produces a two person experience of unbroken feeling closeness. Beginning with appreciating the other person's affect as a crucial component of communication, being open to being affectively aroused by them, and responding with their own affect, one can develop affective attunement.

Teacher Attunement

The degree to which teachers correctly identify which students belong to which peer groups in the classroom is known as teacher attunement, one of the dimensions of teacher involvement. The authors are Hamm, Farmer, Dadisman, Gravelle, and Murray (2011). Understanding peer group memberships is a crucial component of teacher sensitivity (Hamm et al., 2011), and it may be a crucial skill for teachers who want to set up their classrooms as relationally responsive and encouraging spaces. According to Hamm et al. (2011), one ability that enables instructors to use peer group memberships to encourage children's social adjustment in the

classroom social system more effectively is teacher attunement. The metaphor of the "invisible hand of the teacher" was first used by Cairns and Cairns (1994) to describe the routine and frequently intentional ways that teachers (as well as other adults) impact social dynamics that either promote or impede children's adjustment in the classroom. The metaphor of the teacher's invisible hand also refers to instructors' awareness of the social dynamics in the classroom and the peer groups in which their pupils participate (Cairns & Cairns, 1994). Teachers' invisible hands, according to Farmer et al. (2011), are interactions, behaviours, activities, or methods that "promote students' self-directed, autonomous, and developmentally productive peer experiences." The essential desire of students to feel related and connected in the classroom is addressed by teacher participation, which involves instructor affection and liking, attunement to and knowledge of students, as well as time and energy spent on students (Skinner & Belmont, 1993). From this broader definition, teacher sensitivity to students' membership in peer groups represents a dimension of a teacher's overall involvement with students and may be a particularly pertinent skill that enables teachers to intentionally foster positive and fruitful social relationships that satisfy students' need for acceptance, inclusion, and relatedness (Hamm et al., 2011).

Need of Teacher Attunement & Social Dynamics Management in Classroom

In addition to guiding students' cognitive growth, teachers also have a duty to address social concerns including bullying and hostility (Kinderman, 2011). Teachers serve as a "invisible hand" (Cairns & Cairns, 1994) in the everyday management of the classroom, guiding the class towards new interactions and norms by gently modifying social networks and status systems (Rodkin & Gest, 2011). Teachers have numerous possibilities to subtly build healthy relationships while preventing undesirable social behaviours through network-related practises, attitudes, and beliefs (Hamm & Hoffman, 2016). Teachers must be aware of the social dynamics in the classroom in order to properly foster positive interactions among students (Farmer, McAuliffe Lines, & Hamm, 2011). Teacher attunement is defined as "teachers' knowledge of the social characteristics of their students as their students perceive them" by Ahn and Rodkin (2014, p. 1146). According to recent research, a teacher's awareness of the social dynamics in the classroom may play a significant role in influencing the peer connections amongst students (Ahn et al., 2013; Hoffman et al., 2015). This could occur in one of two ways: either (a) teachers who are more attuned demonstrate their concern for and interest in the lives of their students by showing this; or (b) teachers who are more attuned can strategically use practises to encourage their students to form strong social bonds with one another (Hamm & Faircloth, 2005; Rodkin & Hodges, 2003).

Teacher Attunement for Student Peer Relationships

For a number of reasons, it is believed that when teachers are aware of the social dynamics of their students, this is beneficial for student peer connections. First off, strong attunement can encourage social relationships among students to the extent that it represents a warm and connected teacher-student relationship in which the instructor makes an effort to understand students' personal lives and experiences. This is so that teachers may transmit the dynamic that students are intended to develop with one another, as stated by Farmer and colleagues (2011), by showing that they care about students and are willing to provide them with emotional support. According to research, a classroom environment that supports prosocial behaviour in students' interactions with one another may result from higher levels of teacher emotional support, as indicated by students (Luckner&Pianta, 2011). According to studies on the subject,

children who have tight, cordial connections with their professors are more likely to be liked by their classmates (Hughes et al., 2001).

Teacher Attunement in the Context of Intervention

Teacher sensitivity may also promote peer relationships in the classroom to the extent that more perceptive teachers are better equipped to put tactics to improve relationships amongst students into practice. This helps to foster a pleasant social atmosphere where teachers show an interest in their students' lives. Teachers who have accurate views of students' social ties may be better situated to execute teacher practices if they have an impact on the peer dynamics of the classroom (van den Berg et al., 2012, for example). On a fundamental level, sensitive instructors might be better at spotting pupils who are hated by their peers, giving them more chances to assist such pupils in creating new social identities or roles that alter how peers view them (Farmer et al., 1993). Due to their understanding of the social dynamics of their students, attuned teachers may be able to achieve improved intervention efficacy in the setting of intervention. The effectiveness of the teacher in putting the techniques into practise depends on the teacher having proper knowledge about the peer interactions among the students. As a result, sensitive teachers may benefit because they may modify intervention tactics to meet the unique social requirements of each student.

Conclusion

Teachers who are sensitive to the social dynamics of their pupils can create a more supportive and emotional learning environment for their students. Teachers were keen observers through attunement, which is the flexibility to modify educational challenges and approaches to suit the situation and the individuality of the kid. This allowed students to be children free from the competing tensions of institutional expectations. The ability of instructors to recognize social dynamics and regulate them helps to include kids with different needs and fosters a positive learning environment for all pupils.

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