

Resilience in peer relationships

Social and emotional aspects of school adjustment

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A complex jigsaw...

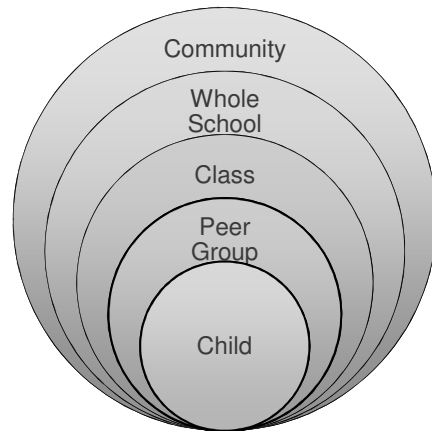
Emotional well-being

Social relationships

Academic engagement

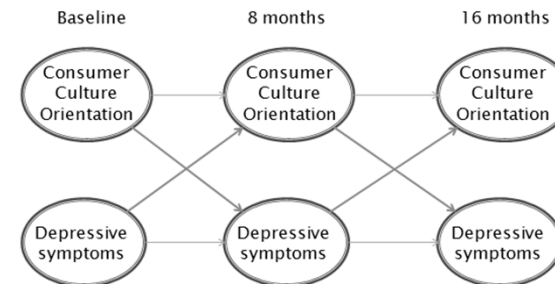
Learning outcomes

Ecological model of the school environment

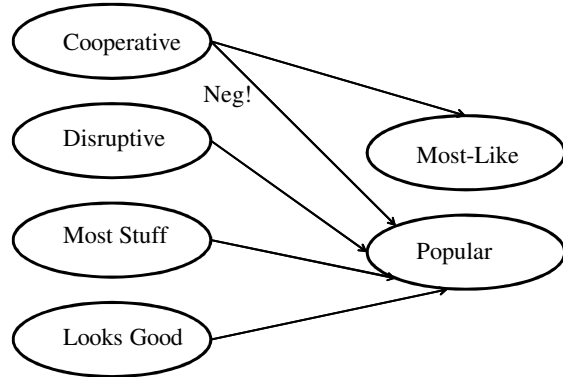


Living in a material world

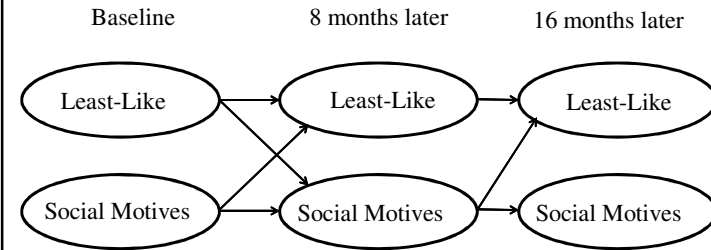
- New longitudinal study of consumer culture and well-being in children, with over 1000 children aged 8-14 years (Dittmar et al., 2013)



Whole sample, baseline to 8 months later



Peer rejection and social motives for consumer culture



And what about learning?

- Ku et al. (2012)
 - cross-sectional and longitudinal evidence from Hong Kong teenagers
 - Materialistic value orientation predicts:
 - decreased mastery learning goals
 - increased performance goals
 - AND
 - declining exam performance

- Ku et al. (2013)
 - experimental evidence where children are primed with a materialistic child's video diary
 - less likely to choose a challenging learning task
 - AND
 - less likely to persist with the task!

Banerjee et al. (2013) – Working with SEAL in the UK

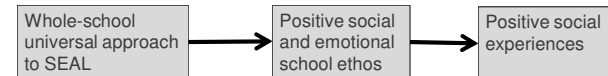
Banerjee et al. (2013) – Working with SEAL in the UK

Whole-school
universal approach
to SEAL

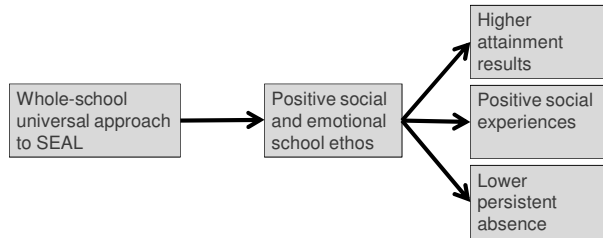
Banerjee et al. (2013) – Working with SEAL in the UK



Banerjee et al. (2013) – Working with SEAL in the UK

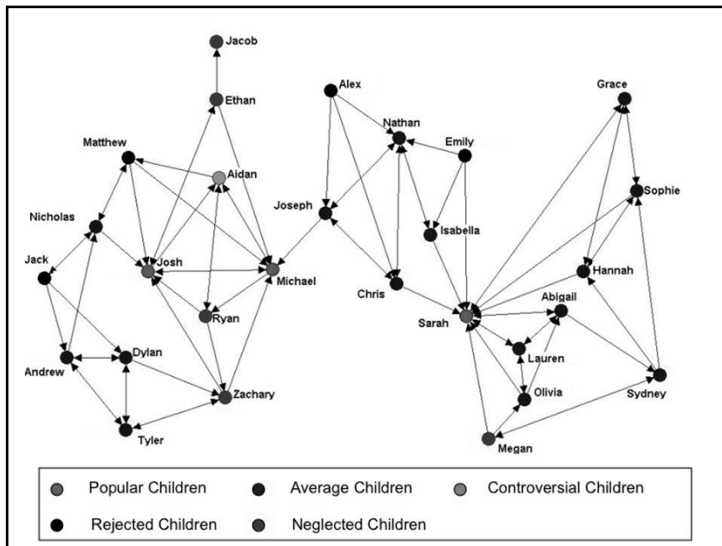


Banerjee et al. (2013) – Working with SEAL in the UK

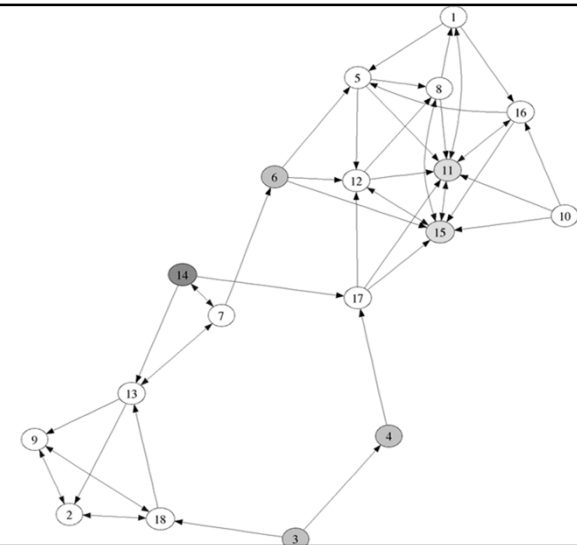


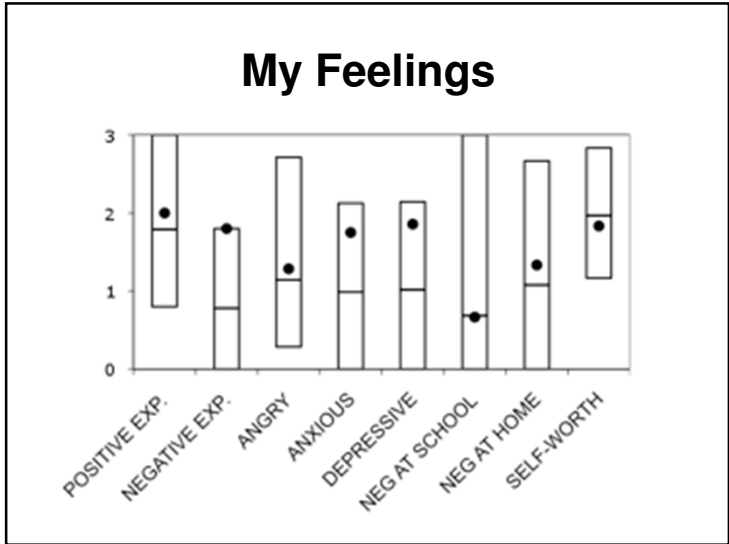
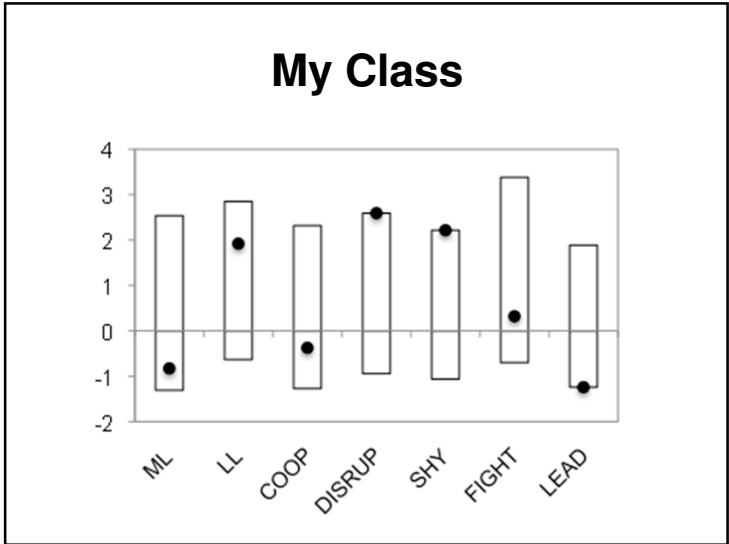
Implications

- Identifying **school features explicitly designed to promote a positive social and emotional ethos**
 - **Community initiatives**
 - **School environment**
 - **Universal SEL provision for pupils**
 - **Engagement of all staff etc.**
- assessing school **ethos/climate** (as perceived by students AND staff)
- identifying trends in **attainment outcomes**
 - narrowing the gap



My Class





Biases in information-processing

- encoding and interpretation of cues
 - anxiety disorders ↔ hypervigilance to threat
overinterpretation of threat
*(catastrophising negative events
and discounting positive events.)*
 - conduct problems ↔ hostile attribution bias
- often involves the influence of emotion-laden schemata about the social world

- response access and selection
 - anxiety disorders ↔ avoidant response to ambiguous situation
 - conduct problems ↔ aggressive response to peer provocation
- biases can be exacerbated by parents

You see a group of students from another class playing a great game. As you (your child) walk over and want to join in, you notice that they are laughing. What do you think is happening? What would you (your child) do?

Barrett et al., 1996:

Percentage of anxious children selecting avoidant solutions

- 30% before family discussion
- 68% after family discussion

Percentage of ODD children selecting aggressive solutions

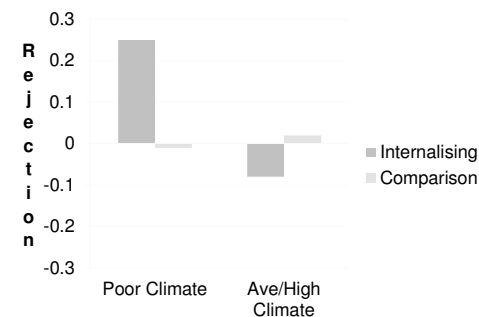
- 35% before family discussion
- 80% after family discussion

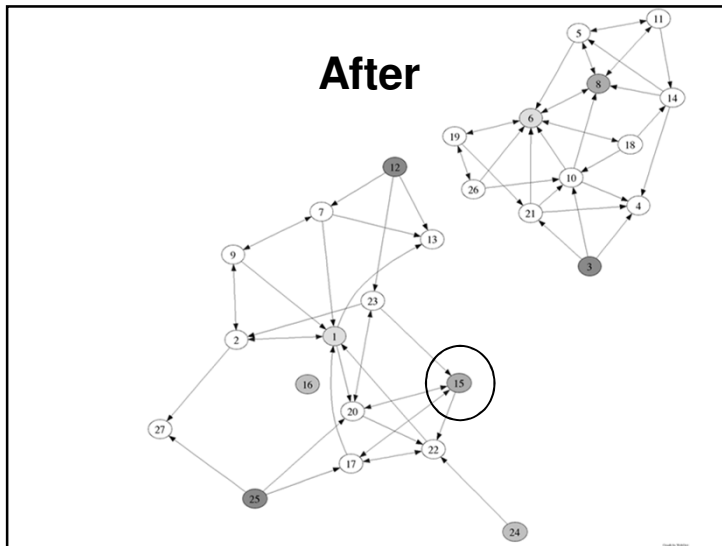
Classroom climate and psychopathology

- My Feelings and My Class survey in three local authorities
- 1439 children in 60 classrooms
- 21 classrooms with relatively poor social climate (nearly as much victimisation as social inclusion reported by pupils)
- longitudinal data over the course of one academic year – what happens to children with internalising and externalising difficulties?

- high internalising (peer-nominated shy reputation, self-reported anxious and depressive symptoms) group
 - approx. 150, with approx. 50 in poor climate classroom
- high externalising (peer-nominated aggressive and disruptive reputation, self-reported anger) group
 - approx. 150, with approx. 50 in poor climate classroom
- longitudinal trends in peer acceptance (Most-Like) and rejection (Least-Like)?

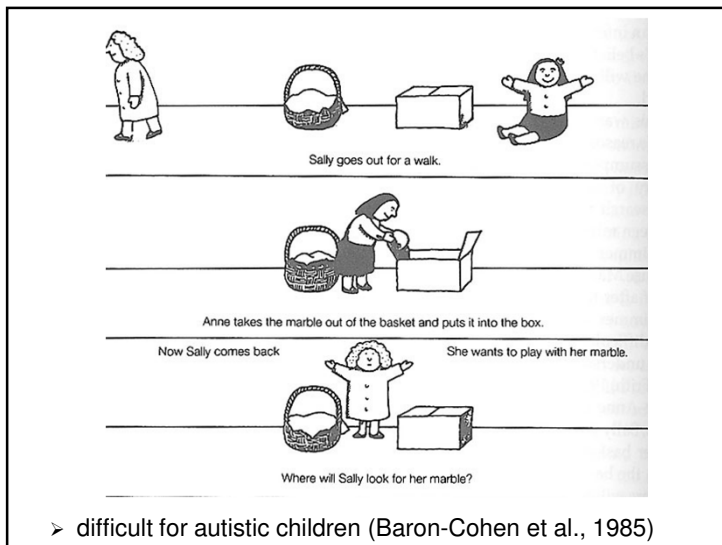
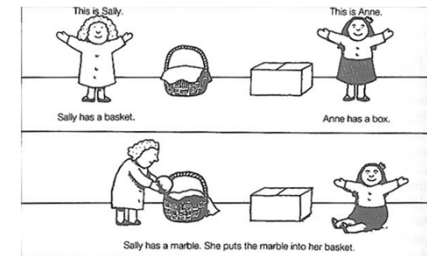
- Peer rejection increases for high-internalising group in poor-climate classrooms only





A milestone in 'theory of mind'

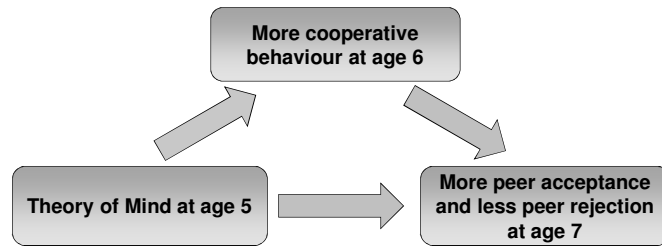
➤ the 'false belief' task



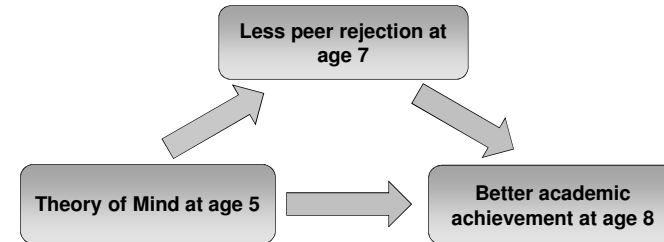
Social understanding and social relationships

- early abilities in emotion recognition and labelling predict interactive peer play in 2- to 3-year-olds (Mathieson & Banerjee, 2010)
- new work showing that parents use socialisation strategies to scaffold 4- to 6-year-olds' emotion understanding

➤ Caputi et al. (2012)



➤ Lecce et al. (in prep.)



➤ a vicious cycle in social skills; Banerjee et al. (2011)



- longitudinal data from 210 children over three school years
- faux pas scores increase with age
- but there are important differences *within* age groups
 - early peer rejection seems to inhibit development of social understanding (from 7 to 9 years)
 - and impaired social understanding predicts subsequent rejection (from 10 to 11 years)

Training theory of mind?

- Ongoing work with Serena Lecce and Federica Bianco
 - new training programme involving four group discussion sessions
 - focus on hypothetical stories where characters have different mental states
 - misunderstandings, ironic statements, unintentional insults
 - good evidence of enhanced progress over time in theory of mind
 - more than in control group
 - effects were found to persist over two months

Working in groups

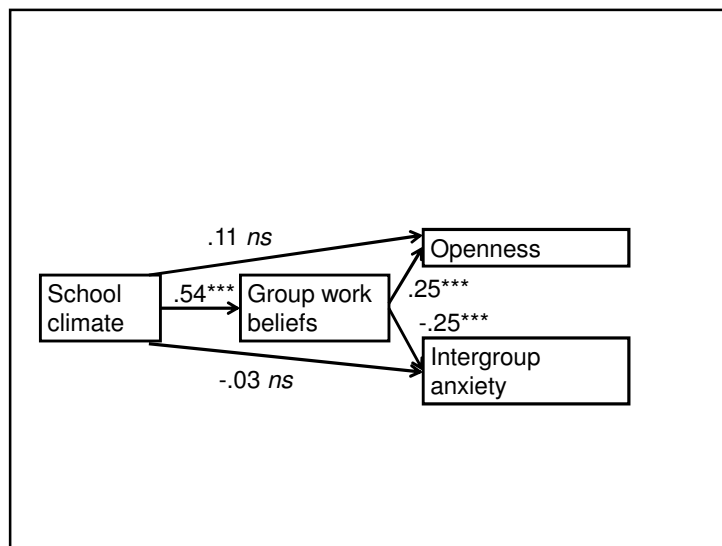
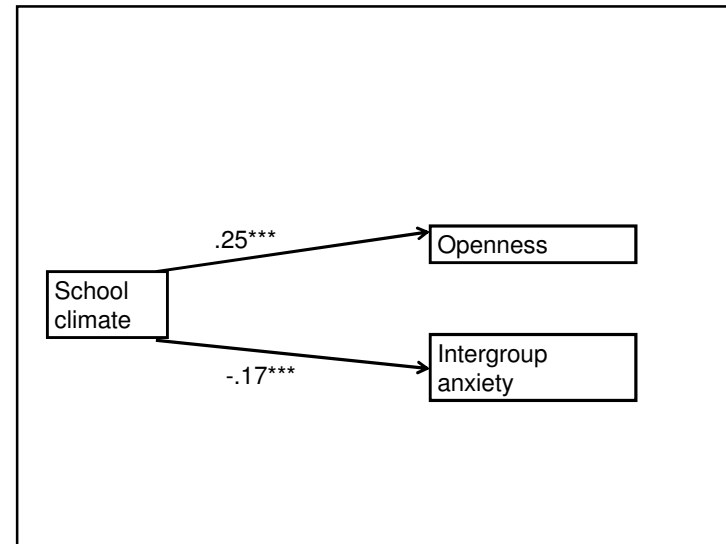
- Perceptions of school climate may be linked to beliefs about group work
- Group work can facilitate open attitudes towards dialogue, discussion, and consideration of multiple perspectives (see Blatchford et al., 2003; Mercer & Howe, 2012)

- Killen & Rutland (2011) – interface between social exclusion, intergroup dynamics, and socio-moral reasoning
- How do children's attitudes regarding cultural issues (e.g., openness to cross-ethnic friendships, anxiety about intergroup contact etc.) relate to broader school climate and attitudes regarding working in groups?

Development Education Centre, South Yorkshire

- Work with teachers and other education professionals to foster a global perspective
- Project funded by Paul Hamlyn Foundation on dialogical learning, engaging children from different ethnic groups in group work and supported intergroup contact
- Dialogical learning approaches, including P4C
- 589 children aged 9-11 years, representing 19 different ethnic groups (63% White British, 37% Non-White British)

- Openness to multi-ethnic friendship: e.g., *I would be happy to have most of my friends from different ethnic or cultural groups*
- Intergroup anxiety (about working with children from a different cultural or ethnic group): e.g., *I think it would be awkward*
- School climate: e.g., *Pupils at school can trust each other*
- Group work beliefs: e.g., *I learn more when I work in groups than when I work on my own*
- controlling for Direct contact: e.g., *How many of your friends are from a different cultural or ethnic group to you?*



Value – and challenges – of group work

From interviews with school staff:

- *There's been a development of confidence ...there was a girl who hardly said anything during the discussions and she was a very quiet girl generally but she would listen and then at the end, she would make her point. Another little girl blossomed in the sessions as she had strong opinions and so this was a forum to express these, but also, other people used to comment on her opinions so it helped her to hear what other people thought of her opinions.*

- *It's helped with collaborating with others but not as much as I'd like .. if you let them work with who they want you get better results and they get more involved in discussions but if you encourage them to work with others then you don't get the results, they don't really discuss issues, so it's difficult*

- *I've read reports by a couple of girls about the fact that they didn't like who they were mixed with... they were totally different people. But they were so honest and open in their writing about this, really reflective.*

Implications

- Interconnections between:
 - Positive attitude towards working in groups
 - Positive experience of school climate
 - Greater openness to cross-ethnic peer relationships
 - Lower intergroup anxiety
- Potential importance of dialogical group work
- Promote opportunities for pupils to reflect on and share their learning

Conclusions

- Many opportunities to promote resilience within the peer relations context
 - Specific lessons and activities
 - Whole-school strategies
 - Classroom climate and peer group processes
 - Perceptions of school climate
 - Dialogical group work
 - Cultural awareness, attitudes, and behaviours
- Consider both universal work and targeted work with particular groups (e.g., FSM, ethnic groups)

➤ Major challenge – what conditions need to be in place in order to ensure school is ready to move forward with this?

- Engagement of all staff
- Integrated approach to behaviour and well-being
- Professional development
- Clear channels for communication
- Partnership with parents and community