

METHODS AND APPROACHES FOR EFFECTIVE GROUP MANAGEMENT

Masodikova Zulfiyakhon Hamdamovna*Kokand State University**Senior Teacher*

Abstract: *This article examines effective methods and approaches to group management in educational and professional settings. It highlights the importance of organizing group activities, fostering collaboration, maintaining positive interpersonal relationships, and ensuring productive communication among group members.*

Keywords: *Group management, teamwork, leadership, collaboration, communication, group dynamics, conflict resolution, motivation, cooperative learning, group interaction, organizational effectiveness, team performance, management strategies, educational management, leadership skills.*

Managing teenage group dynamics requires careful planning, emotional understanding, and effective communication strategies. Educational institutions and youth organizations must create environments that encourage positive interaction while preventing conflicts and negative peer influence. One of the most effective methods of managing teenage groups is collaborative learning. Collaborative activities encourage students to work together, exchange ideas, and solve problems collectively. These activities strengthen communication skills and create opportunities for mutual support. Effective teenage group management requires a combination of communication, cooperation, leadership development, emotional support, and conflict-resolution strategies. Teenagers are strongly influenced by peer relationships and social environments; therefore, teachers, parents, and youth leaders must create supportive and respectful group settings. Methods such as collaborative learning, team-building activities, leadership programs, counseling, and inclusive classroom environments help teenagers develop confidence, responsibility, empathy, and social competence. Although challenges such as peer pressure, emotional sensitivity, and conflicts may occur, proper guidance and positive management strategies can create healthy and productive group dynamics. Successful management of teenage groups not only improves classroom behavior and academic participation but also prepares adolescents for future personal, social, and professional success.[1]

Technology also plays an important role in modern teenage group interaction. Social media and online communication significantly influence teenage behavior and relationships. Educators should teach digital communication ethics and responsible online behavior to reduce cyberbullying and negative social influence. Another important approach is student-centered learning. In student-centered environments,

teenagers actively participate in discussions, decision-making, and collaborative projects. This approach increases motivation and responsibility. Teachers must also understand individual differences among students. Some teenagers are naturally extroverted and confident, while others may feel shy or anxious in group situations. Effective group management requires balancing participation and ensuring equal opportunities for all students. Educational programs focusing on emotional intelligence, empathy, and leadership training contribute significantly to positive group dynamics. Teenagers who develop emotional awareness are more capable of understanding others and maintaining healthy relationships.[2] Group dynamics for teenagers are strategies assertives that promote solidarity, resolution of problems, as well as the application of logical thinking to improve productivity. During adolescence is It is essential to implement different activities that encourage social integration and that they serve so that young people learn to reflect on topics such as morality and the values, but in an entertaining way.

Research indicates that teachers' actions in their classrooms have twice as much impact on student achievement as assessment policies, community involvement, or staff collegiality; and a large part of teachers' actions involves the management of the classroom. Classroom management is critically important in the middle grades years when students are more likely to experience declines in academic motivation and self-esteem. Research indicates that these declines can be linked to the classroom, and particularly to teacher-student relationships. When surveyed about their goals, adolescents have claimed that academics and the completion of their education are important to them. However, repeated studies of sixth through ninth graders have shown interest in academics, motivation for academics, and academic achievement levels decline dramatically during early adolescence, and especially during seventh grade. One of the keys to effective classroom management is the development of a quality relationship between the teacher and the students in the classroom. Marzano, Marzano, and Pickering, in a meta-analysis of more than 100 studies, reported that teachers who had high-quality relationships with students had 31% fewer discipline problems, rule violations, and other related problems over a year's time than did teachers who did not. This significant statistic justifies further investigation into developing relationships.[3] A critical component of developing relationships is knowing and understanding the learner. Teachers must take steps to learn and understand the unique qualities of middle grades students, who are at a crucial time in their development. Although they are good at disguising their feelings, they have been described as actually craving positive social interaction with peers and adults; limits on behavior and attitudes; meaningful participation in families, school, and community; and opportunities for self-definition. Teaching middle grades students is unique in its demand for unconventional thinking; therefore, middle grades teachers must be

willing to break the rules and transcend convention. The strategies that will be described for dealing with the most difficult of students are in many ways just that unconventional.

Teachers who adopt a relationship-building approach to classroom management by focusing on developing the whole person are more likely to help students develop positive, socially-appropriate behaviors. The characteristics of effective teacher-student relationships are not related to the teacher's personality or whether the teacher is well liked by the students. Instead, the relationships are characterized by specific behaviors, strategies, and fundamental attitudes demonstrated by the teacher. This approach involves taking personal interest in students; establishing clear learning goals; and modeling assertive, equitable, and positive behaviors.

Research indicates that the most effective classroom managers do not treat all students the same. Effective managers employed different strategies with different types of students. Teachers with effective classroom management skills are aware of high needs students and have a repertoire of specific techniques for meeting some of their needs. Ideas from the fields of counseling and psychotherapy can be applied to these classroom struggles. Rogers and Renard asserted that we need to understand the needs and beliefs of our students as they are—not as we think they ought to be". What follows are specific strategies from the fields of counseling and psychology that teachers can apply in classroom settings when dealing with difficult students. The strategies of empathy, admiring negative attitudes, leaving the ego at the door, and multicultural connections will be explored.[4]

Many teachers simply assume they understand the student's problems and dilemmas, and mistakenly try to communicate their understanding in ways that only distance the student. For example, a female middle grades student once told a disappointed teacher that things were really hard at home and studying was difficult. The teacher responded by saying, "Well, you have to get past it and study anyway. I have been teaching for a long time, and there isn't any excuse I haven't heard." The student, of course, had no indication that the teacher understood at all and was actually discouraged by the teacher's unempathetic response. If this teacher had taken the time to show that she understood the student's dilemma, she would have learned that the parents of the student were verbally fighting with each other every day, threatening each other with divorce, and arguing over custody of the children. They also fought about the father's drinking. The teacher could have easily encouraged the student with an empathetic response such as, "It must be really difficult trying to study while listening to your parents fighting and wondering what is going to happen with your family." Such a response would have communicated understanding to the student that she would have found valuable and that would have enhanced the level of respect she had for the teacher. Such a response also

would have encouraged the student to communicate with the teacher so that the teacher and student could brainstorm ways to keep the student on task with her various assignments.[5] At first glance, this approach would seem to violate all that we know about behavior modification, but it is based on a well established area of research called “positive psychology”. This approach looks upon negative student behavior as a skill he or she has been practicing and refining for many years. Most of these skills have their beginning in the student’s family life. In the case of a manipulative female teen, for example, being manipulative might have been the only or best way of getting her needs met in her family. It is to be entirely expected that she would bring these same skills to school in an effort to meet her needs there as well. Rather than engage in a power struggle with such a student, a teacher should acknowledge the skill that the student has worked so hard to develop and then redirect it. Give her credit for all of the years she has practiced the skill. This will also lead to an increase in the student’s perceived empathy from the teacher. After acknowledging the skill, reframe the skill and then redirect it. It is important that this skill be applied with sincerity. Any hint of sarcasm could lead to further alienation between the student and the teacher.

Let us extend the example of a manipulative, young adolescent girl. She is engaged in a behavior that, in all likelihood, annoys both adults and her peers. However, there is a skill that may be present in the girl that can be reframed as the “ability to influence people.” Rather than address the girl’s manipulations as such, mention to her, “I have noticed that you have the ability to influence people, is that true?” She will probably reply with something like, “What do you mean?” The teacher can respond by saying, “Well, I have noticed that you can get people to do what you want them to do. Am I wrong?” It would help if the teacher used specific examples. At this point, the student will likely look at the teacher somewhat suspiciously and smile, saying, “Well that’s true sometimes, I guess.” The teacher can then respond, saying, “You have a valuable skill there. If you used it in other ways, you may find more successful ways of getting your needs met. This skill could be valuable in certain careers, such as corporate management, sales, or even counseling.” The young adolescent is usually quite surprised to hear something that she has previously been criticized for now being admired and looked upon as something potentially valuable.

Disruptive behaviors, when displayed by a student who takes charge in his or her own way, can sometimes be reframed as great leadership skills. The teacher can ask the student to use those abilities to help lead the class. In the case of the disruptive class clown, the reframe would be along the lines of admiring the student, then reframing the clown act as natural comedic skill. A possible redirect could consist of a challenge to the student to use that skill in a creative way and in an

appropriate setting that can be set up by the teacher according to the personality of the student.

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