

Classroom applications of Sociograms.

“Why fit in when you were born to stand out.” -Dr. Suess

In 1934, Joseph Moreno published his work related to “sociometry”.

Sociometry: The study and measurement of interpersonal relationships in a group of people.

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/sociometry>

Various methods are used to assess young people’s friendships and socio-metric nominations. For example, young people typically respond to a question such as ‘List the names of 3 people in this class that you like to play with’. Reciprocal liking is seen as two or more individuals nominating each other as friends. Mutual nominations are typically regarded as clear indicators of friendships. Sociometric analysis generally identifies a number of individuals or groups of students in any classroom:

- Rejected – disliked by many peers and like by few.
- Popular – liked by many peers and dis-liked by few.
- Neglected – receive few if any nominations by peers.
- Cliques – groups of 3 or more students who mutually choose each other.

A Sociogram is a visual diagram that demonstrates the social and relationship ‘ties’ between individuals.

Sociogram: A sociometric chart plotting the structure of interpersonal relations in a group situation.

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/sociogram>

Using Sociometry and Sociograms in the Class setting

Constructing a classroom sociogram:

STEP1: After the students have been at school for a term (so that they have had a chance to get to know one another), ask them to write their name at the top of a piece of paper, and then write the names of two students who they would most like to work with. (You can also use who they would most like to play with.)

STEP 2. For visual impact, the teacher then writes the names of all students in the class in the class on a large A3 piece of paper.

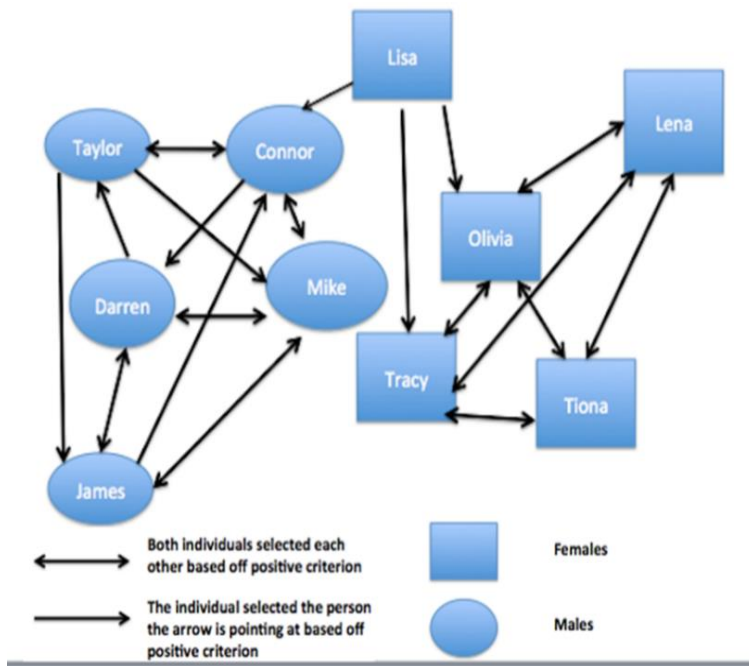
STEP 3. Using the names provided by the students, and arrows to indicate who chooses whom, point the arrows towards the students each student has chosen.

STEP 4. For visual impact, draw larger circles for the students who get chosen by many others or colour code them. A coded shape e.g. square for males and round for females could also be used.

Important note: The information that is collected and collated by the teacher in the development of classroom ‘Sociogram’, should be used solely for the teacher’s professional use, and should not be shared with students or parents.

TEACHER INFORMATION SHEET

Classroom applications of Sociograms.



In the sociogram (Slee, 2017) illustrated here, you can identify:

- 'neglected' (receive few if any nominations e.g. Connor),
- 'popular' (receive many nominations e.g. James & Olivia),
- 'rejected' (disliked by many peers e.g. Lisa)
- 'cliques' (each select each other e.g. Olivia, Tracy & Tiona)

Benefits of developing and using Sociograms in the classroom:

Students benefit from a safe and supportive classroom environment, helping them to feel comfortable and able to learn to the best of their ability. By addressing students' social and emotional needs, social anxiety is reduced, helping students to learn efficiently and develop positive classroom relationships.

<https://www.sometics.com/en/sociograms-in-the-classroom>

By visually mapping a Sociogram a teacher can:

- Identify the social dynamics within the class and promote a healthy classroom climate.
- Identify the students that are socially excluded and provide them with appropriate support.
- Develop ideas and friendship-building strategies, expanding friendship bases for students.
- Promote positive peer relationships, thereby reducing anxiety in students that would normally be excluded.

References:

Moreno, J. L. (1934). *Who shall survive?: A new approach to the problem of human interrelations*. Nervous and Mental Disease Publishing Co. <https://doi.org/10.1037/10648-000>

Slee, P. T. (2017). *School bullying: Teachers helping students cope*. Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group.

Links:

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/sociometry>

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/sociogram>

Sociograms <https://users.sussex.ac.uk/~robinb/socio.html>

Interpreting sociograms <https://users.sussex.ac.uk/~robinb/socio4.html>

<https://www.sometics.com/en/sociograms-in-the-classroom>

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