CONSEQUENCES OF BULLYING IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: PERSPECTIVES OF TEACHERS IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF SANTANA-AP

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ABSTRACT

This article addresses the impacts of bullying on the teaching-learning process in Elementary School, from the perspective of teachers from Santana-AP. The main objective is to understand how bullying affects the school environment and, consequently, the academic performance of students. A field research with a quantitative approach was used, applying questionnaires to teachers from the public and private schools to obtain statistical data on their perceptions and experiences related to the theme. The results indicate that bullying has significant negative effects on children's cognitive and emotional development, compromising the learning process. In addition, the data show the need for more effective institutional support to help teachers deal with situations in the classroom. The research highlights the importance of school prevention and intervention policies, aiming to create a safe educational environment conducive to learning.

Keywords: Bullying, Elementary Education, Learning, Teachers, Prevention.

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INTRODUCTION

School bullying is a growing problem in the Brazilian educational landscape, affecting people of all ages, races, religions and nationalities, with an especially severe impact on children and adolescents. According to Fante (2012), this problem is described as "a subset of aggressive behaviors, characterized by their repetitive nature and power imbalance" (p. 98). These intimidating behaviors cause emotional, psychological, and physical damage to victims, contributing to the creation of a toxic and harmful environment.

A survey conducted by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) in partnership with the Ministry of Health revealed a significant increase in the practice of bullying in Brazilian schools, with an estimated 30% of students being involved. In 2019, more than 40% of students reported being victims of bullying, with teasing often based on students' physical appearance, color, and ethnicity.

Aggression can manifest itself in two main ways: indirect and direct. Pereira (2009, p. 47-48) explains that indirect damage aims to cause psychological damage to the victims, often being more difficult to detect. The direct involves violent behavior and physical aggression, such as hitting and pushing, as well as verbal actions such as pejorative nicknames and insults. The psychological form of bullying can manifest itself in a variety of ways, including intimidation, embarrassment, mockery, unfair accusations, ridicule, and creating an unbearable environment for other students. Consequently, bullying has a significant negative impact on students' school development. Neto (2005) points out common signs and symptoms in victims, such as anxiety, isolation, low school performance and stress. Therefore, educational institutions must be aware of these signs and create open communication channels so that students can report problems, promoting a safe and welcoming environment for all.

Law 14,811 of 2024, which added article 146-A to the Penal Code, establishes measures to combat and punish crime. It defines it as individual or group actions that systematically intimidate "one or more people, through physical or psychological violence, intentionally and repetitively, without evident motivation, through acts of intimidation, humiliation, discrimination, or verbal, moral, sexual, social, psychological, physical, material or virtual actions" (Brasil, 2024). However, the existence of laws is not enough to eradicate the problem; A continuous effort to combat and prevent it is necessary on the part of schools, education professionals, students, families and society in general.

In this context, many teachers face difficulties in dealing with bullying due to the lack of knowledge and preparation on the subject. Therefore, it is important to understand this phenomenon in the educational context, which will imply changes in children's attitudes and behaviors, promoting a culture of respect, empathy, and tolerance in any environment. From this problem, the following research question arises: how do teachers understand the practice of bullying in the teaching-learning process of children in Elementary School?

The objective of this study is to understand the perception of teachers about the practice of bullying in the teaching-learning process of children in Elementary School. To achieve this objective, the article addresses three specific aspects: to identify the factors that lead to the practice of bullying in schools; to verify the consequences of bullying in the lives of students; and to analyze the perspectives of teachers on the relationship between bullying and the teaching and learning process.

The choice of this theme arose from the interest in understanding, discussing and provoking reflections on the need to recognize that bullying is not a simple game, but an act of violence, which creates a negative and demotivating school environment, harming the mental, emotional and academic health of all involved. It is essential to realize that victims of bullying face learning difficulties; When bullied or insecure, they have trouble paying attention in class and assimilating the content taught, resulting in poor school performance, dropped grades, absences, and even school dropout.

METHODOLOGY

The research was conducted through a field investigation with a quantitative approach. This method provides a statistical representation of the object of study, allowing us to measure its importance and variation. As Marconi and Lakatos (2003, p. 109) point out: "statistics can be considered more than just a means of rational description; it is also a method of experimentation and proof, as it is a method of analysis". The work was developed using a closed questionnaire, with the objective of understanding and describing data and results related to the object of the research.

Data collection took place in the municipality of Santana, in the state of Amapá, with the target audience being elementary school teachers from public and private networks. 8 teachers participated in the research, who were the research sample, whose contribution was fundamental to the statistical basis of the study. According to Marcarenhas (2012, p. 45), "it is based on quantification to collect and later treat the data obtained", which proved

to be an important resource for the research. To ensure the validity of the study, an Informed Consent Form was prepared, authorizing both the research and the completion of the questionnaire, ensuring the legitimacy of the study.

The closed questionnaire applied to the participants aimed to collect effective data. According to Santos (2017), questionnaires are formulated with targeted questions that relate to the theme of the study and the reality of the interviewee. The selection of participants included teachers with more than 5 years of experience and who have already witnessed some type of bullying.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

THE BULLYING PHENOMENON: FROM THEORETICAL ASPECTS TO SCHOOL IMPLICATIONS

Society in general has been facing, throughout human formation, several problems inherent to the relationship in social life in various spaces, especially in educational institutions, whether public or private, so that it has been generating some type of violence, presenting psychological aggression to the victims as damage to interfere in the relationship with the development of teaching and learning. In view of the above, Oliveira (2018) stresses that victims sometimes prefer not to say the violence they are suffering, due to conditions of lack of security, fear of reprisals or even shame.

Therefore, Chalita (2008, p.8) states that the term Bullying, "[...] It is a word that comes from the adjective bully, which in English means bully. Those who are stronger tyrannize, threaten, oppress, frighten and intimidate the weakest." Therefore, in the most restricted sense to the epistemological field, bullying composes a characteristic in its use to qualify violent behaviors to the victim, causing intentional damage, as well as repeated damage inflicted on other people, assuming in its various forms such as: psychological, 7 physical and verbal, and this is very evident in teaching spaces.

According to Fante (2012), the use of this expression provides a definition of the conscious and deliberate desire to mistreat an individual, in the projection of positioning him or her under tension through the use of aggressive behaviors, as well as antisocial behaviors. Consequently, he points to a literal definition of violence, which for Minayo (2006), is "[...] Latin origin, the word comes from the word vis, which means strength and refers to the notions of constraint and use of physical superiority over the other" (p.13). Thus, it cannot be denied that when the individual suffers any type of bullying, it causes

discrimination with totally negative effects on the victims.

In this context, Fante (2018) draws attention to the object of study in question, highlighting that:

> [...] We can consider bullying as a very old phenomenon, as it is a form of violence that has always existed in schools – in which the "bullies" continue to oppress and threaten their victims, for banal reasons – and that to this day occurs unnoticed by most education professionals. (Fante, 2018, p.29).

In fact, the author ratifies the historical path of Bullying, by taking a violent position regarding the practice that is offensive to the other and that is often not perished by teachers in the school environment. Hence, it is important to resort to identifying what really characterizes this word and what is the understanding in order to contribute to the intervention and/or prevention so that this type of practice does not occur in school spaces. Fante (2018).

In view of this configuration, it is necessary to understand that bullying, throughout history, has undergone transformations, which accompanied the evolution of human civilization. However, Monteiro (2008) states that bullying is not a modern phenomenon but is only now being recognized as a cause of damage and deserving of special measures for its prevention and confrontation, because in the school daily life complex social issues are faced, in which pedagogical knowledge cannot face alone, requiring knowledge from other technicians. To this end, it is necessary to discuss that in school spaces this phenomenon has been causing interference in the process of formation of subjects, especially in the light of the teaching and learning process.

The school environment is understood as a field of social inclusion, and ends up suffering conflicting impacts when it affects this space as a whole, creating a climate of fear and insecurity that can harm the school performance of all students. In fact, this overlaps the practice of freedom, as evidenced by Freire (2004), in which the school, as a social function, has an importance of creating an educational environment that values dialogue, mutual respect for the subjects that are part of it, as well as solidarity. Thus, for the aforementioned author, students within the school cannot live in a relationship of oppression, but need to express in their behaviors performances favorable to their personal and professional development, preventing the rise of bullying.

From this perspective, such violence has been promoting in the field of discussion a phenomenon that directly affects human relationships, where children, young people and

adults are exposed to psychological aggression, especially when observing the educational field. However, we can see that we are in the twenty-first century, and this characteristic is impactful and has generated aggressive behaviors, as well as intentional behaviors that are repeated daily at various times within the educational institution. In addition, in the next topic we will address the discussion about the role of the teacher as a mediator of the teaching and learning process in the fight against this violence in order to discuss the theme to better understand in the context of the teacher's view in the classroom environment.

THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER AS A MEDIATOR OF THE TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCESS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST BULLYING

The research was carried out with the participation of 8 subjects, totaling 8 questionnaires collected. Data analysis focused on specific issues related to the theme of the study.

School bullying is recognized as a serious problem that harms the learning environment, directly affecting the development of students. This is reinforced by the results of the questionnaire applied, which indicated that 100% of teachers agree that bullying has a negative impact on the educational process, generating trauma and insecurity. As highlighted by Fante (2012), bullying is "a subset of aggressive behaviors, characterized by its repetitive nature and power imbalance" (p. 98). These intimidating behaviors not only harm victims emotionally and psychologically, but also compromise the school environment, creating a toxic atmosphere.

Table 1 – Do you believe that Bullying negatively affects the learning environment?

Yes	No
100,0%	0,00%

Source: Field research data

The second question revealed that 87.5% of the respondents stated that students who were victims of bullying showed a drop in academic performance, while only 12.5% disagreed. This result indicates that most recognize that victims who suffer from this practice have a negative impact on learning, which can harm the victims' chances of school succession. Studies corroborate this perception, pointing out that bullying causes psychological suffering, decreased self-esteem, isolation, and impairments in learning and academic performance (Giuliato, 2020). Given this, it is essential that the school is aware of

the signs of bullying, especially in classrooms, and that it offers adequate support to victims. This attention not only improves the school environment but also contributes to the recovery of academic performance of affected students.

Table 2 – Have you ever observed a drop in the academic performance of students who were victims of bullying?

Yes	No
87,5%	12,5%

Source:Field research data

It was observed in the table below that 100% of the teachers have already had to intervene in bullying situations in the classroom. The teacher, as a mediator, plays a crucial role in preventing and identifying bullying, being essential to ensure a healthy and welcoming environment for all students. Therefore, the need to pay attention to this phenomenon is highlighted, it is essential that schools promote training and resources that help educators in this challenge.

Table 3 – Have you ever had to intervene in bullying situations that directly affected the class atmosphere?

Yes	No
87,5%	12,5%

Source: Field research data

According to the question in table 4, it was observed that 62.5% of teachers do not receive support from schools to deal with bullying cases, it is understood that this lack of support can make it difficult to identify and solve this problem, contributing to the increase in these practices. However, 37.5% of the teachers stated that they received support in the schools. This highlights the importance of teacher qualification, as well as the implementation of educational practices and prevention and intervention strategies, so that everyone is prepared to identify and deal with cases of bullying.

Table 4 – Have you received adequate support from the school to deal with cases of bullying?

Yes	No
37,5%	62,5%

Source: Field research data

It was observed in the table below that 75% of the respondents observed an increase in school absences due to bullying, while 25% disagreed. It is noted that these data are worrisome, as they show how this situation has a significant impact, interfering with student attendance and, consequently, with their learning and development

Table 5 – Have you ever observed an increase in school absences due to bullying?

Yes	No
75.0%	25.0%

Source: Field research data

In summary, the results of this research corroborate that bullying is a serious problem in educational institutions, evidenced by the fact that 100% of the participants recognize its harmful effects on the learning environment. This finding highlights the relevance of addressing the issue from the beginning of the school year, rather than waiting for incidents to occur before taking action.

In this context, it is essential that schools implement effective preventive policies and offer adequate support to teachers. These actions are essential for the promotion of a safe and welcoming school environment, in which all students can fully develop their academic, emotional and social capacities.

CONCLUSION

School bullying is a multifaceted and high-impact phenomenon, whose consequences go beyond the direct victims, affecting the school environment as a whole. The data collected demonstrate that most teachers recognize the seriousness of this issue and its negative influence on the teaching and learning process. However, it is observed that bullying practices often have roots in the family environment, being brought to the school context, where they often do not receive the proper preventive and educational attention.

In view of this, it is essential that schools take an active role, implementing pedagogical strategies that promote healthy relationships and constructive behaviors among students. The action of the teaching staff must be integrated into a systemic approach that involves families and other social agents in the fight against bullying. This collaboration is indispensable for the construction of an educational space where mutual respect and empathy are fundamental values.

In addition, it is necessary to open avenues for future research that explore innovative prevention and intervention strategies, as well as the impact of inclusive and participatory school policies. The continuity of studies on the cultural and social roots of bullying and on teacher training methods can contribute to facing this challenge. Only with joint and constant efforts will it be possible to consolidate a safer, more equitable school environment that is conducive to the full development of all children and adolescents.

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