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SCHOOL BULLYING AS A RELATIONAL PHENOMENON: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF A PEDAGOGICAL INTERVENTION IN A CONTEXT OF SOCIAL VULNERABILITY IN SOUTHERN BRAZIL

BULLYING ESCOLAR COMO FENÔMENO RELACIONAL: ANÁLISE CRÍTICA DE UMA INTERVENÇÃO PEDAGÓGICA EM CONTEXTO DE VULNERABILIDADE SOCIAL NO SUL DO BRASIL

EL ACOSO ESCOLAR COMO FENÓMENO RELACIONAL: ANÁLISIS CRÍTICO DE UNA INTERVENCIÓN PEDAGÓGICA EN UN CONTEXTO DE VULNERABILIDAD SOCIAL EN EL SUR DE BRASIL

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Abstract

His article analyzes a pedagogical practice aimed at raising awareness and addressing bullying in the school context, developed in a public school located in the northern region of Rio Grande do Sul, in a community characterized by high levels of violence. The study seeks to understand how

REMUNOM
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DOI: 10.66104/qevve380
Pages: 1-22

educational activities can contribute to problematizing bullying and fostering more respectful relationships among students. Methodologically, this is a qualitative study of an applied nature with a descriptive-interpretative approach, based on the analysis of an intervention carried out in April, a period dedicated to bullying awareness. The activity initially involved a lecture conducted by teachers from Specialized Educational Assistance (AEE), followed by the production of comic strips by students, in which they were asked to represent situations of bullying and ways to address them. The data were analyzed using content analysis. The results show that students recognize bullying in its multiple manifestations, especially in verbal and psychological forms, associated with humiliation, body stigmatization, and social exclusion. The productions also reveal an understanding of the emotional impacts of violence, such as sadness, suffering, and isolation, as well as an awareness of the continuity of aggression in digital environments. Furthermore, elements of empathy, respect, and reconciliation are evident in the narratives, suggesting the internalization of values discussed during the pedagogical intervention. It is concluded that the use of active methodologies, such as the production of comic strips, constitutes an effective strategy for promoting critical reflection and student engagement in addressing bullying. However, the need for continuous and articulated actions within the school context is emphasized, aiming at the construction of a culture of peace and democratic coexistence.
Keywords: comic strips; culture of peace; school violence; socio-emotional education.

Resumo

O presente artigo analisa uma prática pedagógica voltada à conscientização e ao enfrentamento do bullying no contexto escolar, desenvolvida em uma escola pública situada no norte do Rio Grande do Sul, em uma comunidade caracterizada por elevados índices de violência. O estudo tem como objetivo compreender de que forma atividades educativas podem contribuir para a problematização do bullying e para a construção de relações mais respeitosas entre estudantes. Metodologicamente, trata-se de uma pesquisa de abordagem qualitativa, de natureza aplicada e caráter descritivo-interpretativo, baseada na análise de uma intervenção realizada no mês de abril, período dedicado à conscientização sobre o combate ao bullying. A atividade envolveu, inicialmente, uma palestra conduzida por professoras do Atendimento Educacional Especializado (AEE), seguida da produção de histórias em quadrinhos pelos estudantes, nas quais deveriam representar situações de bullying e suas formas de enfrentamento. Os dados foram analisados à luz da análise de conteúdo. Os resultados evidenciam que os estudantes reconhecem o bullying em suas múltiplas manifestações, especialmente nas formas verbal e psicológica, associadas à humilhação, estigmatização corporal e exclusão social. As produções também revelam a compreensão dos impactos emocionais da violência, como tristeza, sofrimento e isolamento, além de indicarem a percepção da continuidade das agressões em ambientes digitais. Destaca-se, ainda, a presença de elementos de empatia, respeito e reconciliação nas narrativas, sugerindo indícios de apropriação dos valores discutidos na

REMUNOM
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Pages: 1-22

intervenção pedagógica. Conclui-se que a utilização de metodologias ativas, como a produção de histórias em quadrinhos, constitui uma estratégia eficaz para promover a reflexão crítica e o engajamento dos estudantes no enfrentamento do bullying. Contudo, ressalta-se a necessidade de ações contínuas e articuladas no âmbito escolar, visando à construção de uma cultura de paz e convivência democrática.

Palavras-chave: histórias em quadrinhos; cultura de paz; violência escolar; educação socioemocional.

Resumen

El presente artículo analiza una práctica pedagógica orientada a la concienciación y al enfrentamiento del acoso escolar en el contexto educativo, desarrollada en una escuela pública situada en el norte de Rio Grande do Sul, en una comunidad caracterizada por altos índices de violencia. El estudio tiene como objetivo comprender de qué manera las actividades educativas pueden contribuir a problematizar el acoso escolar y a la construcción de relaciones más respetuosas entre los estudiantes. Metodológicamente, se trata de una investigación de enfoque cualitativo, de naturaleza aplicada y carácter descriptivo-interpretativo, basada en el análisis de una intervención realizada en el mes de abril, período dedicado a la concienciación sobre el combate al acoso escolar. La actividad incluyó, inicialmente, una charla impartida por profesoras del Atendimento Educacional Especializado (AEE), seguida de la producción de historietas por parte de los estudiantes, en las cuales debían representar situaciones de acoso y sus formas de afrontamiento. Los datos fueron analizados a partir del análisis de contenido. Los resultados evidencian que los estudiantes reconocen el acoso escolar en sus múltiples manifestaciones, especialmente en las formas verbal y psicológica, asociadas a la humillación, la estigmatización corporal y la exclusión social. Las producciones también revelan la comprensión de los impactos emocionales de la violencia, como la tristeza, el sufrimiento y el aislamiento, además de indicar la percepción de la continuidad de las agresiones en entornos digitales. Asimismo, se destaca la presencia de elementos de empatía, respeto y reconciliación en las narrativas, lo que sugiere la internalización de valores discutidos durante la intervención pedagógica. Se concluye que el uso de metodologías activas, como la producción de historietas, constituye una estrategia eficaz para promover la reflexión crítica y el compromiso de los estudiantes en el enfrentamiento del acoso escolar. Sin embargo, se subraya la necesidad de acciones continuas y articuladas en el ámbito escolar, orientadas a la construcción de una cultura de paz y convivencia democrática.

Palabras clave: historietas; cultura de paz; violencia escolar; educación socioemocional.

1. Introduction.

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Pages: 1-22

The intensification of debates on school violence in recent decades has placed the phenomenon of bullying at the center of educational, legal, and psychosocial discussions, consolidating it as a public issue of high complexity. Defined as a set of intentional, repetitive practices marked by asymmetrical power relations, bullying manifests through physical, verbal, psychological, and symbolic aggression, producing significant impacts on students' socio-emotional development and academic performance (OLWEUS, 1994; SMITH et al., 2002).

The international literature, since the pioneering studies of Dan Olweus, highlights the structural nature of this phenomenon within the school environment, emphasizing its recurrence and its lasting effects on the lives of both victims and perpetrators (OLWEUS, 1993; OLWEUS, 2013).

In the contemporary context, expanded research demonstrates that bullying cannot be understood merely as deviant individual behavior, but rather as an expression of broader social dynamics shaped by inequalities, discrimination, and institutional fragilities. Recent studies point to a strong association between experiences of bullying and the development of emotional problems such as anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation, reinforcing the need for systematic and preventive pedagogical interventions in everyday school life (MODECKI et al., 2014; UNESCO, 2019). From this perspective, the phenomenon assumes an interdisciplinary character, engaging fields such as education, psychology, and sociology, which requires integrated and contextualized approaches capable of articulating prevention, intervention, and the promotion of an ethical culture of coexistence (CROCHÍK, 2015).

In Brazil, recognition of the seriousness of the problem has led to the institutionalization of specific public policies, notably Law No. 13,185/2015, which establishes the Program to Combat Systematic Intimidation (bullying). This legislation represents a normative milestone by setting guidelines for prevention, training of education professionals, and the promotion of a culture of peace in the school environment, emphasizing educational actions rather than exclusively punitive measures (BRAZIL, 2015). Despite these advances, studies indicate that the effectiveness of these policies still faces significant challenges, particularly

REMUNOM
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Vol: 13.08
DOI: 10.66104/qevve380
Pages: 1-22

regarding their implementation in public education systems and the articulation among school, family, and community (SILVA; ASSIS; SANTOS, 2020).

It is within this context that the present article is situated, aiming to present and analyze a pedagogical activity developed in a public school located in the northern region of Rio Grande do Sul, in a community characterized by high levels of violence and recurrent episodes of bullying. The proposal arises from the need to understand the phenomenon not only in its theoretical dimension, but above all in its concrete materiality, considering the sociocultural specificities of the school territory. Thus, by articulating an updated theoretical framework with empirical experience, the study seeks to contribute to the educational field by highlighting possibilities for critical pedagogical intervention aimed at fostering more respectful, dialogical, and inclusive relationships within the school space.

Although the literature on bullying and the use of comics in educational contexts is well established, studies that analyze, in an articulated manner, student productions as empirical material in contexts of social vulnerability remain limited, especially in connection with practices of Specialized Educational Support (AEE – in Portuguese). Furthermore, there is a gap in understanding bullying from a situated relational perspective that simultaneously considers school, territorial, and subjective dimensions. In this sense, the present study seeks to contribute by analyzing a pedagogical intervention developed in a peripheral public school, using comics produced by students as devices for expression and analysis, with the aim of understanding how the phenomenon of bullying is interpreted, represented, and problematized by the subjects themselves within their sociocultural context.

2. Literature Review.

School bullying has, in contemporary times, emerged as a highly complex global phenomenon, recognized by international organizations as one of the most recurrent forms of violence within educational contexts. Recent data from UNESCO indicate that approximately one in three students' worldwide reports having experienced bullying at school, highlighting its high prevalence and structural nature

REMUNOM
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Pages: 1-22

(UNESCO, 2023; UNESCO, 2024). This scenario reinforces that bullying cannot be treated as an isolated event, but rather as a systematic manifestation of power relations and exclusion embedded within educational institutions.

From a conceptual standpoint, recent research maintains the classical definition of bullying as intentional, repetitive aggressive behavior characterized by an imbalance of power, while expanding its understanding to include sociocultural and contextual dimensions (GAFFNEY; TTOFI; FARRINGTON, 2021). Current literature emphasizes that the phenomenon should be analyzed from an ecological perspective, considering multiple levels of influence, ranging from individual characteristics to broader institutional and social factors, as proposed by Urie Bronfenbrenner (1996).

Within the educational field, recent empirical studies have demonstrated the direct impacts of bullying on teaching and learning processes. Research by Gimenez et al. (2024), based on international data, shows that bullying victimization is significantly associated with decreased academic performance in areas such as reading, mathematics, and science, as well as reduced school engagement. Supporting these findings, international reports indicate that students frequently exposed to bullying are more likely to experience school dropout and difficulties in school retention, thereby compromising educational equity (OECD, 2019).

Beyond pedagogical impacts, recent literature has deepened the analysis of the psychosocial consequences of bullying. Studies based on large samples indicate a consistent association between experiences of victimization and the development of mental health problems, such as anxiety, depression, symptoms of post-traumatic stress, and suicidal ideation (KOWALSKI et al., 2014; MODECKI et al., 2014; UNESCO, 2019).

Evidence indicates that the greater the intensity and frequency of aggressive behaviors, the more severe the emotional and behavioral harm, affecting aspects such as sleep quality, self-esteem, and students' social relationships. This body of evidence supports the need to understand bullying as a public health issue closely connected to the educational field.

Another important development in recent literature concerns the analysis of

REMUNOM
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Pages: 1-22

bullying among specific groups, particularly students with disabilities or special educational needs. Studies indicate that these students are more vulnerable to victimization due to factors such as stigmatization, social exclusion, and interaction difficulties (KHALID; MANZOOR; RASHID, 2024). This finding reinforces the importance of inclusive policies and the strengthening of Specialized Educational Support (AEE) as a strategy for preventing and addressing school violence.

In the context of digital transformations, cyberbullying has been widely discussed as an extension and intensification of peer violence. Recent studies highlight that the virtual environment expands the reach of aggression, increases its persistence, and makes mediation by the school more difficult (PHILIPO et al., 2024). Furthermore, the integration between offline and online bullying demonstrates that both forms are interconnected, requiring educational approaches that incorporate digital citizenship and the ethical use of technologies.

Contemporary literature has also advanced in proposing and evaluating intervention strategies. Recent studies indicate that isolated actions tend to have limited effectiveness, whereas systemic interventions involving the entire school community (including administrators, teachers, students, and families) are more effective (GAFFNEY; TTOFI; FARRINGTON, 2021). Literature reviews also emphasize the importance of pedagogical practices focused on conflict mediation, the development of socio-emotional skills, and the promotion of a culture of peace as central elements in addressing bullying (SANTOS; OLIVEIRA, 2025).

Another relevant aspect concerns the role of school climate. Research indicates that educational environments characterized by democratic relationships, respect for diversity, and active student participation tend to present lower levels of violence (THAPA et al., 2013). In this context, teachers play a strategic role, not only as mediators of conflict but also as agents in the formation of values, making their continuous professional development essential for addressing bullying.

It is also important to highlight that some recent studies point to the need to move beyond individualizing and punitive approaches, advancing toward critical perspectives that understand bullying as an expression of structural inequalities. Research indicates that factors such as poverty, community violence, and social

REMUNOM
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Vol: 13.08
DOI: 10.66104/qevve380
Pages: 1-22

exclusion directly influence the occurrence of bullying in school settings, particularly in public schools located in vulnerable territories (CHILDREN AND YOUTH SERVICES REVIEW, 2024). Therefore, addressing bullying requires not only pedagogical interventions but also integrated public policies that promote social justice and educational equity.

Understanding the dynamics of bullying evidenced in the comics produced by students requires situating them within the socioterritorial context in which the school is located. This is a public school situated in a peripheral neighborhood marked by high levels of violence, including criminal activity, recurring domestic violence, and various forms of vulnerability that have affected many students since early childhood.

In this sense, the manifestations of aggression, exclusion, humiliation, and silencing identified in the narratives cannot be analyzed as isolated or strictly school-based phenomena. Rather, they are connected to a broader context of social inequality and continuous exposure to multiple forms of violence, which tend to shape interaction patterns, relational repertoires, and conflict resolution strategies mobilized by individuals.

The literature indicates that schools located in socially vulnerable territories often operate under tensions that extend beyond the pedagogical space, being influenced by community violence, precarious living conditions, and weakened social protection networks (ABRAMOVAY, 2002; MINAYO, 2006; WACQUANT, 2008). In such contexts, behaviors associated with bullying may reflect not only interpersonal disputes but also broader processes of inequality reproduction, stigmatization, and the search for recognition in environments marked by instability and insecurity.

The analyzed comics suggest that students draw on experiences and perceptions that extend beyond the school environment, incorporating elements related to everyday violence, whether in family, community, or digital contexts. The recurrence of situations involving aggression, threats, and exclusion can be understood as an expression of a social environment in which violence, at different levels, tends to be normalized or trivialized.

REMUNOM
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DOI: 10.66104/qevve380
Pages: 1-22

Thus, addressing bullying in contexts such as the one investigated requires approaches that go beyond isolated interventions and consider the complexity of the relationships between school, territory, and students' social conditions. This implies recognizing the school as a strategic space for mediation, capable of promoting pedagogical practices oriented toward a culture of peace, the strengthening of social bonds, and the construction of non-violent forms of coexistence, even within structurally adverse contexts.

In summary, the state of the art in research on bullying and education demonstrates that it is a multifaceted phenomenon with significant impacts on learning, mental health, and the quality of school coexistence. Recent literature converges in affirming that addressing bullying requires interdisciplinary, preventive, and contextualized approaches capable of articulating pedagogical practices, institutional policies, and community participation in the construction of safer, more inclusive, and democratic school environments.

3. Methodology.

This research is characterized as a qualitative study, applied in nature, with a descriptive-interpretative design, focusing on the analysis of a pedagogical practice aimed at raising awareness and addressing bullying in the school context. The study was conducted in a public school located in the northern region of the state of Rio Grande do Sul, situated in a territory marked by social vulnerabilities and recurrent situations of violence, including episodes of bullying among students.

The pedagogical intervention took place in April, a period in which awareness and anti-bullying actions are intensified in the Brazilian school calendar, in accordance with the guidelines established by Law No. 13,185/2015 (BRAZIL, 2015). The activity was planned collaboratively between school teachers and professionals from the Specialized Educational Assistance (AEE), considering the importance of inclusive and interdisciplinary practices in addressing school violence.

The development of the proposal occurred in two main stages. Initially, a

REMUNOM
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Pages: 1-22

formative lecture was conducted by AEE teachers, directed at students, aiming to problematize the concept of bullying, its different manifestations (physical, verbal, psychological, and virtual), and its impacts on the school and emotional lives of those involved. This stage had an awareness-raising character and was grounded in a dialogical approach, seeking to promote critical reflection and student participation. At this first moment, the presentation was delivered to all students in the school, totaling approximately 200 students from the final years of elementary education and high school.

This initial session was structured through an expository presentation using slides that integrated theoretical concepts, examples of problem situations, contextualized narratives, and illustrative images, aiming to foster connections between the content addressed and the students' everyday experiences.

In the second stage, within the classroom context, the lead teacher continued the theme through a structured pedagogical activity in which students were invited to produce comic strips addressing the fight against bullying. This activity was developed with a 7th-grade class, which had 18 students present on the day, with an average age of 12. These students frequently experience situations of school and domestic violence, as the school is located in a neighborhood with a high rate of family violence. Organized in pairs, the students produced the comics with the aim of raising awareness about the risks of this type of violence in the school environment. However, only five pairs completed the activity, resulting in five comic strips, which will be presented later.

The proposal aimed to stimulate creative expression, empathy, and the construction of narratives that highlight situations of violence as well as possibilities for overcoming them, conflict resolution, and the promotion of mutual respect. The choice of the comic strip format is justified by its didactic potential, as it combines visual and textual elements that enhance student engagement and the construction of meaning around complex themes (RAMOS, 2012).

The data analyzed in this research were derived from the students' productions (comic strips), as well as observations made during the development of classroom activities. Data analysis followed a qualitative perspective, seeking to

REMUNOM
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Vol: 13.08
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Pages: 1-22

identify emerging categories related to students' understandings of bullying, its forms of manifestation, and coping strategies. For this purpose, content analysis was employed, as proposed by Bardin (2011), allowing for the systematization and interpretation of meanings present in student productions.

From an ethical standpoint, the principles of anonymity and confidentiality of participants were respected, ensuring that no individual identification was disclosed. It is important to note that this study is configured as a report of pedagogical practice, developed within the scope of regular school activities, with a formative purpose. The use of students' productions for analysis occurred subsequently, in accordance with applicable ethical principles.

The preservation of participants' identities was ensured through anonymization, and the use of images from the comic strips was handled carefully, without any identifying elements. The activity was authorized by the school administration and integrated into the institutional pedagogical planning. Due to its nature (without participant identification and without external intervention beyond the educational context) the study falls under the guidelines applicable to research in the Human and Social Sciences that do not require submission to an ethics committee, while still maintaining a commitment to ethical principles in educational research.

In summary, this research is situated within the field of critical pedagogical practices, as it articulates educational intervention and theoretical reflection, contributing to the understanding of the school's role in the prevention and confrontation of bullying.

4. Results and Discussion.

The analysis of the comic strips produced by the students reveals a consistent interpretative repertoire regarding bullying, demonstrating not only the recognition of its forms of manifestation but also the incorporation of reflective and normative elements related to how it can be addressed. The reading of the materials was conducted in light of the content analysis framework proposed by

REMUNOM
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Vol: 13.08
DOI: 10.66104/qevve380
Pages: 1-22

Laurence Bardin, particularly within its thematic categorical approach.

The analytical process adopted a mixed procedure, combining a priori categories (grounded in the literature on bullying) with categories emerging from the empirical corpus itself. Initially, a floating reading of the comic strips was carried out, followed by the definition of units of analysis (narrative and visual elements related to situations of violence, interactions among characters, and presented outcomes).

The coding stage was conducted systematically, with excerpts from the narratives (both textual and visual) assigned to the analytical categories. The process involved two independent coders to enhance the reliability of the analysis. Interpretative divergences were discussed until consensus was reached, based on previously established theoretical criteria.

From this procedure, five central categories were identified:

(i) forms of bullying manifestation (evidenced through scenes of verbal, physical, and virtual aggression);

(ii) social markers and stigmatization (associated with bodily characteristics, appearance, and social belonging);

(iii) psychosocial impacts (expressed through emotions such as sadness, fear, and isolation);

(iv) the role of peers (including omission, reinforcement, or mediation of violent situations); and

(v) coping strategies and conflict resolution (such as reporting, dialogue, and reconciliation).

These categories directly align with contemporary literature, which conceptualizes bullying as a relational, ecological, and multifaceted phenomenon (Gaffney; Ttofi; Farrington, 2021).

The analysis of Figure 1 reveals a short narrative sequence that begins with verbal ridicule (“you dumbo,” referring to a student with larger ears), progresses to a physical threat (“I’m going to hit you”), and culminates in a technology-mediated message (“tomorrow I’m going to lock you in the bathroom”). This narrative progression is particularly relevant, as it demonstrates that students understand

REMUNOM
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Vol: 13.08
DOI: 10.66104/qevve380
Pages: 1-22

bullying as a dynamic and escalating process rather than as isolated events. This perception is consistent with studies indicating that bullying tends to persist and, in some cases, intensify over time when there is no effective intervention (Olweus, 1993; Ttofi; Farrington, 2017).

Figure 1: Comic strip "Threat and intimidation in the school context."



Source: Created by the students (2026).

Furthermore, the presence of a digital device points to the perception that violence extends beyond the school environment, reinforcing the notion of hybridization between bullying and cyberbullying (Patchin; Hinduja, 2020). This finding is significant, as it indicates that students recognize the ubiquity of digital interactions as a potential space for the reproduction of violence, suggesting an expanded understanding of the contemporary dynamics of bullying.

Figure 2 shows the recurrence of insults related to body features ("fat," "big ears"), highlighting the centrality of physical markers as mechanisms of exclusion. The literature has pointed out that bullying is often grounded in visible differences that are socially hierarchized, such as body weight, facial characteristics, and overall appearance (UNESCO, 2019).

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Pages: 1-22

Figure 2: Comic strip “Bullying and body stigmatization.”



Source: Created by the students (2026).

In this sense, the comic strips reveal not only the reproduction of such practices but also the internalization of normative standards of body and normality. However, the most relevant element of this production lies in the discursive shift presented in the final panel (“playing with respect is more fun”), indicating a movement from a logic of violence toward an ethic of coexistence. This shift suggests that the pedagogical intervention was able to challenge previously naturalized values, fostering the emergence of critical awareness—an aspect emphasized by educational approaches focused on socio-emotional development (Durlak et al., 2011).

Figure 3 deepens the understanding of bullying by highlighting its repetitive dimension. Offensive statements are repeated across different panels, reinforcing the systematic nature of aggression, a central element in the definition of the

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phenomenon (Olweus, 1993). Moreover, the absence of intervention by other characters suggests the normalization of such practices within the school routine.

Figure 3: Comic strip “Repetition and normalization of violence.”



Source: Created by the students (2026).

This aspect is widely discussed in the literature through the concept of the “culture of silence” or “normalization of violence,” in which aggressive behaviors become tolerated or ignored (SALMIVALLI, 2014). The omission of bystanders plays a crucial role in the maintenance of bullying, as it contributes to the symbolic legitimation of the aggressor and the isolation of the victim. Thus, the comic strip reveals an understanding, albeit implicit, of the collective dynamics that sustain the phenomenon, indicating the need for interventions that engage the entire school community.

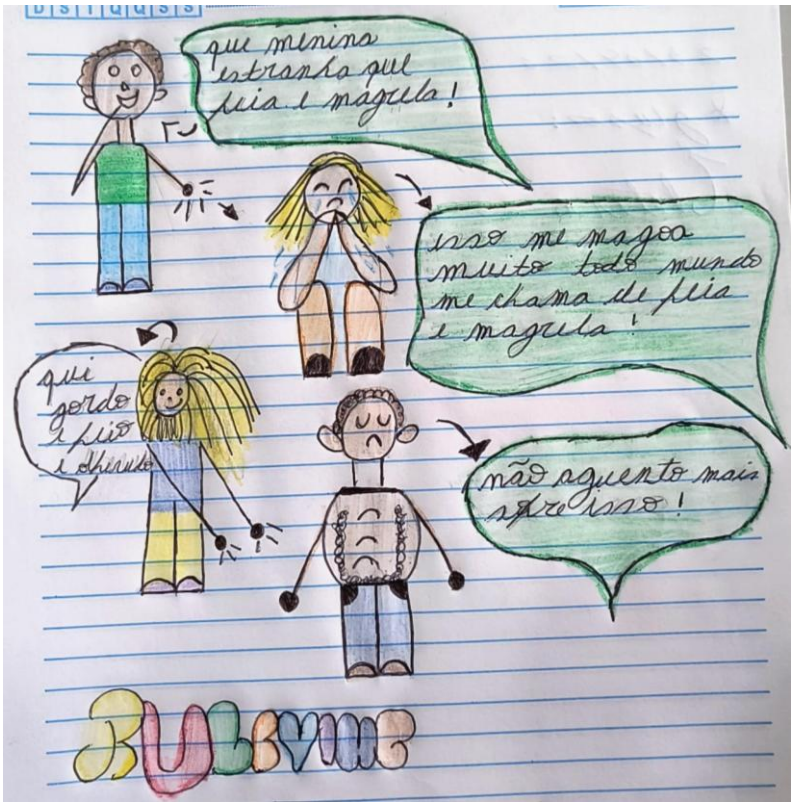
In Figure 4, there is an explicit representation of the victim’s psychological suffering, with expressions of sadness, crying, and exhaustion (“this hurts me,” “I can’t take it anymore”). This affective dimension is central in contemporary

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Pages: 1-22

literature, which has consistently demonstrated the association between bullying and mental health problems, including anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation (MODECKI et al., 2014).

Figure 4: Comic strip “Emotional impacts of bullying”.



Source: Created by the students (2026).

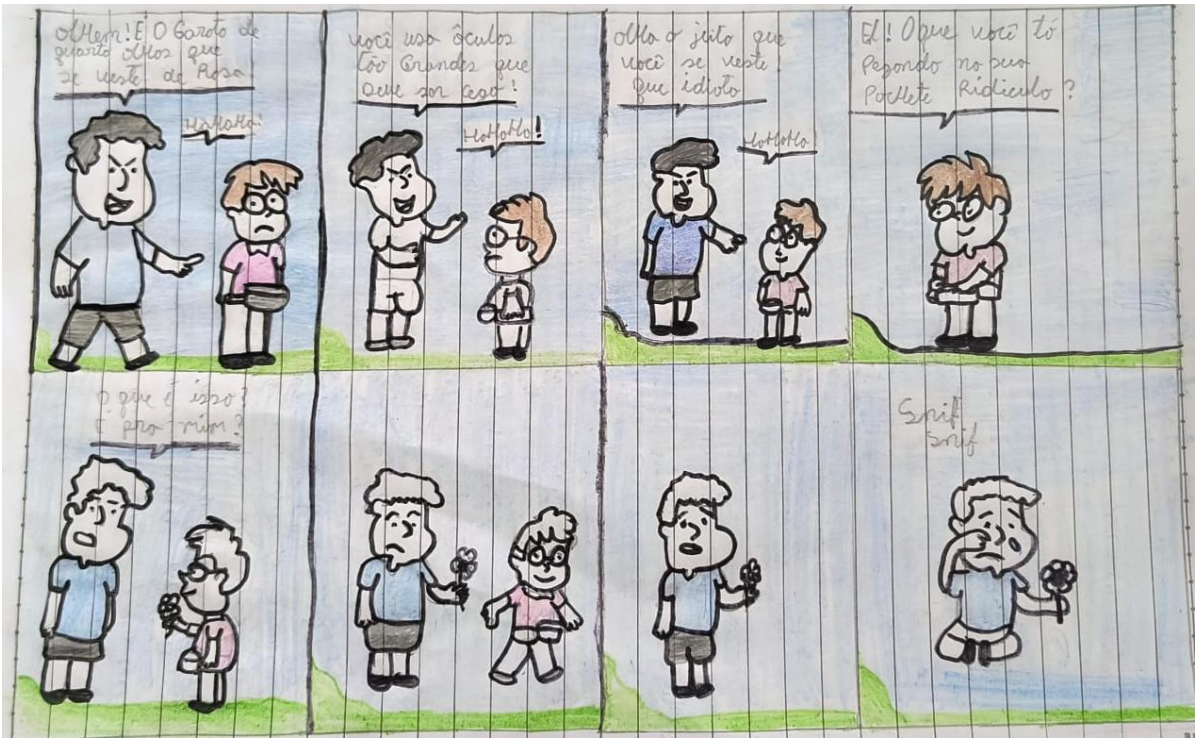
What stands out in the students’ production is their ability to represent not only the aggressive act, but also its subjective consequences, suggesting a high level of empathy and emotional understanding. This is particularly relevant from a pedagogical perspective, as it indicates that expressive activities, such as the production of comic strips, can foster processes of identification and awareness, which are fundamental for building a culture of respect.

Finally, Figure 5 presents a significant narrative shift by introducing the possibility of repairing relationships. After episodes of ridicule, the aggressor shows remorse and seeks to reconcile with the victim through a symbolic gesture (offering a flower).

REMUNOM
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DOI: 10.66104/qevve380
Pages: 1-22

Figure 5: Comic strip “Reconciliation and empathy as a strategy for addressing conflict”.



Source: Created by the students (2026).

This representation aligns with contemporary approaches such as restorative justice, which proposes conflict resolution through dialogue, accountability, and reparation of harm (MORRISON, 2007). The presence of this element in the comic strips indicates that students not only recognize the problem but are also able to develop ethical alternatives for overcoming it, reinforcing the effectiveness of the pedagogical intervention.

Across the productions, it is evident that bullying is understood by students as a relational phenomenon, sustained by social interactions and implicit group norms. This perception is consistent with the ecological model of human development proposed by Urie Bronfenbrenner, which highlights the influence of different social contexts on behavior formation (BRONFENBRENNER, 1996). In this sense, the comic strips reflect not only individual experiences but also the school culture in which the students are embedded.

Another relevant aspect concerns the pedagogical potential of the language

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Pages: 1-22

used. Comic strips, by integrating visual and textual elements, allow the expression of complex content in an accessible and meaningful way. As noted by RAMOS (2012), comics constitute a multimodal language that fosters engagement and meaning-making, being especially effective in educational contexts. In this study, this methodological choice proved appropriate, as it enabled students to externalize perceptions, emotions, and values related to bullying in a creative and reflective manner.

Finally, the results indicate that the pedagogical intervention points to the possibility of expanding students' critical awareness of bullying, promoting not only the recognition of the problem but also the development of coping strategies based on respect, empathy, and dialogue. These findings corroborate the literature that emphasizes the importance of continuous, participatory, and context-sensitive educational approaches in the prevention of school violence (GAFFNEY; TTOFI; FARRINGTON, 2021). In contexts marked by social vulnerability, such as the school investigated, such practices become even more relevant, as they enable the construction of safer, more inclusive, and socially committed educational spaces.

It is also important to highlight that, in this analyzed context, the AEE plays a strategic role not only in supporting students targeted by special education, but also in promoting inclusive practices and mediating school relationships, especially in contexts marked by social vulnerability. By working to identify barriers to learning and participation, the AEE contributes to recognizing situations of exclusion, stigmatization, and silencing that are often intertwined with bullying dynamics. In this sense, its work can foster the construction of more welcoming environments by promoting qualified listening, differentiated pedagogical interventions, and collective awareness-raising strategies. Moreover, the AEE can function as a privileged space for articulation between teachers, school management, and students, strengthening preventive and restorative actions aimed at school coexistence. The data from this study suggest that the participation of AEE teachers in the formative activity contributed to broadening students' reflective repertoire and to problematizing bullying as a relational phenomenon, indicating the potential of this service in building more inclusive school cultures that are less tolerant of violence.

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5. Conclusion.

The present study aimed to analyze a pedagogical practice focused on raising awareness and addressing bullying, developed in a public school in northern Rio Grande do Sul, located in a context of high social vulnerability and recurrent situations of violence. Through the articulation between theoretical framework and empirical analysis of students' productions (comic strips), it was possible to demonstrate that bullying constitutes a complex, relational phenomenon deeply embedded in social and cultural dynamics that structure the school environment.

The results indicate that students show evidence of conceptual understanding regarding the multiple forms of bullying manifestation, especially in its verbal, psychological, and symbolic dimensions. The analyzed comic strips suggest recognition of aspects such as the recurrence of aggression, power asymmetry, and emotional impacts on victims, in line with the literature in the field (DAN OLWEUS, 1993; GAFFNEY; TTOFI; FARRINGTON, 2021). In addition, there are indications of understanding of contemporary dynamics of the phenomenon, including its continuity in digital environments, as discussed in studies on cyberbullying (PATCHIN; HINDUJA, 2020).

Regarding attitudinal dimensions, the students' productions present signs of awareness, expressed in the appreciation of principles such as empathy, respect, and dialogue, as well as in the elaboration of endings that point toward forms of mediation and conflict resolution, approaching perspectives such as restorative justice (MORRISON, 2007). Such elements suggest the appropriation, at a discursive level, of values mobilized in the pedagogical intervention.

However, it is necessary to emphasize that the analyzed data do not allow for the assertion of sustained behavioral changes or transformations in the school climate. The production of comic strips, although relevant as a pedagogical and analytical device, constitutes a punctual and situated snapshot, and is not sufficient, on its own, to demonstrate lasting changes in students' interactions and practices. In this sense, the findings should be understood as indicators of initial

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processes of reflection and awareness, rather than evidence of consolidated behavioral effectiveness.

From a pedagogical standpoint, the use of comic strips proved to be a powerful strategy for fostering the expression of experiences, emotions, and perceptions, contributing to student engagement and to the problematization of sensitive topics, as pointed out by Paulo Ramos (2012). Nevertheless, addressing bullying requires continuous, systematic, and articulated actions involving different members of the school community and broader institutional policies (UNESCO, 2019; GAFFNEY; TTOFI; FARRINGTON, 2021).

Additionally, considering the specific context of the investigated school, marked by high levels of violence, it is reinforced that bullying cannot be analyzed in isolation, but must be understood in articulation with broader structural conditions, such as social inequalities, territorial vulnerabilities, and weakened protection networks.

Finally, it is concluded that the school plays a relevant role in promoting spaces for reflection and problematization of violence, especially through participatory and context-sensitive pedagogical practices. The results of this study point to the potential of such practices in fostering critical understandings and student awareness, while also highlighting the need for future research with longitudinal designs and multiple data sources capable of more consistently assessing possible impacts at behavioral and institutional levels.

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