


PREVENTION AND EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTION ON BULLYING: PHYSICAL EDUCATION AS AN OPPORTUNITY

PREVENÇÃO E INTERVENÇÃO EDUCATIVA SOBRE O BULLYING: A EDUCAÇÃO FÍSICA COMO UMA OPORTUNIDADE 

PREVENCIÓN E INTERVENCIÓN EDUCATIVA SOBRE EL ACOSO ESCOLAR: LA EDUCACIÓN FÍSICA COMO OPORTUNIDAD 

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Abstract: Bullying is a social problem characterized by intentional aggression over time, usually in school contexts and in cyberspace (cyberbullying). There has been growing interest in preventing that phenomenon to reduce its adverse effects. Different studies and reports suggest that Physical Education may be a setting of interest to promote attitudes and behaviors against bullying. This work examines the state of the debate in this area through scientific literature. Based on the analysis of the evidence, we conclude by making recommendations regarding strategies and skills that should be included in Physical Education curricula to prevent bullying and cyberbullying. Among those most widely used, we highlight cooperative methodologies, a teaching attitude that promotes a motivational climate focused on the task, and curricular integration of teaching resources that address skills and protective factors.

Keywords: Bullying. Physical education. Motor Activity. Primary Prevention.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Research on bullying, which began in the late 1970s, has been increasing (ZYCH; ORTEGA-RUIZ; DEL REY, 2015). This social problem involves violence among schoolchildren with specific characteristics: intention to cause harm, repetition, and imbalance of power between those who attack and those who are attacked (SMITH; PEPLER; RIGBY, 2004). Likewise, this phenomenon of interpersonal violence among schoolchildren is also characterized by moral transgression: Both the aggressor and direct observers of the phenomenon recognize it as immoral and unjust behavior (ORTEGA-RUIZ; DEL REY; CASAS, 2016). This is a type of interpersonal violence between equals that emerges and is maintained within the group, where the aggressor performs a negative action with the intention of harming, exercising his physical, psychological or social power and finding the necessary support for it, while the victim is isolated and defenseless in the face of a situation that is repeated over time and is maintained under the silence of the spectators (OLWEUS, 1999). Victims of bullying can be subdued by one aggressor or by several and feel that they have fewer resources to get out of situations and more difficulties to defend themselves (MARTÍNEZ- VILCHIS *et al.*, 2015; OLWEUS, 2006). These situations often occur at school (MAYER; FURLONG, 2010). Physical activities and/or school sports are contexts in which bullying can be generated and developed (O'CONNOR; GRABER, 2014). Different epidemiological data indicate that 30% of schoolchildren are occasionally affected by this phenomenon (MODECKI *et al.*, 2014), while 10% are frequently and severely affected (HYMEL; SWEARER, 2015). These percentages are increased to 50-60% in less severe cases and to 25-30% in more severe cases depending on the criteria in the definition, the assessment instruments or the types of analysis (ZYCH; ORTEGA-RUIZ; MARÍN-LÓPEZ, 2016). However, prevalence rates in studies remain constant over the years and there is a notable increase in studies addressing cyberbullying (ZYCH *et al.*, 2020; ZYCH; BALDRY; FARRINGTON, 2018). Smith *et al.* (2008) define cyberbullying as an intentional aggression, by a group or an individual, using electronic forms of contact, repeatedly, to a victim who cannot easily defend herself. Cyberbullying shares the three defining characteristics of traditional bullying—intentionality, repetition and imbalance of power—and by its digital nature, includes novel characteristics like the possible anonymity of the aggressor, and advertising, as digital devices sometimes reproduce the offence or aggression out of the author's control (SLONJE; SMITH; FRISÉN, 2013). These violent phenomena have multiple harmful effects on victims, aggressors, and bystanders. From the victims' point of view, suffering from bullying can damage psychological well-being (MAYER; FURLONG, 2010), provide the appearance of psychosomatic disorders (SÁNCHEZ; ORTEGA; MENESINI, 2012), become a risk factor for school absenteeism and truancy (KOCHENDERFER-LADD, 2004), damage academic performance (GLEW *et al.*, 2005), decrease feelings of attachment to school (VAILLANCOURT *et al.*, 2013), promote social exclusion (RODRÍGUEZ-HIDALGO; ORTEGA-RUIZ; ZYCH, 2014), and increase suicidal ideation and attempts (VAN GEEL; VEDDER; TANILON, 2014).

Some studies reveal different typical psychosocial and demographic characteristics in each of the roles involved in bullying (CEREZO *et al.*, 2015).

Thus, victims tend to show low levels of social skills—mainly assertiveness—and acceptance and popularity among their schoolmates (FOX; BOULTON, 2005; SENTSE; KRETSCHMER; SALMIVALLI, 2015). From an emotional point of view, victims are described as having certain difficulties in recognizing, expressing, and understanding emotions, while aggressors seem to have problems linked to emotional regulation (ELIPE *et al.*, 2012). Aggressors do not usually show deficits in social skills and enjoy popularity status among their peers, possibly because their aggressive and overbearing behavior patterns help them to achieve or maintain that social position (BERGER; CARAVITA, 2016). Schoolchildren in mixed aggressor-victim roles often exhibit ambivalent behavior. However, victimized aggressors show worse social and emotional skills (CEREZO *et al.*, 2015).

The school is the social environment where the most interpersonal relationships between equals are established and of the greatest depth. Different investigations have highlighted the relevance of these school relationships, suggesting that positive links not only benefit coexistence and conflict resolution, but also reduce the risk of phenomena such as bullying and cyberbullying (DAY *et al.*, 2013).

As bullying has become a topic of public interest and considerable media attention, there has been an increase in concern and research efforts, reflected in a growing number of investigations that seek to assess the impact of interventions aimed at reducing it (VREEMAN; CARROLL, 2007).

The following work aims to review the scientific literature on the prevention of bullying and cyberbullying through programs in the physical education (PE) classroom and its relationship with the treatment of physical activity. It analyzes research published both in PE classes and in other subjects; the occurrence of bullying in PE and the convenience of the use of PE as a subject that can contribute to the prevention of bullying and cyberbullying at school; and it concludes with a series of strategies and skills that have been shown to be helpful for use in the classroom. Thus, throughout the review we try to highlight and synthesize the practical implications for physical education teachers and professionals related to sports activity.

2 EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTION AGAINST BULLYING

Most studies on educational interventions against bullying agree that it is very common for schools to react late, in an ineffective way, or not to develop educational and/or therapeutic actions for restitution (CEREZO-RAMÍREZ; SÁNCHEZ-LACASA, 2013; ROMERA-FÉLIX *et al.*, 2017).

It is usual educational bullying-prevention programs to integrate primary and secondary prevention (WOLFE, 2006). On the one hand, primary prevention promotes attitudes and behaviors that favor coexistence from the moment that interpersonal relationships between schoolchildren begin. On the other hand, secondary prevention is aimed at controlling existing relational violence between aggressors and victims and trying to establish more adaptive and prosocial responses and behaviors (CEREZO-RAMÍREZ; SÁNCHEZ-LACASA, 2013).

The review of the scientific literature on prevention programs shows that it is feasible to influence, through professional intervention, the prevention of this social problem as well as the reduction of bullying and victimization. Goodman, Medaris, Verity, and Hott (2013) found that a large majority of the programs analyzed were effective. For their part, Evans, Fraser, and Cotter (2014), after conducting a meta-analysis, noted that about 55% of the programs analyzed showed positive effects in reducing the perpetration of bullying, and about 70% of the programs decreased victimization. Similarly, Zych *et al.* (2015) reached a conclusion about the effectiveness of intervention programs, although the impact of these programs is small, leaving room for improvement. This is mainly due to the complexity and dynamism of the process influenced by the context and the individual, which makes it difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of the programs (MENESINI, 2019), considering that gender is usually an important moderator in the effect of the intervention programmed (NOCENTINI; MENESINI; PLUESS, 2018).

Research on bullying reports significant data about a set of protective factors that are mainly divided into two types: personal or individual and contextual. In the first place, personal or individual ones, include those social or emotional competences or skills that have been linked to the prevention of bullying.

Bullying-prevention programs focused on the classroom context are intended to stimulate and develop various types of skills (CANTONE *et al.*, 2015; EVANS; FRASER; COTTER, 2014). Individual factors that programs have sought to enhance in schoolchildren include self-esteem (BERRY; HUNT, 2009), self-knowledge (LEWIS *et al.*, 2013), self-efficacy (WILLIFORD *et al.*, 2012), coping resources (SALMIVALLI, 2010), and school well-being (KÄRNÄ *et al.*, 2011).

Over the last decade, prevention programs globally have been including empathy as a core competency for prevention. For example, the “Empathy Training Program” (ŞAHIN, 2012) develops educational work on empathy and emotions through intervention in ten sessions. The “Friendly Schools” program (CROSS *et al.*, 2012) tries to promote prosocial skills, conflict resolution, and empathy. The “Steps to Respect” program (BROWN *et al.*, 2011) seeks to improve positive peer relationships, emotion management and regulation, recognition, rejection and reporting of bullying, assertiveness and empathy. The Finnish program “KiVa,” one of the most popular and extended of the last decade, also works the empathy towards the victims (SALMIVALLI, 2010; WILLIFORD *et al.*, 2012). Joronen, Konu, Rankin, and Åstedt-Kurki (2012) worked on empathy and social competence and the appreciation of emotions through the technique of drama, based on themes of friendship, loss of a friend, bullying, support of the harassed classmate, tolerance and child abuse.

Assertiveness is also another of the competencies that in the last decade preventive programs have tried to stimulate and develop (BROWN *et al.*, 2011) example through student assistants who are trained to give support, listen, channel emotions and interpret possible solutions among others (MARTÍN-CRIADO; CASAS, 2019).

School-based cyberbullying prevention programs, as a phenomenon linked and related to bullying, also tend to include the promotion of the skills described above

as central to prevention programs. In a recent review, Hutson, Kelly, and Militello (2018) emphasize that cyberbullying prevention programs are oriented to promote empathy, collaborative work, social skills, and self-efficacy.

Second, the research refers to contextual factors, linked to the dynamics of schools and classrooms, which have also been shown to be protective against bullying, among them, respect for diversity and teacher support (GAGE; PRYKANOWSKI; LARSON, 2014); as well as positive climate and perception of security (BOSWORTH; JUDKINS, 2014).

Cooperative work is fundamental to improving the classroom climate and the awareness of belonging to the class group (CROSS *et al.*, 2012), which is why many prevention programs incorporate it as an essential element. For example, the “KiVa” program integrates group work as a core element (WILLIFORD *et al.*, 2012). Or the use of cooperative and conflict-mediation methodologies to improve coexistence (ORTEGA-RUIZ; CÓRDOBA ALCAIDE, 2017). Polo *et al.* (2017) carried out an educational intervention process based on cooperative learning in the classroom during four months with fifth- and sixth-grade primary education students (10–12 years old). The “Jigsaw” technique was used. In this technique, the learning topic is divided into as many parts or fragments as the team members have. The methodology in cooperative learning was effective in its intervention on aggressors and victims, as well as on bystanders. There was a reduction in direct verbal and physical aggression, indirect physical aggression, and social exclusion typical of the dynamic of bullying (POLO *et al.*, 2017).

3 PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND BULLYING

The review of the existing literature relating to bullying and PE shows that most research focuses on the study of this aggressive phenomenon in the specific context of PE classes. Thus, Correa *et al.* (2018) found that physical and verbal aggressions were frequent in classes. Gano-Overway (2013) observed in students aged 10 to 15 years old that 28% admitted to having been bullied at least once during their PE class and that 39% admitted to having been bullied at other times and in other school settings. Martínez-Baena and Faus-Boscá's (2018) review has highlighted four lines of study in this area: the characterization of bullying in PE; predictors of bullying in PE; classroom climate and bullying in PE; and the perception of members of the educational community regarding bullying in PE. The literature review also shows other lines of research on bullying in PE, such as those focused on identifying these situations of violence especially related to: gender discrimination (CARNEY; MERRELL, 2001; COCKBURN; CLARKE, 2002; HURLEY; MANDINGO, 2010); dissatisfaction with your own body (EISENBERG; NEUMARK-SZTAINER; STORY, 2003; KUMPULAINEN *et al.*, 1998); with overweight being the most important factor (PETERSON; PUHL; LUEDICKE, 2012); with the perception of low physical competence (BEJEROT *et al.*, 2013; BEJEROT; EDGAR; HUMBLE, 2011; HURLEY; MANDINGO, 2010; LUKE; SINCLAIR, 1991).

In accordance with the division of protective factors determined in bullying studies, below we will carry out an analysis of studies related to bullying and physical

education organized according to personal or contextual factors (ORTEGA-RUIZ; CÓRDOBA-ALCAIDE; BENÍTEZ-SILLERO, 2020).

3.1 PERSONAL FACTORS

Victimization among peers during the practice of sports at school appears to be a predictor of low enjoyment of physical activity (SCARPA *et al.*, 2012). On the other hand, obesity and even clothing seem to be important factors in this victimization among equals, making it difficult to either denounce or ask for help from adults to defend among peers and to generate feelings of insecurity in the spaces where PE takes place (O'CONNOR; GRABER, 2014). Baranov & Rozhina (2017) state that developing a culture of developed physical activity provides an efficient means of preventing cyberbullying by increasing the stress tolerance resources of the adolescent in the specific personality and activity domains. These researchers found that adolescent athletes, compared to their nontraining and nonsporting peers, displayed more constructive and adaptive self-regulation and stress-management strategies and were less vulnerable to cyberbullying. Ornelas and Oliveira (2013) found fewer students victimized by bullying among young people who practice federated sports, especially team sports and combat sports, but the same was not true of school sportsmen. Along the same lines, Morris (2008) showed that boys and girls who practiced extracurricular sports activities were less victimized than those who practiced academically oriented activities not related to sports. This may be due to a variety of specific psychological variables stimulated by sport that would increase their stress tolerance, self-control, confidence, emotional balance, and ability to control interpersonal relationships fostered by sport-specific interactions with peers under the extreme competitive conditions of team sports (BARANOV; ROZHINA, 2017).

In contrast, Méndez, Ruiz-Esteban, and Ortega, 2019 found that adolescents who engaged in more physical activity showed greater aggression and similar victimization than those who engaged in less physical activity. Taking into account the type of sports activities practiced, Medina and Reverte (2019) found a higher rate of victimization in boys who practiced more competitive modalities such as football and athletics, compared to others such as dance, martial arts, or popular games, postulating that it could be due to competitiveness. For authors such as Mora, Cruz, and Sousa, (2013), this competitiveness should be treated in such a way as to produce a learning of rules and to promote self-regulation and self-control by individuals, especially through referents or through integration situations (TOMÁS; VALDIVIA; CASTRO, 2009). In turn, it is recommended to promote strategies that favor sports adherence in schoolchildren in less competitive environments and more focused on sports education.

It is therefore necessary to raise awareness among PE teachers of the appropriate strategies and behaviors to develop to combat bullying in the classroom and prevent it through a well-planned and well-argued intervention. Previous research has shown that PE teachers had little knowledge of anti-bullying measures at school and adopted various strategies to deal with bullying, including verbal criticism and avoidance of the situation (O'CONNOR; GRABER, 2014). Recognizing the role of

PE teachers in creating an inclusive and supportive environment for all students is the first step in addressing bullying behavior (FULLER; GULBRANDSON; HERMAN-UKASICK, 2013).

Gråstén and Yli-Piipari (2019), after an intervention program, increased the time and intensity devoted to physical activity in the school, increasing a 30-minute break where students could practice sports and physical training during the five days of the week. Among the benefits obtained, the teachers highlighted that violence among boys decreased, and bullying was reduced.

As it has been exposed, physical education can make certain interpersonal conflicts visible and favor bullying situations. However, there are also some aspects that make this subject an interesting scenario for prevention. First PE is highly valued by students in basic training (FERNÁNDEZ-VILLARINO *et al.*, 2017). The role of the PE teachers is also noteworthy for its power to influence the personal experience and attitudes of their students, often being considered by students as a model to follow for the promotion of supportive relationships among peers (GANO-OVERWAY, 2013; GRÅSTÉN; YLI-PIIPARI, 2019; MIERZWINSKI; COCK; VELIJA, 2019). This need for improved training, due to the inability to detect bullying problems, occurs not only in schools, but also among family members and sports coaches (PRAT GRAU *et al.*, 2020).

3.2 CONTEXTUAL FACTORS

In relation to the prevention of bullying, a teaching attitude focused on competition—which promotes comparison between equals, victory at any price (over companionship), and unequal recognition—is likely to promote demotivation profiles in students and not be a contributing factor to the improvement of coexistence in general. However, a teaching attitude that fosters a task-focused motivational climate—one that prioritizes personal improvement, progress, and cooperation—will facilitate the generation of optimal psychological states that are motivating and conducive to positive coexistence (CABELLO; MOYANO; TABERNERO, 2018). Thus, teachers can play an active role in modulating this motivational climate, something that can undoubtedly have several effects on variables that contribute to the prevention of school violence and potential intervention on victims and aggressors. When the atmosphere is cordial in the PE classes, this predicted the improvement of social relations and empathy (GANO-OVERWAY, 2013).

In some way, people in general and students are motivated by the need to show their competence. Furthermore, the perception of self-efficacy and subjective success would depend on the criteria assumed (in this case by the teachers and the group of equals) in relation to what such success consists of in practice. This approach can be useful in applied contexts such as PE, since the adoption of one or another criterion will lead to different affective, cognitive, and behavioral consequences.

In relation to this idea, the concept of motivational climate is of interest, defined by Ames (1995) as the set of signals (implicit and/or explicit) that the participants perceive from the environment and through which they define the keys to success

and failure. In the context of PE, this motivational climate is generated, among others, by parents, coaches, teachers, peers, the media, and social models (e.g., famous athletes), and two types can be distinguished: a task-oriented motivational climate and a competitive motivational climate.

There is also some data on the negative effect of jokes that teachers (especially male teachers) can play on boys with less sporting qualities. This type of behavior, even if not malicious, can make the recipients of such jokes feel bad and be a potential contributing factor to bullying in PE classes (ATKINSON; KEHLER, 2012). However, there is also some evidence that PE teachers may be complicit in the normalization of behaviors generally considered to be bullying, as well as in promoting and engaging in bullying relationships among young people (MIERZWINSKI; COCK; VELIJA, 2019). For example, O'Connor and Graber (2014) found that PE teachers made a climate of bullying commonplace by, among other things, promoting aggression and violence through the implementation of inappropriate curriculum choices. Some teachers even encouraged ridicule of peers through sarcastic comments or mocking demonstrations of poor skills.

Gano-Overway (2013) talks about the caring environment of the teacher in the classroom as an important aspect of improving prosocial behavior and an influential factor in bullying. (FRY; GANO-OVERWAY, 2010) describe the caring environment as a “general context characterized by listening, acceptance, attention, motivational displacement (honoring interests, supporting, and helping to achieve goals, empowerment), as well as respect (trust, sensitivity). Empathy is fundamental to its development, as it is a key mechanism in the affective climate and influences prosocial behavior. Students perceived that when the class climate was more affectionate, they were less likely to engage in antisocial behavior, including bullying, and were more likely to engage in prosocial behavior.

Oliveira *et al.* (2017), after applying a three-month intervention program of cooperative games in voluntary PE classes, found a decrease in episodes of physical and verbal violence in subsequent classes. The performance of cooperative physical activity can involve subjects not only in the achievement of motor goals, but also affective and social goals, which results in improvements in physical self-concept (NAVARRO-PATON; REGO FERREIRA; GARCÍA GARCÍA, 2018), prosocial and assertive behaviors (GARAIGORDOBIL *et al.*, 2009), and may tend to reduce victimization in people (Medina (MEDINA; REVERTE, 2019).

Twemlow, Fonagy, and Sacco (2005) used a combination of role-playing, relaxation, and defensive martial arts techniques with the PE program “the gentle warrior” within the intervention program “The Peaceful School Experiment.” The approach helped children protect themselves and others by using nonaggressive cognitive and physical strategies and learning self-control, respect, and helping others. Coates and Vickerman (2010) developed an inclusive PE program avoiding discrimination and getting children with special educational needs to show fewer bullying situations in those classes.

Although the published studies on intervention programs in PE to prevent and improve bullying situations have not been numerous, some specific recommendations

have been described to establish working strategies in PE for the prevention of bullying (FULLER *et al.*, 2013; GIBBONE; MANSON, 2010; HAND, 2016; WENOS, TRICK; WILLIAMS, 2014). For example, to improve the motivational climate in the PE classroom, some options are suggested in the measures proposed by Mora *et al.* (2013) that coincide with those proposed in the different bullying-prevention programs, such as: setting up task-oriented challenges; working in a cooperative way among students; promoting interactivity among peers; and creating heterogeneous groups in the activities proposed.

Recently, Calmaestra *et al.* (2019) developed the program “Against the Bullying,” of the Barça Foundation. This program is specially aimed at schoolchildren between six and 12 years old (primary education), and one of its characteristics is the inclusion of different didactic units of PE specifically oriented to the prevention of bullying and cyberbullying. According to the preliminary results, this program has widely evidenced its effectiveness for the prevention of bullying and cyberbullying in the centers where it has been applied. In line with specific interventions considering the Physical Education curriculum, Benitez-Sillero *et al.* (2020) represent one of the first intervention programs carried out exclusively in relation to the physical education subject to prevent school bullying, an intervention program to prevent bullying in adolescents in physical education classes (PREBULLPE). The implementation of a specific intervention to prevent bullying inserted into the physical education curriculum seems to have decreased bullying and cyberbullying victimization. This program was developed during six sessions of physical education class lasting 1 hour each and the psychosocial contents developed were as follows: knowledge of bullying, the roles of victim and aggressor, knowledge and expression of basic emotions, importance of the social group, collaborative work, self-esteem, empathy, self-control, resilience and discrimination.

In short, PE is a school subject designed to help students develop the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to participate in an active and healthy life.” (HICKSON; FISHBURNE, 2005). For Pérez-Soto and García-Canto (2013), PE due to its intrinsic characteristics, can allow the development and improvement of school coexistence thanks to the continuous exposure of students to situations where they must regulate their behavior and solve problems by adjusting to external rules. Therefore, this subject is a privileged context to prevent and intervene in bullying.

4 CONCLUSION: STRATEGIES AND COMPETENCIES TO PREVENT BULLYING IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The prevention of bullying and cyberbullying is one of the major challenges facing society in general and the education system. In the present work, a review of the scientific literature on the relationship between bullying and PE has been carried out, complementing the analysis of the relationship with cyberbullying.

As argued, there are numerous prevention and intervention programs on bullying and cyberbullying that have obtained satisfactory results such as the “Empathy Training Program” (ŞAHİN, 2012), “Friendly Schools” (CROSS *et al.*, 2012), “Steps to

Respect” (BROWN *et al.*, 2011) the Finnish “KiVa,” (SALMIVALLI, 2010; WILLIFORD *et al.*, 2012), although few of them have explicitly included PE as a potential resource. After the review, taking into account the characteristics of the area of PE, we consider that it is essential to integrate into the curriculum of this area certain actions aimed at improving coexistence and preventing bullying (HOLT/HALE; PERSSE, 2015), while improving personal and social development, one of the key competences in education (FULLER; GULBRANDSON; HERMAN-UKASICK, 2013).

Knowledge of good practices in addressing classroom bullying can help physical educators prevent bullying in schools (HOLT/HALE; PERSSE, 2015). Based on the analysis of the evidence previously exposed, we will conclude by making a series of recommendations regarding strategies and skills that should be included in PE curricula to prevent bullying and cyberbullying.

We will differentiate these recommendations considering personal aspects of both the teacher and the students as well as contemporary issues.

Regarding personal factors, the need for a teaching attitude that promotes a motivational climate focused on the task that prioritizes personal improvement, progress, and cooperation—to facilitate generating optimal psychological states, motivating, and favoring positive coexistence (CABELLO; MOYANO; TABERNERO, 2018). Incorporating teaching units and proposals that include skills that have been shown to be relevant such as self-regulation and self-control, knowledge, expression, and emotional control, as well as avoiding discrimination and developing empathy and prosocial behavior (BROWN *et al.*, 2011; ŞAHIN, 2012; SALMIVALLI, 2010; WILLIFORD *et al.*, 2012) and to promote adherence and interest in the practice of activities in the out-of-school environment, above all educational activities, from the PE classrooms themselves, with the aim of stimulating specific psychological variables that are stimulated by sport and that could be protective factors against bullying and cyberbullying (BARANOV; ROZHINA, 2017).

Regarding contextual factors, among the most widely used, we highlight first the promotion of cooperative methodologies, paying special attention to the constitution of groups in which inequality is avoided (OLIVEIRA *et al.*, 2017; POLO *et al.*, 2017). Not only are motor objectives promoted, but also affective and social ones (NAVARRO-PATON; REGO FERREIRA; GARCÍA GARCÍA, 2018) and prosocial and assertive behaviors (GARAIGORDOBIL *et al.*, 2009).

Also, it is necessary to intervene on specific tasks that allow students, through the very dynamics of PE, to know the problem to be addressed and to promote awareness and appropriate behavior; that is, to train on what bullying and cyberbullying are, what are the roles, their dynamics, and the coping strategies that can be implemented to reduce and eliminate them (CALMAESTRA *et al.*, 2019).

Finally, it is necessary to point out the need to develop a strategic line of training for PE teachers that has been shown to be deficient in terms of knowledge and coping with bullying (MARTINS *et al.*, 2018). In this sense, it would be possible to develop action-research projects in classrooms and continue researching the effectiveness of specific programs to implement, adequate conditions for their implementation, the

role of teachers, and the modulating factors of these processes. Also, another path is needed of specific training in the development of guidelines for teachers based on scientific evidence due to the power of influence of PE teachers on the personal experience and attitudes of their students, considered by the students as a model to follow for the promotion of interpersonal relationships and, in general, of coexistence (GANO-OVERWAY, 2013; GRÁSTÉN; YLI-PIIPARI, 2019; MIERZWINSKI; COCK; VELIJA, 2019).

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Resumo: O *bullying* é um problema social caracterizado pela agressão intencional que ocorre ao longo do tempo, geralmente em contextos escolares e no ciberespaço (*cyberbullying*). Tem havido um interesse crescente na prevenção deste fenômeno, a fim de reduzir os efeitos adversos. Diferentes estudos e relatórios sugerem que o tema da Educação Física pode ser um cenário de interesse para promover atitudes e comportamentos contra o *bullying*. O objetivo deste trabalho é examinar o estado da questão nesta área através de uma revisão da literatura científica. Com base na análise das evidências, concluímos fazendo recomendações sobre estratégias e habilidades que devem ser incluídas nos currículos de Educação Física para prevenir o *bullying* e o *cyberbullying*. Dentre as mais utilizadas, destacamos as metodologias cooperativas, uma atitude de ensino que promove um clima motivacional focado na tarefa e a integração curricular de recursos didáticos que abordam habilidades e fatores de proteção.

Palavras chave: Bullying. Educação Física. Atividade Motora. Prevenção Primária.

Resumen: El acoso escolar es un problema social caracterizado por la agresión intencional que se produce a lo largo del tiempo, generalmente en contextos escolares y en el ciberespacio (ciberacoso). Hay un creciente interés en la prevención de este fenómeno, con el fin de reducir sus efectos adversos. Diferentes estudios e informes sugieren que la Educación Física puede impulsar actitudes y comportamientos contra el acoso escolar. El objetivo de este trabajo es examinar, a través de una revisión de la literatura científica, el estado de este tema en el área. Con base en el análisis de las evidencias, concluimos con recomendaciones sobre estrategias y habilidades que deberían incluirse en los currículos de Educación Física para prevenir el acoso y el ciberacoso. Entre las más utilizadas, destacamos las metodologías cooperativas, una actitud docente que promueve un clima motivacional centrado en la tarea y la integración curricular de recursos didáticos que aborden habilidades y factores de protección.

Palabras clave: Acoso escolar. Educación Física. Actividad Motora. Prevención Primaria.

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CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have declared that this work involves no conflict of interest.

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