# Bullying and Gender Violence at School: Analysis of Teacher Perceptions

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## Abstract

Nowadays gender violence and bullying continue to be considered a matter of great concern to society. This study analyses the teachers' perceptions of these two social problems in the educational context. The interventions that are carried out from the school to prevent and respond to these behaviours are studied. From a methodological point of view, the study responds to the paradigm of qualitative research. We interviewed fifteen teachers of Early Childhood Education, Primary Education and Secondary Education of the Spanish educational system. The information collected indicates that teachers advocate a necessary reinforcement of emotional competencies and social skills from schools. In addition, they express their dissatisfaction due to the insufficient strategies applied from the school to respond to these violent behaviours. These results support any initiative that aims to train teachers to prevent possible cases of bullying or gender violence.

# Bullying y Violencia de Género en la Escuela: Análisis de la Percepción del Profesorado

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**Resumen**

La violencia de género y el acoso escolar continúan siendo consideradas, en nuestros días, un tema de gran preocupación para la sociedad. En este estudio se analizan las percepciones del profesorado ante estos dos problemas sociales en el contexto educativo. Se estudian las actuaciones que se llevan a cabo desde el aula y la escuela para prevenir y responder a estas conductas. Desde un punto metodológico, el estudio responde al paradigma de la investigación cualitativa. Se entrevistaron a quince docentes que impartían clases en las etapas educativas de Educación Infantil, Primaria y Secundaria del sistema educativo español. Respecto a los resultados, el profesorado aboga por una necesaria implementación de la educación emocional y las habilidades sociales desde las escuelas. Además, manifiestan su descontento debido a las insuficientes medidas que se toman desde el contexto educativo para combatir estas conductas de violencia. Estos resultados respaldan toda iniciativa que tenga como propósito la formación de los docentes para prevenir posibles casos de bullying o violencia de género.

**Palabras clave:** problemas sociales, investigación cualitativa, competencias emocionales, conductas de violencia

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Current educational context expects that the different institutions will be strongly aware of the eradication of violence and provide a safe and quality education for all students. This concept is reflected in two of the Sustainable Development Goals established by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. More specifically, this Organization exposes the need to "guarantee an inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all". On the other hand, it refers to the need to "achieve gender equality and empower all women. women and girls" (UNESCO, 2015, p.6). Both objectives are closely linked to the educational context as a transforming agent of society. Their commitment combines the transformation of social reality and the achievement of a less violent society. The educational system tries to instill in the students a series of fundamental values such as teamwork, humility, equality, respect and empathy. In this way, a quality education is favoured in which violent behaviours have no place (Ainscow, 2016; Fermín-González, 2019). The violent behaviours manifested most frequently in the educational sphere take place among the students themselves and they are linked to a type of abuse that can have different origins. However, all of them have consequences that translate into negative effects and disadvantageous situations experienced by the victim (Blake et al., 2016; Gallardo & Gallardo, 2019; Mark et al., 2019). Among these behaviours are, precisely, bullying, as well as gender violence.

In the present, bullying does not have a single definition. It is a social phenomenon that can be detected both inside and outside the educational context. It is carried out by victims, aggressors and bystanders, who in turn end up being victims of bullying and, day after day, it gradually increases (Goldbach et al., 2018; Urra, 2017). Bullying has got numerous definitions from the literature published to date. One of the first definitions of peer abuse was the one provided by Olweus (1998), who described it as intentional, harmful behaviour and constant social rejection and psychological and / or aggressive intimidation of some children towards others who become, generally, in victims. Along the same lines, Stubbs-Richardson et al. (2018) understand bullying as a series of intimidating and / or aggressive acts that originate an imbalance of powers between the aggressor and the harassed.

On the other hand, gender violence is considered a special type of violence whose purpose is to maintain control and subordination of women to men (Namy et al., 2017). It is the most generalized and perhaps least perceived type of violence, due to the patriarchal culture that, for centuries, has recognized it as something "normal" that happens in society. In parallel, Carrington et al. (2020) define this concept as all injustice, offense and violence originated from sexist ideas of legitimacy of male superiority. In this sense, it is more than evident the important role that the school context plays as a space in which the values and attitudes necessary to prevent or eradicate this type of behaviour are promoted and to favour the establishment of a more just and egalitarian society (Gallardo & Gallardo, 2019; Lunneblad, & Johansson, 2019).

Both types of violence (both that which occurs between equals and that which is related to gender inequalities) have been part of the dynamics of society throughout history. They have even been considered as naturalized, silenced and invisible (Ballard & Easteal, 2018; Elipe et al., 2017). Likewise, the nature that characterizes bullying can be very diverse (Hicks et al., 2018). On certain occasions, these actions are conditioned by a lack of knowledge or a lack of commitment that, from educational centres and from society, is shown towards both social problems. They have even been attributed a lack of connotation and it is assumed that they must be resolved by the people directly involved. They have also been considered as "private matters" that have to be solved as a couple. Inevitably, the difficulty of intervening and providing a feasible solution to these problems increases in this way (Cheyne, 2020). This lack of involvement or ignorance may be due to the fact that, until relatively few decades ago, this type of action was considered "natural" and "invisible" for society. As such, they are behaviours present in all social areas, including education. In addition, the acceptance by teachers of some gender-related stereotypes forges the maintenance of social inequalities in the educational environment (Mencía-Ripley, 2020).

Consequently, the need arises to analyse the starting point around this social problem, to know in which areas these situations occur and if there is knowledge about it from schools. All this, with the main purpose of reflecting on which may be the most appropriate educational measures to

respond to them (Gaffney et al., 2018; Hicks et al., 2018). This fact will be a first step in the long and complex task of raising awareness, from the earliest ages, to those people who will be the future of society. Reflecting on the evident gender inequality that still exists today and considering educational institutions as key contexts in achieving social changes (Albayrak, Yildiz, & Erol, 2016), the necessary investigation of the commitment and involvement of teachers is also proposed. of educational centres with regard to gender equality and the eradication of violence between equals.

In light of these premises, this study aims to analyse the opinion and perceptions of teachers in the stages of Early Childhood, Primary and Secondary Education in the face of two of the most common problems that currently have such an impact on society, such as bullying school and gender violence. As a second objective of the investigation, the actions or measures that are carried out from the schools in an attempt to solve them are studied. Therefore, this research responds to the desire to know the current panorama about bullying and gender violence, and the actions that are implemented from the educational context in order to implement the most effective actions to try to respond to them.

## Method

To obtain greater clarity regarding the teachers' perceptions of these two social phenomena, an investigation carried out in public schools in the Autonomous Community of Aragon (Spain) is proposed. The research responds to the qualitative paradigm, which allows observing and interpreting the reality of the phenomenon under study as understood by some of the main protagonists (Delamont, 2012). That is, the teachers of the school context in which the study takes place. Specifically, it is approached from a phenomenological theoretical-methodological perspective. For this, it is necessary to analyse in depth the discourse, perceptions and opinions of the interviewees.

### Participants

The participants were chosen through a theoretical-intentional sampling

process (Malik, 2013) and according to a series of previously defined criteria. In the first place, all the participants had to be teachers of different ages and had to carry out their professional activity in the different stages of the Spanish educational system (Early Years, EY, which ranges from 3 to 6 years old; Primary Education, PE, which ranges from 6 to 12 years old; Secondary Education, SE, which includes ages 12 to 16). Likewise, an attempt was made to guarantee gender equality among the teachers interviewed. However, we assume that there would be a female majority due to the reality of this professional sector. Fulfilling the previous criteria, the sample consisted of fifteen teachers who voluntarily agreed to collaborate by responding to the interview. All of them worked in public schools located in the Autonomous Community of Aragon (Spain). Table 1 shows the sociodemographic characteristics of the sample.

Table 1.
*Sociodemographic Characteristics of the Sample*

| PARTICIPANTS | Gender | Age | Years of experience | Educational stage |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| VARIABLES | | | | |
| *Participant 1* | F | 31-40 | 4 | SE |
| *Participant 2* | F | 31-40 | 4 | SE |
| *Participant 3* | M | 31-40 | 4 | SE |
| *Participant 4* | F | 22-30 | 6 | EY |
| *Participant 5* | F | 22-30 | 5 | EY |
| *Participant 6* | M | 22-30 | 1 | PE |
| *Participant 7* | F | 51-65 | 10 | PE |
| *Participant 8* | M | 31-40 | 5 | SE |
| *Participant 9* | F | 31-40 | 4 | EY |
| *Participant 10* | M | 22-30 | 9 | PE |
| *Participant 11* | F | 51-65 | 6 | SE |
| *Participant 12* | F | 51-65 | 2 | SE |
| *Participant 13* | M | 31-40 | 15 | PE |
| *Participant 14* | F | 22-30 | 5 | PE |
| *Participant 15* | F | 22-30 | 2 | SE |

## Instrument

The semi-structured interview was used as an instrument to collect detailed information from the interviewees. These interviews allow to collect the perceptions and points of view of the individuals on the questions with total freedom (Longhurst, 2003). The interview consisted of a set of nine questions, all of them with an open structure in order to promote opinion and expression. The set of questions was organized according to the two main themes of the present study. Therefore, the constructs of gender violence and school bullying were taken into account (Figure 1).
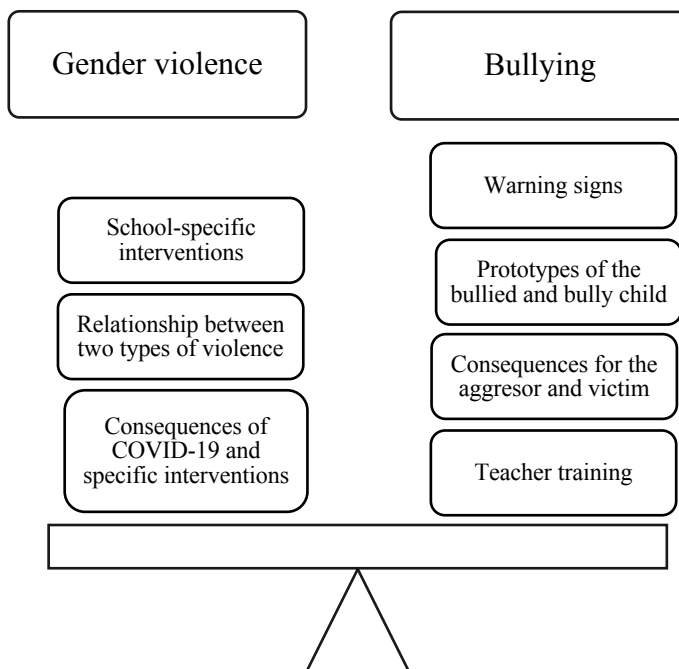
*Figure 1.* Information constructs of the interview

In the first place, regarding bullying, they were asked for information about the warning signs and their opinion regarding the archetypes that predominate among bullied children and bullies, as well as the possible short and long-term consequences. They were also asked to comment on the measures taken at school to eradicate bullying and gender-based violence, and whether there was any relationship between the two. Likewise, their opinion was asked about the position that teachers take regarding bullying and if they have any training to respond to situations in which these forms of violence are involved and prevent them. Finally, they were asked about the consequences that gender violence could have in the current situation of the health crisis caused by COVID-19 and the possible actions that could be taken with children.

**Analysis and Investigation Procedure**

The study was structured around a set of successive phases. In the first place, and after a thorough review of the literature, the information cores were extracted into which the interview questions were grouped. Subsequently, contact was established with the teachers who were to be interviewed. The main criterion was that the interviews be carried out by video call. The average duration of the interviews was between 15-20 minutes. At the beginning, the researcher who conducted the interviews offered the participants various information (reason for the study, approximate duration of the interview, and the anonymity and confidentiality with which the information provided would be treated). Regarding the ethical aspects of the research, the privacy of the research subjects was guaranteed. At the beginning of the interview, informed consent was requested from each participant. Likewise, the current legislation for the storage and codification of information in the custody of the investigation team was taken into account. The information they required regarding this research was provided to the participants at all times and any type of doubt was resolved throughout the process. Regarding the processing of personal data, all the information collected was treated in accordance with the provisions of Organic Law 3/2018. The information from the interviews was coded anonymously so that its authorship could not be identified in the study database. In addition, only the research team could access this information, which was stored in a protected folder on Google Drive. A numerical code was established to be able to identify each of the interviews and thus preserve the privacy of the participants. Third, the information was transcribed. It was decided to audio record all the interviews to later carry out an exhaustive analysis of the information.

Subsequently, the content analysis of the discourse began following the assumptions of Miles and Huberman (1994) and Lowe et al. (2018). Seven categories were predefined during the research design phase. From this category system, the researchers extracted topics by identifying, coding and categorizing the information. This coding was carried out with each of the interviews. After that, with all of them together as a unit (Stake, 2006).

In general, the strategies of qualitative research were adopted in order to

achieve the methodological rigor necessary for the research (Hernández et al., 2014). First, the dependency criterion was taken into account and the theoretical perspective, the design, the sample selection criteria, the methodological strategies, the data collection context and the description of how the analysis of the data was carried out were explained in detail. Secondly, the credibility criterion, since the interviews were transcribed and the triangulation of the researchers was used in order to enrich the information and contrast it (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2007). Furthermore, the transferability criterion was adopted since the process and the research context were described in depth so that the procedure could be replicated in other studies. Finally, the auditability criterion was considered while the decisions made during the research were recorded and all interviews were audio recorded.

## Results

After analysing the information, the results, discussion and conclusions are presented according to the initially proposed objective. The purpose was specified in knowing the opinion of teachers about two of the problems with the most impact today in society, such as bullying and gender violence. In addition, we analysed what actions are carried out from the educational context to give an effective response to these problems. To present the results, each of the previously exposed categories is taken as a starting point: warning signs of bullying, prototypes of the aggressor and bullied child, consequences for the aggressor and for the victim, teacher training, consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, specific actions to prevent gender violence and finally a possible relationship between both problems.

In the first category referring to behaviours that indicate the presence of bullying among students, most of the teachers interviewed agree on a series of warning signs of this phenomenon. Specifically, they have referred to behaviours such as isolation and loneliness of the student during recess, as well as during group work, lack of concentration, refusal to go to school and poor academic performance. As clear examples, the following testimonies stand out:

Participant 5: Isolation and loneliness behaviours of the student are detected in school breaks and group work. This is usually where we can realize that that person is not interacting out of fear or other reasons, one of which may be that the student is being bullied.

Participant 7: Generally, a very striking progressive isolation is observed in recess or in unstructured and group tasks. A lot of sadness, nervousness, irritability, fear and misplacement with respect to the group is often observed. Their absenteeism increases and the academic result tends to decrease.

Participant 11: I think that the clearest signs of bullying are isolation and the fact that they begin to show that they do not want to be in a class group or even refuse to go to school.

Another aspect highlighted by several of the teachers is that there is no prototype to define the bullied child or the aggressor child. On the contrary, certain behavioural characteristics are detected. The bullied child presents a more withdrawn character, with few social skills and with different interests from their peers. The bullying child has a more outgoing personality and is usually the leader of the group. These ideas are reinforced by the testimonies of various participants:

Participant 8: Talking about prototypes is somewhat risky since, after several years of experience, I have been able to verify that there is no single profile. However, it is true that there are behavioural characteristics for both the bullied child and the aggressor. The bullied child usually shows a more withdrawn character in all areas and the aggressor shows the opposite. They are usually children with a strong and extroverted character.

Participant 10: It is not possible to fully determine what the profile of a bullied child or an abusive child is like. But it is true that in most cases the bullied child is more withdrawn and usually lacks social skills and the aggressor is the opposite. The bullying child sometimes turns out to be the leader of the group and someone who seems to have a lot of friends.

Participant 13: I do not think there is a prototype of a bullied child,

since children and adolescents can take different criteria to bully someone, but we could generalize that it is usually with shy, discreet people, newcomers to the school or immigrants. Regarding the aggressor child, I also do not consider that there is a standard, but it is usually the leader of the group or students with difficulties in their social context who want to demonstrate their superiority to other people.

Participant 15: I think it is difficult to establish a specific prototype of a bullied student as well as an aggressor. However, regarding the bullied child, we could speak of the lack of security as a key element. On the other hand, with respect to the aggressor, we could highlight a lack of empathy or the presence of aggressive behaviours in a close context (family).

On the other hand, with regard to the short and long-term consequences, most agree that these are more noticeable and visible to the victim. Feelings such as fear, sadness and low self-esteem may appear in the victim. In relation to the aggressor, the interviewees consider that his behaviour is due to a lack of empathy and control, as well as a low tolerance for frustration and significant difficulties in establishing adequate social relationships with other children. In this sense, the testimonies of several of the participants stand out:

Participant 11: In the short term, the victim confronts the aggressor. He does not understand well what is happening or why and he often defends himself without knowing what he is doing. He tries to avoid conflict and often withdraws from the aggressor. In the long term, the victim usually feels completely helpless. He does not seek help and knows that whatever he does, the situation will not change and he no longer struggles.

Participant 14: The short-term consequences for the victim can be school failure during the course and being totally alone (without any friends) due to the fact that the aggressor is the "leader" and everyone supports him. In the long term, there can be serious psychological consequences that last a lifetime and the child may need treatment as it can cause trauma.

> Participant 15: What happens in the houses of the aggressors? Do the respective parents take action on this matter?

Regarding specific measures to respond to bullying and gender violence, the schools emphasize the importance of promoting emotional education and social skills fundamentally based on empathy and conflict resolution. These teachers have referred to emotional education as a process that occurs throughout life. This allows, precisely, to develop emotional competencies (such as self-esteem or empathy) that are very necessary and that, generally, are absent in those students who manifest violent behaviors. One of the most important problems with bullying is related to a low ability to understand emotions. Students who abuse their peers are unable to understand the emotional consequences this has for their victims. Therefore, the ability to regulate emotions and give an adequate response to complex situations (such as bullying) is an effective tool for the prevention of bullying situations in schools. At this point, it is considered appropriate to highlight the proposals of different participants:

> Participant 4: In my opinion, the most effective interventions for these cases in early childhood education are the development of emotional and social skills through dramatizations and symbolic play, because in this way boys and girls learn in a playful way.

> Participant 9: […] Someone who has experienced this situation can tell you about their experience, both on the one hand and on the other. It may also be interesting for them to listen to the aggressor and tell them how he regrets it and why it should not be done.

In addition to the actions established from the school, the importance of the collaboration of families in the development of these types of competences and in their support is also emphasized. According to these teachers, in any bullying process, families should pay attention to three basic detection indicators: isolation, change of character and visible manifestations of bullying. When these situations are detected, from the family context an emotional congruence must be manifested and empathize with the children. Also, blaming should be avoided and proactive behaviors will be developed. As specified below:

> Participant 3: The most effective action would be the promotion of emotional education by families. In this way the students may never become aggressors. Unfortunately not all families educate their children with these values, hence it is important to highlight the tutorials and dialogues with the students to be able to connect with those who do not have this training from home.

> Participant 6: I believe that there is no one measure more important than another, but that they all come together to eradicate bullying. Therefore, success is achieved with good coordination between all of them. I do believe that individual tutorials with students and families are important. Knowing the student himself and his family context may help us in the prevention of a possible case, although as I said, I believe that success is in coordinating all the measures that are proposed.

On the other hand, and regarding the teachers' perception about the detection of bullying cases, the interviewees (with the exception of one of them) agree on the important role they play in identifying these situations, as well as the little training they receive to detect and prevent it at school. In this sense, it is important to know well the character of the children, to speak and dialogue with them daily and to know their day-to-day functioning dynamics. After that, in the next step, trust is included as one of the best strategies to detect bullying and gender violence. The trust that children have in their parents and their teachers to communicate to them if someone may be suffering a situation of abuse is essential. Several participants express their perception in this regard: Participant 1: "The role of teachers is in many cases crucial and decisive […]". Participant 2: "[…] teachers are not given much (or not at all) training in this regard.". Participant 5: "[…] we did not even receive information on the protocol to follow in these cases". Participant 13: "[…] we don't usually receive training to detect it or propose solutions […]".

Regarding the consequences that gender-based violence could have on younger children during the current crisis situation due to COVID-19, all those interviewed mention that it may have been increased by having to live 24 hours a day with an abuser. As the teachers have highlighted, one of the

possible causes of this increase could be the lack of a gender perspective and the implementation of measures and strategies planned during the COVID-19 pandemic at the global and local level. Also compulsory social isolation, limitations in movement, the suppression of social and family support groups, fear and tension have contributed to this increase in incidence. On the other hand, some of the teachers say that the consequences of such violence would directly affect the mental and emotional state of the children and that they could express emotions such as fear, anxiety and sadness. These results are evidenced in the following testimonies:

> Participant 7: The consequences caused by this COVID-19 crisis in these situations are that boys and girls develop emotions such as fear and sadness. Opportunities for socialization and friendship with other people such as classmates and the teacher have also been reduced.

> Participant 11: […] Unfortunately the families and homes in which acts of gender violence take place are going to be experienced by the youngest children and this will directly affect their mental state.

Regarding the possible actions that could be carried out with the children, the teachers have highlighted the face-to-face tutorials that the classroom tutor does with the class group in order to monitor the situation and raise awareness among all the children. In addition, the teachers comment that the telephone line is an effective instrument to analyse the real climate experienced in the family context. Participant 7 has indicated which is the greatest danger that can affect children especially at an early age: Participant 7: "They internalize violence as normal and tend to repeat it or suffer it."

Finally, teachers have highlighted that there is an intrinsic relationship between these problems: bullying and gender violence. In both cases, a type of abuse is exercised that negatively influences another person regardless of its origin. This abuse can be more pronounced in children who have developed in an unfavourable social and family context. Furthermore, in bullying situations, gender stereotypes are reflected in two different ways. In the first place, there are differences between the bullying carried out by boys and girls. While boys tend to resort more frequently to physical violence, girls generally exercise more verbal and psychological violence. In turn,

bullying behaviors directly related to one's gender are observed. One of the participants considers the following: Participant 12: "In a family context where there is gender violence, it is easier for a student to develop aggressive behaviours as well as a lack of empathy that could lead to a future case of bullying."

In the same way, teachers comment that these are problems that are not ignored by society. However, they require more information and training for society to help prevent, detect and promote more positive relationships. In this way, participant 15 emphasizes that "sexist, racist and xenophobic ideologies emerge every day" that we must all confront to avoid possible types of violence.

## Discussion and Conclusions

The information analysed indicates the teachers interviewed are aware that, currently, there is a need to invest efforts in eradicating violence from schools. Even so, there is still a demand for the need to clearly establish a series of actions and base measures from the schools that are implemented by all members of the educational community.

From a general point of view, the most outstanding results of this study include the current persistence of bullying in our schools and the negative consequences that these situations cause both in the victims and in the school environment in general. However, the teachers in this study have shown that they are capable of recognizing the characteristics that describe both the stalker profile and the victim profile. Despite this, they have concluded by showing the factors that are needed to face this type of situations and eradicate them, teachers need further training both in identifying the problem and in subsequent action measures, as well as including to all educational agents they demand the need to include intervention programs that favor the development of socio-emotional competence in an optimal way and in collaboration with families. This type of measure is considered to be able to reduce or prevent the appearance of this type of action among students.

Returning to the results analysed, all teachers with professional experience agree that there are characteristic warning signs on the part of the

victim that facilitate the detection of bullying at school. These red flags have been well picked up by the theorists working on them. In this sense, Garaigordobil and Oñederra (2010) mention a set of indicators, more or less visible, that show these problematic situations such as low level of emotional intelligence, low self-esteem, discouragement, low tolerance for frustration, low level of performance and low activity.

Regarding the existence of a prototype of a bullied child and an aggressor, the teachers conclude that there is no single prototype that defines them, but there are behavioural characteristics that explain each role. For their part, the study by Urra et al. (2018) also supports particular characteristics such as violence and aggressive patterns. All of them should be addressed and managed from schools through prevention activities, an aspect on which the teachers interviewed here have insisted on several occasions. The non-existence of an exact prototype of a bullied student contrasts with a series of common traits that teachers have mentioned. In general, there are particular characteristics that all of them share and that are translated, for the most part, in a profile of insecure, shy, introverted students or who may manifest some cultural or socioeconomic difference with their peers. All of this coincides with what is stated by Olweus (2013) in relation to the various characteristics or profiles that describe the victim.

Respect to the variable related to short and long-term consequences, the answers offered by the participants agree on the results of the study carried out by Costanza et al. (2017). In it, the authors mention that the impact is always greater on the victim, although it negatively affects all the subjects involved. To do this, it is convenient to differentiate that, at first, this harassment suffered can lead to a deterioration in their academic performance. However, if this subject continues to be the object of his aggressor and these acts persist over time, it can cause serious and permanent psychological problems.

Likewise, the role of teachers has enormous relevance in the detection of cases of bullying or any indication of gender violence (Urra et al., 2018). However, most of the interviewees are dissatisfied due to the few and insufficient measures that are taken from the educational context to resolve this type of situation. They demand the reinforcement of prevention measures, as well as professional training that allows them to detect

situations of harassment or gender violence and intervene effectively in them. We must not forget that the teaching figure is the main responsible for the teaching-learning process. These results coincide with those found in other recent studies (Lester et al., 2017; Urra et al., 2018) in which preventive measures are used as key tools to eradicate all types of violence from educational centres (Albayrak, Yildiz, & Erol, 2016; Hall & Chapman, 2018).

On the other hand, the educational context has the task of implementing learning processes linked to emotional education and social skills. This premise is supported by previous literature (Bisquerra, 2013; Méndez et al., 2019; Leganés-Lavall, 2013; Smith & Low, 2013) as a high degree of emotional competence, as well as the development of empathy skills can help prevent many of the school situations related to bullying and violence (Estévez et al., 2019; Pozas-Rivera et al., 2018; Salavera et al., 2021). In turn, Iñiguez-Berrozpe et al. (2021) highlight the importance of fostering positive relationships between equals as a starting point to promote behaviours that prevent any type of violence, as well as transformation of the society. In this regard, the classroom climate and school coexistence are established as factors that influence the development of positive relationships and attitudes, and civic behaviours within the educational context (Yang et al., 2018).

Another relevant aspect that has been investigated in this study refers to the particular situation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. This exceptional circumstance has led, as the teachers interviewed here have stated, that there has been an increase in these problems (especially in situations of gender violence in homes). This conjecture, which could not be confirmed with the results of this study, is in line with what was found by Cheyne (2020), and Mittal and Singh (2020), who conclude that social isolation has created conditions for violence gender gets worse.

Finally, the study aimed to analyse, from the teachers' point of view, the existing relationships between both social problems. Most of the interviewees agree on highlighting an intrinsic relationship between the two since, regardless of their basic characterization, violence is exerted on another person who is the victim. They consider that they are not phenomena ignored by society but that, nevertheless, more training is required to deal

with them, especially from the educational context.

This study concludes that education professionals are aware of the need to incorporate specific projects or programs that favour the development of emotional competence, as well as the promotion of positive social relationships among all members of the community. These proposals advocate the achievement of a good climate at school and in the classroom that allows an optimal development of students at an academic, social and personal level. All this, with the ultimate aim of responding to the Sustainable Development Goals linked to educational quality and equity, and to achieve a more inclusive society for all. Likewise, teachers would need to receive training that would allow them to prevent, detect and intervene effectively in situations related to harassment or violence. Both claims, training and prevention and intervention programs, stand as the starting point for a transformation of school coexistence with the aim of achieving a favourable and inclusive environment for the entire society.

This research entails, in turn, a series of limitations to be highlighted. The study is subject to the methodological approach used and, therefore, the generalizability of its results is limited. However, it should be noted that the purpose of the case studies is not to generalize but, rather, to inquire from an analytical perspective. The variety of opinions presented serves to understand the current situation in the approach to bullying and gender violence from schools. Simultaneously, they constitute a starting point to continue collaborating and investigating about the educational and social transformation required to reach its end.

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