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Editorial: Towards 2030: Sustainable Development Goal 16: Peace, justice, and strong institutions. An educational perspective

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Editorial on the Research Topic

Towards 2030: Sustainable Development Goal 16: Peace, justice, and strong institutions. An educational perspective

The sixteenth Sustainable Development Goal of the 2030 Agenda points to the need to “promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies.” Some of the most important issues to achieve this goal relate to children, particularly the protection of children and youth and the development of safe, welcoming and non-discriminatory environments. To promote more just, peaceful and inclusive societies, it is important to educate minors in contexts and relationships where they feel safe, secure and respected, and where they are supported by adults to express their potential beyond the limitations or socio-cultural background from which they come. In this regard, school represents a fundamental developmental context for minors and young adults (Baker et al., 2003; Longobardi et al., 2019a; Fabris et al., 2022; Lin et al., 2022). It not only promotes education and skills development, but also plays an important role in preventing and addressing forms of threat and risk of victimization. We know that the problem of violence against children remains a social emergency (Longobardi et al., 2022) and that school is a context in which forms of violence can occur (Longobardi et al., 2019b,c; Badenes-Ribera et al., 2022). Violence against children and youth has short- and long-term effects on individuals’ psychological and social adjustment (Norman et al., 2012; Prino et al., 2019; D’arcy-Bewick et al., 2022), and this can also impact society in terms of costs and the risk of creating less equitable, inclusive, and peaceful societies.

In this Research Topic, two studies have been dedicated to the issue of violence in schools. The first study was conducted in Spain by Pina et al.. The authors used qualitative techniques to increase knowledge about aporophobia and its relationship with school violence. The results show that aporophobic attitudes are related to the use of violence to make oneself feel better, to be perceived as legitimate, and to relate to peers. The authors suggest that children and adolescents who are perceived as “poor” tend to be at greater risk of being bullied at school, and that students who come from families with high socioeconomic status may have a greater propensity to engage in bullying behaviors.

The second study (Ardestani et al.) examines the prevalence of teacher violence in schools in southern Iran, a region that has been little studied in previous literature on school violence. The authors find that, on average, teachers report fewer experiences of violence than students, leading to the consideration that teachers may need to be made more aware of how they interact with students. In addition, the authors found that male, young, single teachers with graduate degrees and less professional experience reported significantly higher levels

of violence than other teachers. In addition, public boys' schools tended to report significantly higher levels of teacher violence. These data are of interest both to the international literature on school violence, which also appears to be influenced by cultural issues (Longobardi et al., 2017), and to administrators and governments who can outline intervention and prevention strategies.

Carmichael-Murphy et al. address the emerging problem of NEETs in a qualitative study. The authors offer a contribution aimed at understanding how adolescent boys who are classified as "at risk" NEET, engage in a school-based intervention to promote work readiness. Through their exploratory study, the authors offer interesting insights into intervening with at-risk boys and suggest that engagement should be viewed as an ecological construct.

Finally, the reform of China's university system is addressed in the study by Peng and Nair. Based on data from a survey of 327 university professors, the authors suggest promoting faculty participation in decision-making and professional growth processes to foster a new system with high non-monetary cost-benefits for professors and increase their behavioral intentions for development and promotion.

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Author contributions

MF wrote the original draft of the editorial. CL supervised the manuscript and together wrote and approved the final version.

Conflict of interest

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