

The psychological impacts of bullying in secondary schools on LGBT+ students

ARTICLE

Wagner Grizortiⁱ 

Unioeste, Faculdade UDC, Foz do Iguaçu, PR, Brasil

Márcia da Luz Lealⁱⁱ 

Unioeste, SEED, Santa Terezinha de Itaipu, PR, Brasil

Thiago Benitezⁱⁱⁱ 

Unioeste, Faculdade UDC, Foz do Iguaçu, PR, Brasil

1

Abstract

This article is a bibliographic research based on four authors that addresses the important theme of the psychological impact of bullying in the high school educational network, with a focus on LGBT+ students. Bullying can trigger a series of adverse psychological effects, including anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, social isolation, suicidal thoughts, and mental health issues. The hostile environment created by discrimination and harassment harms students' emotional well-being, compromising their academic performance. Education about the impact of bullying and the promotion of empathy are essential tools. It is crucial to create an inclusive and respectful school environment that LGBT+ students feel accepted and valued, reducing the risks of discrimination and harassment. This includes training and development for teachers and staff, inclusive policies, and involvement of the school community.

Keywords: School. Violence. Gender. Sexuality.

Os impactos psicológicos do bullying na rede de ensino médio em estudantes LGBT+

Resumo

Este artigo é uma pesquisa bibliográfica baseada em quatro autores que abordam a importância da temática dos impactos psicológicos do *bullying* na rede escolar de ensino médio, com foco nos alunos LGBT+. O *bullying* pode desencadear uma série de efeitos psicológicos adversos, incluindo ansiedade, depressão, baixa autoestima, isolamento social, pensamentos suicidas e problemas de saúde mental. O ambiente hostil criado pela discriminação e assédio prejudica o bem-estar emocional dos alunos, comprometendo seu desempenho escolar. A educação sobre o impacto do *bullying* e a promoção da empatia são ferramentas essenciais. É fundamental criar um ambiente escolar inclusivo e respeitoso, em que os alunos LGBT+ sintam-se aceitos e valorizados, reduzindo os riscos de discriminação e assédio. Isso inclui a capacitação e formação de professores e funcionários, políticas de inclusão e envolvimento da comunidade escolar.

Palavras-chave: Escola. Violência. Gênero. Sexualidade

1 Introduction

2

The choice of the topic of bullying in the school environment is justified by the observation of discrimination and lack of information on the part of the teachers who work in these spaces, often due to a historical and social context marked by colonialism. The lack of knowledge about LGBT issues¹ in teachers' continuing training is notable, resulting in a lack of sensitivity and ability to deal with these topics. In addition, there is a common perception that older teachers working in secondary schools are more resistant to change, especially the introduction of new pedagogical approaches.

This can be a significant obstacle to promoting a school environment that is more inclusive and sensitive to the needs of students, including those from the LGBT+ community. The need to address these issues goes beyond the academic curriculum, as it relates directly to the emotional and social well-being of students. It is therefore crucial that educational institutions invest in training and resources that help teachers acquire the sensitivity and skills needed to create an inclusive and respectful environment for all students, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

This study was structured to collect speeches through bibliographical research and turn their aspirations, preferences, motivations, difficulties and struggles in relation to LGBT bullying into research material. First, we define the objectives that guided the study and then we present the methodological steps applied to qualitatively construct the information provided by the authors listed above. This creates gender diversity and changes inequality and prejudice.

Research carried out in 2017 by UNESCO with gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender adolescents in Brazil showed that 73% suffered bullying at school and 37% were beaten up. The figures were announced at a hearing of the Commission on Human

¹ Currently, the term LGBT is the most widely used, representing lesbian, gay, bisexual, transvestite and transsexual people. The term was approved in Brazil in 2008 at a national conference to debate the human rights and public policies of gays, lesbians, bisexuals, transvestites and transsexuals.

Rights and Participatory Legislation (CDH). The data analysis was carried out between January and March by non-governmental organizations from six Latin American countries: Argentina, Brazil, Peru, Colombia, Uruguay and Chile. The aim was to identify problems faced by LGBT students. The results will help governments take measures to improve school environments and prevent suicide among young people, for example. The Senate of the Republic requested an analysis of data on LGBT bullying in Brazil. 1,016 students aged between 13 and 21 were interviewed. 60% said they felt unsafe at school, 73% said they had been verbally attacked, 48% had heard homophobic comments and 27% said they had been physically attacked and 36% believe that schools are ineffective in preventing aggression.

In addition, the aim of this study is to draw up a complete picture of the bullying phenomenon and its possible psychological impact on the reality of public high schools, especially considering the lack of research on this subject in local realities. It is hoped that the data collected will enable educational institutions to plan interventions to combat all forms of violence, especially bullying, and to treat and understand the psychological effects of bullying.

2. Bullying and its context

The first researcher to associate the word with bullying was Dan Olweus, a professor at the University of Norway, at the end of the 1970s. He researched suicidal tendencies among teenagers and found that the majority of these young people faced some kind of threat and, therefore, bullying is an evil that must be combated. To analyze this trend of violence, the researchers used a questionnaire with students and teachers to understand the different definitions of the phenomenon of bullying in schools and to find out what identifies students as victims of this practice. The results obtained indicate that the victims are weaker than usual, have an atypical appearance and may have special needs (FANTE, 2005).

Fante (2005) defines bullying as any type of behavior that occurs for no apparent reason; it is used by one or more people against another, causes pain or fear and is carried out in an unequal power relationship, as well as aggressive, deliberate and repeated behavior. Therefore, repeated acts and the imbalance of power between the students are essential characteristics that make it possible to intimidate the victim, the lack of reasons justifying the attack, the negative emotions mobilized and the emotional consequences experienced will make it difficult for the victim to defend themselves. An example is the incident that took place in the town of Taiúva, in the city of São Paulo.

In January 2003, in the city of Taiúva, in the interior of São Paulo, a shy 18-year-old, after graduating from high school, shot at 50 people during playtime at the school where he had studied. He shot eight people and then shot himself in the head. The victims survived, but one of them was left paraplegic (FANTE, 2008, p. 20).

According to Rolim (2010), bullying is a distinct and well-defined concept, since it does not resemble other forms of violence. This is justified by the fact that it has its own characteristics, perhaps the most serious of which is the trauma caused to the psyche of its victims and those involved. It also has the property of being recognized in various contexts: in schools, in families, in the armed forces, in the workplace, in old people's homes, in prisons. In short, wherever there are interpersonal relationships, unfortunately, we live in an extremely individualistic and capitalist society, where the human being, for many authors, has ceased to be the neighbor and has become just a means for them to achieve their "happiness", which has as its project, only to gather money and acquire goods (CALHAU, 2010, p. 4).

There is a danger that individualism will start in our own homes, preventing people from realizing the conflicts and transformations they are going through. In addition, it is essential to review domestic models that revolve around ethical parameters and solidarity with this individuality experienced by society, which always seeks to have more at any cost. Adolescents end up assimilating this behavior within

their own families, which in turn is reflected at school, often leading to events such as bullying.

Researcher Cléo Fante was the first to carry out a more systematic study of bullying in Brazil, launching the book "Phenomenon Bullying: how to prevent violence in schools and educate for peace" (2008). After its publication, the author came to be considered a pioneer in the field of bullying in Brazilian education. In 2000, she started the Educate for Peace Program in the São José do Rio Preto region of São Paulo, which lasted until 2003 and involved 2,000 students. She runs CEMEOBES (Centro Multidisciplinar de Estudos e Orientação sobre Bullying Escolar - Multidisciplinary Center for Studies and Guidance on School Bullying), in Brasilia, and promoted the "1st Brazilian Forum on School Bullying" in 2006, initiating and consolidating debates on the issue in Brazil.

Through the "Program to Reduce Aggressive Behavior among Students" in schools in Rio de Janeiro in 2002, ABRAPIA (Brazilian Multiprofessional Association for the Protection of Children and Adolescents), which was founded in 1990 with the aim of defending and promoting the rights of children and adolescents, found that the phenomenon of bullying is present in Brazilian schools and has worrying rates.

Fante (2005) also found that when teenagers are being bullied, they show the following indicators: when they show a lack of desire to go to school; they feel sick when it's time to leave the house; they ask to change schools; they show fear of going to or returning from school and always ask to be picked up; they frequently change the route between home and school; they show poor academic performance; they repeatedly return from school with torn clothes or books; they often come home with unexplained injuries; they become closed and withdrawn people; they seem distressed; anxious, depressed; they show manifestations of low self-esteem; have frequent nightmares, even shouting "help" or "leave me" in their sleep; repeatedly "lose" their belongings, their money; always ask for more money or start taking money from the family; avoid talking about what is happening, or give unconvincing excuses for everything; start showing signs of (diarrhea, vomiting, abdominal pain, asthma,

insomnia and nightmares) and emotional problems (such as sadness, depression) or social problems (such as isolation and non-participation in group activities); attempt or commit suicide.

On deeper reflection, it is clear that bullying is a cruel and silent phenomenon that not only has negative consequences for the school environment, but also because society is nothing more than the result of the attitudes of each of its members. These unstructured relationships in youth, when values and character are being formed, will be reflected harshly throughout these students' lives.

According to studies by Neto (2005), bullying can occur in two ways in particular, direct or indirect: direct when there is an actual attack against someone and in their presence through nicknames, physical aggression, threats, theft, verbal offenses or expressions and gestures that cause discomfort, and indirect when the victim is absent.

For Fante (2008), bullying can be divided into two roles: the bully is when the aggressors are characterized by forcing the victims into social isolation and the bullies, who are characterized when the victim is from outside the relationship, implying that the aggressor's power depends only on the perception of the victim, who seems to be the most intimidated to offer any resistance. This violence can take both psychological and physical forms and most of the time goes unnoticed by parents, teachers and society in general. The victim of bullying can suffer this type of abuse for a long time without anyone realizing what is going on. The aggressor exerts enormous pressure, instilling fear and threatening retaliation, so that the victim remains silent. Parents and teachers often only notice that something serious is going on when they see the damaging effects of this pressure, which manifest themselves in the form of school phobia, poor academic performance and depression,

Repeated abuse can, over time, cause serious damage to the psyche and negatively interfere with the process of cognitive, emotional, sensory and socio-educational development. When attacks are chronic, victims can become aggressors; in extreme cases, they often result in school tragedies, such as Columbine (1999) and

Virginia Tech (2007) in the United States, Taiúva (2003) and Remanso (2004) in Brazil, and Finland (2007) (FANTE, 2008, p. 2).

It is therefore essential to consider that aspects relating to an adolescent's self-esteem contribute to their possible position as victims or aggressors of their peers, and to discern what role the family plays in building this self-esteem and its repercussions in adult life. An important implication of bullying is the possibility of the victim reproducing the abuse they suffer at home or at school on younger or more fragile children.

2.1 bullying in the school environment

Brazil is considered one of the 10 richest countries in the world, but one of the biggest problems is precisely access to education. Data from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE, 2008) show that inequality and schooling differ according to family income. In 2001, it was found that 15 million Brazilians, or 12% of the population, were still illiterate and belonged to the poorest families.

In this sense, the school is now seen as a privileged space for education, which must assume its decisive role of guaranteeing the development of ideas, attitudes and knowledge that will enable the student to be effectively incorporated into the civil world, in the context of freedom of consumption, freedom of choice and participation in political freedom of choice and participation, freedom and responsibility in the sphere of family and public life (GOMES, 2000). In this way, the school, an institution whose main purpose is to train and educate the social being who attends it, is part of this context, bringing together different cultures, ways of thinking and acting.

From this perspective of different ways of acting and thinking and freedom of choice, the school can be considered an environment conducive to bullying. This type of behavior interferes with interpersonal relationships, in which the stronger ones turn the weaker ones into objects of pleasure or amusement, through games that mask the purpose of mistreating or intimidating, making it impossible for the victim to defend

themselves and, furthermore, they don't have someone to defend them from the aggressors because bullying is confused with other forms of violence.

According to Fante (2008), the term bullying is used to define the aggressive attitudes of one individual against another. It is common for some of them to start insulting or intimidating for no good reason, using nicknames or making fun in order to hurt and "make life hell" for others. Knowing about school violence is a gain, in that it makes it possible to understand it based on a social, historical and cultural context, in which it occurs with the advantage of being able to resolve different actions, behaviors and situations involving different individuals: teachers, students, staff and other members of the school community.

From the perspective already confirmed, bullying has existed in schools for years, but it was only a little over thirty years ago that it began to be studied from a psychosocial and scientific point of view and given a specific name. However, historically, bullying is old and has become an extremely worrying social issue, generating insecurity, especially in the school community, and the solutions put forward to date are palliative, without concern for improving interpersonal relationships that should be developed through socio-educational strategies, in a systematic effort to mediate the problem between aggressor and victim.

Dreyer (2005) points out that in addition to causing cruel damage, bullying is widespread in all schools, both public and private, and its characteristic behaviors tend to increase rapidly as students get older. International studies have shown that bullying can occur from the age of three, when the intentionality of these acts can already be observed.

According to Lopes Neto (2005), another form of bullying, which is also very present and violent, is that which takes place in the media, especially on the Internet, which according to Colovini and Costa (2007), Facebook is the main virtual medium for aggression, ridicule, gossip and other forms of intolerance among young people. This form of aggression is called CyberBullying or Virtual Bullying, as discussed by Lopes Neto in a report shown by Rede Globo on Fantástico on April 29, 2007, and

explained by the author (2005). Television communication ends up becoming an economic, social and cultural risk factor and, from this perspective, it is important to understand its classification.

Lopes Neto (2005) classifies bullying as direct when victims are attacked directly through nicknames, physical aggression, threats, theft, verbal insults or expressions and gestures that make the targets feel bad. These acts are used four times more frequently among boys, or indirect when they are absent, through attitudes of indifference, isolation, defamation and denial of desires, adopted especially by girls. Knowing the classification of bullying, it is important to emphasize the difference between the stronger, who commits the aggression, and the weaker, who has difficulty breaking the unequal power relationship.

2.2 the psychological effects of bullying

According to Fante (2008), bullying at school can happen in a number of ways, among which are a series of significant psychological effects on victims, aggressors and even observers.

Here are some of the main psychological effects associated with bullying:

1. Effects on victims:

- **Stress and Anxiety:** Victims of bullying often experience high levels of stress and anxiety due to the constant fear of being bullied.
- **Depression:** Bullying can lead to depression, manifesting itself as deep sadness, hopelessness and a lack of interest in everyday activities.
- **Low self-esteem:** Victims often have their self-esteem damaged by constant attacks on their appearance, abilities or personality.
- **Social isolation:** Many victims isolate themselves socially to avoid bullying, which can lead to loneliness and feelings of exclusion.

- **Long-term Mental Health Problems:** Repeated bullying can leave lasting emotional scars, increasing the risk of mental health disorders such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

2. Effects on aggressors:

- **Awareness:** The continuous practice of bullying can lead aggressors to become insensitive to the feelings of others and the suffering they cause.
- **Behavioral Problems:** Some aggressors may develop behavioral problems, such as juvenile delinquency, substance abuse and academic difficulties.
- **Affected Future Relationships:** Bullying behavior can damage social skills and make it difficult to form healthy relationships in the future.

3. Effects on observers:

- **Feeling Powerless:** Witnessing bullying without intervening can lead observers to feel powerless and guilty.
- **Increased Stress:** Those who observe bullying can experience increased stress due to the anguish of witnessing other people's suffering.
- **Reinforcement of Bullying Behavior:** In some cases, observers may inadvertently reinforce bullying behavior by not reporting or laughing at the bully's actions.

It is important to note that the psychological effects of bullying can vary from person to person and depend on various factors, such as the severity of the practice, the social support available and individual resilience. Therefore, the approach to the problem of bullying must be holistic, including prevention, intervention and adequate psychological support for all parties involved.

Priotto (2011) emphasizes that the power relationship within the school arises from problems that occur in its daily life, many of which cannot be resolved without adopting collective solutions, because when there is no understanding within the school of the problem, it ends up triggering psychological effects, especially in primary and secondary schools.

2.4 prejudice against lgbtqia+ students

In the data provided in Fante's book, there are reports of students who have been bullied dropping out of school. These reports are in line with the 2016 report on page 4 of the report's introduction, drawn up by the Department of Education's Association of Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transvestites and Transsexuals (ABGLT):

- **Absences and low performance:** In terms of performance, students who are less frequently the targets of prejudice report getting better grades than those who are victims of discrimination more intensely. Of those who reported being attacked for their sexual orientation or gender identity or expression never, rarely or sometimes, around 80% said they received good or excellent grades, between 7 and 10 points. The rates drop among those who suffer aggression frequently or almost always for sexual orientation (73.5%) and gender expression (72.4%).
- **Suicide:** The survey also found that LGBT students who experienced higher levels of verbal aggression due to sexual orientation or gender identity were 1.5 times more likely to report high levels of depression. Some of the students' testimonies also show lower levels of self-esteem and even a desire to commit suicide.
- **Lack of teacher preparation:** In the opinion of the Brazilian Association of Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transvestites and Transsexuals (ABGLT), in order to reverse this scenario, teachers need to be trained with specific content aimed at sexual diversity and there needs to be teaching materials to promote respect

for all, without distinction of any personal characteristic. Among other measures, the association is calling for public policies and laws to combat discrimination against the LGBT population.

In this context, it is important to consider that most acts of psychological abuse occur outside the view of adults, and that most victims do not react or talk about the aggression they have suffered. With this in mind, we can understand why teachers and parents have little perception of bullying, underestimate its prevalence and act insufficiently to reduce and interrupt these situations. In addition, according to Lopes Neto (2005), bullying is more common among students aged between 11 and 14, and is less frequent in kindergarten and high school, and among aggressors there is a predominance of males, while in the role of victim, there are no differences between genders. The fact that boys are involved in acts of discrimination more often does not necessarily indicate that they are more aggressive, but rather that they are more likely to adopt this type of behavior.

However, the difficulty in identifying the effects among girls may be related to the fact that they use more subtle forms. It is therefore essential to draw up an overview of these effects in schools, their characteristics, which are very diverse, since their practices are masked by discreet violence. Based on these statements, the task is to discuss, inform and situate the reader with regard to the development and understanding of the research on the subject proposed here.

3 methodology

The methodology of this study involves a critical analysis of the topic, which is based on four specific authors: Ciara Molina, Cléo Fante, Lara Antiquino and José Ignacio Pichardo Galán. The choice of these authors was motivated by the interest and appreciation of the authors of this work, with the aim of ensuring clarity in the writing and reliability in the results obtained by these authors.

The criteria used to select these authors include:

1. **Reputation and Expertise:** We chose renowned authors who are recognized for their expertise in the field of bullying and school psychology. This was crucial to ensure that the sources selected were backed by solid knowledge and experience on the subject.
2. **Thematic Relevance:** We chose authors whose publications were directly related to the topic of our research, i.e. bullying and its psychological effects. This selection was essential to ensure that the authors' contributions were aligned with the focus of our study.
3. **Variety of Perspectives:** We recognized the importance of incorporating different perspectives and approaches to enrich our analysis. We chose authors who offered diverse and complementary insights, enabling a more comprehensive understanding of the topic.
4. **Publication period:** We prioritized authors who had published recent work. This ensured that the information was up-to-date and reflected the latest findings in the field of bullying and school psychology.
5. **Widely Recognized:** We chose authors who were widely recognized and cited in other academic research. This gave us confidence that their contributions are respected and influential in the academic community.

Our careful selection of authors was based on a thorough analysis of reputation, thematic relevance, variety of perspectives, updating of publications and recognition in the academic community. These criteria were essential to ensure the robustness and reliability of our research by incorporating sources of high quality and relevance to the topic in question.

3.1 results and discussion

With regard to the results and discussions related to the topic, it is essential to highlight that the first publication of a scientific article on school bullying is attributed to

Fante (2005). Over the period from 2005 to 2017, these four authors collaborated jointly in the production of books, articles and information, demonstrating a collective commitment to expanding knowledge about bullying and its psychological effects and consequences.

These collective contributions reflect a joint effort to deepen the understanding of bullying, not only in the school context, but also in its social repercussions beyond the school walls. This has significantly enriched the field of study, allowing for a more complete analysis of the implications of bullying in the school environment and in social reactions outside this environment. In addition, this research has provided a critical view and negative promotion of these acts, highlighting the importance of combating them and promoting a healthier and more respectful coexistence in all areas of society.

With regard to the process of categorizing the books, articles and information based on the four authors, they were grouped into thematic categories that address the central themes of the discussion:

- 1. Characterization of school bullying:** This category focuses on understanding and describing the phenomenon of bullying, including its manifestations, dynamics and characteristics.
- 2. Emotional and psychological effects and repercussions on victims, aggressors and witnesses:** The psychological impacts of bullying are explored here, not only on victims, but also on aggressors and observers, highlighting the emotional and cognitive dimensions.
- 3. Identification, prevention, intervention and public policies:** This category addresses strategies for identifying, preventing and intervening in school bullying, as well as discussing the role of public policies in this context.
- 4. Social analysis:** This category provides critical analysis and broader discussions on how the issue fits into society, considering social, cultural and contextual issues.

The authors emphasize that the debate on school bullying and its implications for the LGBT+ community should be conducted sensitively, avoiding polarizations.

They suggest that it is essential for educators to read and inform themselves on the subject, gaining confidence in their approaches. The authors also highlight students' interest in discussing this topic and the need to provide information and solid knowledge to promote a more complete and empathetic understanding of the subject. The students' responses varied greatly, but in many cases revealed the myths surrounding homosexuality, reports of very rewarding classroom work that placed scientific knowledge alongside empirical knowledge and reached a consensus that much of what is said or heard is not the reality of the facts.

4 4 analysis of the subject's psychological profile: bullying at school through research analysis

In order to avoid situations of school *bullying*, it is essential to establish a series of strategies focused on preventing *bullying* within formal education. The characteristics are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 - Strategies for the prevention of *bullying*

Awareness and Education:	Promote educational campaigns for students, teachers and parents on the different aspects of bullying, its impacts and how to recognize it.
Safe School Environment:	Creating a school environment where students feel safe to express concerns without fear of retaliation.
Psychosocial support:	Providing psychological support services for victims of bullying and aggressors, with a view to understanding the underlying causes of aggressive behavior.
Promoting Respect and Empathy:	Encourage mutual respect and empathy through programs and activities that emphasize the importance of fair and compassionate treatment.

Source: The authors (2023).

To achieve the above, it is important to work with the peer group, the guidance department, teachers and families. Here are some proposals:

a) Communication between professionals: It is essential that the school provides training and structures for teachers to report aggression in the classroom. In this way, it will be possible to see whether the aggression is constant or one-off, and thus take the appropriate measures.

b) Group assemblies: Holding group assemblies is a very important strategy, because through it, teachers and their students can democratically stipulate a series of rules for coexistence in the classroom. By carrying them out consensually, students will feel more responsible for them.

c) Cooperative learning: Another very useful strategy is cooperative learning, which allows students to interact and learn from each other. It is important that the tutor conducts the groups at this time, since if there is a situation of harassment, they may leave the victim aside and this would aggravate the situation.

In relation to homophobic bullying, UNESCO (2015) defines it as "a specific type of violence, common in the school context, which targets people because of their perceived or actual sexual orientation and/or gender identity". Terms such as homophobic bullying indicate that they are expressed through both physical and verbal aggression, there are also threats from the aggressor and, therefore, the person who is attacked enters an environment of exclusion. These acts are repeated frequently and are persistent. The aggressor's intention is to cause physical, emotional and social harm. With regard to the relationship between the aggressor and the person being attacked, it should be noted that it is unequal in nature.

Pichardo (2012) highlights characteristics of homophobic bullying:

- "Invisibility of diversity in the orientation of desire". This refers to the lack of information about different sexual orientations, since many of them are still taboos.
- "The 'different' sexual condition is particularly dangerous because it is a 'transferable' risk factor". With this, it can be coded that the person defending the victim

of harassment will be "accused" by the aggressors of being homosexual. This makes it difficult to get help from colleagues to stop the harassment.

- "Victims may fear making their sexual condition more obvious if they draw attention to their case when they report it".

"Questioning LGBT students often don't have role models in their environment with whom they can identify or with whom they can ally to protect themselves."

Therefore, formal education has the need and the duty to prevent this data from continuing to rise, as schools should be a space free of discrimination, an environment where all students feel safe and can express themselves freely. This is very important because, from childhood until they enter the world of work, children and young people spend most of their time in the classroom, and it is there that they learn what is accepted and what is not accepted within society. It is therefore essential to detect which situations can result in this problem. In order to achieve the above, it is essential that there is more information on the subject of sexuality, that it is transmitted and then debated in a common way, without ridicule or stigmatization. In addition, it is important to be aware of and know what you are bringing and encompassing the theoretical and quantitative basis, from which point formal education will be able to argue about sexual diversity and the fact that there are many sexual orientations that are equally valid to those pre-established by the heteronormative model of sexuality..

In this respect, it is also vital to put an end to the stereotypes and prejudices that exist about the LGBT collective, since society has largely eliminated them, but some are still latent. All of the above is relevant in the classroom because, as we've seen, it's the place where most cases of aggression against LGBT people occur.

To this end, Pichardo (2012) emphasizes that, when discussing the issue, it is a good idea to raise a series of recommendations aimed at these professionals in order to detect and stop possible cases of harassment, such as the following points:

- Address the preparation and training of school actors, and thus explore understanding of sexuality and sexual orientation issues. It is very important that these issues are addressed, putting an end to existing myths and stereotypes;

- Use non-sexist language;
- Make groups in which gender is not the criterion. An example of making groups could be according to month of birth, alphabetical order or affinity;
- Show how homophobia occurs through language, for example in insults such as "faggot" or "queer", which are pejorative;
- Show homophobic situations and comments or provocations for the big debate;
- Show empathy and affection;
- Discuss in class what the consequences of bullying can be;
- Generate a climate of safety for all students who are LGBT;
- Allowing displays of affection between the LGBT group, as well as heterosexual couples.

According to an analysis presented to the Folha de São Paulo newspaper ², school is still a very hostile environment for many students. 68% of young LGBT people (lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transvestites and transsexuais) aged between 13 and 21 say they have been verbally attacked at school because of their sexual orientation. Physical aggression affected 26.6% of Brazilian LGBT students. Because of the violence, 60% felt unsafe in the educational environment in the last year because of their sexual orientation. Despite this freedom, we can see that part of society still does not accept everything that goes beyond the existing "male/female" dichotomy.

The psychological effects of bullying refer to the emotional and mental consequences that victims, aggressors and observers experience due to constant exposure to aggressive and repetitive actions in the school context. These effects can be profound and long-lasting, encompassing a variety of emotional, behavioral and cognitive responses. For victims, the psychological effects often include chronic stress, anxiety, depression and a drop in self-esteem. The constant fear of being bullied and the negative impact on mental health can impair their performance at school and their general well-being. The aggressors, known as "bullies", can also experience

²Available on the website: <https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/educacao/2016/11/1834166-73-dos-jovens-lgbt-dizem-ter-sido-agredidos-na-escola-mostra-pesquisa.shtml> Accessed on: 21 Mar. 2023.

psychological effects, including emotional desensitization, increased risk of future aggressive behaviour and, in some cases, behavioural and mental health problems.

Witnesses or observers of bullying are also not immune to the psychological effects, often experiencing feelings of powerlessness, guilt and increased stress due to the anguish of witnessing the suffering of others. Therefore, the psychological effects of bullying encompass a range of emotional and behavioral reactions that can profoundly affect the well-being of all parties involved, making awareness, prevention and effective intervention against this problem essential.

Dreyer (2005) emphasizes that, just like the perpetrators of such violence, most of whom are people who have lived in unstructured families with poor emotional relationships and a lack of attention to supervision on the part of their parents, this aggressive or explosive behavior in resolving conflicts is also quite common on the part of those who practice bullying who, in theory, are only repeating this antisocial behavior in their adolescence because they have already suffered from it in their childhood. Some behavioral signs can also be observed, such as: not adapting to rules, insecurity, difficulty in making friends, provoking fights wherever they go and intimidating everyone into doing their bidding.

With the connivance of the group and the omission of adults, the "bullies" increasingly tend to abandon feelings of generosity, empathy, solidarity, affection, tolerance and compassion. The victims are the pupils who are in an unequal position of power, whether because of their socio-economic situation, age, physical size or even because they are outnumbered.

In addition, the victims generally already have something that sets them apart from the standard group (they are shy, introspective, considered "nerds", have some striking characteristic, such as being thin, fat, radicalized or of a dissident sexual orientation). This fact alone makes them vulnerable to offenders. There is no plausible justification for the choice, but the targets are certainly those who are unable to defend themselves against the aggressions they suffer.

These aggressions usually happen during school recess. It is during this time that children/young people interact most intensely with their peers, develop feelings of friendship that imply mutual help and acceptance, as well as enmities that sometimes trigger aggressive behavior.

4 Final considerations

In addition to the above-mentioned reflections, it is now necessary for us teachers to start questioning our school practices, which are often naturalized in everyday life; to doubt, question and problematize some "truths" about sexualities and gender. In addition, it is necessary to bring up some issues that imply unveiling the processes of denying the right to education to LGBT people, who suffer bullying and, as a result, end up acquiring traumatic and irreversible psychological effects. In a way, we are corroborating reflections on the social role of schools and educators in tackling prejudice and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Thus, with this article, we can see that there are intolerant and stigmatizing practices, called homophobic and/or heterosexist, which hurt the dignity of human beings inside and outside the school. Let's also remember that we can say that these practices are guided by the heteronormative matrix present in the social configurations of education. These practices, guided by historically sedimented discourses and repeated in everyday life, promote the exclusion of the LGBT+ population from citizenship rights, constituting a serious problem to be faced in education and in the democratization of Brazilian society.

A lot of attention is required, given that we are part of a state governed by the rule of law that provides us with specific freedoms, including the freedom to manifest and perform our sexualities. It is therefore essential to educate teenagers to respect others, not only at the level of sexual and gender diversity, but also to respect all those people with dissident bodies, who deviate from the "norm", from what is pre-established as "wrong", "strange" or "inappropriate".

The work sought to portray, reflect on and reduce harassment, this existing rejection of the LGBT+ collective, which is largely due to the prejudices and stereotypes inherited from a patriarchal and sexist society. Some of the things we can do to avoid this are: refrain from derogatory language, provide affective and effective sex education that doesn't just focus on heteronormative relationships. Likewise, it is very important that schools and their management get involved in the fight against LGBTphobia and train their staff on the issue of sexually peripheral communities, since adolescents feel that they receive almost no information about these groups.

The latter can also discuss their sexual orientation and gender identity, since these are seen as "abnormal" when they are dissident and therefore harassment in the classroom is normalized. The oppressive psychological effects should therefore be reversed through lectures and workshops aimed at raising awareness in order to prevent homophobia. In the same way, we can deal with sexual and social education in a transversal way.

We hope that this research will pave the way and that its reflections can be put into practice by the educational network, developing skills so that the educational system, which is the Paraná State Department of Education in this case, can create ongoing training programs on this subject for educators in order to help in the socialization process and thus develop educational interventions, promoting social change and transformation in the school environment.

References

- CALHAU, L. B. **Bullying**: O que você precisa saber. São Paulo: Impetus, 2005.
- FANTE, C. **Fenômeno Bullying**: como prevenir a violência nas escolas e educar para a paz. São Paulo: Verus, 2005.
- FANTE, C; PEDRA, J. A. **Bullying escolar**: perguntas e respostas. Porto Alegre: Artmed, 2008.
- GADOTTI, M. **Escola cidadã**. São Paulo: Cortez, 1995.
- GIL, A. C. **Como Elaborar Projetos de Pesquisa**. São Paulo: ATLAS, 2002.

LIBÂNEO, J. C. **Adeus Professor, Adeus Professora?** Novas exigências educacionais e profissão docente. São Paulo: Cortez, 1998.

LOPES NETO, A. A. **Bullying** - comportamento agressivo entre estudantes. *Jornal de Pediatria*, v. 81, n. 5, p. 164-172, 2005.

ROLIM, M. **Bullying pesadelo na escola**. São Paulo: Dom Quixote, 2010.

SOUZA, J. S.; ARAÚJO, R. **Trabalho, Educação e Sociabilidade**. Maringá: Práxis, 2010.

MOLINA, C.; ANTIQUINO, L. **Sexo sentido, sexo vivido**. Lisboa: Editorial Planeta, 2017.

GENERELO, J. **Sem Complexos, guia jovem**. Barcelona: Editorial Egales S. L., 2007.

COLOVINI, C. E; COSTA, MARA R. N. **O Fenômeno Bullying na Percepção dos Professores**, 2007. Disponível em: <https://docplayer.com.br/14657552-O-fenomeno-bullying-na-percepcao-dos-professores.html>. Acesso em: 10 maio 2023.

ABGLT - **Associação Brasileira de Lésbicas, Gays, Bissexuais, Travestis e Transexuais**. Secretaria de Educação. Pesquisa Nacional sobre o Ambiente Educacional no Brasil 2015: as experiências de adolescentes e jovens lésbicas, gays, bissexuais, travestis e transexuais em nossos ambientes educacionais. Curitiba: ABGLT, 2016.

UNESCO. Organização das Nações Unidas para a Educação, a Ciência e a Cultura. Programa Mundial para Educação em Direitos Humanos. Paris, 2017.

í **Wagner Grizorti**, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5017-5365>

Centro Universitário UDC

Graduado em Pedagogia pela Faculdade Anglo UDC (2012). Doutorando no Programa de Pós-Graduação em Desenvolvimento Rural Sustentável PPGDRS pela UNIOESTE. Mestre pelo Programa de Pós-Graduação em Integração Contemporânea da América Latina (PPG-ICAL) - UNILA (2020). Professor no Centro Universitário UDC.

Contribuição de autoria: em que esse autor colaborou com o texto.

Lattes: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/3373405784824585>

E-mail: wagnergrizorti@gmail.com

ii **Márcia da Luz Leal**, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2640-8384>

Universidade Estadual do Oeste do Paraná

Licenciatura em Letras/Espanhol - Universidade Estadual do Oeste do Paraná - UNIOESTE (1997). Doutoranda no Programa de Pós-Graduação em Desenvolvimento Rural Sustentável PPGDRS pela UNIOESTE. Mestre do curso de Pós-graduação em Políticas Públicas e Desenvolvimento (PPGPPD), Universidade Federal da Integração Latino-Americana – UNILA.

Contribuição de autoria: em que esse autor colaborou com o texto.

Lattes: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/8763801287754888>

E-mail: marcia_lleal@yahoo.com.br

iii **Thiago Benitez de Melo**, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2474-6400>

Universidade Estadual do Oeste do Paraná

Licenciatura em Letras Português/Espanhol - Universidade Estadual do Oeste do Paraná - UNIOESTE, (2010). Doutorado no Programa de Pós-Graduação em Sociedade, Cultura e Fronteiras (PPGSCF) pela UNIOESTE. Mestre pelo Pós-graduação em Letras (PPGL) pela mesma universidade. Especialista em Cultura e Literatura e Metodologia de Ensino.

Contribuição de autoria: em que esse autor colaborou com o texto.

Lattes: <https://lattes.cnpq.br/0845013347338328>

E-mail: thiago_benitez@hotmail.com

Responsible publisher: Genifer Andrade

Ad hoc expert: Fabrício de Sousa Sampaio e Kássia Mota de Sousa

How to cite this article (ABNT):

GRIZORTI, Wagner.; LEAL, Márcia da Luz.; BENITEZ, Thiago. Os impactos psicológicos do bullying na rede escolar de ensino médio em alunos LGBT+. **Rev. Pemo**, Fortaleza, v. 6, e10977 2023. Available at: <https://revistas.uece.br/index.php/revpemo/article/view/10977/version/9974>

Received on July 5, 2023.

Accepted on November 8, 2023.

Published on February 24, 2024.