Scientific article

Estrategias de afrontamiento docente ante la violencia escolar entre pares desde la perspectiva del profesorado de primaria

Teacher coping strategies in the face of peer violence from primary teacher's perspective

Estratégias docentes de enfrentamento da violência escolar entre pares na perspectiva de professores do ensino fundamental

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Resumen

La violencia escolar entre pares se manifiesta en la cotidianidad de la escuela y tiene repercusiones graves en las víctimas, lo cual puede ser prevenido por los docentes. Por ende, el presente estudio tuvo como objetivo analizar las estrategias de afrontamiento desarrolladas por docentes para prevenir la violencia escolar entre pares en escuelas primarias ubicadas en zonas vulnerables. Para ello se desarrolló una investigación cualitativa, fundamentada en el método interpretativo básico de Merriam (2009). La técnica aplicada de muestreo fue por intensidad, lo que permitió la selección de 15 docentes reconocidos por directivos y estudiantes por abordar de manera efectiva la violencia entre pares en ocho escuelas primarias públicas ubicadas en el municipio de Cajeme, Sonora, mientras que la técnica de recolección de datos fue la entrevista semiestructurada. Los resultados se agruparon en las siguientes categorías: a) estrategias de afrontamiento preventivas; y b) estrategias de afrontamiento reactivas. A partir de esto se concluye que los profesores desarrollan estrategias preventivas que les permiten reducir los casos de violencia escolar entre pares y formar al estudiante de manera integral. Sin embargo, cuando surgen conflictos graves e inesperados, el profesor utiliza estrategias reactivas para frenar los actos violentos de manera inmediata. Desde la perspectiva de los profesores, ambas estrategias resultan efectivas para afrontar el problema, especialmente en contextos vulnerables, ya que los estudiantes están expuestos al aprendizaje continuo de conductas violentas, tanto en la calle como en casa, y sus efectos se manifiestan en el aula.

Palabras clave: afrontamiento docente, violencia escolar, acoso escolar.

Abstract

School violence between peers manifests itself in daily life at school and has serious repercussions on the victims. Teachers can prevent or aggravate this phenomenon in the classroom and school context. The objective of this study is to analyze the coping strategies developed by teachers to prevent school violence between peers in Elementary-level schools located in vulnerable areas. This investigation is qualitative; Merriam (2009) basic interpretative method was used to substantiate it. Fifteen teachers participated; they were recognized by directors and students for effectively standing up to violence between peers belonging to 8 public primary schools. For data collection, semi-structured interviews were used. The results were formed out of the following categories: a) preventive coping strategies; and b) reactive coping strategies. It was concluded that teachers develop preventive strategies, which allow them to reduce cases of school violence

between peers and train the student in an integral way. However, when unexpected serious conflicts occur, the teacher uses reactive strategies to stop violent acts at that moment. From the teachers' perspective, both strategies are effective in dealing with the problem, especially in vulnerable contexts, since students are exposed to learning from a continuous stream of violent behaviors, on the street and at home, which are then replicated in the classroom.

Resumo

A violência escolar entre pares manifesta-se no quotidiano escolar e tem graves repercussões nas vítimas, que podem ser prevenidas pelos professores. Portanto, o presente estudo teve como objetivo analisar as estratégias de enfrentamento desenvolvidas por professores para prevenir a violência escolar entre pares em escolas primárias localizadas em áreas vulneráveis. Para isso, desenvolveu-se uma investigação qualitativa, baseada no método interpretativo básico de Merriam (2009). A técnica de amostragem aplicada foi por intensidade, o que permitiu a seleção de 15 professores reconhecidos por diretores e alunos por abordar eficazmente a violência entre pares em oito escolas primárias públicas localizadas no município de Cajeme, Sonora, enquanto a técnica de amostragem de coleta de dados foi a semi- entrevista estruturada. Os resultados foram agrupados nas seguintes categorias: a) estratégias preventivas de enfrentamento; eb) estratégias reativas de enfrentamento. A partir disso, conclui-se que os professores desenvolvem estratégias preventivas que lhes permitem reduzir os casos de violência escolar entre pares e formar os alunos de forma integral. Porém, quando surgem conflitos graves e inesperados, o professor utiliza estratégias reativas para interromper imediatamente os atos violentos. Na perspectiva dos professores, ambas as estratégias são eficazes na abordagem do problema, especialmente em contextos vulneráveis, uma vez que os alunos estão expostos à aprendizagem contínua de comportamentos violentos tanto na rua como em casa, e os seus efeitos manifestam-se na sala de aula.

Introduction

School violence is a topic that has captured the attention of researchers from various disciplines due to its psychological, social, economic and educational repercussions (López-Burgos, 2020). This phenomenon refers to the acts, conditions, processes and forms of relationship through which an individual or group intentionally causes physical, social or emotional harm to other people in the educational context (Vergara-Lope et al., 2023), so it covers concepts such as *bullying* and *school violence between peers*, which share certain similarities and differences.

For example, *bullying* is defined as a type of school violence characterized by physical, verbal or psychological attacks carried out intentionally by the aggressor or aggressors, without the victim provoking or responding to the attack, in an asymmetrical power relationship (Olweus, 2004). Bullying, for its part, is presented as a form of violence between classmates, where one or more constantly bother or attack one, or more, who do not defend themselves effectively due to their disadvantage or inferior conditions (Secretariat of Public Education [SEP], 2016), while *school violence between peers* is recognized by the aggressive behaviors of one or more students towards their classmates (peers) with the intention of causing them some type of harm (Romero and Martínez, 2023). In other words, the differences between the aforementioned concepts lie in the fact that in *bullying* the victim does not defend himself; in *bullying*, the victim does not defend himself effectively; and in *school violence between peers*, the victims come to normalize the attacks in the educational context.

Now, in the specific case of *school violence between peers*, it can be indicated that this occurs in the daily life of school as a multi-causal phenomenon with negative repercussions on students (Vilcacundo, 2020), since low self-esteem is reported in the victims. As well as, anxiety, depression, poor school performance, school dropouts and even suicide (Caicedo and Fernández, 2022). For their part, adaptation problems, substance abuse, and antisocial behavior in the medium and long term are described in aggressors (Ríos et al., 2020), while bystanders experience feelings of anxiety and fear in situations of violence that they witness (Corozzo, 2015).

In the literature it is consistently pointed out that teachers have the ability to prevent or aggravate *school violence between peers* depending on the way in which they face the conflicts that arise in the classroom (Gregus et al., 2017; Organization of the United Nations for Culture, Sciences and Education [Unesco], 2019; Valdés and Urías, 2018). For this reason, the teacher is given the responsibility of facing and resolving the tensions and conflicts that arise in the

educational context, especially in regard to preventing and stopping attacks between students that occur in the classroom and school environment (Calderón, 2021). .

Coping strategies

Coping refers to any activity that an individual can launch, whether cognitive or behavioral, in order to confront a certain conflictive situation (Góngora and Reyes, 1998). Teacher coping is defined as the actions that teachers use to manage conflictive situations that arise in their classroom (Elizalde, 2010), while coping strategies are understood as psychological resources that the subject uses to cope with stressful situations. (Macías et al., 2013). The effectiveness of coping strategies is determined by the results obtained in solving the problem addressed (Gil-Monte, 2009).

Now, studies such as those by Evans et al. (2017), Ortega et al. (2019) and Rivadeneira et al. (2019), among others, focus on the student's coping with situations of violence between peers; however, research on teacher coping is scarce. Therefore, the investigation is justified from the teaching perspective, given that they have more coping resources in situations of violence as they are authorized to act as necessary in the face of any type of aggression between peers in the school context (Gregus et al., 2017). Furthermore, the teacher's actions can become tools that allow us to understand and manage the emotions and situations that arise in the classroom (Calderón, 2021).

Teacher coping and coping strategies are key constructs to observe the role that teachers play in the face of school violence among peers (Rigby, 2014). In this sense, the teacher must deploy a series of strategies that allow him or her to reduce situations of school violence between peers through making accurate and timely decisions.

According to Góngora and Reyes (1998, 2000), teacher coping is developed under one of the following strategies: 1) direct, cognitive or behavioral actions aimed at solving the problem; 2) emotional: affective responses to the situation; 3) evasive: strategies aimed at escaping from the problem or avoiding it; 4) reevaluative, implies giving a positive meaning to the problem, focusing on learning from the situation and defining the problem effectively; and 5) direct-social, seeking the support of other people to solve the problem.

Teacher coping strategies reported to be most effective in intervening in situations of peer violence that include encouraging empathy (Navarro et al., 2017), restorative discipline, mediation (including peer mediation), the support group method, the shared concern method and direct sanctions to the student or students identified as responsible for the aggression (Rigby,

2014). These strategies are associated with teachers who have a lower prevalence of school violence among peers (McSuga-Gage et al., 2012; Rigby, 2014).

Having explained the above, it can be noted that the objective of this research is to analyze the coping strategies developed by teachers that are considered effective by directors' and students' perspective for the management of school violence between peers in primary schools located in vulnerable areas.

Factors that produce and reproduce school violence between peers

Research indicates that social, family, and school contexts are variables that influence teachers' ability to address school violence among students. According to the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) (2016), the school factors that contribute to school violence between peers in Mexican schools are mainly due to aspects related to weight or height (43.8%), how they dress (32.1%) and the way of speaking or expressing oneself (31.8%). The most frequent attacks include teasing and nicknames (17.2%), rejection by peers (11.4%), exclusion from participating in games or teamwork (10.6%), hitting, pushing or threats (9.1%), theft of money, supplies or other personal objects (8.7%), and submission to perform acts that he or she did not want to do (5.4%).

Schools located in vulnerable contexts, understood as urban areas with high indicators of violence, present a greater possibility of students being victims of violence, since the living conditions are more adverse (INEGI, 2016; Secretariat of Public Security [SSP], 2018). In these contexts, educational actors face situations of precariousness and weakness in their relational ties, which makes the frequent appearance of violent relationships more likely (Foschiatti, 2010).

In fact, the available evidence suggests that the way in which teachers deal with peer violence is related to the prevalence of such problem in schools (Valdés and Urías, 2018). Teachers consider that students learn violent behavior on the street, which is reproduced at school, especially in the classroom. In this sense, the normalization of violence and the culture based on violent behavior, according to teachers, is the result of the negative mentality, bad habits and indiscipline learned in their context (Manig et al., 2017).

These beliefs affect the teacher's coping, since their actions are limited from their perspective by external agents that do not allow them to get involved effectively to resolve violence conflicts between peers. Having described the previous scenario, this study aims to answer the following question: how do teachers in urban public primary schools in northern Mexico located in vulnerable contexts deal with school violence among peers?

Method

The present study adopts a qualitative approach and is based on the basic interpretive method, which is oriented towards understanding how people construct reality and interacts with the social world through the meanings that give meaning to their lives (Merriam, 2009). According to this, the method is appropriate to explore the forms of coping that teachers develop in their social interaction processes, according to the meaning that violence between peers has for them and the meaning of life that they attribute to it in the vulnerable contexts that characterize the school environment.

Participants

The participants were teachers from primary schools located in vulnerable contexts. For its selection, intentional sampling was carried out through which eight public primary schools that met indicators of high social vulnerability in Ciudad Obregón, Sonora were chosen (SSP, 2018).

To select the informants, intensity sampling was used (Lawrence et al., 2015), through which teachers, recognized by other educational actors for effectively confronting situations of school violence among their students, were identified and invited to participate. . In total, 15 teachers participated, of which six were women and nine were men. Their ages ranged from 27 to 55 years old, and they had a minimum of two years and a maximum of 35 years of teaching experience. Table 1 presents the characteristics of the participants, differentiated by a pseudonym that preserves their identity.

Table 1. Characteristics of the participants

Homoclave	Age	Gender	Academic training	Years of service	Years of service	School	Degree
LV_DOC01	55	M	Normalist	35	20	1	4th
LV_DOC02	54	M	Normalist	3. 4	29	1	5th
LV_DOC03	48	M	Normalist	24	7	1	4th
RCM_DOC04	32	M	Normalist	12	1	2	5th
RCM_DOC05	41	F	Normalist	13	11	2	4th
HB_DOC06	27	F	Bachelor of Education	4	2	3	4th
VG_DOC07	49	F	Bachelor of Education	10	3	4	3rd
NCP_DOC08	31	F	Normalist	9	1	5	1st
NCC_DOC09	28	M	Bachelor of Education	3	1	6	2nd
BJ_DOC10	27	M	Bachelor of Education	3	1	7	6th
ETC_DOC11	27	M	Bachelor of Education	2	1	8	3rd
ETC_DOC12	30	M	Normalist	2	2	8	6th
ETC_DOC13	35	F	Normalist	4	2	8	4th
ETC_DOC14	35	M	Normalist	6	5	8	5th
ETC_DOC15	29	F	Normalist	6	1	8	5th

Source: self-made

Information recovery technique

The recovery technique was used through semi-structured interviews with an open approach at the end. The interview guide was designed around four main themes: a) meaning of school violence among peers; b) intervention in school violence between peers; c) prevention of

school violence among peers; and d) context. The guide included twelve trigger questions that explored the strategies that teachers use to confront school violence among peers.

Before starting data collection, two fundamental ethical aspects were considered: obtaining the informed consent of the participants and guaranteeing the confidentiality of the information collected.

Information systematization and analysis procedure

The procedure for carrying out the analysis, according to the basic interpretive method, consists of four essential stages: 1) preparation of the raw data; 2) coding; 3) categorization; and 4) interpretation (Merriam, 2009). In the first stage, a pseudonym was assigned to each participant in order to safeguard their anonymity; the audios of the interviews were transcribed in the Word processor and their fidelity was verified. In the second stage, data processing began in Atlas ti 7.1; the codes emerged from the analysis of the empirical data obtained in the interviews. In the third stage, the coded data were recoded into categories. Finally, the interpretation was carried out based on the description of each of the categories resulting from the empirical data.
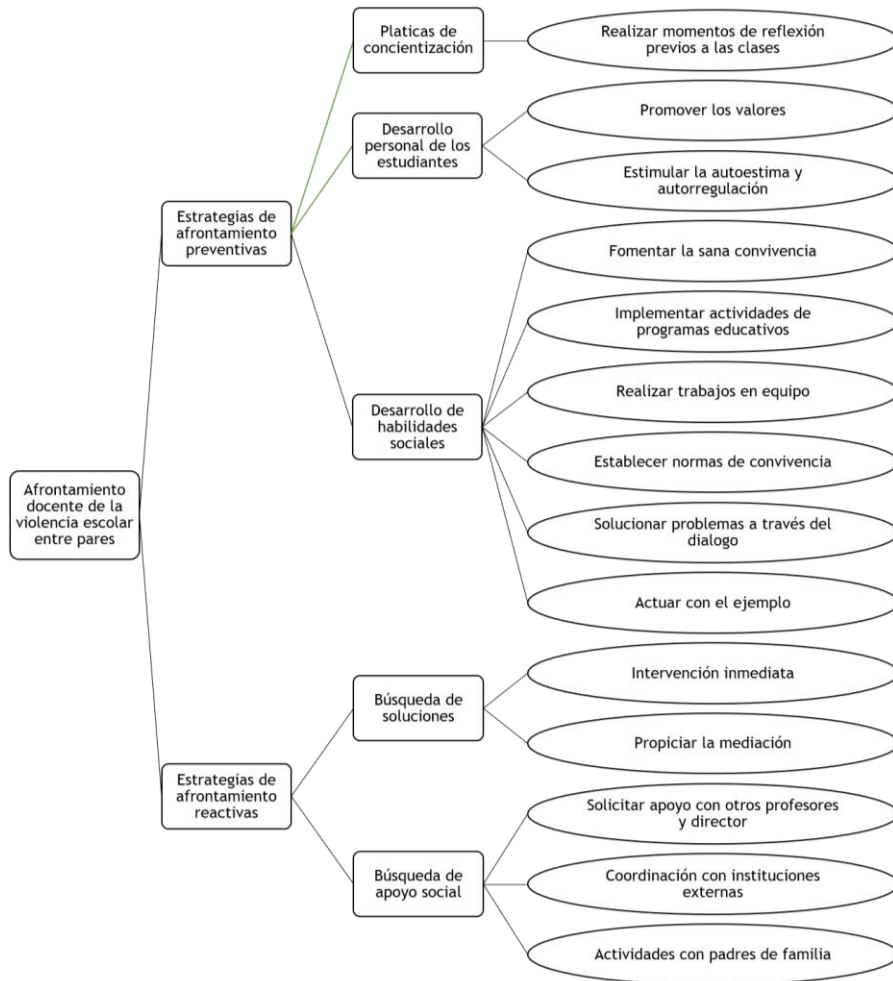
Methodological rigor

For this study two reference criteria were considered: logical consistency and credibility. In this sense, attention was paid to the coherence and congruence between the research question, the data collection procedure, the systematization and analysis of the results obtained. In addition, the contents of the transcripts were verified, the emerging categories were compared with some participants and peer review was implemented as a strategy (Patton, 2002), for which other researchers were involved to review the categories resulting from this analysis process.

Results

Teacher coping strategies refer to the actions developed by teachers to deal with school violence among peers. From the analysis of the empirical data, two main categories emerged: the first, intended to describe the strategies that teachers use to prevent situations of violence; and the second, focused on the strategies that teachers apply when violent acts occur among their students (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Emerging categories and subcategories of data analysis

Source: self-made

Preventive Coping Strategies

The *preventive coping strategies category* refers to the actions that teachers use with the expectation of preventing situations of violence among students. This category includes a) awareness talks; b) personal development of students; and, c) development of social skills (Table 2).

Table 2. Preventive coping strategies

Strategy	Actions	Purpose	Participants
Awareness talks	Carry out moments of reflection before classes	Motivate students to reflect on everyday life situations and the consequences of actions	LV_DOC01 LV_DOC02 HB_DOC06 NCP_DOC08 BJ_DOC10 ETC_DOC12 ETC_DOC14 ETC_DOC15
Personal development of students	Promote the values	Stimulate in students values such as: empathy, tolerance, respect and friendship	LV_DOC01 LV_DOC02 LV_DOC03 RMC_DOC05 VG_DOC07 CP_DOC08 ETC_DOC13 ETC_DOC14 ETC_DOC15
	Stimulate self-esteem and self-regulation	Implement actions that stimulate self-esteem, respect emotions and promote self-regulation in students	LV_DOC01 LV_DOC03 RMC_DOC04 RMC_DOC05 VG_DOC07
Development of social skills	Promote healthy coexistence	Promote appropriate social interactions among students	LV_DOC01 LV_DOC02 LV_DOC03 BJ_DOC10 ETC_DOC15

	Implement educational program activities	Promote spaces where students share and coexist healthily	LV_DOC01 LV_DOC03 VG_DOC07 NCC_DOC09 ETC_DOC12 ETC_DOC13 ETC_DOC14 ETC_DOC15
	Carry out teamwork	Promote good social relationships among students through team activities, encouraging cooperation	LV_DOC01 LV_DOC03 RCM_DOC05 BJ_DOC10
	Establish rules of coexistence	Agree on rules of coexistence that regulate the behavior of the group	LV_DOC01 LV_DOC02 RCM_DOC04 RCM_DOC05 VG_DOC07 ETC_DOC11 ETC_DOC14
	Solve problems through dialogue	Promote conflict resolution among students through dialogue to avoid aggression	LV_DOC01 LV_DOC02 LV_DOC03 BJ_DOC10 ETC_DOC11 ETC_DOC15
	Act by example	Encourage the student to observe and replicate the teacher's social skills	LV_DOC02 LV_DOC03 BJ_DOC10

Source: self-made

Awareness talks

The first preventive strategy mentioned by teachers is awareness talks, through which they inform students about the different ways to avoid violence in the classroom and make them reflect on the consequences of their actions. In this regard, the teachers comment: "We hold awareness-raising talks. [...] In these talks, giving examples, real-life situations works because it allows us to counteract situations of violence or prevent them from happening" (LV_DOC01), and "this helps [students] not only here at school, but in their daily life" (LV_DOC02). Another teacher shares:

> *Every day [...] we begin with reflections that make the student aware, reflect on their behavior and the behavior of others and that they value themselves, many believe they are from "boys from the hood", we give a humanist touch, we project videos which children analyze the situations [...] this has worked given the level of aggression in the group has decreased* (ETC_DOC12).

Personal development of students

In the second strategy referring to the *personal development of students*, teachers share that they promote self-esteem and self-regulation in their students. This is how they express it:

> *The most important thing in all this is that the child has high self-esteem, we must respect points of view, we must learn to value their emotions, to take them into account, to take into account two opinions about certain conflict. To listen carefully when they talk to you, to treat all students equally, [...] that the child feels accepted* (LV_DOC01).

> *For me it is very important that the child is well emotionally [...] there is a subject that is Civic Education and Ethics, and there come activities that give us a lot to be able to help the emotional situation of the children [...] come self-regulation situations* (LV_DOC03).

Likewise, other teachers share that they promote values, such as empathy, friendship, respect, tolerance, among others. This is how they express it: "I really like practicing the value of empathy in the classroom" (ETC_DOC14); "Putting yourself in someone else's shoes is important" (NCP_DOC08); "Integrate activities where values […] friendship are promoted" (LV_DOC01); "Reinforce values, such as respect, honesty, […] responsibility, of course work

and tolerance" (LV_DOC02); "Make them aware of the importance of tolerance […] between individuals" (VG_DOC07).

Development of social skills

In the third strategy, which refers to the *development of social skills*, teachers indicate that they carry out actions to foster appropriate interpersonal relationships. This includes promoting healthy coexistence, implementing educational program activities, stimulating teamwork and cooperation, establishing norms of coexistence, promoting problem resolution through dialogue and acting by example.

The promotion of healthy school coexistence is an action that seeks to "Encourage healthy interactions, work in an appropriate coexistence environment that helps facilitate learning processes" (LV_DOC1). In this regard, a teacher shares: "What helps them [the students] is the fact that they understand that they have to behave well for a reason: peaceful coexistence that will help you grow as a person" (LV_DOC02). Another teacher points out:

> *I look for a way for there to be a work organization, for there to be rules and, above all, for there to be a lot of harmony [...] for them to coexist, for there to be more camaraderie, for the appearance of their face to change reflecting a little more tranquility, peace and happiness* (LV_DOC03).

In relation to what is established in the educational programs, two interviewees express: "We carry out activities from a little book called PNCE where real life situations come, stories are read, reflections are made and debates are held" (ETC_DOC13); "The school coexistence program has worked because there have been certain improvements in the children's behavior, there are fewer conflicts" (LV_DOC1). Likewise, another teacher points out that in textbooks:

> *There are some activities called active breaks that have also served us to integrate the students, they are given certain coexistence activities at the end of each of the sessions of each subject [...] where the child has to do certain exercises and they interrelate with each other and that helps them improve their relationship* (LV_DOC1).

> *We* try *to have fun recesses, sometimes I bring the speaker and play music for the children and they like it. […] I started because [...] in the technical councils, they give us commissions, and I had that commission for school coexistence and carrying out recreational games, and [...] we also do internal sports tournaments that are attractive to them* (LV_DOC03).

During recess hours they are given activities, [...] dances, music, they are given games on the fields, they are given floor games where they join groups and stop doing activities where they can physically attack a certain classmate, there have been certain changes in this school year that have improved the ability to avoid to avoid this series of conflicts (ETC_DOC12).

Regarding teamwork and cooperation, a teacher shares that he encourages "That [the student] learns to work as a team with his classmates […] I promote attitudes of cooperation between them, so that relationships improve" (LV_DOC1). Another teacher shares the need for students to "Change their attitude and realize that collaborative work, teamwork and camaraderie will give us more" (LV_DOC03). In relation to the rules of coexistence, the teachers mention the following:

From the first day of class, the first thing you do is set the rules of coexistence, negotiate them with them, in fact, their first work in their notebook is all the rules of coexistence [...] then they are asked that this material […] take it to your parents to make them see that there is a commitment in which we are all participating, also the parents, the students and oneself. […] The rules are because they have to clearly understand what is right and what is wrong (LV_DOC02).

Currently, something that has worked a lot for me […] are cohabitation agreements. Together with the children in a session […] we define […] this regulation and every day while we are in some activity, we remember them, we read them, we give examples of each of the aspects that they mentioned and I ask them to explain to me what will be the coexistence agreements that will work for the job we are going to be in (ETC_DOC11).

With the actions mentioned above, the teachers consider that the students "Have been integrated effectively, we could say, I think that practicing each of these strategies has worked, since they have worked" (LV_DOC01) and that "These strategies are very effective because they help keep the group under control, since they know the consequences that bad behavior may have" (RCM_DOC04).

In addition, teachers promote conflict resolution in students through dialogue. In this regard, the participants share: "I provide spaces to dialogue with them [the students], also give them a space so that they can get closer to you, talk give them confidence and for them to express themselves" (LV_DOC03). "It is about developing a communicative capacity" (LV_DOC02);

and "Seeking to resolve a certain conflict and for the children to support each other, help each other, see each other more as companions, that a stronger bond unites them, a friendship" (LV_DOC01).

Finally, a teacher expresses: "I try to project myself [...] by example, so that the child realizes that a problem is going to be a problem if one wants to see it that way, and not fall into impulse" (LV_DOC03). In this same order of ideas, a teacher shares:

> *A preventive measure is the fact of showing authority, firmness, control and strict adherence to the truth, [...] they detect that there is firmness between what is being promised and what is being fulfilled, [...] but above all they see that there is a lot of congruence between what I tell them and what I do [...]. This strategy works quite well for me; at the end of the school year they realize that they are changing and that they are indeed seeing things in a different way* (LV_DOC02).

Reactive coping strategies

The category of *reactive coping strategies* refers to the actions developed in order to stop situations of violence between students in the classroom or school. This category includes strategies for a) searching for solutions and b) searching for social support (Table 3).

Table 3. Reactive coping strategies

Strategy	Actions	Purpose	Participants
Search for solutions	Immediate intervention	Stop, correct and reduce episodes of violence through dialogue, reassignment of places and the application of consequences	LV_DOC01 LV_DOC02 LV_DOC03 RCM_DOC04 RCM_DOC05 HB_DOC06 NCC_DOC09 BJ_DOC10 ETC_DOC13 ETC_DOC14 ETC_DOC15
	Promote mediation	Establish specific agreements with students about the behavior presented	LV_DOC02 LV_DOC03 RCM_DOC04 NCC_DOC09 BJ_DOC10 ETC_DOC11
Search for social support	Request support with other teachers and principal	Exchange strategies that have worked to confront violence and request the application of the regulation in specific cases	LV_DOC01 RCM_DOC04 ETC_DOC11 ETC_DOC12 ETC_DOC15
	Coordination with external institutions	Request support for holding informative talks aimed at students and parents	LV_DOC01 HB_DOC06 NCC_DOC09 BJ_DOC10 ETC_DOC15
	Activities with parents	Involve parents in informative meetings about the problem and request support to address cases of	LV_DOC01 LV_DOC02 LV_DOC03

		violence in their children	NCC_DOC09
			BJ_DOC10
			ETC_DOC11

Source: self-made

Search for solutions

The search for solutions includes immediate intervention and promoting mediation. According to the teachers, immediate intervention makes possible to stop violence when it occurs. In this regard they express: "The first thing is to separate [the students involved] and make them see the situation that is being generated […] we have to talk in pairs" (LV_DOC02); "I try to keep the students who fight away from each other" (HB_DOC06); "I try to avoid yelling at the child, scold him, […] I look for a way to ensure that if he has already made the mistake, we have to solve it now" (LV_DOC03); Furthermore, another teacher points out:

> *A space is reassigned within the classroom and we work personally with the student* [aggressor] *so that he feels that the teacher is aware of his behavior and also that he shares his interests or concerns with the teacher* (NCC_DOC09).

On the other hand, other teachers point out that after intervening with the student it's necessary to take measures to prevent the situation from occurring again. This is how they express it: "Well, first of all, smooth things over with the children" (LV_DOC03); "talk to him [aggressor], make him understand that what he did was wrong, and then fill out a report " (ETC_DOC14) "Reports of indiscipline are made […] there may even be suspensions to the child, we talk to the principal" (LV_DOC01). Another teacher shares:

> *A verbal questionnaire is done to make the child relax, including reading to him and reminding him of the classroom rules, threatening him with a report, to try to control him. If it is a physical assault, the report is immediately applied, and the regulation, which is suspension, is applied. If it is a verbal attack, it is a reprimand, whether it is an individual talk or a general talk so that the students learn from the situation of their classmates* (ETC_DOC13).

Lastly, teachers share that they observe positive changes in student behavior. In this regard, a teacher expresses: "I can't tell you that we completely solved the problem, but over time […] I have managed to observe positive changes in the students and this is also achieved by involving the parent" (LVDOC03). Likewise, a teacher shares:

In most cases, when this situation is reached, the child improves their behavior because they already see that they can leave the group or they can leave school, which has not happened, but it is always a fear for them, so they begin to improve behaviors (LV_DOC01).

Another action that involves the search for solutions is to promote mediation. The teachers express that the objective of this strategy is to reach specific agreements about the behavior presented with the students involved. In this regard, a teacher shares:

I leave them outside for a while so that the two [aggressor and victim] *can begin to negotiate a solution, why happened what happened, and whether it will happen again or not [...]. Until things are fixed, they do not enter the classroom and they have to explain to me what the arrangement was, under what circumstances they agreed [...]. The fact that they negotiate is very effective because we have seen how people [...], who were hurt by others suddenly become very good friends after talking to each other* (LV_DOC02).

Search for social support

The second reactive strategy that integrates this subcategory is the search for social support, which describes the activities carried out by teachers in coordination with other educational actors, such as other teachers, directors, educational institutions and parents.

I request the support of another teacher, to see what strategies the teacher can offer me to solve this problem. If there is no fix I go to the principal's office and file a report [...]. On occasions when the level of violence and aggression was high, I would give him [student] *some special work and assign him to another group. I would ask the teacher to support me by having the child sit at a desk in the classroom so that he* [student] *will work. This measure was effective since it served both when I had to leave the room so that the student did not fight, and so that the child understood that if he presented inappropriate behavior it would not be tolerated in the group to which he belonged* (ETC_DOC11).

Regarding the support requested from external institutions the teachers share:

Sometimes a situation gets out of control, but [...] we seek support from colleagues, we seek support from the principal, even [...] cases of violence are also channeled through USAER, [...] and by ITSON and support is also received from ULSA (LV_DOC01).

In [this] *school we did not have USAER, we did not had any type of support and due to the big problem that arose with a child, we chose to seek help from outside, first from the principal so that [...] he would be treated with psychological help, and from there we began to invite teachers, we began to invite different people to give talks at school* (ETC_DOC15).

On the other hand, a teacher points out: "Every year we have CIFA programs; they come and give conferences to parents. We manage it with the support of the director […] to help in cases of violence that happen here at school" (BJ_DOC10). The participation of parents in these types of activities allows them to integrate students into the classroom. In this sense, two teachers share: "For me, teaching school for parents, as well as carrying out activities where parents participate, are effective strategies because they help me involve them in improving the children's behavior" (HB_DOC06); "This strategy has worked for me to solve the problems of violence that I have had in the classroom" (NCC_DOC09).

Finally, teachers, in addition to involving parents in informative activities, also request their support once situations of violence occur among their students. This is how they express it: "The father's assistance is requested and we talk to him about the behavior and we ask that the father tell us if the child has told him something about the problem that has arisen" (ETC_DOC11); "I turn to the parents or guardians who are in charge of the children […] talk to the parents so that between the two of us we can remedy the matter, try to solve it and try to help the child, make agreements" (LV_DOC03); "Three reports that the student has repeated, the father is called […] depending on the case of indiscipline" (LV_DOC01) and "A summon is sent to the mother and a commitment is made that the child must behave appropriately within the class […] that those things do not happen again" (ETC_DOC14).

Discussion

The study aimed to identify the coping strategies developed by teachers in primary schools located in vulnerable areas. In this sense, the results of this research suggest that teachers confront violence through preventive and reactive strategies. For example, teachers who approach preventively intervene not only to reduce episodes of violence, but also to comprehensively educate the student. With this, the teacher seeks to develop in the student the ability to self-regulate their behavior, reflect on their actions, live together healthily and be empathetic with their classmates. Likewise, they recognize that these actions improve interpersonal relationships

and are effective in preventing violent acts, which coincides with what was stated by Garandeau et al. (2016) and Sáenz (2017), who point out that this type of strategies have positive results in reducing manifestations of violence between peers.

Another preventive strategy that teachers develop is the establishment of rules of coexistence together with the students, a tool that serves to regulate behavior, avoid episodes of violence and determine the consequences for students who break the rules, as well as the actions to address any situation that arises. This agrees with Valdés et al. (2018), who suggests that school safety actions that involve the creation of structure, such as rules of coexistence and mechanisms to address cases of violence, reduce aggression between students.

On the other hand, teachers also develop reactive strategies that allow them to intervene directly or indirectly with the aim of stopping violent acts. In accordance with the literature, immediate intervention involves strategies such as direct intervention, dialogue with those involved and mediation (Garandeau et al., 2016; Kanh et al., 2012). These results coincide with other studies that suggest these strategies are effective in reducing this type of behavior (Valdés et al., 2018; Yin et al., 2017).

However, teachers point out that after intervening with the student, it is necessary to apply consequences (reports, suspensions, among others) to prevent the situation from being repeated, which coincides with Rigby (2014), who mentions it as direct sanctions. Teachers express that these strategies have allowed them to achieve positive changes in student behavior, although this differs from research that shows that strategies based on authority or control can have negative effects on student behavior (Rigby and Bauman, 2010; Troop-Gordon and Ladd, 2015). One possible reason for these positive changes is parental involvement.

In line with this, teachers report that they rely on parents, since their participation facilitates improvements in student interaction within the classroom. This is consistent with studies that indicate that family involvement is associated with a lower frequency of acts of violence between peers (Valdés et al., 2018). Furthermore, teachers request support from other educational actors, such as other teachers, administrators and institutions, which shows that working together makes it easier for them to address situations of violence between students (Navarro et al., 2017).

Finally, it can be indicated that the previous tools can be grouped into three of the coping strategies indicated by Góngora and Reyes (1998, 2000). Firstly, teachers use direct strategies, both preventive and reactive, that allow them to resolve situations of violence that arise in their classroom, such as immediate intervention, mediation and the application of consequences.

Secondly, they develop revaluation strategies, such as awareness-raising talks, the promotion of healthy coexistence, the resolution of conflicts through dialogue and acting by example, since this allows them not only to confront the problem effectively, but also to learn from the situation. Finally, they implement direct-social strategies through seeking support from directors, teachers, institutions and parents.

Conclusion

The findings found in this study focus on the efforts that teachers make to develop preventive strategies that allow them to reduce cases of school violence among peers, so that they can train the student in a comprehensive manner. However, when serious and unexpected conflicts occur, teachers resort to reactive strategies to stop violent acts immediately. From the teachers' perspective, both strategies are effective in addressing the problem, especially in vulnerable contexts, where students are exposed to continuous learning of violent behavior both on the street and at home, and whose effects are manifested in the classroom.

In other words, teachers confront manifestations of violence in the classroom through various strategies aimed at preventing this problem, such as awareness-raising talks, the personal development of students, and the promotion of social skills. Furthermore, they consider necessary to address cases of violence that arise through reactive strategies, such as immediate intervention and mediation, as well as the search for social support from teachers, directors, institutions and parents.

Finally, it is important to highlight that teacher coping is not enough to reduce the prevalence of school violence among peers, especially in schools located in vulnerable contexts, since it is also a social responsibility of various educational actors, which includes directors, teachers, parents and students, to prevent this serious phenomenon in a comprehensive manner.

Future lines of research

Based on the reflection on the findings, the analysis of preventive coping strategies as a model of teaching intervention aimed at reducing the prevalence of school violence among peers is proposed as a future line of research.

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