

Bystanders and their beliefs to help victims in situations of bullying

Os espectadores e suas crenças para ajudar as vítimas em situações de *bullying*

Los espectadores y sus creencias para ayudar a las víctimas en situaciones de *bullying*

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ABSTRACT

Bullying is a type of violence that manifests itself as unwanted and aggressive, intentional behavior among peers that is repeated over time. The Help Teams (EA's) are groups of students prepared to offer strategies and solutions to the problems that afflict the daily coexistence of children and adolescents in schools. The present research is exploratory, quantitative in nature, and sought to compare the differences perceived in self-efficacy beliefs for helping in bullying situations among adolescents in schools that have implemented the EA's and those that do not. It also compared the self-efficacy beliefs to help between participants of EA's and non-participants. The study had 2,403 students distributed in two groups: 1,301 students from private schools that have the EA's and 1,102 students from schools that do not have such a proposal. The results show that the beliefs to help reached lower rates in schools that have the SAI implemented. This fact is due to the increased perception of the complexity of the phenomenon, which does not exist in schools that do not have the work developed.

Keywords: Bullying. Helping teams. Bystanders. Self-efficacy.

RESUMO

O *bullying* é um tipo de violência que se manifesta como comportamento indesejado e agressivo, intencional entre pares e que se repetem ao longo do tempo. As Equipes de Ajuda (EA's) são grupos de alunos preparados a oferecer estratégias e saídas para os problemas que afligem a convivência diária de crianças e adolescentes nas escolas. A presente pesquisa apresenta caráter exploratório, de natureza quantitativa, e buscou comparar as diferenças percebidas nas crenças de autoeficácia para a ajuda em situações de *bullying* entre adolescentes em escolas que possuem as EA's implantadas e nas que não as possuem. E ainda comparar as crenças de Autoeficácia para ajudar

entre participantes das EA's e não participantes. Participam da pesquisa 2.403 alunos distribuídos em dois grupos: 1.301 alunos de escolas privadas que possuem as EA's e 1.102 alunos de escolas que não há tal proposta. Os resultados apontam que as crenças para ajudar atingiram índices menores em escolas que possuem os SAI implantados. Tal fato se dá pelo aumento da percepção da complexidade do fenômeno, o que não existe, em escolas que não têm o trabalho desenvolvido. **Palavras-chave:** Bullying. Equipes de ajuda. Espectadores. Autoeficácia.

RESUMEN

El bullying es un tipo de violencia que se manifiesta como conductas no deseadas y agresivas, intencionales entre pares y que se repiten en el tiempo. Los Equipos de Ayuda (EA's) son grupos de estudiantes preparados para ofrecer estrategias y soluciones a los problemas que afligen la vida diaria. Esta investigación tiene un carácter exploratorio, de carácter cuantitativo, y buscó comparar las diferencias percibidas en las creencias de autoeficacia para ayudar en situaciones de bullying entre adolescentes de escuelas que tienen EA implantados y aquellos que no. Y también compare las creencias de autoeficacia para ayudar entre los participantes de EA y los no participantes. En la investigación participaron 2.403 alumnos, divididos en dos grupos: 1.301 alumnos de colegios que cuentan con EA y 1.102 alumnos de colegios que no cuentan con dicha propuesta. Los resultados muestran que las creencias para ayudar alcanzaron tasas más bajas en las escuelas que han implantado IAS. Este hecho se debe a la mayor percepción de la complejidad del fenómeno, que no existe, en las escuelas que no tienen el trabajo desarrollado.

Palabras clave: Bullying. Equipos de ayuda. Espectadores. Autoeficacia.

BULLYING, ITS CHARACTERS AND CHARACTERISTICS

According to Olweus (1993, p. 09), bullying is defined as "unwanted and aggressive behavior among children and adolescents that involves an imbalance of power between the parties, which is repeated over time". Avilés (2012) adds that those who suffer such aggressions, remain in a situation of victimization due to the impossibility of getting rid of a self-image with little value. He also states that aggressor and victim are always under the eyes of their equals, who witness the facts.

Cook *et al.* (2010) conducted a survey and examined quantitative studies of school bullying published between the years 1999 to 2006. The survey revealed 82 studies that met the criteria for a meta-analysis. The researchers calculated, within situations indicated as bullying, average prevalence rates of the characters involved of about 20% for bullies, 23% for victims, and 8% for perpetrators/targets (when the same person presented being in both categories simultaneously).

To better understand this dynamic, we need to know the characteristics of each person who is involved in this situation. Recent research suggests that perpetrators are motivated to hostile bullying and harassment behavior by the pursuit of power, high status, and dominance over their peers (Pellegrini, 2002). Although the search for status is closely linked to the idea of collectivity, it is also related to the position that the individual establishes in front of the hierarchy of domination in the peer group - "the result of an evaluation of attributes that produce differences in respect and prominence" (Keltner *et al.*, 2003, p. 265).

In addition to gaining power and social status in front of a group, other research also seems to suggest that aggressors also exhibit low levels of development in behaviors involving ethical and moral issues. For example, it seems that they are competent in moral judgments and discernments between what is right and wrong, but fail in compassion and moral sensitivity (Gini *et al.*, 2011), show low levels of moral motivations (Gasser & Keller, 2009), of empathy (Caravita *et al.*, 2008), and of shame and guilt (Menesini & Camodeca, 2008).

On the one hand, perpetrators are also those who are most morally disengaged (Togetta et al., 2014). Moral disengagement means that they justify their actions by dehumanizing, demeaning the victim, without being able to see that victim as someone of value who deserves respect (Almeida et al., 2010; Gini, 2006).

Those involved in the dynamics of maltreatment as potential aggressors have one point in common: they lack moral sensitivity; being exactly those who are most morally disengaged (Tognetta et al., 2014), justifying their conducts from the minimization of the impacts of violence and the valorization of self over the other.

On the other hand, various research has attempted to examine the factors that make an individual more susceptible to victimization. Research indicates that victims have few of the skills necessary to cope with bullying behavior. For example, they respond to bullying by reinforcing the aggression, that is, by taking a submissive position or responding aggressively (Dempsey et al., 2006). It is not, then, a random condition, which reflects a circumstance of their own devaluation in face of the disrespectful situation, producing in the victimized subject the reduction of his capacity for indignation.

In another investigation, when asked about what they usually felt during the aggressions suffered, it was found that 48% of the answers from boys and girls, targets of bullying, revealed feelings considered conducive to the situation of victimization as conformation, fear, shame or embarrassment. In contrast, only 13.9% of the subjects surveyed argued that they experienced feelings of combat to the systematic bullying, such as indignation, anger or revolt (Tognetta et al., 2010).

BYSTANDERS: THOSE WHO WITNESS THE VIOLENCE

Although Cowie (2014) called the bully and the victim "real characters"-and most current research on bullying focuses on the risk factors and effects of bullying on these characters, one area of investigation that is gaining prominence is the study of the role bystanders play in this situation, as well as how the responses of witnesses contribute to increasing or reducing the problem.

A study that sought to measure the participation and the relationship between aggressors, victims and bystanders in public and private schools in Brazil found that, among all those involved in bullying situations, 15.9% called themselves victims, 19.5% said they had participated in perpetuating the aggressions as perpetrators, and another 62.8% reported being bystanders, just watching the scenes of abuse and mistreatment (Tognetta et al., 2014).

Research indicates that most students have knowledge of the situations and dynamics of bullying (Avilés, 2013; Tognetta, 2012). However, despite their constant presence, unfortunately, witnesses do little to intervene in peer bullying situations. Research by Atlas and Pepler (1998), conducted among Canadian students, revealed that peers intervened in about 10 to 19% of bullying situations, despite being present in more than 85% of episodes.

By analyzing a research led by Thornberg et al. (2012), we will understand why witnesses, disagreeing with witnessed aggression, move towards turning wishes into actions. The qualitative analysis revealed five themes related to the motivation that the bystander has when thinking about helping a victim of the aggression, as shown in the following figure, these being: 1- Interpretation of harm in the bullying situation; 2- Emotional reactions; 3- Social evaluation; 4- Moral evaluation and 5- Self-efficacy belief to intervene.

Given the themes that emerged around the reasons that witnesses have for intervening or refraining from some sort of interposition, the analysis demonstrated three key elements: a potential importance of clear communication to children about how adults expect them to intervene when they witness bullying; a likely effect of education about how bystanders can

intervene that results in an increase in children's self-efficacy as advocates for those who are victimized; finally, the efficacy in encouraging children to believe that bullying is morally wrong.

Self-efficacy beliefs belong to the class of expectations and, as the term itself suggests, expectations linked to the self. Their definition, according to the author: "beliefs in personal abilities to organize and execute the courses of action necessary to produce given accomplishments" (Bandura, 1997, p. 3). It is a belief of personal capacity, established by situational judgment, because it evaluates the competence of the individual in dealing with the specific characteristics of the task or a set of them, in addition to demands about the level of performance and the circumstances in which it occurs (Bandura, 1997).

It is the judgments of self-efficacy of a person that will determine their level of motivation to act - it is in function of them that the individual can mentally anticipate an action, its causes, consequences and results.

Research presented so far allows us to realize how much bystanders have a fundamental role in the systematic of peer bullying situations, and, of equal importance, how much we should look at how these young people are considering themselves capable of acting in these situations, in order to guarantee an environment of respect and trust, helping the victim to overcome this condition.

HELP TEAMS: FIGHTING AND PREVENTING BULLYING

Livingstone *et al.* (2011) conducted a survey in 25 countries that asked youth and adolescents who they told when they experienced violence in school. The results are striking: 52% of young people tell their friends, 42% turn to their parents, and 8% to some other adult who is important. Only 7% report to teachers as a possible solution to their problems. In view of this and thinking about the performance of schoolmates themselves in offering peer support, Cowie (2011), states that Peer Support Systems (SAIs) are groups of students prepared to offer strategies and ways out of problems that afflict daily coexistence.

SAIs have enormous potential to provide young people with opportunities to immediately address bullying in everyday contexts and, on a broader level, become involved in developing policies to ensure that schools are safe and enjoyable places. Many teachers who coordinate such work encourage students to take an active role in problem solving, and there is evidence that this can be perceived as a significant catalyst for change (Cowie *et al.*, 2004).

As a type of SAI, Avilés, Torres, and Vián (2008), described the concept of Help Teams (EA's) that consist of groups formed at school with students who habitually live with each other and thereby identify their own problems, and are considered stable support networks that act cooperatively and collaboratively. The goal is to prioritize the concept of a team, a group of students who work together for the same activity and who can help each other at any given time, regardless of their age.

Avilés (2013, p. 121) defines that the EA's model constitutes, "among the Support Systems, the one that offers the most open participation to the bystanders of bullying within the group of equals".

The results of initial research on the implementation of this system in Brazil (Tognetta *et al.*, 2019) reveal an effective decrease in the problems of systematic bullying, characterized as bullying, from the presence of actions related to the work of EA's.

With this panorama established, we proceed with the description of the methodological procedures of this research.

METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

The present investigation is configured as a quantitative exploratory research, descriptive in nature, which aims to identify possible differences between the beliefs to help victims of bullying among students in schools that have the SAI and in schools where such a procedure does not exist.

Participated in the sample, a total of 3,219 students from Elementary II (6th to 9th grade) who are between 11 and 15 years old, divided into 1,687 students enrolled in private schools that have the SAI, Help Teams, (CEA) and, another 1,532 students, in which support systems are not implemented (SEA). The teaching units are located in the municipalities of São Paulo, Campinas, Americana, Nova Odessa and São João da Boa Vista - all in the State of São Paulo.

The selection of students that make up the sample of this research was done intentionally, by convenience, since the CEA group was chosen because the students had gone through all the stages of the process of implementation and formation of the Help Teams, and is an indispensable criterion for the fulfillment of the objective defined for this research. The implementation of the work in these schools began in 2015. The data for this research were collected in August 2018, therefore, three years after the implementation of the work. As for the SEA group, the composition is due to the fact that these schools do not have systematized work incorporated into their school routine.

This research was approved by the Ethics Committee of the School of Sciences and Languages of the UNESP/Araraquara/SP, through Plataforma Brasil, under process number CAAE: 66076917.6.0000.5400.

PROPOSAL FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A PEER SUPPORT SYSTEM - THE HELP TEAMS AND THE CONSTITUTION OF THE "CEA" GROUP

In Brazil, the implementation of this peer support system (SAI) has been elaborated and undertaken by the Group of Studies and Research in Moral Education, UNESP/UNICAMP (GPEM), based on studies by Professor José Maria Avilés Martínez (University of Valladolid) and adapted to the Brazilian reality (Tognetta, 2021).

The integration of SAI in these schools is the result of a larger project, in which there is a prior involvement of the entire school community, management team, teachers, employees, parents and students, in a program called "Ethical Coexistence". This program, developed in Brazilian schools since 2015, corresponds to a project that establishes in schools, a systematized space, in which morality and socio-educational relationships become objects of rational appropriation by teachers, which aims at the development of good coexistence and constructive resolution of interpersonal conflicts.

Besides the whole formative process, the actions of the school are basically based on the insertion of a subject in the weekly curriculum of the classes that belong to the Elementary II (EFII) - 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th grades - whose objective is to establish an institutionalized and systematized space so that the themes related to ethical and moral coexistence are also discussed and reflected with the students, besides the moral practices, which according to Puig (2004, p. 63) are "[...] ritualized ways of solving morally relevant situations". Therefore, there is intentionally in the moral practices, the presence of virtues and expression of values - the major object of the program.

In order for the "Ethical Coexistence" classes to be, in fact, a moment built on solid theoretical bases, the project also includes moments of study and training for the tutors (teachers who teach these classes), so that the issues related to the application of moral practices in the classes are previously studied and discussed by the group.

It is in these spaces that these teachers insert the activities related to the school bullying theme, and it is these contents that will give origin to the process of election of the students who will compose the Help Teams (Tognetta, 2021).

RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

To achieve the highlighted objective, the instrument used was constructed in two parts. The first one consists of a questionnaire with closed-ended questions about self-efficacy beliefs and was adapted from the studies of Correa *et al.* (2016) to discuss self-efficacy beliefs in situations of social aggression.

There are 21 questions, representing different types of bullying experienced by students at school that constitute a 6-point Likert scale, where 1 indicates "completely unable" and 6 "completely able". As shown in the following frame:

Frame 1 - Questionnaire applied

How would you JUDGE YOURSELF CAPABLE of helping a friend or colleague...	1	2	3	4	5	6
1... who has had received messages on a cell phone or internet in which he/she has been insulted, threatened, offended or frightened.						
2... who was filmed and they used that video to threaten or blackmail the colleague.						
3... who has had their pictures or images spread on the internet or cell phone.						
4... who has had intimate images or photos spread on the internet or cell phone.						
5... who has had their belongings broken, stolen, or hidden.						
6... who has been threatened and is afraid to stay in school.						
7... who has been beaten by one or more students.						
8... who has been insulted or offended.						
9... who has been spoken ill of, commented on, or shown something personal that he/she did not want others to see or know about.						
10... who was forced to do something that he/she didn't want to do (bring money, do homeworks, pay for snacks, etc.).						
11... who has been discriminated against, teased, made fun of for wearing glasses, being short, being tall, being thin, being overweight, being black, being white, being redheaded, etc.						
12... who has been discriminated against, teased, made fun of for being a woman, man, gay, or lesbian.						
13... who has been accused of something they didn't do.						
14... who has been the victim of blackmail by peers.						
15... who has been excluded from a group, game, party or other activity.						
16... who has been ignored by classmates pretending that he/she doesn't exist.						
17... who has been prevented from participating in activities and games at school.						
18... who has been teased or made fun of in a way that made him/her feel uncomfortable or embarrassed.						
19... who has been nicknamed with something he/she dislikes.						
20... who has had lies made up about him/her.						
21... who has been spoken badly of by others.						

Source: Souza (2018)

This instrument was submitted to a validation process (Souza, 2018), through two statistical methods: AFE (exploratory factor analysis) and Cronbach's Alpha analysis.

After the AFE, two factors were identified: Factor 01 (F1) which comprises questions 05 to 21 and is composed of the items about with bullying situations. And Factor 02 (F2), which comprises questions 01 to 04 - involving cyberbullying situations - in all items, there was convergence that the main characteristic among them was the point that bullying happened in a virtual environment ('that he/she received messages on his/her cell phone...'; 'that he/she was filmed...'; 'pictures spread over the internet...' etc.).

From this analysis, two scores were composed, one for each factor, by adding the answers of the items corresponding to each factor. The higher the score, the greater the person's ability to help his/her friend in that situation. Taking into account that each of the questions had six levels (from 1 to 6) that could be marked, we have, then, that in F1 a student could reach from 17 to 102 points, and in F2, from 6 to 24.

To identify the reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient (α) was used. According to Hair *et al.* (2005), reliability is the degree to which a set of indicators of a latent variable (construct) is consistent in its measurements. It is very important to be able to assess whether the instrument used in the research can infer or measure what it really intends to, giving relevance to the research. Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient is a commonly used measure of reliability (that is, the evaluation of the internal consistency of questionnaires) for a set of two or more construct indicators (Bland & Altman, 1997). Values of α range from 0 to 1.0; the closer to 1, the greater reliability among the indicators. According to this methodology, the factor analyses of the instrument revealed the following α : for Factor 1, the coefficient value was 0.890, while for F2, it showed 0.958, demonstrating great reliability in the consistency of this questionnaire.

RESULTS

Are there differences in self-efficacy beliefs to help in bullying situations between students in schools where SAI has been implemented and others where such work does not exist? And also: Are there differences in beliefs to help between students who are part of the teams and those who are not? These were the questions that generated the analysis and the questions in this research. To this end, we composed two samples, as described above: the group CEA (With Help Teams), which is composed of 1,301 subjects from schools that have the SAI implemented, and the group SEA (Without Help Teams), with 1,102 subjects from schools that do not have the system, as shown in the following table:

Table 1 - Descriptive CEA and SEA samples

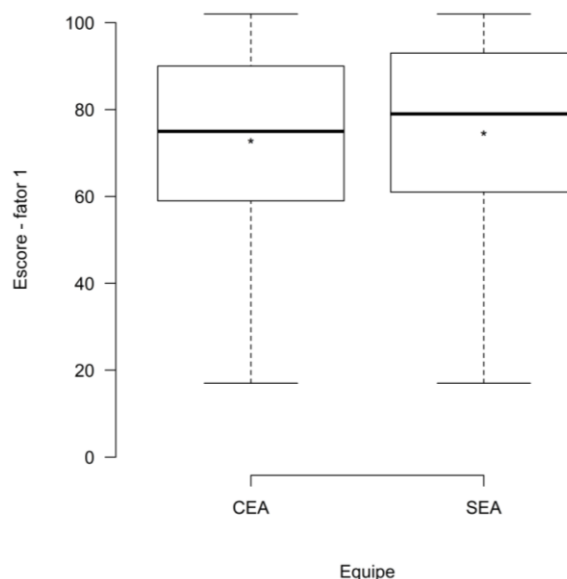
VARIABLE	TOTAL CASES	PERCENTUAL
TEAM		
CEA	1301	54.14
SEA	1102	45.86
GENDER		
FEMALE	1209	50.31
MALE	1194	49.69

Source: Prepared by the authors

In the analysis of the scores obtained by the two groups, we obtained a decrease in the scores of the CEA group, compared to the SEA group, thus pointing to a small decrease in beliefs

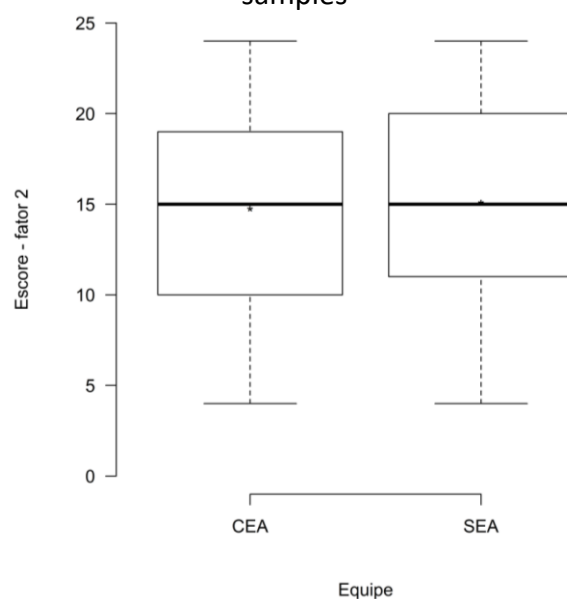
after the implementation of the SAI, both in bullying situations (Factor 01) and in cyberbullying situations (Factor 02), as shown in the figures below:

Figure 1 - Variation of scores obtained in bullying situations between the CEA and SEA samples



Source: Prepared by the authors

Figure 2 - Variation of scores obtained in cyberbullying situations between the CEA and SEA samples



Source: Prepared by the authors

For comparisons between the groups, analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was proposed, which in addition to comparing groups, allows for the adjustment of covariates (Montgomery, 2000). All models were adjusted by gender.

In the following table, the differences in scores between groups and genders are described. It is possible to see the evidence of difference between the groups on the decreased self-efficacy belief for help in bullying situations in the CEA sample (the score was 2.17 points lower for this group).

Table 2 - Comparison between the CEA and SEA samples in the scores obtained in Factor 01 - Bullying Situations

Factor 1				
Comparison	Expected difference	Confidence Interval (95%)		Value-p
CEA – SEA	-2.17	-3.87	-0.47	0.01

Source: Prepared by the authors

It can be observed that when we take into account the total sample, disregarding the variable gender, the estimated difference between them is -2.17, indicating that there is a difference ($p= 0.01$) between the groups.

When analyzing the indicators of Factor 02 - cyberbullying situations - we observe that according to table 04, there was only a difference between the groups when considering only the girls.

Table 3 - Comparison between the CEA and SEA samples in the scores obtained in Cyberbullying Situations

Factor 2				
Comparison	Expected difference	Confidence Interval (95%)		Value-p
CEA – SEA	-0.43	-0.89	0.04	0.07

Source: Prepared by the authors

The value $p=0.07$ points out that we cannot say that there is a difference between the two groups (CEA and SEA), since the confidence interval (which is 95%) transits between positive and negative values (-0.89 and 0.04).

Analyzing the values found, we can say that, even though the data point to a negative difference between the CEA and SEA groups, in beliefs to help in bullying situations, the value of the estimated difference (-2.17) is very low, compared to the total score that the participants could achieve.

Thus, we can understand that, contrary to our hypothesis, there is no relevant difference in self-efficacy beliefs for helping in (cyber)bullying situations between students from schools that have the SAI (help teams) implemented and schools that have not implemented this type of work.

Are there differences in beliefs to help between students who are part of the teams and those who are not?

Faced with this questioning, we also compared, through the same analyses used so far, the possible difference in the belief to help between students who are part of the AEs and those who do not participate only considering the CEA sample.

For this, we counted on the sample of 1,175 subjects who do not participate in the AEs and 126 participants, chosen by their peers to participate in the EAs, as the following table points out:

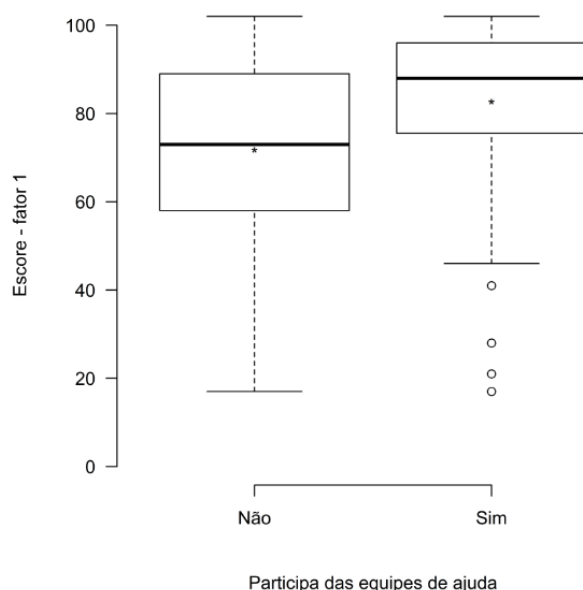
Table 4 - Descriptive of the percentage of students participating in EAs

Variable Gender	Participating in the help teams	
	No	Yes
Female	597 (50.81%)	85 (67.46%)
Male	578 (49.19%)	41 (32.54%)

Source: Prepared by the authors

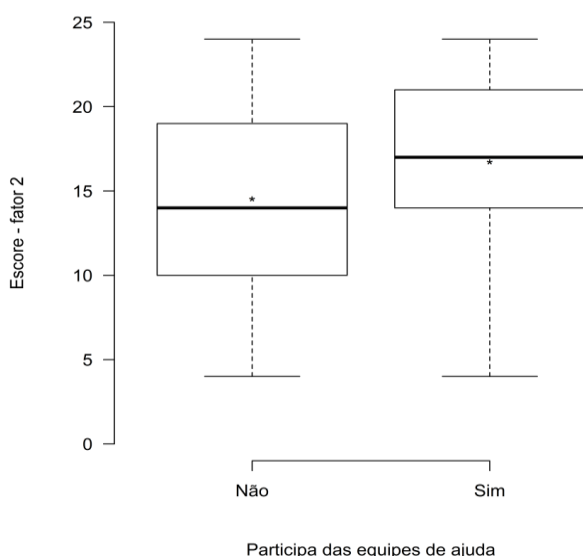
In this variable, as we will see in the subsequent figures, the concentration of students who indicate high self-efficacy beliefs for helping is much higher among students who are part of EA than among students who are not active in this work, for both bullying and cyberbullying

Figure 3 - Variation of scores obtained in bullying situations between schools that have and schools that do not have AEs



Source: Prepared by the authors

Figure 4 - Variation in cyberbullying scores between schools that have and schools that do not have EAs



Source: Prepared by the authors

In the comparison between the groups as shown in the following table, both in bullying and cyberbullying situations, we obtained significant differences between the two groups, positively for those who participate in the EA ($p < 0.01$), that is, the students who make up the help groups see themselves as more effective when it comes to intervening to support victims of bullying.

Table 5 - Comparison between the samples participating and not participating in EAs in the scores obtained in Factor 01 - Bullying Situations

Comparison	Expected difference	Confidence Interval (95%)		Value-p
Participating EA - Not participating EA	11.16	7.09	15.22	<0.01

Source: Prepared by the authors

The significant difference in comparing the self-efficacy beliefs for helping between students who are part of the helping teams and students who are not, corroborates all the research we have used so far. According to Avilés, Torres, and Vián (2008), 84% of students believe that being part of a help team has changed their way of thinking, acting, and analyzing situations, alluding to changes such as those described by themselves: "now I focus more on my classmates' behavior," "I feel more qualified to help," "I listen to others better," "I put myself more in the other's shoes." Another 75% believe that being part of EA's has helped to improve communication with others.

RESULTS DISCUSSION

The ability of the bystander to help the victim in cases of bullying has been widely discussed in the literature (Boulton & Underwood, 1992; Gini *et al.*, 2008; Rigby & Johnson, 2006). So has the effectiveness of Support Systems in combating this form of violence (Avilés, 2006; Cowie & Fernández, 2006; Cowie & Jennifer, 2007; Smith & Sharp, 1994). However, correlating the aspects of how much SAI interferes with the ability of those witnessing the bullying to intervene in ways that help the victim overcome this problem is not something that has been empirically tested.

What we discuss here is how much existing research on the interfaces of this situation can help us explain the data we have found. It is known by the entire academic community that investigates the consequences of implementing SAI that it reduces the number of bullying incidents (Smith & Levan, 1995) and that the actions of student protagonists improve the quality of the school climate and coexistence (Avilés, 2017).

Let us see that, on the one hand, according to these same researches, the reduction of bullying problems or other types of bullying is the result of a long working process and that, therefore, the evaluation of a program requires a longitudinal effort. On the other hand, these investigations report that the improvement in coexistence is the result of progress in providing help and, thus, contribute to the empowerment of the students themselves who are part of the EA (Avilés *et al.*, 2008; Naylor & Cowie, 1999) as we will also see in this analysis later on.

That said, there seems to be a greater "sense of responsibility" among bystanders in schools that do not have SAI implemented, and, as a consequence, the belief that they are able to help are also greater. It is greater in comparison with models in which there are people chosen to help, given the short time that the teams have been active in promoting help and improving the coexistence towards one of the objectives of the Teams: the construction of co-responsibility among its members and the other students.

With a short time of implementation and institutionalization of the program, it seems evident that there is still a "transference" of the commitment to provide the necessary support that can occur for three reasons: the first is that if there are students who are prepared to act in these

cases, it is believed that they are more capable than others. The second is that, due to the presence of the AEs, those who witness the scenes of violence do not see the need to intervene. And, finally, the third is that the period of time investigated was not enough to fulfill another objective of the school's Teams of Help: the process of involving the other students in the actions of helping and promoting coexistence.

Thus, for these reasons, self-efficacy beliefs tend to remain the same, or even decrease, as we have seen here, due to the existence of someone better prepared to do it.

CONCLUSION

Thornberg *et al.* (2012) related self-efficacy to intervene in cases of bullying with possible variables that would influence this ability. The qualitative analysis of the data presented some themes that connect with the ability to provide help. Among them, moral evaluation, which refers to the observer's judgment or analysis of a bullying situation in acting, in terms of thinking it right or wrong, as well as in evaluating and attributing self-responsibility. In this sense, the authors concluded that this subconstruct is related to how much bystanders thought they were responsible for helping the victim in various situations and were not committed to assisting the victim. One student even reported, "I saw it, but it is not my responsibility to help".

Considering that the framework presented by the authors makes a direct relationship between moral evaluation and self-efficacy belief, we are led to think that the lower the attribution of self-responsibility, the less the bystander thinks he is effective to intervene. This could explain our results: the presence of EA's in schools may be the justification for other students not feeling responsible for taking care of their peers and, consequently, having their self-efficacy belief to help diminished. This lack of "co-responsibility" can be explained, in our case, in Brazil, by the short time of implementation of this SAI. The changes felt in the educational community regarding the need for other spaces for student protagonism are still a small proportion of the expected changes. Few actions are still developed in Brazilian school environments to reiterate student autonomy and, therefore, to empower everyone in their actions at school. In the case of the schools where we implemented the EA's, other actions, such as the introduction of coexistence classes, class assemblies, and dialogue rounds that would instigate such student participation, are as recent as the Help Team itself.

We could see that the adolescents trained to develop characteristics and skills to observe, welcome, and help those who need it, fulfill the role they have been entrusted with: they, indeed, have greater capacity and a belief that they can succeed in intervention, in order to help boys and girls overcome situations in which they are belittled, bullied, and excluded from being among their peers.

That said, it is necessary to think that the insertion of the new themes in the Law of Directives and Bases for Education (LDB) n. 9.394/1996 (Brasil, 1996), points out that the work with moral values - the practices of a daily life where people's daily violence is discussed, such as discrimination, prejudice, social injustice, and many others - must be established within a program that can be intentional and planned. Yes, because bullying and violence at school cannot be fought with punctual actions.

Our research suggests, therefore, more than speeches. It is necessary to go beyond the "religion classes", the "lectures" by specialists or the posters scattered around the schools. Our results allow us to think about the characteristics of those who watch bullying scenes and don't act: it is necessary that the school gives meaning to these practices by establishing a daily routine in which the actions of protagonism are not forgotten in the face of the contents that fall on the vestibular exams. That said, it should be understood that living together is "living conflicts" and that, therefore, one does not learn about coexistence issues in a single year. Thus, the "young age" of our

work of implementing SAI's in Brazil may justify the need for more time for self-efficacy beliefs to help to become stronger.

The possible limitations of the instrument used and the short period of time for the consolidation of the proposal also denote the need for the work of the Help Teams to be institutionally recognized by the schools in which they work. Only this way will it be possible that the fight against bullying and other violence that affects girls and boys in our country can be won: by promoting coexistence in its highest sense - the well-being of all.

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