

Chapter 7

Use of Pedagogical Interventions to Improve Well-Being in Physical Education: A Pilot Study

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ABSTRACT

Living in society requires establishing social relationships, which often lead to disagreements and conflicts. To promote well-being among secondary school students, a quasi-experimental study evaluated two pedagogical interventions. Using a pre-post-test design, data were collected from four natural groups: two engaged in a Motor Conduct Education focused on socio-affective skills, while the other two followed a Sport Education approach lacking social interaction emphasis. The results indicated significant improvements in conflict management and positive emotional intensity among participants in the Motor Conduct Education group, particularly benefiting females in emotional stability and males in conflict perception. These findings suggest that integrating socio-affective education effectively enhances both emotional well-being and conflict resolution skills in secondary school students.

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INTRODUCTION

The disruption in school coexistence is recognized as an important challenge in education in the twenty-first century (Anabalón et al., 2024; Zembylas, 2011). Conflicts in the school environment, especially in secondary schools, are becoming more frequent and make it difficult to create an environment conducive to teaching (Small & Dressler Tetrick, 2001). Recent studies have identified the role of physical education as a significant space for addressing such challenges, offering innovative pedagogical approaches to managing conflicts and fostering coexistence (Gaviria & Castejón, 2013; Lavega-Burgués et al., 2023).

In addition, the increase in cultural and social diversity in the classroom has generated new challenges in the management of coexistence (Anabalón et al., 2024; Small & Dressler Tetrick, 2001). At the same time, adolescence is a critical period for the formation of personal identity and psychosocial development, characterized by emotional instability and exploratory conducts (Bermúdez, 2017; Berry et al., 2011; Betrán, 2005; Skoe & von der Lippe, 2005; Somerville, 2013; Upreti, 2017). During this time, any sense of discomfort, conflict, or lack of socio-affective support can have a negative impact (Berry et al., 2011; Campbell et al., 1997; Skoe & von der Lippe, 2005; Upreti, 2017).

Peer group relationships play a crucial role in the construction of identity, often more valued than cognitive experiences (Bernal Guerrero & König Bustamante, 2017; Skoe & von der Lippe, 2005). These findings underscore the importance of addressing socio-affective needs and fostering positive interpersonal relationships to support adolescents' healthy development (Bermúdez, 2017; Bernal Guerrero & König Bustamante, 2017).

Recent research highlights the value of implementing innovative methodologies, such as Motor Conduct Education (MCE) and the Sport Education Model (SEM), to promote inclusive school climates and enhance coexistence (Pla-Pla et al., 2025). These approaches aim to address socio-affective needs while equipping students with conflict resolution skills and fostering a sense of community (Gil-Arias et al., 2021; Lavega-Burgués et al., 2023).

Current educational models, more focused on emotional education and the development of socio-affective skills, have placed the management of coexistence as a key pedagogical objective to train responsible citizens capable of resolving conflicts peacefully (Caurín Alonso et al., 2019; Hessel et al., 2008; Trianes Torres & García Correa, 2002). Thus, the need to promote a positive and inclusive school climate is a priority in education in the twenty-first century.

The United Nations (2015), in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, highlights the importance of generating learning experiences based on school coexistence through the three goals related to community coexistence, “Good health and well-being” (SDG3), “Quality education” (SDG4) and “Peace, justice and strong institutions” (SDG16), which emphasize the need to promote peaceful societies, respectful, diverse and democratic.

Regarding the Spanish territory, according to the Spanish Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport in the proposal of the Strategic Plan for School Coexistence (MECD, 2017), it is of special relevance to provide schools with social strategies that allow them to address conflict situations with respect. This implies providing many socio-affective experiences and situations that generate tension between the participants, which through education favour the development of social skills and competencies aimed at the relational and emotional well-being of future citizens.

Traditionally, the school has focused on cognitive aspects, neglecting socio-affective education, essential for the prevention of violence and the integral development of students (Anabalón et al., 2024; Falunina & Gerasimov, 2021; Trianes Torres & García Correa, 2002).

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