






## UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES DO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS JUSTIFY THE USE OF VIOLENCE IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION?<sup>1</sup>

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### Abstract

Violence reflects socioeconomic and cultural issues, becoming a growing concern in Brazil. This study investigated groups of students from Curitiba-PR with the purpose of analyzing how they interpret and justify the use of violence, especially for conflict resolution, as well as addressing the relevance of restorative practices as a non-violent alternative in conflict management. This study is characterized as action research, with data obtained through focus groups among high school students at CE Teobaldo Kletemberg. A closed questionnaire with open questions was also applied to students at CE Protásio de Carvalho. Through the collected data, it was possible to observe how violence is intensely inserted in the school environment. The students' narratives pointed out that their involvement in conflicts is influenced by emotions. Therefore, the difficulty of communicating their feelings during a discussion can lead them to physically express their emotions, through aggression. In this context, Restorative Justice emerges as an alternative, promoting dialogue, reflection, and rapprochement between victim and offender in relation to the peaceful composition of conflicts in the school space

**Keywords:** Violence; Conflicts; High school; School space; Restorative justice.

### How to cite

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## EM QUE CIRCUNSTÂNCIAS OS ESTUDANTES DO ENSINO MÉDIO JUSTIFICAM O USO DA VIOLÊNCIA NA SOLUÇÃO DE CONFLITOS?

**Abstract:** A violência reflete questões socioeconômicas e culturais, tornando-se uma preocupação crescente no Brasil. O presente estudo investigou grupos de estudantes de Curitiba-PR com o propósito de analisar como eles interpretam e justificam o uso da violência, principalmente para resolução de conflitos, assim como, abordar a relevância das práticas restaurativas como alternativa não violenta no manejo dos conflitos. O presente estudo caracteriza-se como uma pesquisa-ação, com dados obtidos através de grupos focais entre os estudantes do Ensino Médio do CE Teobaldo Kletemberg. Também foi realizada a aplicação de questionário fechado e com perguntas abertas junto aos estudantes do CE Protásio de Carvalho. Por meio dos dados coletados, foi possível observar como a violência está intensamente inserida no ambiente escolar. As narrativas dos estudantes apontaram que seus envolvimento em conflitos são influenciados por emoções. Logo, a dificuldade de comunicar seus sentimentos durante uma discussão podem levá-los a expressarem fisicamente as emoções, por meio da agressão. Neste contexto, a Justiça Restaurativa surge como alternativa, promovendo diálogo, reflexão e aproximação entre vítima e ofensor em relação à composição pacífica de conflitos no espaço escolar.

**Palavras-chave:** Violência; Conflitos; Ensino Médio; Espaço escolar; Justiça restaurativa.

## ¿EN QUÉ CIRCUNSTÂNCIAS LOS ESTUDIANTES DE EDUCACIÓN SECUNDARIA JUSTIFICAN EL USO DE LA VIOLENCIA PARA RESOLVER CONFLICTOS?

**Resumen:** La violencia refleja cuestiones socioeconómicas y culturales, convirtiéndose en una preocupación creciente en Brasil. El presente estudio investigó grupos de estudiantes de Curitiba-PR con el propósito de analizar cómo interpretan y justifican el uso de la violencia, principalmente para la resolución de conflictos, así como abordar la relevancia de las prácticas restaurativas como alternativa no violenta en el manejo de los conflictos. El presente estudio se caracteriza como una investigación-acción, con datos obtenidos a través de grupos focales entre los estudiantes de Educación Media del CE Teobaldo Kletemberg. También se realizó la aplicación de un cuestionario cerrado y con preguntas abiertas junto a los estudiantes del CE Protásio de Carvalho. A través de los datos recolectados, fue posible observar cómo la violencia está intensamente inserta en el ambiente escolar. Las narrativas de los estudiantes señalaron que sus involucramientos en conflictos son influenciados por emociones. Por lo tanto, la dificultad de comunicar sus sentimientos durante una discusión puede llevarlos a expresar físicamente las emociones, a través de la agresión. En este contexto, la Justicia Restaurativa surge como alternativa, promoviendo diálogo, reflexión y acercamiento entre víctima y ofensor en relación a la composición pacífica de conflictos en el espacio escolar.

**Palabras clave:** Violencia; Conflictos; Enseñanza Secundaria; Espacio escolar; Justicia restaurativa.

## Introduction

Over the years, violence has become one of the biggest concerns of the Brazilian population, particularly due to its intense presentation on social media, which features reports on violent events. These events are structured through a sociocultural basis that engenders violence and intensifies the belief in Brazilian society that violence happens and spreads freely throughout the country. In view of this, it becomes more likely that a large portion of Brazilians reflect that there are no suitable measures to remedy situations of violence, since the measures taken by the State are not capable of solving them in the long term (Pino, 2007).

The article presented is a partial result of a report produced in 2024 (the data from this report were collected in 2022) submitted to the Institutional Program for Scientific Initiation Scholarships of the Pontifical Catholic University of Paraná (PIBIC-PUCPR)<sup>5</sup>. The finalized report is part of the action research project focused on high school students in public schools in the municipality of Curitiba. The action research in schools is part of a broader research project entitled "The Multiple Faces of Human Rights Violations in Paraná", linked to the Social Sciences Course, to the Master's Program in Human Rights and Public Policies - Research Line Human Rights and Public Policies - of the Pontifical Catholic University of Paraná. The project is approved by the University's Research Ethics Committee - CAAE: 8343617.5.0000.0020-Proof Number: 5,587,165/2022.

The execution of individual research projects approved by the Institutional Program for Scientific Initiation Scholarships of the Pontifical Catholic University of Paraná has the participation of undergraduate students who, during the term of their respective research plans (12 months), are awarded with Scientific Initiation scholarships in the following modalities: Voluntary Scientific Initiation (ICV), CNPq and Fundação Araucária. The same research theme was contemplated through a social innovation research project, an action-research modality in schools, submitted and approved in the MCTIC/CNPq Universal Call 2021, granting a CNPq research productivity grant (2022-2025)<sup>6</sup>

The study investigated the various scenarios in which high school students from certain public schools in Curitiba - PR justify the use of violence as a tool for conflict resolution and, at the same time, addressed the relevance of restorative practices as a non-violent alternative in

<sup>5</sup> Title of the final PIBIC report submitted and approved: "In what circumstances do high school students justify the use of violence in conflict resolution?". The report in question has not yet been published.

<sup>6</sup> Professor Cezar Bueno de Lima - proponent and responsible for carrying out the project with the CNPq.

conflict management. In the literature, there are different meanings of the word violence, since its conception changes in a given context. It is possible to point out the complexity of the theme and how youth is understood when related to violence, especially the peripheral Brazilian youth.

The use of the word violence is naturalized in today's society, the same definition is responsible for characterizing various events, for example, communication channels display violent events through information about crimes, robberies, homicides, robberies followed by death, femicides and others. However, the different forms of violence in the urban environment are related to scenarios linked to the context of current Brazilian society and conditioned by multiple factors.

Therefore, it is not possible to characterize its meaning in a concrete way, regardless of institutional, legal, social and even individual parameters. Summarizing its meaning to a solid and immutable concept restricts the understanding of the singularities that configure different communities, the transformations and historical characteristics. Thus, there is the occurrence of different forms of violence linked to numerous events and norms (Bonamigo, 2008).

Through the literature used during the production of the research, it is possible to obtain an understanding of the wide complexity surrounding violence. Fachinetto (2010) denotes the importance of problematizing the scenario that young people face in Brazilian society, especially with regard to violence, youth is subject to various vulnerabilities, which make them both victims and offenders.

It is essential that the school promotes and encourages the construction of students' identity, through forms of teaching that emphasize respect for the differences experienced in the school community. When there is no adequate management of diversity in the institution, conflicts become evident, and when these are managed inadequately, they generate violence in the classroom. In order to contribute to the non-violent resolution of conflicts between students in the school space, the first section of the article exposes the importance of reflecting on Restorative Justice and how it can contribute to creating peaceful instruments for the school community to deal with conflicts.

The second section presents the results of the field research in schools, how students perceive violence at school, how they resolve their own conflicts and whether there is knowledge about other forms of conflict resolution. The third section discusses the data presented and ends the article by drawing attention to raising awareness among young people about the effects of school violence on the construction of their identities.

## **Restorative Justice and its applicability in conflict resolution at school**

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It is noticeable that school is a space where teachers and students spend most of their day. As such, it is an environment full of ideas, beliefs, collective construction of knowledge and exchange of experiences between subjects, and the existence of conflict is inevitable. In this context, the school community demands the need to establish practices that favor non-violent communication, both in the classroom and in other environments of the institution. Therefore, it is possible to recognize in the theoretical and methodological foundations of Restorative Justice a possibility of helping to create a culture of peace in the school environment (Dias, 2016).

Therefore, it is essential that, within the scope of its competences, the pedagogical coordination carries out activities that contribute to improving the level of basic education, and that these should be based on democratic foundations and ethical principles, present in the school's political pedagogical project.

The school team is challenged to think about and create strategies aimed at preparing adolescents to develop reasoning, make choices and weigh the consequences, exercise their rights, take care of their health, adopt a critical sense, make use of communication and information technologies, and consequently carry out an education focused on citizenship (Dias, 2016).

From this perspective, RJ<sup>7</sup> can be outlined as a practice that aims to help restore dignity through dialogue between the victim, the offender and the community. Communication is essential for a better understanding of the conflict since, through reflection and empathy, the offender has the freedom to reflect on the consequences of their actions and have awareness before offending another person (Andreucci; Felício, 2019).

The restorative circle is a promising space for achieving this purpose. It enables the resolution of school conflicts through reflection (the motivation and causes of the actions of each of those involved), building empathy (the ability to put oneself in the other's place), empowerment (the possibility of solving one's problems), a sense of justice (the feeling of finding the best and most egalitarian solution) (Baroni, 2011).

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<sup>7</sup> Justiça Restaurativa.

It also enables the outcome of positive actions (in which each one commits to carrying out a positive action, which favors the other, so that it is possible to re-establish the corrupted bonds). This method is an assertive way of resolving conflicts, which enables the formation of cooperative spaces, communication and promotes the reduction of violent events in the school environment (Baroni, 2011).

To carry out this restorative technique, three stages are necessary: pre-circle, circle and post-circle. The authors Machado, Brancher and Todeschini (2008) describe the initial moment as a pre-circle, in which the first contact with those involved in the circle is made. The coordinator is responsible for obtaining all available facts about the motivation of the conflict, and if possible, carrying out the reading of documents integrated by informal and professional contacts related to the initial handling of the conflict. Therefore, these actions aim to facilitate the coordinator's perspective on what happened during the situation.

It is essential to highlight the role of the coordinator in the first phase of the method, since he is the main one in acting to create the conditions that will enable an adequate explanation of the conflict, even if there are discrepancies between the participants (author, recipient and community) regarding the details.

The Restorative Circle is composed of three different moments. In the first, which the authors call "Mutual Understanding", the focus is directed to the current needs of the members regarding the event that occurred. The coordinator should encourage each participant to express how they feel about the situation and its consequences, in addition to asking what the other absorbed from what was said by their colleague and, finally, ensuring that everyone felt understood (Machado; Brancher; Todeschini, 2008).

In the second moment, "Self-Responsibility", the central point is on the needs of the participants at the time of the events and guides the members to self-responsibility. It is common for the author of the event to start this dialogue, expressing himself and allowing others present to understand him and confirming this understanding. The other participants also act in this same dynamic and at the end, everyone must affirm that they have made all the statements they intended and felt heard (Machado; Brancher; Todeschini, 2008).

Finally, at the moment entitled "Agreement", the needs of the participants to be met take center stage. Thus, the coordinator guides the members to establish and suggest concrete attitudes that can change the conflict situation. In this way, a commitment must be established that involves realistic and clear deadlines for the fulfillment of these actions, meeting the needs expressed by the participants (Machado; Brancher; Todeschini, 2008).



In addition, the coordinator must end by writing a term of agreement signed by those present. This term must contain the date, time and place where the Post-Circle meeting will take place. It is important that the Restorative Procedures Guide form, filled in according to each stage of the process, contains the entire step-by-step process up to the present moment (Machado; Brancher; Todeschini, 2008).

To finalize the Restorative Procedure, the Post-Circle must be applied. This is a meeting with the purpose of evaluating and reflecting on the fulfillment of the agreement established in the Restorative Circle. Those present debate the satisfaction of everyone in relation to the Action Plans, in addition to analyzing what results were achieved. If, throughout the discussion, the need to revisit the agreement is identified, members can suggest changes and new directions.

Thus, it is the coordinator's responsibility to record the meeting, the suggestions (if any) and communicate the developments of the process. It is possible that the members conclude that the agreement has been fully complied with, ending the procedure. However, when this is not the case, alternatives must be discussed to continue resolving the conflict.

The restorative circle presents itself as an alternative to the use of a violent and punitive practice in the school space; the violent practice only leads to the occurrence of more violent situations in the classroom. It is possible to observe that everyone involved in the conflict, by having the autonomy to dialogue, listen and witness everyone's feelings, can more easily develop a sense of empathy and assertiveness. Therefore, the use of violence as an alternative to conflict resolution must be denied.

## Method

Action research is a type of social research that is elaborated and carried out in close relation to an action or the resolution of a group problem, where the researchers and the participants of the context that is analyzed are directly involved in the process, in a cooperative and interactive way (Thiollent, 1985 apud Baldissera, 2012). Therefore, the research project focused on the direct action of the research team with high school students from public schools.

In this project, the construction of concepts, methods and techniques aimed at social intervention recognizes the "process of self-regulation of the object of study", that is, a moment of dialogue and mediation of knowledge and social practices between individuals, groups, and institutions "with the objective of promoting changes" in the context of micro-social reality.

Action research fulfills this requirement because it is a type of research that, according to Thiollent (2002, p. 14):

[Has] an argumentative [or deliberative] nature [contrary] to the traditional conception of research, in which logical-formal and statistical criteria are valued. [Seeks] to establish a link between [...] hypothetical reasoning [,] requirements of proof, [without belittling] the arguments of researchers and participants. [Action research is] a type of social research with an empirical basis that is conceived and carried out in close association with an action or with the resolution of a collective problem and in which <sup>1</sup> the researchers and the participants representative of the situation or problem are involved in a cooperative or participatory <sup>2</sup> way.

Regarding the choice of research techniques, the use of focus groups offers qualitative information, reveals experiences, perceptions, ideas, feelings and difficulties experienced by the groups of interviewees. Based on the construction of a previous script and called mobilizing questions, the research subjects explain and/or debate and socialize their experiences, interacting about their ideas in order to unravel the object of study, as well as reveal new phenomena and the relationship between them (Cruz Neto; Moreira; Sucena, 2002).

In the case of young students, conducting focus groups helps to understand and explain values and interests that give meaning to existence and to the construction of individual and collective relationships and actions considered significant.

## Approach

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The study carried out is a qualitative research; this research category aims to investigate, describe, and understand its object of study in its own social phenomenon. Based on the analysis of individual or group experiences. These experiences can be associated with biographical and cultural stories or everyday practices, where reports, social interactions, and communications are analyzed (Barbour, 2009). Regarding the source of information, field research deepens the explanation of a specific reality, requiring direct contact with the researched population, via interaction through focus groups and the construction of restorative circles.



## Procedures and data collection instruments

The synthesis of the speeches presented in the results constitutes the field research (focus groups) in the year 2022, together with students enrolled in the 3rd year of the morning period of the Teobaldo Eduardo Kletemberg State College; in total, 10 students and 2 researchers from the research group were present (who also participated as mediators of the discussion). At the same school, in a second moment, the focus group was held with 10 students from the 1st year of the night period, 10 students from the 2nd year of the night period, and 2 researchers for each focus group. The focus group aimed to question and understand the students' point of view on the themes: 1) Work/school/life project; 2) Violence/human rights; 3) Participation/democracy/restorative practices; 4) Positive/negative evaluation of the school. Therefore, a pre-established script was not used for the discussion with the students; the conduction of the focus group was the responsibility of the mediators of each meeting.

The speeches were recorded with the students' authorization, through the researchers' cell phones, and later transcribed to a table, with the main answers on each topic being selected. To identify the students' answers, fictitious names were used, in order to preserve the identity of the interviewed adolescents.

The inclusion criteria for the answers presented in this article were those that addressed the theme of violence, participation, restorative practices, democracy, human rights, and school. The exclusion criteria were the answers that did not present a correlation with the central theme of the study, being answers about work, life project, positive and negative evaluation of the school.

**Table 1** - Example of a table used for speech transcription

SCHOOL NAME: TEOBALDO EDUARDO KLETEMBERG STATE COLLEGE		GRADE: 3RD YEAR OF HIGH SCHOOL	PERIOD: MORNING
VARIABLES	SUMMARY OF SPEECHES	NON-VERBAL REACTIONS <sup>8</sup>	OTHER OBSERVATIONS
1. WORK/SCHOOL/LIFE PROJECT			

<sup>8</sup> Non-verbal reactions: tone of voice, gestures, contradictory reaction, emphasis on the answer, indifference to the theme.

2. VIOLENCE AND HUMAN RIGHTS			
3. PARTICIPATION/DEMOCRACY/ RESTORATIVE PRACTICES			
4. POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE EVALUATION OF THE SCHOOL			

**Source:** The authors (2022).

The data used in the figures of this study are from a questionnaire with multiple-choice questions and some open-ended questions on the topics of Violence, Restorative Justice, and Human Rights applied via Google Forms. The questionnaire was applied by teachers in the classroom to students from the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd year classes of CE Protásio de Carvalho, located in the Industrial City of Curitiba - PR. The questionnaire received a total of 109 responses, in which 86 participants agreed to answer the questionnaire and agreed with the Free and Informed Consent Form, and 23 participants did not agree to participate in the research.

### Analysis procedures

The analysis derives from the comparison between the theoretical categories described in the article and the speeches and/or answers of the students to the research instruments (focus group and semi-open questionnaire) referred to in the article. Action research emphasizes the importance of theoretical approaches and concepts and, at the same time, opens itself to other providers of meanings originating from subjects and their daily experiences.

### Synthesis of data collected from the speeches of focus groups

As mentioned previously in the procedures and instruments for data collection, the focus group was held with the 1st, 2nd and 3rd years of high school, morning and night periods, of the Teobaldo Eduardo Kletemberg State College. In the three meetings held, 10 students<sup>9</sup> and

<sup>9</sup> Letters were used to identify the students and their answers, to protect their identities, the students' names are represented in a fictitious way. Students with repeated initials were identified with numbers. Example: N (1) and N (2) are different students. The following students participated in the results: N (1): Nicole; V: Víctor; JP: João Pedro; N (2): Nicolý; K: Kaique; E: Student E; F: Student F; B: Student B, A: Student A. The last students were not identified by names at the discretion of the researcher who transcribed the focus group to the table.

2 researchers from the research group responsible for mediating the discussion participated. Initially, presentations were made by the researchers, the topics to be covered in the focus group, and it was clarified that the students' anonymity would be preserved. Subsequently, the students were introduced to the presented topics (see Table 1).

Regarding the understanding of what violence is, when questioned by the mediator, the students from each class of the 1st and 2nd years of high school presented diverse answers. In the understanding of student JP, violence suggests "[...] misunderstanding between students, hence causing violence" (sic)<sup>10</sup>, while for N (1) "I think disrespect, in any situation actually". Student V related violence not only to "fighting", but added that it is not just normal violence, but verbal, for the student, psychological violence "is more bullying" (sic).

When questioned by the mediator about how they deal with/resolve their problems and conflicts, dialogue was mentioned by two students, N (2) states that "I talk, I resolve on the basis of conversation" and student V who at first stated that "I sometimes swear". However, as the debate progressed, he reflects that "is it because today you're going to solve something by fighting? We are no longer animals, we are no longer savages" and concludes that for him "at school the easiest thing is to talk".

Following the debate on conflict resolution methods, in the 1st year high school class, the mediator continued by asking "about conflict resolution, right, which is solving problems, you pointed out that the best way would be the verbal approach and trying to understand both sides, in a physical conflict, what would that approach be? How would you do it?".

At first, student K answers "ah, I don't even know, I guess I don't know". However, the mediator asks if the student has ever witnessed a physical fight, to which the student affirms positively. Student K states that he has witnessed this type of fight and that he was involved in it "it's very different, right? Then we solve it by fighting, there's no way to talk to the person" (sic), K affirms that in the mentioned situation he defended himself through physical aggression.

In a debate with the 3rd year high school class, the mediator addressed a case of injustice that had been reported and that the students stated they had not intervened in, in order to

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<sup>10</sup> A expressão "SIC" advém da forma reduzida do termo em latim "sicut" que significa "assim como é, exatamente desta forma". A língua latina clássica também define o advérbio "SIC" como um termo próprio (no entanto com o significado parecido ao de "sicut"), representando que a expressão foi transcrita da forma em que foi dita, ou no mesmo nível de intensidade declarada (Maia; Palomo, 2012).

stimulate the debate. Students F and E answered respectively that "no, everyone was watching" and "it's that he was very aggressive, he would go after anyone" (sic).

In addition, F reported that, in a given situation, he almost assaulted one of his best friends and, when asked by the moderator what he thought about it currently, the student stated that it was a mistake "I almost hit a pregnant woman, I could have been arrested that day for a fit of rage. I regret it a lot [...] if it weren't for the teacher it would have been worse".

The moderator also questioned the students about the position they assume when witnessing a case of violence or injustice, if they have adopted a defensive position and opted not to get involved. Student B reported that when witnessing a conflict he:

[...] stays more to myself, because I think the problem with getting involved in fights is that you don't know who's right and you don't know if the person has a weapon [...] so sometimes you're afraid to help. But if it were people I know I would help.

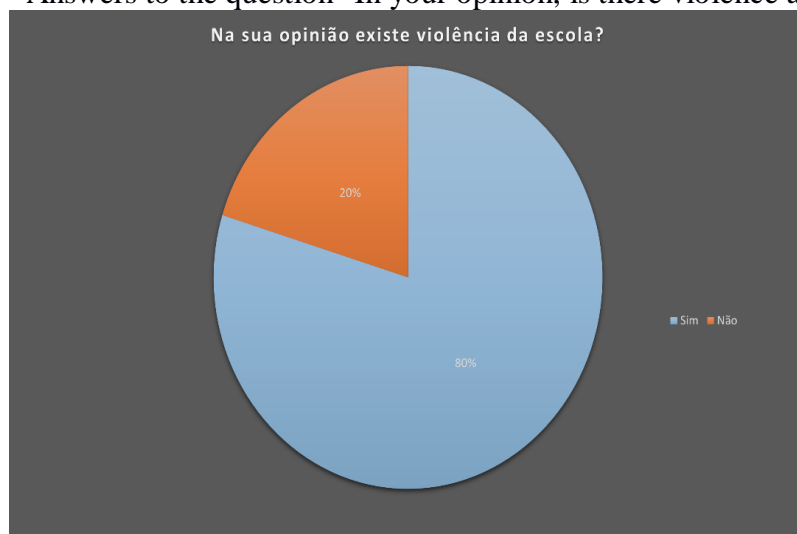
Following, the moderator asks what strategy the students imagine they would adopt, even if they have never been in a similar situation. Student A states "I think I should put pride aside [...] I always go by talking. I never resorted to violence, but there are times when it's tiring, because people don't listen to you [...] so I decide to stay quiet" (sic). Student B answers that if the situation were with a friend of his, he would be able to intervene or try to stop the conflict, in order to prevent any harm to his colleague. The student adds that even if he didn't know the reason for the conflict, he would defend his friend.

### **Synthesis of data collected from the questionnaires**

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The application of the questionnaire was essential to obtain an understanding of the students' point of view on the topics of violence, restorative justice, conflict, human rights, life project, and others. Regarding the questionnaire applied at CE Protásio de Carvalho, it is possible to observe in Figure 1 the results of the question "In your opinion, is there violence at school?"

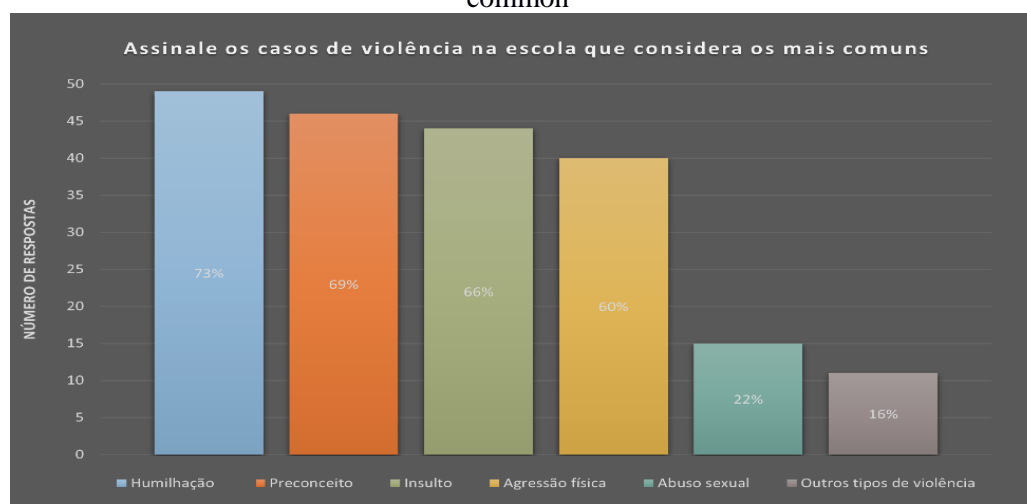
**Figure 1** - Answers to the question "In your opinion, is there violence at school?"



Source: Prepared by the authors (2023).

It is observed through the results of the chart that the students affirm that there is violence in the school space, since 80% of the respondents answered positively. Regarding the most common cases of violence found in school:

**Figure 2** - Answers to the statement "Check the cases of violence at school that you consider most common"

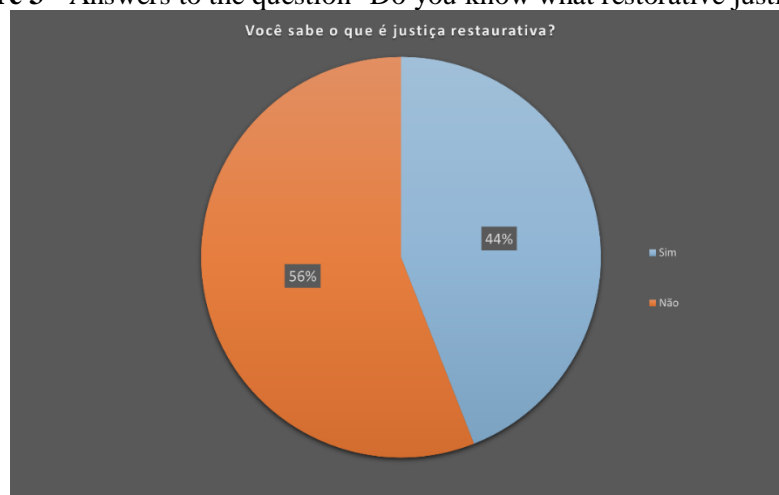


Source: Prepared by the authors (2023).

From a sample of 50 responses, the cases of violence at school considered most common by the students were: 73% "Humiliation"; 69% "Prejudice"; 66% "Insult"; 60% "Physical aggression". The results allow us to verify the strong presence of school violence in the daily lives of these students, especially psychological, verbal violence and prejudice. Thus, faced with the results arising from this questioning, it is pertinent to investigate whether there is an

effective promotion of the teaching of respect for cultural differences and the individuality of students in this institution. Another point of analysis is whether the school itself, as an educational institution, is promoting the recognition and appreciation of the diversity of the student body. Finally, the last question dealt with the students' knowledge of Restorative Justice:

**Figure 3 -** Answers to the question "Do you know what restorative justice is?"



**Source:** Prepared by the authors (2023).

The answers indicate that most students (56% of the responses) claim not to have knowledge about the fundamentals of Restorative Justice. This result indicates that students are not familiar with the RJ<sup>11</sup>, methodology, and it is necessary to encourage and implement techniques for greater participation of the school community.

### Discussion of collected data: theoretical perspective

Through the presentation of the data collected in the focus groups, it is possible to notice how violence and the absence of participation in a discussion are represented as a tool for conflict resolution. Student V's narrative demonstrates that even though he uses swear words during a discussion, he does not believe that violence is the best solution and the school space presents itself as ideal for conversation.

<sup>11</sup> Restorative Justice.

In the 1st year high school class, when questioned about conflict resolution and what method would be used in a physical conflict, student K stated that he had witnessed a physical fight and that when there is an aggressive response from another individual, there is no other possibility than to defend oneself physically. In the focus group held with the 3rd year high school class, Student F stated that he almost physically assaulted one of his best friends. When asked by the moderator what his reflections were on this event nowadays, he stated that he regretted it and believed that he would have been arrested for a fit of rage.

Therefore, it is observed through the students' discourse that when they are in a conflict, they are intensely influenced by emotional and psychological motivations. **Chrispino (2007)** points out that conflict, in addition to being a consequence of the difference of opinions between people, is also the result of the failure of communication and assertiveness between individuals. The difficulty of assertively expressing their feelings during a heated discussion can lead the subject to express through verbal or physical aggression.

In the data presented in the figures, it is possible to observe that in Figure 3 most students (56%) state that they do not have theoretical knowledge about Restorative Justice. Students are interested in using conciliatory practices, however, they are not familiar with restorative techniques. In this context, the school institution needs to enable practices that provide non-violent communication in conflict resolution, promoting a space that offers peaceful learning for conflict resolution even outside the school. As **Dias (2016)** explains, through the methodological foundations of Restorative Justice, it is possible to help create a culture of peace in the school environment.

Regarding Figure 2, through a total of approximately 50 responses on the cases of violence in school considered most common, the answers that were most marked by students were: 73% "Humiliation"; 69% "Prejudice"; 66% "Insult"; 60% "Physical Aggression". It is possible to notice that school violence is present in the daily lives of students, especially psychological, verbal violence and prejudice. It is necessary to point out that the presentation of these different forms of violence in the school space is linked to the absence of teaching respect for diversity among students.

Therefore, knowing how to deal with cultural and experiential differences between students and providing a space that promotes diversity, even though it is a right of each student, it is necessary that it be a concern of the institution, which observes the reality of students in a generalized way (Leite, 2006). If differences are not managed in an adequate and respectful



way, conflicts and violent manifestations will arise as a consequence, later becoming school violence.

### Final considerations

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According to the results pointed out through field research and the application of the questionnaire, it is noted how violence, in its various forms, is strongly present in the school space. In different speeches, it was possible to observe that in the students' reports that when they are in a conflicting situation they are intensely influenced by emotional and psychological aspects. Conflict originates from the divergence of opinion between people, but it is also the result of communication failure. Therefore, the difficulty of verbally expressing their feelings during an energetic discussion can lead to the physical expression of emotions, through aggression.

Restorative Justice emerges as an alternative to the use of violence in conflict resolution and the restorative circle allows the victim and offender to be able to reflect on their actions and think about future agreements that mitigate the consequences of the occurrence. Thus, the implementation of methods from Restorative Justice is an effective way to contribute with tools that allow students to deal respectfully with confrontational situations. However, the challenge for the dissemination of restorative practices lies in the lack of knowledge about them.

The school, as a space for socialization and learning, must assume an active commitment in minimizing violence and prejudice, in addition to playing a fundamental role in disseminating values that promote respect and dialogue.

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