INPLASY

School Coexistence and Its Impact on Learning: An Overview of the Evidences

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ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

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Conflicts of interest - None declared.

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Amendments - This protocol was registered with the International Platform of Registered Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis Protocols (INPLASY) on 13 August 2025 and was last updated on 13 August 2025.

INTRODUCTION

Review question / Objective What is the summary of the evidence found in systematic reviews on the relationship between school coexistence (e.g., school climate, tackling violence and bullying, culture of peace, discipline, and educational inclusion) and the performance/learning process of students, in addition to participation in school activities; participation in peer activities; and organization of actions at school and with the community?

Rationale This overview synthesizes findings from systematic reviews, integrative reviews, scoping reviews, narrative reviews, and critical analyses addressing the relationship between school coexistence and educational learning. The review is grounded in the premise that the quality of social interactions and the overall environment in schools substantially affects students' academic performance and socioemotional development. School coexistence encompasses dimensions such as school climate, violence prevention, bullying, discipline, and the promotion of a culture of peace. Beyond contributing to student well-being, these factors are fundamental to fostering educational success.

Research on school coexistence has been approached through various lenses, including the study of violence, conflict, inappropriate pedagogical practices, and educational inclusion (Andrades-Moya, 2020). UNESCO (2024) has underscored the importance of this theme by producing a guide focused on socioemotional learning (SEL). This guide connects learning to students' beliefs, values, attitudes, and skills, with objectives that include enhancing academic performance, promoting well-being, cultivating peaceful and healthy relationships, and fostering active global citizenship. Among the featured strategies is the use of Awareness Theater to improve school coexistence, prevent violence, and strengthen a culture of peace. The document reports a growing prevalence of disruptive classroom behavior, fights, bullying, and peer aggression in public spaces, alongside alarming rates of self-harm and suicide among students.

These challenges exacerbate mental health concerns, diminish learning quality, and contribute to increased school dropout rates, thereby perpetuating cycles of poverty, unemployment, and social exclusion (UNESCO, 2024).

In Brazil, the Ministry of Education (MEC), through the Secretariat of Basic Education (SEB), is developing the Positive School Climate Guide under the School of Adolescents Program. This initiative emerged from the Climate and Coexistence Working Group (GT), established based on issues raised during the 2024 Adolescent Listening Week (MEC, 2025). The GT identified the urgent need for evidence-based guidance on improving school climate and coexistence, given the growing complexity of related challenges (Mori et al., 2024). A systematic review conducted by the group analyzed 27 international studies on intervention programs aimed at improving school coexistence. Key dimensions addressed included behavioral aspects, bullying, behavioral problems, and social skills. The most effective interventions were those centered on emotional intelligence, sports education, coexistence programs, multifaceted approaches, and psychoeducation.

Recognizing the educational urgency—amplified in the post-pandemic context—researchers from Brazil and other countries created the Science Center for the Development of Basic Education (CCDEB). This center is dedicated to producing applied, ethical, and socially engaged knowledge to enhance the quality of Basic Education. It adopts an integrated approach to the intertwined challenges of learning and school coexistence, emphasizing the need for interdisciplinary analyses that consider social, historical, and subjective determinants affecting children's and adolescents' schooling.

The CCDEB operates within a broad national and international research network, involving partners from all Brazilian regions and from Latin America, Europe, and Africa, including Angola, Argentina, Cuba, France, Mexico, and Portugal. This collaborative structure enables cross-context comparisons, joint diagnoses, and the development of globally relevant yet territorially specific proposals. The Center maintains strategic partnerships with the São Paulo State Department of Education (SEDUC-SP) and the University of São Paulo (USP), which hosts its headquarters.

The research agenda is organized into three principal studies, each comprising subprojects and thematic axes. A shared methodological architecture integrates qualitative and quantitative data, participatory methodologies, critical policy analysis, and systematic evidence gathering. This design ensures analytical rigor, epistemological coherence, and social impact, aligning scientific production with the practical formulation of solutions to the most pressing problems in public schools.

The overview presented here is part of one of these studies, aiming to consolidate knowledge on school coexistence and its connection to educational learning. It is accompanied by three additional literature.

Condition being studied The overview of systematic reviews will follow PRISMA 2020 guidelines for conducting the study, aiming for transparency and protocol quality. Eligibility criteria restrict studies to reviews of high methodological quality, focused on students at any level of education, explicitly addressing school coexistence and evaluating learning indicators such as academic performance, engagement, and motivation. Reviews published since 2010, in Portuguese, English, French and Spanish, will be included. The selection of studies will occur in two phases (title/abstract and full reading), independently by two reviewers. The methodological quality of the included reviews will be assessed using the AMSTAR 2 tool. Data synthesis will be predominantly explanatory analysis and integrative synthesis, grouping reviews by theme, identifying consistencies and inconsistencies, and exploring factors of variation.

METHODS

Search strategy The PICO (Patient/Problem, Intervention, Comparison, Outcome) to develop the search strategy for a systematic review is crucial because it structures and focuses the search. It transforms a broad clinical or research question into specific terms, ensuring you find the most relevant and accurate studies.

The PICO can organize our research question and define what we want to know from our overview of systematic reviews. Thus, we will have:

P (Population/Problem): reviews about basic education students.

(Intervention/Exposure): School coexistence as an exposure factor, encompassing its various aspects:

School climate (positive/negative)
School violence (physical, psychological, verbal)
Bullying (and/or cyberbullying)
Culture of peace (initiatives, practices, and values)
School discipline (rules, enforcement, environment)
School exclusion (marginalization, discrimination, ableism, racism, LGBTQIphobia)
School inclusion (anti-ableist education, anti-racist education, education for diversity; education for gender equity; comprehensive education; people

with disabilities, decolonial education, functional diversity, bodily diversity)

Context: aims to investigate the context of the research object.

Search Terms (keywords or descriptors):

We will combine terms related to school coexistence with terms related to learning, using Boolean operators (AND, OR, NOT, if necessary). For example:

School Coexistence: ("school coexistence" OR "school climate" OR "school environment" OR "school culture" OR "school violence" OR bullying OR cyberbullying OR "school peace" OR "culture of peace" OR "school discipline" OR "school exclusion" OR "school inclusion" OR "school interpersonal relationships" OR "school well-being" OR "well-being" OR "living well" OR "living together" OR "coexisting" OR "school relationships" OR "school interrelationships")

Learning: (learning OR "academic performance" OR "school achievement" OR "school success" OR "school engagement" OR "socio-emotional skills" OR "cognitive development" OR "educational performance" OR "teaching-learning process" OR "interpersonal relationships" OR "values learning" OR "collective activities" OR "conflict resolution")

Type of Study: ("systematic review" OR "integrative review" OR "scoping review" OR "narrative review" OR "critical review")

Example of a search string (pre-built search strategy) that should be adapted for each database and translated into English:

(((("school coexistence" OR "school climate" OR "school environment" OR "school culture" OR "school violence" OR bullying OR cyberbullying OR "school peace" OR "culture of peace" OR "school discipline" OR "school exclusion" OR "school inclusion" OR "school interpersonal relationships" OR "school well-being") AND (learning OR "academic performance" OR "school achievement" OR "school success" OR "school engagement" OR "socio-emotional skills" OR "cognitive development" OR "educational performance" OR "teaching-learning process") AND ("systematic review" OR "integrative review" OR "scoping review" OR "narrative review" OR "critical review")))

The proposed search strategy will be pre-tested. Based on the initial results, it may be reformulated to refine the search strategy.

Participant or population Studies focused on basic education students (early childhood education, elementary school, high school).

Intervention Studies that explicitly address actions, exposures and interventions in school coexistence, school climate, tackling school violence within school, from school and against school (examples: physical, verbal, psychological, cyber, bullying/cyberbullying), interpersonal relationships, culture of peace, school discipline (punitive vs. restorative approaches), and school exclusion/inclusion in their relationship with learning.

Comparator Not applicable.

Study designs to be included Studies with systematic, scoping, integrative, narrative and critical review designs will be included.

Eligibility criteria Eligibility criteria restrict studies to high-quality methodological reviews focused on elementary and secondary school students, explicitly addressing school coexistence, and assessing learning indicators such as academic performance, engagement, and motivation. Reviews published since 2010, in Portuguese, English, French and Spanish, will be included. Exclusion criteria: Overviews.

Information sources We will implement a comprehensive and transparent search strategy and seek to exhaust information sources, such as: Dedalus: bibliograph database of the Universidade de São Paulo; PubMed/MEDLINE; Scopus; Web of Science; PsycINFO; ERIC (Education Resources Information Center); Dimension. SciELO. Google Scholar (for additional searches and identification of gray literature, with caution in screening)

The references of the included reviews will also be scanned to reduce the risk of missing important work.

Main outcome(s) Studies with outcomes regarding the relationship with learning indicators, such as: academic performance (grades, standardized tests), school engagement, motivation to learn, school persistence, development of cognitive, affective, and socio-emotional skills relevant to learning, participation in school activities; participation in peer activities; organization of actions at school and with the Community.

Exclusion: Studies that assess only mental health or well-being outcomes, without an explicit connection to learning.

Additional outcome(s) Not applicable.

Data management Ryyan, RedCap, Excel spreadsheet.

Quality assessment / Risk of bias analysis
Amstar2 - A Measurement Tool to Assess Systematic Reviews.

Strategy of data synthesis Explanatory analysis and integrative synthesis.

Subgroup analysis Not applicable.

Sensitivity analysis Not applicable.

Language restriction Portuguese, English, French and Spanish.

Country(ies) involved Brazil - Universidade de São Paulo/Instituto de Psicologia.

Keywords School Coexistence, school climate, school environment, school culture, school violence, bullying, cyberbullying, school peace, Learning, academic performance, Systematic review.

Dissemination plans The results of the overview will be published in national and international journals, books and book chapters, guides, and presented at national and international events. They will also be recommended as a basis for public policy.

Contributions of each author
Author 1 - MARILENE SOUZA - The author is responsible for the general coordination of the project.
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