

School climate

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Why is school climate so important?

UNESCO and its Member States celebrated the “International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non Violence for the Children of the World” between 2001 and 2010.

This action reflects the relevance of school climate and violence in education worldwide. Within the framework of the Right to Education as a fundamental human right, and especially the “Education for All” initiative¹, this means that school climate is understood as violence prevention, generating constructive/nurturing school environments and/or citizenship education, must be part of the guarrenty of this right and therefore it has increasingly come to constitute a central axis of education policy.

The need to prioritize policy and practices toward improving the quality of school climate in Latin American schools is reinforced by the results of UNESCO’s Second Regional Comparative and Explanatory Study (SERCE, for its name in Spanish) which, conducted in joint collaboration with countries of the region,

showed the importance of school climate to improve the quality of learning. In spite of this evidence and policies that have been developed, there are different underlying logics on what is important to consider in school climate.

Part of the efforts to improve school climate is based on instrumental rationality that understands school climate as a means of achieving quality learning. Rather than a supposition, it has become a fact with plenty of empirical evidence. As stated by Blanco (2005) and Cohen (2006; Cohen, McCabe, Michelli & Pickeral, 2009), the existence of a positive affective and emotional environment in school and in the classroom is a fundamental condition for students to learn and fully participate in class. The SERCE study (UNESCO, 2008) showed that school environment is the most important variable to explain academic performance of primary education students in the countries of the region. Another study (using the results of the PISA 2009 test) found that school environment mediated the relationship between the social-economical

¹ The Education for All initiative was agreed upon by the UNESCO Member States in 2000, in Dakar, Senegal. It is made up of 6 educational goals which the signing countries agreed to make efforts until 2015, a framework of action and follow-up led by UNESCO to contribute to meeting these goals.

level and academic achievement (López et al., 2012).

Notwithstanding the above, it is also true that improving school climate is an end in itself. School should be a space where children build academic and social-emotional learning and learn how to coexist democratically, becoming protagonists of more just and participative societies (UNESCO, 2013). This way, social, emotional, ethical and academic education is part of the human right to education that must be guaranteed for all students. Furthermore, participation is learned. This is one of the elements that are part of citizenship education, which is currently recognized, together with academic achievement, as one of the final objectives of educational systems. What type of citizens are we educating?

How do we understand school climate?

Just as there are different visions or logics to explain the importance of school climate, there are also those that explain what school climate is. It is necessary to understand different conceptual orientations to understand why certain strategies and actions are chosen at one time or another, or in one country compared to another. In other words, the approach to school climate is related to how we understand school climate.

The traditional perspective in research on school violence raised the concept of *bullying*. Olweus (2004, 2010) himself, who from Scandinavia coined the concept, defined it as a form of permanent or constant harassing, exercised by one person or more from a position of power (physical, social

status) over others, and causes intentional damage. This analysis perspective was

very influential during the last decades of the 20th century, because it focused on the individual characteristics of aggressors and victims. At the beginning of the 21st century, Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon researchers included witnesses or spectators in their analyses, in what was called “the triangle of school harassment” (Hoglund & Leadbeater, 2007). This enabled passing from an individual or dyadic perspective to a group perspective in understanding the phenomenon.

However, as a complex phenomenon, violence, as well as school climate, need to be analyzed considering the interrelation between diverse levels of participants operating in and through it. In this sense, Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model (1989) is of interest and has been applied in school violence research (Espelage & Swearer, 2010; Khoury-Kassabri, Astor & Benbenishty, 2009; López, Bilbao & Rodríguez, 2012). This way, the phenomenon of school violence, as well as that of school climate, is understood within relational dynamics of the school. These are related to the climate of learning and coexistence spaces, and also aspects of the environment and the school’s policies. These are the school variables, which to more or less extent affect levels of intimidation and victimization (*bullying*), depending on the surrounding context.

The conceptions generate certain effects on school practices. Thus, a conception of school climate focused on students’ behavioral problems will tend to generate systems of punishment in the event of

non-compliance to the expected norms, to strengthen the creation of a system of rules and will make efforts to ensure

their compliance. Conceptions based on learning environments will tend toward more teacher involvement, understanding that they are part of the solution, and therefore, they are also part of the problem. It will also tend to relate school climate with technical-pedagogical aspects, to create learning environments to achieve improved performance of all students. Finally, a transformational conception of school climate links the school with the education of certain social and human values (for example, republican principles, Christian values) and will generate action that will be strongly linked to school climate and with school ethos, generating strong identification of students and parents with the school and promoting action in the school's community beyond the classroom.

School climate and Educational Policies

Punitive Environments of Educational Policy

In Latin America, the discussion on educational policy with regard to school climate is related to tension at a global level in educational policy environments (Debarbieux, 2003). This affects the possibility of prioritizing school climate improvement as part of the Post-2015 agenda. These disruptors are the increasingly punitive environment which has been adopted on school violence in some countries; the effect of standardized tests with important consequences for schools; and practices of school exclusion and segregation.

Accountability policies based on academic achievement tests have tended to demand equal results for all, but without addressing social and structural inequity which produces unequal results (Ravitch, 2010), emphasizing responsibility by punishment. Research shows that the atmosphere created by these punitive instruments may cause negative side effects, including the installation of fear as the prevailing mood in teachers due to threats of negative consequences; over-focusing on achieving good results on standardized tests, through training in the assessed areas, and consequently, the reduction of areas that are not considered a priority because they are not assessed; and generating high levels of stress and distress for teachers.

According to Hargreaves (2003), these standards-based reforms have led to standardization that rewards the best and degrades or blames the worst performing centers, which are generally located in marginalized zones. At an international level, it is debated whether these policies are generating higher levels of socio-educational exclusion and, consequently, educational segregation. This is also linked to school climate, because a school system that segregates by social class ends up concentrating school climate problems in areas that become highly stigmatized (Casassus, 2003). In fact, students from low social-economic communities inform higher rates of intimidating behavior (Kornblit et al., 2009; SERCE, 2006). The logic of exclusion has been reproduced within the schools themselves, as students who are considered different from the majority, or different from what the school expects of them, do not participate in learning spaces the same

way; they are stigmatized, and excluded by their peers and teachers. All this restricts the notion of education quality, exacerbating inequity.

Guidelines for National and Local School climate Policies

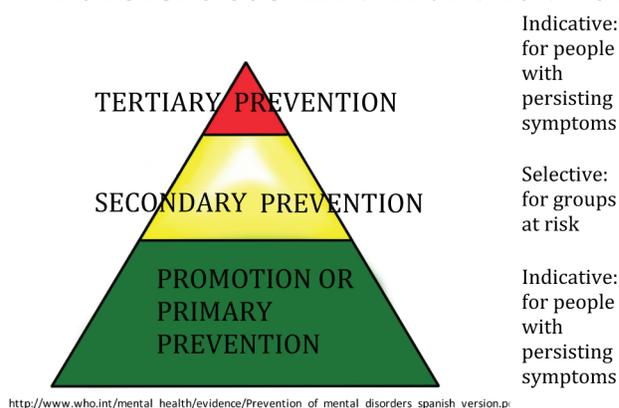
What does not work in the area of school climate, are the zero-tolerance policies that seek to “remove” the problem of *bullying* or school violence. School violence is in line with the social violence phenomena (Debarbieux, 1997; Chaux, 2012): it goes far beyond what a school or an educational system can do on its own. On the other hand, violence is one of many ways to resolve conflict, and conflict is part of daily life and school life (Bardisa, 2001), therefore the point is to find non violent ways of managing conflict. Also, *bullying* and other forms of school violence are often the “leaves” or manifest expressions of deeper roots, related to discrimination based on classism, racism, sexism, and other “isms”. If these “leaves” are cut off, the roots still remain and continue producing new expressions of violence (for example, *cyber-bullying*). Finally, zero tolerance policies and methods generate “zero knowledge” because they do not build capacities within school actors to enable them to understand their conflicts, to make evidence-based decisions, assess their impact and learn from their experience (Astor & Benbenishy, 2006).

Another strategy that does not work is having psychologists, social workers or other professionals to work with problem students on behavioral issues, individually or as a clinical approach in school. If the

problem is in the children, the solution is to “fix” the children: Pathologizing childhood is detrimental because it leads to medicalizing childhood. This does not mean that some children should not receive individualized treatment, or that these or other children do not ever need clinical support. The problem is the order and the proportion: individual/ clinical treatment strategy should be the last resource and only for a reduced percentage of students within a school.

What does work, in terms of school climates are systemic strategies at the level of the whole school, which include action on the three levels indicated by the World Health Organization for psychosocial interventions: A level of promotion or primary prevention, a level of secondary prevention, and a level of tertiary prevention (see Figure 1) (Dimmit & Robillard, 2014).

WHO PSYCHO-SOCIAL INTERVENTION MODEL



Level 1, of primary prevention, is indicated for 100% of the students—and adults—and should be enough for 80% of them. The purpose is to provide opportunities for human and academic development, agglutinating positive actions “that do not hurt”. For example, wellbeing -based curricula, in developing study habits, in

developing math, language, citizenship skills, etc. Level 2, of secondary prevention, requires certain specific and group strategies for students found at risk in Level 1. Risks may be multiple and diverse; for example, desertion or failure; repetition; behavior problems. It is expected for between 10% and 20% of students not to respond satisfactorily to whole school level strategies and therefore, they will require Level 2 actions. This level includes interventions and programs for specific groups, which are generally conducted in small groups. For example, educational reinforcement workshops, tutoring systems, and social skills development workshops are found at this level of intervention.

Level 3 consists of tertiary prevention strategies and intervention for high risk students. These strategies should only be initiated once it has been established that Level 1 and 2 strategies, i.e. school level and small group strategies have been insufficient for a specific group of students. The expected proportion of students is around 5% of the total and is never over 10%. This level concentrates on individual interventions to address situations related to school failure, severe behavior issues and mental health problems. Actions generally require a team of teachers and professionals who meet to coordinate intensive individual attention with professionals and services outside school. It also includes individual action inside school, such as individual counseling and daily or weekly follow-up.

Finally, multi-level and intersectoral efforts should be made, where school systems are articulated with pediatric care systems, mental health care and child protection

systems (Kazak, Hoagwood, Weisz, Hood, Kratochwill, Vargas, & Banez, 2010).

School climate in Latin America and the Caribbean

Measuring and Assessing Violence and School climate in the Region

Recent decades have seen the rise of great concern over the level of violence perpetrated within schools. This concern is shared internationally. In many countries, it has led to establishing educational policies to diagnose levels of school violence.

Such is the situation of Chile, Peru, Mexico and El Salvador, countries that have sought large-scale measurement of school violence levels. However, changes in elected governments have sometimes weakened the stability of the assessments. Moreover, in most countries where assessments exist, it is unclear how these assessment efforts translate into improvements for schools.

The most significant instrument in Latin America and the Caribbean has undoubtedly been the SERCE test (and surely will be the TERCE test to be published in December, 2014). This test measures learning outcomes in language, mathematics and science in third and sixth grade of primary education and collects fundamental information on factors associated with learning. The logic is: if we find an association between the classroom learning environment (classroom environment) and levels of student aggression, we may assume that by acting on classroom environments, we may reduce the level of student aggression and, at the same time, improve learning conditions.

However, “measuring” school climate is different from “assessing” it. Assessment always implies a reason for doing it; it is done with a guiding focus, in this case, an educational one, and with a purpose. In most cases of countries that have invested resources and efforts in measuring the quality of school climate, the effort tends to remain at the level of measurement.

One exceptional case is Colombia, a country that during the last decade has developed standards for citizenship education through the modality of citizenship skills. Competencies are ways of learning and doing in everyday life. Citizenship competencies prescribed in the Colombian curriculum direct the training and indicate a guiding focus, emphasizing civil exercise over civil knowledge. Thus, it is understood that the competencies such as anger management, empathy, perspective taking, generating creative options, considering consequences, critical thinking, active listening and assertiveness, are relevant to “shield the school” from school aggressions and other forms of school violence, and at the same time, enabling “formation” as citizens (Chaux, 2012). This curriculum design is consistent with one that has been implemented: The National Citizenship Skills Program for Colombia. Citizenship skills are assessed through census every two years, together with basic academic achievement, by the Institute for Educational Assessment, in primary, secondary and tertiary education.

More information on school climate may be found in a special number of the journal *Revista Iberoamericana de Evaluación Educativa*, which includes contributions from Mexico, Brazil, Chile and Spain (RIIE, Vol. 6, number 2, available at www.rinace.net).

Approaches in the Region of Latin America and the Caribbean

Table 1

Legal strategies and initiatives on school climate in countries of Latin America and the Caribbean (Diaz, 2014)

Country	Strategies	Laws
Peru	<p>General Bureau of Social Communication and Citizen Participation - OGECOP, for its name in Spanish, Oficina General de Comunicación Social y Participación Ciudadana</p> <p>Specialized Reporting System on School Violence – SISEVE, for its name in Spanish, Sistema especializado en reporte sobre Violencia Escolar.</p>	Supreme Decree N° 006-2012-ED of March 31, 2012
Argentina	<p>Social Educational Policy; Comprehensive Sex Education; Coordination of Programs for Democratic Inclusion in Schools; National Professional Development Program for Educational Support and Orientation Teams; National Program for the Rights of Children and Adolescents; Argentine Observatory on School Violence; Territorial Support Unit for Immediate Intervention in Complex Situations in Schools; School climate; Schools and Family; Solidarity Schools; Education and Care; Drug Addiction and Drug Abuse Education and Prevention; Health Program; Media and ICTs; Schools and Media</p>	Law 26.150

Country	Strategies	Laws
Colombia	Educational Policy for Training in School climate	School climate Law
Paraguay	“Learning without Fear” campaign; workshop to eradicate and prevent school violence. Manual for Preventing and Intervening in School Harassment with Activity Guide for all education levels and cycles, and a toolbox with information and activities for students, educators, parents, available on websites: www.mec.gov.py , www.bastadebullying.com , info.paraguay@plan-international.org .	Resolution N° 8353/12 Protocol for handling cases of school violence; Law No. 4.633/12 Against School Harassment in Educational Institutions
Brazil	Observatory on School Violence/School Councils	
Ecuador	Students and Family/ Education for Democracy and Well Being (Well Being Schools; Solidarity Schools; Declaration System of Well Being and Quality Schools; MUYU: Eat the Fruit, Plant the Seed; Education for Democracy; National Intersectoral Family Planning Strategy and Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention	Intercultural Organic Educational Law (LOEI, Ley Orgánica de Educación Intercultural) (81); Guidelines for implementing the student participation program (13260)
Chile	Framework for Good Teaching; Framework for Good Directing; Education Quality Assurance System; School climate Policy; School Councils.	School Violence Law included in the General Education Law

In some countries, the concern of “doing something” about the issues of school violence and school climate have lead to more activism in public policy, through central level parliamentary legislation and ministerial programs (see Table 1). In the Region and beyond, school climate seems to

have at least two approaches to educational policy in school violence prevention and the promotion of school climate.

A first approach considers school violence prevention as part of other (future) forms of violence and delinquency. Under this

focus, preventing violence is associated with “stopping it” before it escalates. The methods applied are often punishment and surveillance. An example of this are the zero tolerance policies initiated in the United States during the 1990s, and situational prevention measures, such as surveillance cameras and metal detectors (Portillos, González and Peguero, 2012). For Hirshfield and Celinska (2011), the rise of these measures is a sign of a paradigm shift, where the framework of “student discipline” has been replaced for that of crime control. Under this logic, violence and criminality are close in concept, since it tends toward criminalization of school violence, which is usually implemented as criminalization of racial and poverty-stricken minorities (Retamal, 2010; Watts and Erevelles, 2004). One of the major implications of this logic is segregation and social exclusion of these same minorities by creating schools that are “more dangerous” than others.

At times, public policy enables or fosters a less punitive approach, but the school communities and/or societies themselves are the ones to apply them judicially or under criminal logics. For Scheinvar (2012), this has happened in Brazil, a country that under Law 8069 of 1990, created guardianship councils, representative organs of civil society. It was installed to foster democratic participation in conflict resolution, to dejudicialize social assistance practices and to decriminalize child and adolescent attention processes. Guardianship councils, originally proposed as an organ to guarantee rights, often become allies to schools seeking to punish students and act under a penal rationality.

Neubauer and Tigo de Silveira (2009) have noted that in other Latin American countries, School Councils—representative and inter-level decision making organisms within schools—were also created with democratic management intentions in countries such as Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico and Nicaragua. They are frequently related to administrative management or school infrastructure improvement issues, but participation in topics of school climate is reduced. Moreover, when school climate topics are addressed, discussion tends more toward the elaboration of rules and regulations. Instead of fostering a positive climate or a shared identity within the school institution, it is focused on sanctions for the transgressors.

Another focus, that has been considered more successful (Craig, Pepler and Cummings, 2009; Olweus, 2004; Orpinas and Horne, 2006), seeks conflict resolution through actions that make visible and enable including the differences (Araos and Correa, 2004). Under this focus, schools, localities, districts or countries seek to develop self-regulation skills in their students (Wilson, Gottfredson and Najaka, 2001), and skills to protect students and generate educational change in the school actors (Astor and Benbenishty, 2006; Hawkings, Catalano, Arthur, Egan, Brown, Abbot and Murray, 2008). This logic is formative-promotional and it seeks to empower schools and their communities with information and mechanisms for them to participate in solving school violence issues.

An example of a program designed under this approach is that of Classrooms in Peace (in Spanish, Aulas de Paz), created in the mid-2000s in Colombia by the Enrique Chaux research group (Chaux, 2012). The program was based on the Montreal Prevention Program (Tremblay et al., 1995) and is focused in a set of citizenship skills defined by the Ministry of Education and grouped under the dimension “school climate and peace.” Using a multi-component model that includes a 40-session classroom curriculum implemented by the teachers themselves, workshops with heterogeneous groups, visits to the families and teacher training. It seeks to develop empathy, assertiveness and critical thinking in second and fourth grade children, and anger management, perspective taking, choice generation, consideration of consequences and active listening in third and fifth grade children (Chaux, 2012). The impact assessment of the program, with a control group, showed positive results: reduced aggression and beliefs legitimizing aggressions and increased pro-social behavior (Chaux et al., 2009).

However, often educational strategies and policies, in relation to legal initiatives, are hybrid. For example, in Chile, Magendzo, Toledo and Gutiérrez (2012) and Carrasco, López and Estay (2012) have identified tension between two paradigms that uphold the School Violence Law issued in 2011. One is the paradigm of control and punishment, and the other is the paradigm of democratic coexistence. While the former deals with the problem of social insecurity, as it is applied in the school environment, the latter addresses security, wellbeing and citizenship building. While in the former,

the behavioral approach as an educational conception is predominant, in the latter, the approach is based on a critical conception of education. In the former, school violence is an object of intervention, and punishment and sanction is how it is addressed and how the interactions are managed in the school. On the other hand, in the latter, the measures are formative and remedial sanctions are the modalities that are emphasized in interaction management.

Post 2015 Priorities: Proposing and Agenda for Latin America

1. *Incorporating New Perspectives for School climate*

One alternative that would open new horizons for transformational work possibilities in the region is to incorporate new analysis perspectives that enable “refreshing” the narrative of the need to improve school climate to reduce violence in school and in society; or to improve academic performance. Somehow, the rhetoric of both of them is exhausted at some point because the place school climate in an instrumental position, where it may lose its purpose in improving school climate.

One of these perspectives is certainly citizenship education. All the countries of the region need to strengthen their democratic processes and form critical citizens who are capable of dialogue and living together in an increasingly changing world. What is being done in Colombia should be acutely reflected upon to visualize the possibility of including citizenship education as one dimension of the Post 2015 goals.

Another one is the perspective of social justice. Developed within the Anglo-Saxon multicultural education movement, social justice encompasses a group of researchers and practitioners seeking to build strong bridges to establish school and education as a place for generating more inclusion through visibility and active discussion of diverse forms of social injustice (Adams, Bell & Griffin, 2007; Banks, 2008). This perspective reflects the traditions of education for liberation and recent feminist pedagogy to develop methodologies for systematic dialogue. These allow for people to learn analysis tools to understand social differences and forms of oppression existing in social systems and in their own lives. They are also to develop and exercise ways of interrupting and changing these oppressive patterns and behaviors.

A third approach is social wellbeing in school. Born within the tradition of subjective well being, this perspective has been reconsidered in the last decade by organisms such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2013; Helliwell, Layard and Sachs, 2013), due to their relevance for achieving policies that are close to the public opinion and that promote positive mental health of their people, social development and ultimately, democracy. Subjective wellbeing is understood as the general assessment of people with regard to their lives and their living circumstances (Bilbao, 2014; Diener, 2006). Social wellbeing explicitly includes the ways social environments and contexts produce wellbeing (and also discomfort). This means

that to understand well being and discomfort within a school community, we must look at the relations between its integrants, within each group (students, levels, teachers, directors, parents, etc.) and also between them and with the local community.

2. Networking Between Countries of the Region: Latin American Network of School climate

One Post-2015 challenge is the creation of systematic networks among countries of the Region on school climate that help answer the question “now what?” What happens after the SERCE 2006 and probably, after the upcoming TERCE? The conceptual orientations are so diverse, so many hues in educational policy and in the involved assessments, that it is necessary to nurture and give feedback on learning within the countries of the Region. Relevant conversations are also necessary between international organisms, research institutions and those who design and implement public policy on issues of school climate. This, in order not to replicate (as it sometimes occurs) bad practices of some Anglo Saxon countries, and also to produce their own practices and policies, from the South, that may serve as an example to other countries within and outside the region.

In this regard, it is important to mention the still little known work of a network of Latin American researchers that is operative since 2003 and was formalized in 2008 under the name of Latin American School climate Network (see www.convivenciaescolar.net). The objective of this Network is to constitute a space for Latin American dialogue, learning, research and collaboration of

scholars and educational actors on issues of school climate and social-emotional and ethical education, contributing to transformation in schools.

3. The Key Discussion: Policies, Standards and Assessment of School climate

As mentioned above, school and class environment are contextual variables that affect learning and aggression between students. Research results in Chile and the world demonstrate this. However, there is a deep gap between the level of research development on school environments and the development of school violence public policy and prevention programs that address the effects of the school environment.

In general, the educational reforms have not included the design of public policy focused on school or classroom environments (Cohen et al., 2009). Legislation reforms experienced by some countries of the region include criminal logic that tends to punish the guilty and forces to denounce perpetrators to protect victims of school violence. Laws against school violence based on denouncing and punishment have, at least, the following four risks: they do not favor an adequate school environment; they release school from its responsibility in potential preventive action; they focus action on the intervention of third parties (police, judges, psychologists) and not the school; and they give priority to legal actions tending toward exclusion over the actions of promoting and preventing that tend toward inclusion (López, 2011; Carrasco, López & Estay, 2012). On the contrary, educational reforms with pedagogical meaning, such as sharing the need to create standards for citizenship education, the

consensus required to establish the relevant citizenship competencies for the country, and how schools and universities will be developed, may generate great educational lessons.

4. Managing School climate is Managing Inclusion and Diversity

Authoritarian leadership does not have the same effects on school climate as democratic leadership. Research has shown that the former has a negative effect on school climate by installing punishment practices and arbitrary application of regulations. By engaging the educational community in regulation design and ensuring that they are applied fairly, the latter is a seed for better school climate.

It is important to understand that in societies where political violence and authoritarian regimes at a macro-political level are part of their recent history, authoritarianism is a socially legitimated relationship. This is probably also true at the level of micro-political relations within the school (Bardisa, 2001). Democratic management and leadership, therefore, are not usually “spontaneous” expressions of relations in many school communities. On the contrary, they are relations that are often difficult to implement and therefore must be intentional (Mena et al., 2011). Expressions like “to spare the rod is to spoil the child” or “get rid of the rotten apple” are part of a cultural matrix that continues to legitimate interpersonal violence and social exclusion as acceptable practices. Managing school climate means to manage differences, diversity.

5. *Generating Ways and Systems of Support (and Not Punishment) in Schools*

A key element is the way countries in the Region outline policies that enable supporting teachers to reduce school violence, improve school climate and citizenship education. Although it seems obvious, as seen above, many policies define what schools or students must not do, but offer little direction with regard to what to do and how to do it.

The paradox, therefore, is that schools are obligated to improve school climate without having enough information on how they are doing it and what can be improved. Therefore, they move in darkness because they have neither a clear diagnosis, nor feedback. Thus, it is difficult for them to make relevant and pertinent decisions regarding resources allocation and prioritization.

Therefore, a Post-2015 challenge is to foster the autonomy of managing teams to plan, implement and assess school climate improvement plans that involve participative diagnosis of the educational community and collaborative and democratic decision making on relevant elements for improvement.

6. *Promoting Intervention Design in the Three Levels of Prevention and Promotion*

Often schools seek to “stop” the problem of school violence, and they seek alternatives of action favoring the penal-judicial approach or the work of professional experts to deal with “problem students”, who are removed from class. Both strategies negatively affect

capacity development in schools and harm students with more difficulties, generating cycles of school segregation and exclusion in them.

Indeed, although individual or focalized interventions in groups at risk may favor developing problem solving skills, it is necessary to consider that their predictive power on the aggressor is lower than the contextual variables such as the classroom environment and family climate. It also entails the risk of labeling and stigmatizing students that participate in them, perpetuating the victimization dynamics.

Therefore, in line with the World Health Organization’s recommendations, endorsed by the Pan American Health Organization, we propose that one of the Post-2015 be the promotion of action programs and strategies in the area of school climate in the region, considering the tripartite promotion/prevention primary (level 1), secondary (level 2), and tertiary (level 3) model. This means that all the students should receive affirmative and educational actions inside and outside the classroom; that some students (no more than 20%) identified to be at risk through reliable instruments or procedures receive differential and group support as a secondary prevention strategy; and that individual, intensive and systematic attention is only provided for students (between 5% and 10%) that, having received Level 1 and 2 actions, require further support. In practice, it is better coordination between the rationality of mental health and the rationality of teaching in school; a necessary articulation between clinical and pedagogical approaches, favoring the latter.

7. Bringing School climate Back to Teaching and the Classroom

As stated by Bellei et al. (2013), it is essential to address the organization, school and teaching environment to achieve coherence between what is taught and what is practiced and lived in them. When there is coherence and teacher-student relationships are adequate, democracy is more directly understood. This links the challenges of citizenship education with those of the aforementioned school environments.

School environment development or citizenship education is not only the concern or duty of school psycho-social teams or support professionals. It is fundamentally the responsibility and work of classroom teachers. Therefore, it is important to include initial teacher training and continuing education in the Post-2015 agenda. It is also the responsibility and the work of executive teams. For them, the programs and support systems should involve directors as key agents for change and offer courses and time for in-situ consulting from the perspective of horizontal educational advisory based on know-how.

GTA Proposal on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) July 19, 2014

The universal goal in the Sustainable Development Goals agenda relates to ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning for all. In this context, and among other 9 specific goals, it is stated that: To ensure that all girls and boys complete primary and secondary quality and equitable education that leads to effective and relevant learning achievement (...); it also proposes that by 2030, all students will have acquired the required knowledge, skills, values and attitudes needed to build sustainable and peaceful societies, through, inter alia, world citizenship education and sustainable development education...

Final Declaration, EFA Global Meeting 2014, Muscat Agreement (Oman) May 14, 2014

For its part, the Oman Declaration states that the agenda of education must adopt a comprehensive, lifelong learning approach, and provide multiple learning pathways through innovative methods and information and communication technologies. At the same time, goals were adopted, including: To ensure that by 2030, all students have the necessary knowledge and skills to promote sustainable development, (...) human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non violence, global citizenship and appreciation for cultural diversity and the contribution of culture to sustainable development...



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