

The Perceived Role of Teachers in Resolving Conflicts Between Students: Reflections on Effectiveness and Intervention

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doi:10.56397/JARE.2025.03.02

Abstract

This article proposes a reflection on the perceived role of teachers in managing conflicts between adolescents in the school context. The central focus is on how educators perceive and interpret conflicts between students, and how this perception influences their resolution strategies and the effectiveness of interventions. Through a theoretical review, the nature of conflict in the school environment is explored, addressing the different types and levels of conflict (intrapersonal, interpersonal, intragroup, and intergroup) and their causes, such as social, emotional, and cultural factors. Furthermore, conflict resolution strategies based on existing theories are discussed, with an emphasis on the active role of teachers in mediation, prevention, and resolution of disputes. The reflection also includes an analysis of the consequences of unresolved conflicts, both for the students involved and for the school environment in general. Based on teachers' perception of conflict and their role in mediation dynamics, the article argues that a conscious and informed approach can increase the effectiveness of pedagogical intervention. The article concludes with recommendations on how to improve teacher training in conflict management, aiming to promote a more harmonious and inclusive school environment. This reflection seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of the interaction between teachers, students, and conflict in the educational context.

Keywords: conflict management, teachers' perception, adolescents, conflict resolution, school mediation, educational environment

1. Introduction

The increasing complexity of school environments, characterized by cultural diversity, socio-economic disparities, and the varied personal experiences of students, has contributed to the emergence and intensification of conflicts among adolescents. In the current context, conflicts arise not only as a reflection of

the tensions inherent in social relationships but also as opportunities for the development of emotional and social skills (Souza & Guilherme, 2024).

The intervention of teachers, in this sense, proves to be fundamental, as they act as mediators and facilitators of a harmonious learning environment. The way in which

teachers perceive and respond to conflicts can significantly influence both the emotional well-being of students and the school climate (Spilt et al., 2012; Valente & Lourenço, 2022). The goal is to provide more effective and tailored strategies for supporting learning, taking into account the idiosyncrasies of each student and the challenges that arise in the school context as a whole (Landim, 2025).

In schools, conflicts among adolescents can manifest in various forms, ranging from interpersonal misunderstandings to tensions that develop between groups. These conflicts can have various origins, including identity issues, cultural differences, and value conflicts, and, if not properly managed, they can evolve into situations of bullying, isolation, and sometimes violence (Ferreira et al., 2024).

The role of teachers, therefore, goes beyond the traditional teaching of curriculum content, requiring an integrated approach that includes conflict mediation and the promotion of a culture of peace. Recent studies highlight that positive and collaborative school environments are crucial for the academic and personal development of students, and that effective teacher intervention is one of the key factors contributing to such an environment (Chrispino & Chrispino, 2023; Sebaje et al., 2019; Valente & Lourenço, 2022).

Despite the recognized importance of teachers as mediators, the perception they have of their own role in conflict management is not always optimized or valued in the training process. Many teachers face significant challenges when trying to identify early signs of conflict and apply resolution strategies that address the needs of students (Ribeiro de Lima, 2024; Zee & Koomen, 2016). The lack of continuous training and institutional support can lead to a sense of helplessness, which in turn compromises the effectiveness of interventions. Additionally, the pressure to maintain order and academic performance can limit teachers' availability to empathetically address conflicts, resulting in reactive rather than preventive approaches (Silva et al., 2022). Thus, the question arises: how does the perception teachers have of their competencies and their mediating role influence conflict resolution? And what strategies can be adopted to strengthen this perception and, consequently, improve the school climate?

This article analyzes the role of teachers in

resolving conflicts between students and how this perception influences intervention strategies and the school environment. The main objectives of the study are: to explore the nature of conflicts among adolescents, from intrapersonal manifestations to intergroup dynamics, identifying the underlying causes; to assess how teachers interpret their role as mediators and how this perception translates into effective pedagogical practices; to review contemporary theories and practices of mediation and conflict resolution in the school context, emphasizing approaches that promote dialogue and inclusion; and to identify gaps and challenges in teacher training, pointing to the need for continuous professional development that allows them to enhance their mediation and intervention skills.

This study aims to highlight the importance of recognizing teachers not only as knowledge transmitters but also as agents of social transformation. Based on a theoretical review grounded in contemporary authors, the article emphasizes the urgency of promoting training that includes socio-emotional skills and conflict resolution (Alves et al., 2023; Maia et al., 2021; Santos et al., 2025). By identifying and discussing teachers' perceptions, the study aims to contribute to the creation of intervention strategies applicable in various school contexts, improving the quality of the educational environment and promoting the holistic development of students.

The article is structured into four main sections. The first, a theoretical review, analyzes in detail the main theories on conflicts and their resolutions, addressing dimensions such as intrapersonal, interpersonal, intragroup, and intergroup, as well as their causes. This section underpins the study, contextualizing the pedagogical interventions within a solid theoretical framework, with references to both classical and contemporary authors.

In the second section, the role of teachers as mediators, the perception of teachers regarding their competencies in conflict management and how it influences the strategies adopted are explored. Mediation and intervention practices are analyzed, highlighting the challenges and potentialities of the teaching role, based on empirical studies and critical analyses of recent literature.

The third section, discussion of results,

integrates the theoretical knowledge from the research with pedagogical practice. It reflects on the implications of unresolved conflicts in the school environment and discusses the best practices that can be implemented to improve the effectiveness of teachers' interventions. This analysis offers a critical and constructive perspective, emphasizing the importance of continuous training for teachers.

Finally, the fourth section, conclusions, synthesizes the main findings of the research, highlighting the practical implications for teacher training and intervention in conflict resolution. Recommendations are made for future research and for improving pedagogical practices, aiming to promote more inclusive and harmonious school environments.

In summary, the article proposes a comprehensive and critical reflection on the importance of teachers' perceptions in resolving conflicts between students. It argues for the need for pedagogical intervention based on effective mediation strategies and continuous training that prepares teachers for the challenges of the current school context (Chrispino & Chrispino, 2023; Deutsch et al., 2011). Based on recent literature and empirical studies, the aim is to contribute to the debate on the transformative role of teachers, encouraging practices that promote cohesion and well-being in the educational environment.

2. Theoretical Review

2.1 Conflict: An Overview

Conflict is a phenomenon inherent to human relationships and manifests in various forms in social and institutional contexts. In the school environment, particularly among adolescents, conflicts emerge as part of the emotional, social, and cognitive development process of students (Gusmão & Almeida, 2024). To understand its dynamics, it is essential to analyse its definitions, characteristics, and impacts on learning and the school climate.

Conflict can be defined as a disagreement or incompatibility of interests, values, needs, or expectations between individuals or groups (Deutsch, 2011; Rahim et al., 2018). In the school environment, it can manifest in various ways, including interpersonal conflicts between students, tensions between social groups, or even disagreements between teachers and students. According to several studies (Gusmão & Almeida, 2024; Pereira, 2021; Silva, 2018),

conflicts can be classified into four main types: intrapersonal, when an individual experiences doubts or internal contradictions, reflected in school behavior; interpersonal, when it occurs between two or more students, arising from misunderstandings, rivalries, or misperceptions; intragroup, when conflicts arise within the same group, such as a class or work team; and intergroup, between different groups, which may involve cultural, social, or institutional issues.

In the context of adolescence, a phase marked by the construction of identity and the development of autonomy, conflicts become frequent due to the search for self-assertion and emotional and social changes (Levisky, 2025; Ramírez et al., 2024). According to Galvão et al. (2016), the school environment should be a space for building socio-emotional skills, promoting preventive strategies for conflicts.

Conflicts are inherent in human interaction and can be seen both as challenges and as opportunities for growth. According to Deutsch (2011), conflicts can be functional when they promote dialogue and the development of creative solutions, or dysfunctional when they result in aggression, prolonged misunderstandings, and social exclusion. Among the main characteristics of school conflicts, the following stand out: multidimensionality, which involves emotional, social, cultural, and psychological factors; interdependence, where one individual's actions directly affect the responses and perceptions of others; and dynamism, which causes conflicts to evolve over time, potentially being resolved, intensified, or transformed into new forms of interaction.

Effective conflict management in the school context depends on the teachers' ability to identify early signs of tension and apply appropriate pedagogical strategies. According to Alves et al. (2023), mediation and teaching conflict resolution skills can minimize negative impacts and create a more collaborative environment.

The way conflicts are managed can have a significant impact on the school environment. Poorly resolved conflicts can generate a climate of tension, fear, and insecurity, affecting students' well-being and their motivation to learn (Spilt et al., 2012). Studies indicate that schools with high levels of conflict experience

higher rates of absenteeism, decreased academic performance, and difficulties in relationships among students (Valente & Lourenço, 2022).

On the other hand, when properly managed, conflicts can be opportunities for the development of socioemotional skills, such as empathy, active listening, and problem-solving. Conflict mediation by teachers plays a key role in promoting a more collaborative and inclusive learning environment (Sebaje et al., 2019). According to Valente and Lourenço (2022), investing in teacher training for conflict management can contribute to a more harmonious and productive environment.

Thus, understanding the dynamics of conflict in the school context is essential for developing effective mediation and intervention strategies, ensuring a more harmonious and conducive learning environment.

2.2 Theoretical Perspective

The study of conflicts in the school environment requires an integrated understanding of various theoretical approaches from psychology, sociology, and pedagogy. These disciplines offer complementary insights that enrich the management and resolution of conflicts among adolescents.

In psychology, conflict is often analyzed through psychoanalytic theory, which emphasizes intrapsychic conflicts and the influence of the unconscious on human behavior (Canavêz & Oliveira, 2014). Social conflict theory, originating from sociology, focuses on structural inequalities and tensions between social groups (Adorno et al., 2021). Sociology, in turn, examines how social and cultural factors influence conflict dynamics among students, highlighting the need for educational policies that promote equity and inclusion. Pedagogy emphasizes mediation as an essential tool in conflict resolution, proposing methods that transform disputes into opportunities for learning and personal development, fostering socioemotional skills and building a more collaborative school environment (Amorim et al., 2022).

Integrating these theoretical perspectives is fundamental for effective management of school conflicts. Psychology provides tools to understand and regulate the emotions involved in conflicts. Sociology offers a critical view of social structures that may perpetuate conflicts, while pedagogy proposes educational practices that turn conflicts into learning experiences. This

integrated approach allows educators to identify the multiple dimensions of conflicts and implement more holistic and effective resolution strategies.

2.3 Theories Related to Adolescent Conflict

Understanding conflicts among adolescents in the school environment requires an in-depth analysis of the theories that elucidate their causes and dynamics. These theories provide insights into the individual and contextual factors that influence the occurrence and escalation of youth conflicts. Various theoretical approaches aim to explain the origins and mechanisms of conflicts among adolescents.

Hirschi's Social Control Theory (1969) suggests that juvenile delinquency results from weakened social bonds. The author identifies four key elements that influence young people's behavior: Attachment, which relates to the emotional bond with parents, teachers, and peers. Adolescents with strong emotional ties tend to respect social norms and avoid deviant behaviors; Commitment, which is associated with investment in conventional activities, such as education and career goals. A high level of commitment acts as a deterrent to delinquency; Involvement, which involves participation in legitimate activities that occupy time and reduce opportunities for deviant behaviors; and Belief, which refers to the acceptance of social norms and values. When adolescents internalize these beliefs, they are less likely to engage in conflicts or delinquent behavior.

This conceptualization is useful for understanding observations about the family and school characteristics of adolescents with disruptive behavior. It is often observed that these young people do not maintain good relationships with parents who are inadequate educators — passive, inconsistent, and disinterested — and are unaware of their children's activities (Monteiro et al., 2019).

The Realistic Conflict Theory (Sherif, 1961) postulates that intergroup conflicts arise from competition for limited resources and incompatible goals. In the school context, groups of adolescents may come into conflict due to competition for social recognition, access to resources, or privileges. Sherif's "Robbers Cave" experiment illustrated how competition can lead to hostility between groups and how common goals can reduce these tensions. His studies were groundbreaking in introducing the first

steps toward understanding intergroup conflicts in social psychology (Fernandes & Pereira, 2018).

Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory (1968) proposes eight stages that span the human life cycle, from childhood to advanced adulthood. In each stage, individuals face conflicts that influence the formation of personality: Trust vs. Mistrust (0-1 year): basic trust is established when needs are consistently met; Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt (1-3 years): the child develops autonomy by exploring and asserting themselves, while a lack of support can lead to doubt; Initiative vs. Guilt (3-6 years): initiative is nurtured by encouraging exploration and creativity; excessive criticism can result in guilt; Industry vs. Inferiority (6-12 years): developing skills and competencies is crucial; lack of success can cause feelings of inferiority; Identity vs. Identity Confusion (12-18 years): adolescence is marked by the search for identity; lack of clarity can lead to confusion; Intimacy vs. Isolation (young adulthood): establishing intimate relationships is fundamental; failure to do so can result in isolation; Generativity vs. Stagnation (middle adulthood): contributing to society through work and family is central; lack of involvement can cause stagnation; Ego Integrity vs. Despair (old age): reflecting on life with satisfaction leads to integrity; regrets may result in despair.

The successful resolution of each conflict results in virtues that influence subsequent development, contributing to a balanced personality throughout life (McLeod, 2018).

In summary, the theories presented illustrate how social and cultural contexts influence both the origin and the evolution of conflicts among adolescents, being fundamental to understanding the escalation of these conflicts. Sociocultural theories highlight the role of the social and cultural environment in shaping individual behavior (Coling et al., 2024). The social context, such as socioeconomic status, family environment, and exposure to violence, can increase adolescents' propensity to engage in conflicts (Dantas & Furlan, 2024). Disadvantaged environments tend to exacerbate stress and limit access to support resources, intensifying conflict. Additionally, cultural norms and values, such as expectations related to masculinity, honor, or respect, can promote aggressive responses, especially in contexts where assertiveness is valued (Ferreira et al.,

2024). Thus, social modeling shows that adolescents tend to observe and imitate behaviors from significant figures in their environment, such as parents, celebrities, or community leaders. If these role models handle conflicts aggressively, it is more likely that young people will adopt similar behaviors.

Understanding these theories is essential for educators to develop effective conflict mediation and resolution strategies. Strengthening the bonds between students and teachers, fostering positive relationships, can increase students' attachment and commitment to school, reducing behaviors that lead to conflicts. Promoting collaborative activities, such as projects that require cooperation, can reduce harmful competition and foster empathy among students (Monteiro et al., 2019). Furthermore, socioemotional education, by teaching emotional management and peaceful conflict resolution skills, empowers adolescents to deal constructively with differences. By integrating these theoretical approaches, schools can create more inclusive environments conducive to the healthy development of adolescents, minimizing the occurrence and escalation of conflicts.

2.4 Theories Related to Conflict Resolution Strategies

Conflict resolution in the school context has been widely studied from different theoretical perspectives, which provide insights into the most effective ways to mediate disputes between students. School mediation and proactive approaches to conflict management are essential for building a positive educational environment. In this sense, two main theoretical approaches that underpin conflict resolution strategies are highlighted: the Harvard Negotiation Theory, Transformative Mediation, and Social Control Theory.

The Harvard Negotiation Theory (Fisher & Ury, 1981) proposes a principle-based approach, emphasizing the importance of effective communication and seeking mutually beneficial solutions (win-win). In the school context, this theory suggests that teachers can act as facilitators by helping students identify common interests and find creative alternatives to resolve their conflicts (Ramírez et al., 2024). One of the main strategies advocated by this approach is the separation of people from the problems, allowing students to focus on resolving the dispute without compromising interpersonal relationships.

Transformative Mediation, proposed by Bush and Folger (2005), emphasizes the need to promote empowerment and mutual recognition between the parties in conflict. This approach not only focuses on the immediate resolution of the problem but also on developing the socioemotional skills of the involved parties, promoting empathy and self-regulation. In the school environment, transformative mediation is especially relevant as it encourages students to understand each other's perspectives and take responsibility for their actions (Silva, 2024).

In addition to these approaches, several conflict management models have been applied in the school context. Deutsch's (2011) Conflict Resolution Model classifies conflicts as productive and destructive, suggesting that the outcome of a conflict depends on how it is managed. Cooperation, rather than competition, is a determining factor in achieving positive resolutions. The Dual Concern Model of Conflict Resolution (Rahim, 2002) identifies five main conflict management styles: competition, accommodation, avoidance, compromise, and collaboration. The choice of the most appropriate strategy depends on the nature of the conflict and the characteristics of those involved.

The application of these theories and models to school mediation highlights the crucial role of teachers as facilitators in conflict resolution. Recent research indicates that continuous training programs for teachers, focused on the development of mediation and conflict management skills, can significantly improve the school environment and reduce incidents of violence and bullying (Alves et al., 2023; Santos et al., 2025). Therefore, integrating approaches based on negotiation, transformative mediation, and the strengthening of social bonds can contribute to a more harmonious and inclusive educational environment.

3. The Perceived Role of Teachers in Conflict Management

The perception that teachers have of their role in conflict management influences how they intervene and the effectiveness of the strategies adopted (Zee & Koomen, 2016). This perception is shaped by factors such as the training received, professional experience, and institutional support. Teachers who feel responsible for mediation tend to adopt more proactive approaches, while others may resort to punitive

strategies or avoid intervening (Silva et al., 2022).

Teachers perceive conflict mediation in different ways. Many recognize it as an essential part of their educational role, while others feel unprepared to handle complex situations (Ribeiro de Lima, 2024). The lack of specific training can lead to the adoption of less effective strategies, such as imposing sanctions without mediation, which can escalate conflicts (Ferreira et al., 2024). On the other hand, teachers with training in conflict management tend to use more constructive approaches, such as non-violent communication and active listening (Valente et al., 2024).

Teacher self-efficacy refers to the belief in their ability to resolve conflicts. Studies show that teachers with high self-efficacy approach disputes with more confidence and flexibility, promoting a positive school environment (Dias, 2017; Zee & Koomen, 2016). Those who doubt their ability may avoid conflicts or apply rigid disciplinary measures, increasing tensions (Silva et al., 2022).

Strengthening teacher self-efficacy can be achieved through continuous training and institutional support. Training programs that teach mediation strategies and communication skills increase teachers' confidence in conflict management (Maia et al., 2021). Additionally, schools that encourage collaboration among teachers promote the exchange of experiences and the implementation of effective practices (Valente & Lourenço, 2022).

Research shows that teachers who are confident in their ability to manage conflicts contribute to a more inclusive and safe environment. This reduces the frequency of confrontations and improves the school dynamics, benefiting both academic performance and the socio-emotional development of students (Santos et al., 2025). Therefore, investing in teacher training and creating a collaborative environment supports effective conflict resolution strategies and a more positive school climate.

3.1 Theoretical Framework for Conflict Management among Adolescents: The Conflict Process

The conflict process among adolescents in the school environment can be broken down into five essential phases: identification, escalation, intervention, resolution, and follow-up, each requiring a specific approach to ensure effective resolution.

In the identification phase of the conflict, teachers play a crucial role in recognizing early signs of tension, such as changes in behavior or verbal and physical aggression (Alves et al., 2023; Spilt et al., 2012). Timely recognition is key to preventing the situation from worsening, as according to Deutsch (2011), the lack of intervention can lead to the intensification of the conflict, creating a cycle that is difficult to break. The teacher must be attentive to these early signs to identify the problem before it escalates.

The escalation of the conflict occurs when the dispute between students grows, involving more people or becoming more aggressive. Here, educators need to intervene quickly to prevent the problem from intensifying (Alves et al., 2023). Early intervention can be decisive in containing violence and reducing harm to the school community. It is essential that teachers act assertively, without allowing the situation to escalate further (Fisher & Ury, 1981).

In the intervention phase, educators act as mediators, using mediation techniques to help students express their emotions and find a solution to the conflict (Bush & Folger, 2005; Sebaje et al., 2019). Mediation requires the teacher to be impartial and capable of guiding students in constructing solutions that meet the needs of both parties. Studies highlight the importance of negotiation, where the parties involved seek to reach a mutual agreement, with the mediator helping to foster constructive dialogue (Ribeiro de Lima, 2024; Silva, 2024).

The resolution phase occurs when students reach an agreed solution. The teacher's role is to help students recognize their responsibilities and understand the commitments made during the mediation process. The goal is to restore relationships and establish a new understanding (Souza & Guilherme, 2024). Effective resolution depends on the students' willingness to collaborate and reflect on what caused the conflict and how to avoid it in the future.

Finally, follow-up is essential to ensure that the solution is lasting. The teacher should continue to monitor the situation to prevent new conflicts, promoting reflection sessions or adjusting school coexistence norms. Constant follow-up ensures that the school environment remains positive and inclusive, helping students apply the lessons learned (Alves et al., 2023; Gusmão & Almeida, 2024).

3.2 Types and Levels of Conflict

Conflicts are natural phenomena in human interactions, and in the school context, they manifest in various forms and intensities. Understanding the types and levels of conflict — intrapersonal, interpersonal, intra-group, and inter-group — is essential for promoting a healthy and collaborative environment. Analyzing these conflicts allows us to identify their causes and find effective solutions for their management.

Intrapersonal conflict occurs when an individual faces internal dilemmas, such as insecurity, social pressure, and identity issues. During adolescence, a phase of intense identity construction, these emotional conflicts can affect behavior and social interaction (Levisky, 2025). The perception of one's own self-efficacy influences the ability to deal with emotional and social challenges, impacting academic performance and interpersonal relationships (Dias, 2017). Additionally, difficulties related to self-esteem and social acceptance can hinder communication and the sense of belonging to groups (Coling et al., 2024; Spilt et al., 2012).

Interpersonal conflicts occur between individuals and can arise from misunderstandings, rivalries, or differences in values and opinions. In the school context, they affect peer relationships and can result in bullying or social exclusion (Ferreira et al., 2024). Effective mediation by teachers can transform these conflicts into opportunities for social and emotional learning (Souza & Guilherme, 2024), with emotional intelligence and communication skills being essential to fostering a more collaborative environment (Valente & Lourenço, 2022).

Intra-group conflict refers to tensions within a specific group, such as a class or a circle of friends, and can arise from competition for status, differences of opinion, or changes in the group's dynamics (Canavêz & Oliveira, 2014). In the school context, these disputes influence the construction of adolescents' identities (Amorim et al., 2022; Levisky, 2025). However, when well-managed, they can strengthen bonds and develop skills such as empathy and negotiation (Galvão, Shultz & Guimarães-Iosif, 2016).

Finally, inter-group conflicts involve disputes between different groups within the school, often driven by social, cultural, or ideological differences (Fernandes & Pereira, 2018). These conflicts are influenced by social identity

processes, in which individuals tend to value their own group over others, potentially leading to rivalries and polarization, with a negative impact on the school climate (Ribeiro de Lima, 2024). Strategies such as mediation and the promotion of collaborative activities between groups are essential for reducing tensions and encouraging a culture of respect and cooperation (Sebaje et al., 2019).

4. Discussion and Theoretical-Practical Integration

This chapter aims to integrate the information and results obtained throughout the research, reflecting on the practical and theoretical implications of conflict management among adolescents in the school environment. The analysis of the conflict, the strategies adopted by teachers, and the consequences perceived by them will help clarify the impact of these situations on the school dynamics and the development of the students.

4.1 Causes of Conflict Among Adolescents

Conflicts among adolescents in the school environment can be triggered by a variety of emotional, social, and cultural factors. Adolescence is a phase of significant changes, both physically and psychologically, which can increase vulnerability to conflicts (Levisky, 2025). Issues of identity, self-esteem, and the need for social acceptance are often at the root of many misunderstandings (Coling et al., 2024). Additionally, the school environment, which involves interactions with a diversity of groups, can amplify tensions and create rivalries, especially when there are disputes over status or power (Canavêz & Oliveira, 2014).

School norms, often represented by rigid rules and hierarchical structure, also influence the emergence of conflicts. The perception of inequality or injustice in the norms can lead to defiant attitudes among students. According to research by Silva et al. (2022), the improper management of norms and the lack of a collaborative approach to resolving disputes aggravate conflict, directly affecting the school climate.

Teachers, as central figures in mediation and conflict management, play a crucial role in early identification and intervention. Their perception of the factors contributing to conflicts is decisive in the choice of strategies to be adopted (Chrispino & Chrispino, 2023). Many teachers identify factors such as bullying, rivalry between

groups, and a lack of conflict resolution skills as the main causes of misunderstandings among students (Ferreira et al., 2024). The ability of teachers to recognize these factors is essential for effective intervention and promoting a more harmonious environment.

4.2 Conflict Resolution Strategies: Teachers' Perspective

Teachers use a variety of approaches to manage conflicts in the classroom. The strategies adopted vary depending on the training received, personal experience, and the school context. According to Maia et al. (2021), many teachers and educators choose mediation strategies that involve active listening and dialogue between the parties, seeking collaborative solutions that meet the needs of everyone involved.

Mediation and negotiation approaches are fundamental to restoring harmony among students. The mediation process, when well-conducted, can transform a conflict into an opportunity for learning and the development of social skills (Chrispino & Chrispino, 2023; Ribeiro de Lima, 2024). However, it is important that teachers are adequately prepared to manage these situations, particularly regarding impartiality and promoting non-violent communication.

In addition, many schools adopt preventive strategies, such as the implementation of socio-emotional education programs aimed at empowering students to handle their emotions and conflicts constructively. Teacher training is a crucial factor in this process, as teachers with specific training in conflict management and mediation tend to be more successful in resolving disputes (Valente & Lourenço, 2022).

4.3 Consequences of Conflict: Impacts Perceived by Teachers

Unresolved conflicts have serious repercussions in the school environment, affecting both the school climate and students' academic performance. Teachers' perceptions of these consequences are essential to understanding the impact of conflicts on the school community. Unmanaged conflicts can lead to a deterioration of relationships among students, increasing tension and, in extreme cases, resulting in bullying or social exclusion (Ferreira et al., 2024).

According to Santos et al. (2025), in terms of academic performance, students involved in

frequent conflicts may experience a decline in motivation, concentration, and participation in school activities. Furthermore, students' emotional health may also be affected, leading to an increase in cases of anxiety, depression, and other emotional disorders.

Institutional support for teachers, such as training programs and involvement of the school community, is crucial to mitigate the negative impacts of conflicts. Creating a collaborative environment, in which teachers feel supported, is essential to ensure they can implement effective conflict mediation and resolution strategies (Chrispino & Chrispino, 2023).

4.4 Existing Knowledge and Gaps in Knowledge

The literature on conflict management among adolescents in the school context is already quite extensive, but there are some gaps that need to be explored. Most of the research focuses on mediation strategies and teacher training, but there is still limited investigation into the impact of institutional norms and school culture on the origin and escalation of conflicts. Furthermore, there is a need to deepen the understanding of how teachers' perceptions of self-efficacy influence their choice of conflict resolution strategies and how this affects the overall school climate (Zee & Koomen, 2016).

The relevance of this study is justified by the fact that, by addressing existing gaps, it contributes to a better understanding of conflict dynamics and provides practical insights for improving the management of these conflicts in the school environment. Additionally, by integrating theory and practice, this study can serve as a basis for the development of continuous training programs for teachers and the creation of more inclusive and positive school environments.

Conflict management among adolescents is an ongoing challenge in the school environment, and the role of teachers is crucial in resolving and mitigating these situations. Understanding the causes, resolution strategies, and consequences of conflicts is fundamental to promoting a school culture of respect and collaboration. By integrating theory with practice, it is possible to refine the approaches adopted by educators, ensuring a safer and healthier environment for all involved.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Summary of Key Points

This research examined teachers' perceptions of conflict management in the school environment, highlighting their influence on the strategies adopted and the effectiveness of mediation. The results demonstrate that teachers play a central role in conflict mediation, with this role being influenced by their training, experience, and institutional support (Silva et al., 2022).

The theoretical review revealed that conflicts among adolescents are natural and multifaceted processes, arising from emotional, social, and cultural factors (Erikson, 1968; Canavêz & Oliveira, 2014). Different types and levels of conflict were addressed, from intrapersonal to intergroup, with the adoption of strategies promoting active listening, nonviolent communication, and negotiation being essential to minimize their negative effects (Bush & Folger, 2005; Valente & Lourenço, 2022).

The analysis of teachers' perceptions revealed a variety of approaches, ranging from mediatory practices to punitive or avoidant strategies. Studies indicate that teacher self-efficacy is a determining factor in the choice of strategies, as teachers with greater confidence in their abilities tend to adopt more constructive approaches (Dias, 2017; Santos et al., 2025). Continuous training and institutional support emerge as key elements in empowering teachers and promoting a more positive school environment (Maia et al., 2021).

5.2 Reflections on Pedagogical Practice

Teachers' perceptions of conflict management directly influence how they handle everyday school situations. When teachers view mediation as an integral part of their educational role, they tend to foster a more collaborative and inclusive environment, minimizing the recurrence of conflicts (Ribeiro de Lima, 2024). However, the lack of specific training may lead to the adoption of reactive approaches, such as direct punishment or omission, which can exacerbate interpersonal problems between students (Ferreira et al., 2024).

Pedagogical practice can be enhanced through the implementation of continuous training programs focused on developing socio-emotional skills and effective mediation strategies (Alves et al., 2023). Additionally, the support of school institutions in promoting spaces for dialogue and collaboration among teachers can strengthen teachers' confidence and encourage the exchange of experiences (Valente

& Lourenço, 2022).

5.3 Recommendations and Future Perspectives

Based on the results of this research, some recommendations are proposed to improve conflict management in the school environment:

- 1) Development of continuous training programs for teachers, focused on conflict management, nonviolent communication, and school mediation. Studies indicate that such initiatives increase teacher self-efficacy and improve the school climate (Maia et al., 2021; Santos et al., 2025);
- 2) Creation of school mediation spaces, where teachers and students can engage in dialogue and resolve conflicts constructively. Models like those presented by Bush and Folger (2005) show that mediation promotes a more harmonious environment and reduces conflict recurrence;
- 3) Encouragement of collaboration among teachers, through pedagogical meetings and the exchange of best practices, strengthening cohesion and institutional support for conflict management (Valente & Lourenço, 2022);
- 4) Ongoing research on teachers' perceptions and the effectiveness of adopted strategies, with the goal of developing more effective methodologies for conflict resolution in the school environment (Sebaje et al., 2019);
- 5) Promotion of a school culture based on respect and empathy, with the implementation of activities that encourage cooperation and mutual understanding among students from different social groups (Fernandes & Pereira, 2018).

Finally, future perspectives point to the need for an integrated approach, involving teachers, students, families, and the school community in building a more inclusive and collaborative environment. Research on the impact of teacher training and institutional policies on conflict management could significantly contribute to the improvement of educational practices and student well-being. In this sense, strengthening educators' capacity and promoting a culture of dialogue and mediation are essential steps to turn school conflicts into opportunities for growth and learning. Only through a concerted and sustained effort will it be possible to consolidate an educational model that values harmonious coexistence, peaceful resolution of differences, and the strengthening of interpersonal relationships, promoting a truly

democratic and equitable school.

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