

# Research analysis on social communicative skills as a tool to prevent violence in the educational context

Análisis investigativo sobre las habilidades sociales comunicativas como herramienta para prevenir la violencia en el contexto educativo

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## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** In today's society there is a strong trend to communicate ideas in an aggressive way, leading to a communication of tension and exasperation, which entails the generalization of situations of psychological and physical violence. These actions may be due in many occasions to the lack of education in assertive communication, both in schools and universities, and have been extended by the massive use of social networks and the alleged freedom of expression of each person, resulting in messages of violence, leading in some cases to hatred in the networks. Therefore, there is an urgent need to rethink a positive culture of peace. Thus, it is necessary to educate in emotional intelligence, in order to teach emotional competencies that counteract violent communication and latent conflicts. What is important is how verbal and non-verbal communication is carried out in order to express oneself in an assertive and non-violent manner. **Methodology:** Therefore, this paper presents a review and critical analysis of the literature on assertive communication in education. The general objective is to deepen in the different approaches, tools and existing methodologies to generate a teaching of nonviolent and assertive communication. The reality of violence prevention education in schools and universities is analyzed through the teaching of assertive communication, the innovative didactic methodologies used to improve coexistence, and the most effective forms of communication and language that promote assertive communication. A systematic review of the scientific literature has been carried out

following the PRISMA 2009, 2020 declaration. It deals with communication, prevention of discursive violence and efficient didactic methodologies for learning assertive communication at school as well as at university. The following databases were used: Web of Science, Scopus, Dialnet, Redalyc and Scielo. A set of 37 articles published between 2000 and 2023 were obtained, organized into four thematic axes according to the codes obtained. **Results:** As an outstanding result, the current need to educate in the prevention of violence in communication is proven, being necessary to include new tools and methodologies in the general curriculum and in the classrooms of Elementary School, Secondary School and University. **Discussion and conclusions:** Several authors highlight assertive communication as a behavior that improves school coexistence. Among the conclusions, it should be noted that assertive communication involves all the agents involved in the teaching-learning process, including the teacher. Its influence on self-directed learning from the point of view of bidirectional communication, as well as on autonomy, critical spirit and the development of students' social skills is also recognized.

**Keywords:** Education; Social skills; Communication; Violence; Conflict resolution.

## RESUMEN

**Introducción:** En la sociedad actual se observa una marcada tendencia a comunicar ideas de forma agresiva, provocando una comunicación de tensión y crispación, que conllevan a la generalización de situaciones de violencia psicológica y física. Estas actuaciones pueden ser debidas en multitud de ocasiones a la falta de educación en la comunicación asertiva, tanto en escuelas y universidades y se han extendido por el uso masivo de las redes sociales y la pretendida libertad de expresión de cada persona, dando lugar a mensajes de violencia, hasta llevar, en algunos casos al odio en las redes. Por tanto, urge la necesidad de replantear una cultura positiva de paz. Así, es necesario educar en inteligencia emocional, con el fin de enseñar competencias emocionales que contrarresten la comunicación violenta y los conflictos latentes. Lo importante es cómo se realice la comunicación verbal y no verbal para expresarse de forma asertiva y sin violencia. De este modo, surge la necesidad de crear contextos de convivencia pacífica, mediante a la utilización de la comunicación asertiva frente a la violenta y agresiva. **Metodología:** Por consiguiente, este trabajo presenta una revisión y análisis crítico de la literatura sobre la comunicación asertiva en educación. Como objetivo general se trata de profundizar en los diversos acercamientos, herramientas y metodologías existentes para generar una enseñanza de la comunicación no violenta y asertiva. Se analiza la realidad de la educación preventiva de la violencia en la escuela y universidad, a través de la enseñanza de la comunicación asertiva, las metodologías didácticas innovadoras que se utilizan para la mejora de la convivencia, y de las formas de comunicación y del lenguaje más eficaces que favorecen la comunicación asertiva. Se ha realizado una revisión sistemática de la literatura científica siguiendo la declaración PRISMA 2009, 2020. Trata sobre la comunicación, la prevención de la violencia discursiva y las metodologías didácticas eficientes para el aprendizaje de la comunicación asertiva en la escuela y universidad. Se utilizan las bases de datos: *Web of Science, Scopus, Dialnet, Redalyc y Scielo*. Se obtienen un conjunto de 37 artículos publicados entre 2000 al 2023 organizados en torno a cuatro ejes temáticos en función de los códigos obtenidos. **Resultados:** Como resultado destacado se comprueba la necesidad actual de educar en la prevención de la violencia en la comunicación, siendo necesario incorporar nuevas herramientas y metodologías en el currículo general y en las aulas de Primaria, Secundaria y la universidad. **Discusión y conclusiones:** Varios autores destacan la comunicación asertiva como una conducta que mejora la convivencia escolar. Entre las conclusiones, hay que destacar que la comunicación asertiva involucra a todos los agentes que intervienen en el proceso enseñanza-aprendizaje, donde se encuentra también el docente, y se reconoce su influencia en el aprendizaje autodirigido desde el punto de vista de una comunicación bidireccional, así como en la autonomía, el espíritu crítico y en el desarrollo de las habilidades sociales del alumnado.

**Palabras clave:** Educación; Habilidades sociales; Comunicación; Violencia; Solución de conflictos.

## **1. Introduction**

Man is a social being to the very core, and lives with others in different environments, starting from the family, being the primary nucleus in which the development of the subject and his relationship with others begins, here respecting rules, being tolerant, respectful and acting with empathy, without this implying to stop defending one's rights. Subsequently, as the child's development progresses, the child enters the school environment, another of the main agents of socialization (par excellence). Here the child interacts with the peer group, with teachers who become significant adults. It is a heterogeneous scenario, in which people converge, each one with their own beliefs, expectations, models of seeing life or a particular situation; all of which leads to highlight the importance of interacting operatively with all social actors (Castillo et al., 2023).

In most cases, conflict situations are presented through several intertwined conflicts and in many occasions the real conflict may not be clearly perceived, due to the complexity of the conflict, the personality of those who interact in it, the previous conflict experiences and how they have been resolved. Life involves conflict, from birth to death, and conflict involves frustrations. Mistake, error or failure lead those who suffer them to frustration. Hence, a mandatory learning process throughout our lives is to learn to be frustrated and to learn through these positive lessons to achieve personal growth (Funes, 2000).

In recent times a strong social trend towards verbal communication with a high component of aggressiveness has been identified, especially in the context of social networks where individuals protected by anonymity lose the basic elements for communication based on respect for what others say freely. As a result, there is an increase in tension and rejection between the people involved, often leading to psychological and physical violence.

It has been observed that social networks, being in a global online environment with the immediacy and speed with which their communications are generated, are sometimes prone to the emergence of intolerance by exposing communications with a high level of aggressiveness reaching the cyber-hate in its many facets. Thus, speeches are raised against some social group due to physical appearance, cultural or sexual identity, etc. Therefore, it is necessary to propose legal, educational and social actions to promote communication spaces and online interaction in the networks that respect the rights of all people (Moreno-López and Arroyo-López, 2022).

One of the causes of this increase in aggressiveness in everyday communication may be caused by a lack of education in assertive communication and communication skills in schools and universities. Nowadays, social interaction has been enriched by the multitude of forms of communication that have been developed, especially since the emergence of social networks. In the case of online communication it is an example of communication that helps to establish interactions with people from a close or familiar context and with unknown people. Its main feature is its accessibility and closeness, but they have the counterpoint that can lead to hostile and negative communications in the same space (Álvarez-García et al., 2017) and in many situations, it can generate harassment or bullying by the comments made (Sarasola et al., 2019; Herrera-López et al., 2017). Thus, through an alleged freedom of expression, a large number of violent messages are often generated, leading in some cases to the promotion of hatred in the networks (Llinares, 2016; Linares, 2018). Romo-Parra et al., (2023) delve into the various types of hate messages that are produced through social networks, specifically identifying those that refer to the physical appearance of people or their principles and political approaches. They point out that the social networks become a stage for the development of these violent and aggressive communications by tolerating certain hate messages and verbal aggressions.

Collel and Escudé (2006) point out that bullying among students has gained great importance in the educational environment. This phenomenon is characterized by causing intimidation and violence that tends to be socially accepted and thus affects, in this way, the whole group.

Villalba (2016) states that the existence of violent behavior in today's society leads to reflection and analysis of how to deal with these situations, to foster a positive culture of peace and thereby to develop a peaceful

"The participants pursue by common agreement their respective plans of action on the basis of a common definition of the situation."

mindset. Bisquerra (2012) shows us the need to educate in emotional intelligence, in order to develop emotional competences in students that can serve as a tool to counteract violent communication and latent conflicts.

In this regard, a fundamental point of communication is the intention of the speaker, how the message is transmitted, what words and tone are used in addition to the message that is intended to be transmitted (Goleman, 2014). The context in which the communication takes place, the channel and the object of the message must also be taken into account. Therefore, the most important thing for the successful development of communication is that it is carried out with the aim of producing an assertive and non-violent communication. For this, one needs to learn to put empathy and active listening into practice when performing oral communication (Frey, 2018; Maza-de la Torre et al., 2023).

From this point of view, preventive social skills are defined as formal representations of sociocultural, philosophical and cognitive experiences, which are of enormous interest when exploring the sources of the applicability of initiatives to achieve achievements and goals for overcoming undesired situations or behaviors. These preventive social skills must not disregard the substantive support of educational programs, especially when the population of interest is adolescents (Lora-Loza et al., 2021). Communication skills are framed as the abilities needed to perform communicative tasks and influence other individuals (O'Connor, 1999). They are conceptualized as groups of verbal and nonverbal resources through which specific communicative objectives are achieved. The basic skills that must be mastered in order to communicate successfully are: speaking, listening, writing and reading (MINEDU, 2001).

Currently, social skills are understood as a series of behaviors that allow subjects to develop in both an individual and interpersonal context by expressing feelings, desires, opinions, rights or attitudes in a way that is appropriate to the situation where they are (Almaraz et al., 2019; Fernández-Delgado, 2019). The family and the school have the responsibility to encourage and promote the development of social skills in young people, since adolescence is a period of great changes at the physical, cognitive, social and emotional levels, which can lead to various risks such as violence or drug use (Borrás et al., 2017).

In this regard, communication skills are necessary for the proper development of any profession, business management, psychology, medicine or any area of work that requires proper communication between people (Doucet et al., 2013). Social skills are the cornerstone for the development of the adolescent; obtaining an adequate coexistence at school that favors their teaching-learning process, and ultimately, their eventual development into competent adults (Seijo-Martínez et al., 2018).

The work on prosocial behavior is intrinsically linked to social competencies and to the improvement of coexistence in the classroom. Prosocial behavior should be considered as a dimension of social competence that plays an important role in the development of relationships with peers (Zahn-Waxler and Smith, 1992). All this, in turn, with emotional education, understood as an educational process, which is continuous, permanent, planned and developed, through programs, with a non-specific primary prevention character, aimed at enhancing socioemotional development; that is, the set of knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes necessary to properly understand, express and regulate socioemotional phenomena as an essential complement to cognitive development (Bisquerra and Álvarez-Fernández, 2000).

If we focus on communication, one way of educating in communication is non-violent communication, which in the area of educational sciences is considered useful for promoting empathy and competence development in inclusive schools. They propose a series of interpersonal actions focused on mutual respect, facilitating conflict resolution based on working within the teaching-learning process, assertiveness when communicating, listening to the impressions of the other (Danet, 2020).

On the other hand, Márquez (2016) mentions the need to educate in values due to the ethical and values crisis reflected in today's society. He points out that, in order to carry out this education, it is necessary to promote more actions in citizens in understanding and empathy with others, to create and develop competencies that integrate culture, knowledge, emotional and communicative skills in such a way that students are able to face the challenges of the 21st century. In order to train these citizens, it is necessary to introduce them to various social and civic values that foster democratic coexistence. Furthermore, Ballesteros-Aguayo and Nogales-Bocio (2021) stress the importance of educating in critical thinking together with relationship, information and communication technologies (RICTs) and incorporating in school education both skills and competences, being insufficient the teaching in ICTs, which should be complemented with an education in a network society culture.

León-Pérez et al. (2019) highlight communication skills as basic to be able to interact in today's society, being essential for the functioning and adaptation to social demands and professional practice. Communication is highly needed to be able to adequately manage negotiations and develop leadership skills. However, the lack of specific development of these communication skills is observed in educational levels at school, undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

In short, it is urgent to create contexts of peaceful coexistence, through the development and use of communication and assertive language, as opposed to violent or aggressive language, in order to promote mutual respect and social harmony among citizens, in addition to establishing, from the educational environment, the development of positive and assertive social and communicative skills in students. Thus, there is a need to analyze the communicative processes, social skills for communication and its non-violent practice.

## **2. Objectives**

This paper presents a review and critical analysis of the literature on assertive communication in education. The general objective of the paper is to analyze social communication skills as tools for violence prevention in the educational context. Therefore, the following will be analyzed:

- The existing tools and methodologies to develop education in communicative skills.
- The reality of preventive education of non-violence in schools and universities, through the teaching of assertive communication, innovative teaching methodologies used to improve coexistence,
- The communicative relationship between family-school, and the most effective forms of communication and language that favor non-violent communication.

## **3. Methodology**

A systematic review of the scientific literature on research and publications related to the general object of the study has been carried out: communicative social skills as tools to prevent violence in the educational context. For its development, a multitude of research, articles and studies have been analyzed through a methodical and orderly methodological process, focused on the identification, analysis and interpretation of the results according to the proposed study objective (García-Peñalvo, 2019). Thus, based on the standards of the PRISMA 2009, 2020 declaration the authors have followed a systematic review (Moher et al., 2009; Page et al., 2021), and, therefore, the actions carried out are based on a previously defined protocol, in an attempt to reduce possible biases (Moraga and Cartes-Velásquez, 2015).

The steps that have been taken throughout this work are as follows:

- (1) search and selection of the topic,
- (2) literature search,
- (3) analysis of the documents from this search,
- (4) application of the PRISMA 2009, 2020 method,
- (5) analysis of the results, and
- (6) discussion and conclusions.

### 3.1. Criteria for study selection

The conditions of inclusion of the searches carried out to delimit the thoroughness of the research are set out in Table 1.

**Table 1:** *Inclusion and exclusion criteria.*

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
1. Research and studies published in scientific journals, with direct access.	1. Studies that are not research articles published in scientific journals (books, congresses...).
2. Studies between 2013 and 2023 (The last 10 years).	2. Research published before 2013.
3. The area of research is educational and educational psychology	3. The area of research is other than education or educational psychology.
4. Results collected from research in the Spanish and Latin American educational field.	4. Results different from the Spanish and Latin American educational field.

**Source:** Elaborated by the authors.

For this article, a bibliographic review of publications written in Spanish and English was carried out in the following databases: Web of Science, Scopus, Dialnet and Scielo. Only publications closely related to one or more variables were considered in the object of study.

Inclusion criteria included research and studies published in scientific journals, with direct access, developed during the last 10 years in the areas of education and educational psychology both in Spain and Latin America (Table 1). As exclusion criteria, we discarded those studies that were not published in scientific journals, prior to 2013 or in areas other than psychology or education (Table 1). We excluded those studies that after full reading did not cover the variables reviewed and those studies for which it was impossible to access the full text.

Finally, after the searches, we proceeded to eliminate articles that did not meet the inclusion criteria by reading the title, abstract and full text of the potentially relevant papers.

For this reason, a systematic search was carried out on the basis of these inclusion criteria in national and international psychology and education databases, followed by their analysis.

In order to perform the systematic search, publications between 2013 and 2023 of articles indexed in the referred databases were analyzed. The search phrases using Boolean operators are described below (Table 2).

**Table 2:** Search organization.

Search organization	
<b>Search/ filter field</b>	Article title, abstract and keywords in Spanish and English in education.
<b>Search words</b>	“habilidades sociales comunicativas”, OR “educación Social”, OR “social skills”, OR “communication and education”, “habilidades comunicativas AND prevención de la violencia”, OR “communication skills and violence prevention”, OR “comunicación asertiva AND educación”, OR “assertive communication AND education”, OR “educación no violenta”, OR “nonviolent education” OR “mejora de la convivencia” AND metodologías”, OR “improvement of coexistence” AND methodologies”, OR “mejora de la convivencia” AND “comunicación asertiva”, OR “improvement of coexistence” AND “assertive communication”, OR “comunicación no violenta AND “educación”, OR “nonviolent communication” AND education”
<b>Boolean operator</b>	OR, AND
<b>Period</b>	2013 to 2023
<b>Databases</b>	Web of Science, Scopus, Dialnet and Scielo.

**Source:** Elaborated by the authors.

### 3.2. Selection procedure

The publication selection procedure was developed by double screening using inclusion-exclusion criteria. A selection sheet was designed to ensure reliability in the application of the selection criteria. In the first phase, the relevance of the studies was determined by reviewing the title, abstract and keywords. In a second phase, the full texts of potentially eligible studies were retrieved and analyzed by two independent reviewers.

A special analysis was made of the most cited and representative studies and research, reviewing the contents of all the selected articles and finally delimiting the state of the art. After the first review, in which 250 documents appeared from this initial group of research, 172 articles were discarded because they did not meet any of the selection criteria indicated: research carried out in other fields such as medicine, law, advertising, marketing, sports, developed in Anglo-Saxon countries, or that were not open access articles, or that did not relate in any way to the educational component, leaving a total of 78 research studies. A new screening is added, discarding researches not specifically focused on the objectives set for this research, eliminating researches due to lack of accuracy based on the central content of each research, the development of the research and its conclusions, eliminating researches due to:



- Reviews, manuals or books.
- Lack of specificity with the objectives set in the research.

Therefore, 48 more studies were eliminated, resulting in a total of 30 studies in this systematic review of the literature. Figure 1 shows the entire process indicated.

Through this systematic review analysis, it has been possible to identify the conceptual categories extracted from the analysis based on the research objectives. The categories that emerged around the stated objectives of our research are presented as follows:

- Importance of assertive communication in education.
- Social and communicative skills as prevention of violence in education.
- The need to use innovative methodologies to develop communication skills.
- Assertive communication and methodologies that improve coexistence.
- Education in non-violent and assertive communication.
- Forms of communication and social relations.

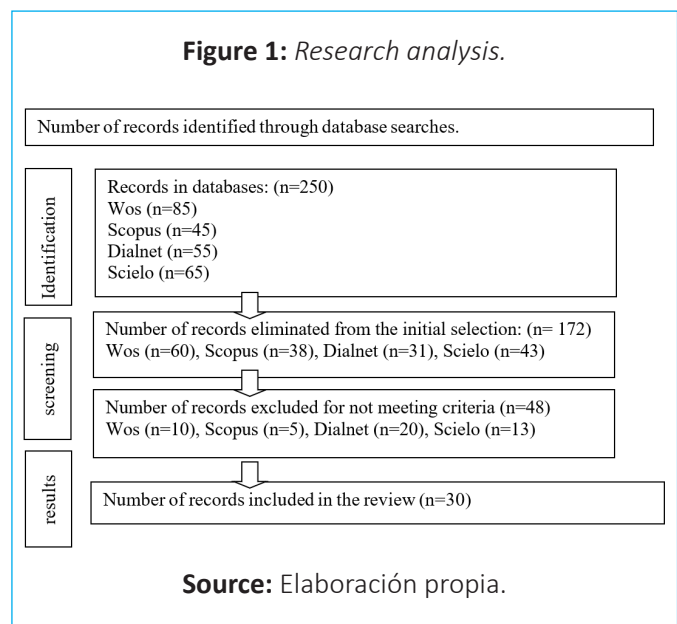
#### 4. Results

The specific results described in the following subsections come from those selected articles that strictly comply with the objectives set out above. Taking into account that we excluded those studies that after a complete reading did not cover the variables reviewed, or whose study population were children or adults, and those studies where it was impossible to access the full text.

Once the number of publications that met the requirements established for our research had been quantified, we proceeded to the analysis taking into consideration the following aspects: analyze the content of the study carried out, extracting the most important aspects of the research, organize and analyze the research by year of publication, to determine which variable was the most studied.

The articles have been selected, taking into account the selection and exclusion criteria, both qualitative and quantitative research, as well as research based on intervention/training programs in social communication skills to prevent violence in the educational environment.

This mapping of the updated state of the art has allowed identifying the different existing epistemological positions on the importance of social communicative skills in the prevention of violent behavior in the school context. The following are the results of the SLR carried out on the basis of the categories established around the research objectives.





#### **4.1. Importance of assertive communication in education**

Once the bibliographic analysis has been carried out, in this category the importance of assertive communication in the educational environment is observed in different authors. Lozano-Fernández et al. (2022) highlight the need to include assertive communication and the development of soft or social skills in the curriculum of basic and higher education, concluding that this would offer a higher quality education. He also emphasizes the need for students to learn communication skills, problem solving and teamwork for their future professional and social development. In this sense, they agree with De la Ossa (2022), who defines soft skills as socioemotional skills, which are essential for education and integral development. The soft skills are classified into three interrelated categories, such as interpersonal skills, cognitive skills and skills for emotional control. Among them there are skills such as assertive communication, empathy, and emotion management. Salcedo-Hernández et al. (2023) relate how the development of soft skills in the classroom reduces student stress. Ochoa (2022) identifies the approach of oral communication from a cognitive, communicative and social perspective, alluding to the use of educational methodologies that foster the development of oral competence such as project work, etc. Likewise Valdivia et al., (2018) allude to the need for media literacy and mediation through language in the educational environment, as tools for social consensus. In this sense, Boizán-Mesa, et al., (2020) allude to the development of communicative practices as part of the competencies and suggest methodologies for their development.

#### **4.2. Social and communication skills as preventive measures against violence in education**

Violence in the educational sector is a problem that needs to be addressed with different approaches, thus Mendoza-González et al. (2020) conducted a study on the profile of students who do not participate in episodes of bullying, taking into account factors such as cognitive attitudes, gender stereotypes, overeating, etc., concluding that students who do not get involved in these conflicts, present a greater development of their social skills and also have better health habits, which allows for greater integration into the social context. In this regard, Brandão et al., (2020) conducted their research concluding that pedagogical intermediation promotes the development of social skills that promote the active participation of students, leading to the development of empathetic and assertive relationships that allow the transformation of the school environment, being very effective as prevention in cases of bullying. Similarly, Ramos (2019) in his study delves into the development of personal skills in students through the situated learning method, where situations are developed where students are exposed to situations of assertive and empathic communication, developing their communication skills for problem solving.

#### **4.3. The need to use innovative methodologies to generate communication skills**

The use of innovative methodologies for the development of communication skills is shown to be a determining factor for conflict resolution, reducing violence and favoring coexistence and therefore, the school climate. In this respect, Cabello-Sanz and Muñoz-Parreño (2023) show the implementation of a hybrid program for the improvement of emotional competences in Compulsory Secondary Education (ESO), based on the competences model of the Research Group on Psychopedagogical Guidance (GROP), together with the Service Learning (ApS) methodology, demonstrating its effectiveness for this educational stage. ICTs as tools of active methodologies lead to improvements in their development as bullying prevention (Ramos, 2019; Ferrada and Contreras, 2021).

#### **4.4. Assertive communication and methodologies to improve coexistence**

Innovative teaching methodologies such as cooperative learning, etc. allow the development of social and communicative skills, etc. in students. Thus Ferrada and Contreras, (2021), in their research with future teachers using the Team-Based Learning method, conclude with a positive perception as students develop social and communicative skills and improve linguistic competences. Other methods can be the one used by Seviairos et al., (2023) which shows us how through educational videos used as a digital tool in a primary classroom, students' communicative skills improve. Similarly, Núñez et al. (2023) show us how the creative pedagogical process through art, especially theater, benefits the students' communicative skills and artistic expression. De

la Cruz-Gómez et al. (2020) propose a psychoeducational intervention program, concluding that students do improve their emotional competencies and communication skills. Marlés-Betancourt et al. (2021) propose a cooperative game as a didactic strategy for university students. The research concludes that the game can be a lever for changing habits and practices in students and favors the development of assertive communication, teamwork, etc. Similarly Ruiz and Martínez (2017) propose a socio-community intervention in a vulnerable neighborhood, during 10 years. They analyze how the intervention has influenced the life trajectory of young people, highlighting the importance of the appropriate proposals in the socio-community intervention on the improvement in coexistence, social cohesion, development of social skills and self-esteem among others. In the case proposed by Randazzo-Eisemann (2021) meditation serves as a protective tool against violence, promoting peace in the school by lowering stress levels, anxiety, aggressiveness, and promoting respectful behaviors, social interaction and integration. Similarly, in the work of Ochoa and Pérez (2019), Service Learning (SL) is used as a methodology to improve school coexistence. As a result, the improvement of the school climate is observed and the protagonism of the students in its implementation is highlighted. In Oyola (2015) one can find the application of sociodrama for the development of social skills, concluding as results of the research, the improvement of social skills in students, communication becomes more assertive, and coexistence is improved in general. In Cruz (2017) one finds the theatrical game as a resource for the work of social and interpersonal skills. In González-Bellido (2021) a work program called TEI is proposed, on a large scale for the prevention of bullying and violence, involving the entire educational community at the national level and being developed in all educational stages. It is based on peer tutoring, with the values of respect, empathy and commitment being key factors for its development in schools. As conclusions, there are significant improvements in cyberbullying, physical aggression, among students and in schools.

#### 4.5. Non-violent and assertive communication education

Assertive communication in the educational environment involves all the agents participating in the teaching-learning process, in this sense, Solórzano (2018) analyzes assertive communication from the role of the teacher as a promoter of self-directed learning of students, where autonomy, critical spirit and the development of social skills of students are developed from the point of view of a bidirectional communication. In this sense the work of Sardiñas et al., (2020) evaluates how through the improvement of educational communication of teachers and the promotion of assertive behaviors, it has a positive impact on the training of students, on their interpersonal development and on conflict resolution, and can also lead to the achievement of the educational objectives of the 2030 Agenda (ONU, 2015). They extend its application to the digital environment and social networks, alluding to the emotional component, empathy, respect, understanding and cooperation. Likewise, in the study by Cañas-Betancur and Hernández-Sánchez (2019) they define assertive communication as a key factor for the prevention of psychosocial problems. They conduct a study based on the sociodemographic characteristics of teachers, concluding on the need to reinforce this assertive communication through an educational intervention, as do Monar and Caballero (2023) who confirm the need for training students in assertive communication in the university training environment, as a pedagogical tool for university management. Likewise, Rodríguez-Vázquez and Figueredo-Vila (2021) allude to the need to integrate and develop communicative competencies and in particular to emphasize assertive communication in university training in Education and Speech Therapy in Cuba.

#### 4.6. Forms of communication and social relations

The evidence of the communicative relationship between family-school is evident in the school performance and well-being of students, as Bueno-Villaverde et al. (2023) show in their study. Furthermore, the efficacy of non-violent communicative forms is shown, as forms that favor non-violent communication in the school and family context. The centers that have implemented good practices present guidelines for preventive and proactive action towards conflicts, in addition to carrying out training actions aimed at all stakeholders such as students and their families as well as teachers. Likewise, Peces and Guevara (2022) show communication as the basis for the development of

"Assertiveness should be educated, and there is a trend towards the application of innovative methodologies that bring social skills."

an adequate family climate, taking into account the changes and evolutionary stages of students that can distort this good climate. It offers an intervention proposal or training workshop aimed at conflictive parents and children, through interactive methodology in order to improve communication and strengthen the bonds between them. Similarly, López and Ovejero (2015), in their study, conclude that a family environment lacking affection and where there is no dialogue and communication and where values are not promoted, has a significant influence on the violent behavior of students. It also proposes that parents should be trained in communication skills and that they should establish a close relationship with the educational center in order to receive possible support. In this sense, and taking into account the diversity of students, Viera et al. (2022) propose workshops for parents of children with ADHD in order to promote communication between them.

## 5. Discussion and Conclusions

### 5.1. Discussion

A series of contributions by authors should be highlighted, subdivided, in turn, into two large blocks (taking into account the relationship between the dimensions of the results):

- I a) *Regarding communication and social skills as violence prevention.*

In communicative action the participants pursue by common agreement their respective plans of action on the basis of a common definition of the situation (...). The understanding-oriented action is constitutive of the condition that the participants carry out their respective plans by common agreement in a commonly defined situation of action. They try to avoid two risks: the risk that the understanding will fail, i.e. the risk of dissent or misunderstanding, and the risk that the action plan will fail, i.e. the risk of failure in action (Habermas, 1992).

Regarding assertive communication, it is possible to promote assertiveness as a means of communication in the classroom and outside it, based on respect for others (Calua et al., 2021). Based on what has been described, Monje et al. (2009) mention that assertive communication is characterized because it transmits direct, safe, timely and calm messages, maintaining respect for oneself and for others. Therefore, assertiveness, is a behavior and not a personality characteristic, which improves coexistence, highlighting assertiveness as an ability in the field of social skills, making one's own and others' rights respected (Peinado, 2015).

Violence is a cultural product. The human being, like any other animal, possesses biological characteristics that induce aggressiveness. That is why all people experience different emotions (fear, aggressiveness, anger, sadness...) before the different situations that arise in everyday life and these emotions lead them to "attack" or confront that which triggered them (Sanmartín, 2000). González and Prendes (2018) comment on the current change that is occurring in communication due to social networks, since they allow interacting in a different way, with greater freedom in communicative levels, being able to generate languages of threats, aggressiveness and hatred. As evidenced by the various research studies analyzed, emotions thus play an adaptive role, providing the necessary behaviors for the survival of the person at a given time. But aggressiveness can change from being a useful instinct, at the service of our survival, to being a harmful behavior for another human being for reasons very different from its own biological effectiveness (Pereira and Bertino, 2010). Cacho-Becerra et al. (2019) make known the importance of preventing violent behaviors in adolescents through workshops based on training in communicative social skills.

There is a need for mediation literacy programs where language and assertive communication are treated as tools for social consensus, as is the case of the program developed by Benito-Pascual et al. (2009). There are other programs implemented that have shown positive results in the relationship between training in social communication skills and violence prevention in the school context (Nunes et al., 2016; Salavera et al., 2019; Llamazares and Urbano, 2020). One of the most noteworthy aspects, given the vulnerability and constant problematic changes encountered by adolescents, is how social skills can reduce risk behaviors and antisocial behaviors (González-Moreno and Molero, 2023).

b) *Regarding methodologies for non-violent-assertive education and forms of communication and social relations.*

In the educational field, the need to develop assertive communication in students and incorporate it into the basic and higher education curriculum, through the development of social skills, as a tool for the future personal and professional development of students, is relevant. It has been proven that the development of soft skills in the classroom reduces student stress. Students who have a greater development of their social skills are more integrated in the social context and are less prone to conflict. It should be noted that schooling plays a relevant role in the development of social skills in childhood and adolescence, and that the variables schooling, self-control and assertiveness have an influence on offending behavior (do Amaral et al., 2015).

Assertive communication involves all the agents participating in the teaching-learning process, including the teacher, and its influence is recognized in self-directed learning from the point of view of bidirectional communication, as well as in the autonomy, critical spirit and development of social skills of students. Assertive communication has been included as one of the social and life skills that are key to the teaching and learning process and the prevention of psychosocial problems (Bernal-Álava et al., 2022). That is, through the improvement of communication and the promotion of assertive behaviors of teachers, students are positively influenced in aspects related to their interpersonal development, empathy, respect, conflict resolution, extending also its application to the digital context. It is demonstrated how the use of innovative methodologies serves as an instrument for the development of competences and acquisition of social and communicative skills in students, showing these skills as a determining factor for conflict resolution, improvement of coexistence and therefore favoring the school climate. The effectiveness of pedagogical methods such as situated learning, team-based learning, service learning, cooperative games, educational videos, theater, meditation, etc. is also demonstrated. In the same way, pedagogical and psychoeducational intermediation promote the development of social and communicative skills, in addition to favoring the active participation of students, which allows the transformation of the school environment, being very effective in cases of bullying prevention. As analyzed in the study by Cáceres-Reche et al. (2022), active methodologies, through the use of ICTs, are a didactic resource of undoubted value in combating bullying from any of its aspects, whether to prevent, intervene or carry out both actions together. All this, through a progressive and continuous work on social and communicative skills. Bautista-García and Zúñiga-Rodríguez (2021) stress the importance of using assertive communication as a basis for learning ICTs, creating an online learning modality and using various platforms with which to educate in assertive communication skills, promoting more global and complete interactions between people. In this way, asynchronous multidisciplinary sessions are proposed so that learning and communication can take place throughout the life cycle. At the same time, ICTs promote the development and learning of communicative skills in education, since language learning takes place in the same sociocultural environment in which the person is participating and in the ICT interactions that they carry out and the social communication that they generate (González and Ríos, 2021).

Furthermore, the importance of a positive communication relationship between family and school is highlighted, since it enhances school performance, as well as the well-being of the students. Communication in the family is a basic pillar for the development of an ideal family climate and it is necessary to pay attention to the evolutionary changes of the students, since they can alter this good climate, especially during adolescence. A family environment lacking affection and where there is no dialogue and communication has a significant influence on the violent behavior of students. Parents and schools require improving interpersonal communication with students, even more so when studies reveal that affective bonds between students and adults at school significantly influence adolescent behavior (Jain et al., 2018). Communication aimed at teaching students to peacefully resolve their conflicts (Díaz-Aguado, 2005) and the involvement of families in the prevention of school violence (Valdés-Cuervo et al., 2018) contribute effectively to the reduction of peer aggression.

## 5.2. Conclusions

The review carried out has provided a contribution to scientific knowledge by developing a panoramic view of the studies on skills as tools to prevent violence in the educational context, in line with the objective set out in this study.

The findings of this study have important implications for teachers who want to develop the social skills of all their students in order to build and develop an assertive communication process that favors a peaceful socio-affective climate.

It is concluded, as has been seen in the results of the studies analyzed, that the school and the family are two complementary spheres whose actions have a decisive influence on what happens in the other. Therefore, there is still a long way to go to establish communication spaces that make the debate on their common interest, the students, more feasible. Contexts where the channels of communication between family and school are transparent and there is a continuous dialogue are prone to the detection, prevention and intervention of all those problems that arise as a result of human interaction, analyzing which are the causes that can lead to conflicts being managed in the best possible way.

It should be noted that this systematic review has identified how intervention programs aimed at promoting social skills in adolescents have good results, since they not only increase the levels of social skills, but also have other benefits in the lives of students, such as reducing risk behaviors and increasing self-esteem or personal well-being.

Thus, it is proven that in view of the evidence of communication in toxic (or violent (aggressive) networks, as studies have indicated, assertiveness should be educated, and there is a trend towards the application of innovative methodologies that bring social skills and the management of coexistence in educational centers to promote a culture of peace, based on the development of positive, empathetic and understanding communication.

On the other hand, it should be emphasized that one of the aspects that could be improved and limitations of this systematic review is the fact that it could focus more specifically on all those educational intervention programs that, at national and international level, focus on promoting communication skills for better coexistence at the different levels of the educational system. Likewise, it would be convenient to carry out a study on the degree of development of programs implemented in social skills in assertive communication, to check if they are being effective.

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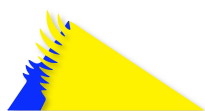
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