

***Programa de intervención para la inteligencia emocional en
adolescentes víctimas de bullying
Intervention program for emotional intelligence in adolescent
victims of bullying***

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Resumen

El bullying escolar se ha convertido en una tendencia entre los adolescentes, situación esta que afecta el correcto desempeño de las relaciones sociales. El presente estudio fue realizado en la Escuela Secundaria Urbana Rafael Orejón Forment de Guantánamo con el objetivo de proponer un programa de intervención para favorecer la inteligencia emocional en adolescentes víctimas de bullying. Para el estudio se escogió una muestra de 16 adolescentes víctimas de bullying en dicho centro, a los que se les aplicaron diferentes instrumentos como la entrevista, el dibujo, la revisión documental, la observación, la encuesta, y el Trait Meta-Mood Scale; arrojando como resultados inseguridad, ansiedad y tristeza, agresiones como amenazas, hostigamiento, intimidación, empujones, insultos y marcadas dificultades en los componentes de inteligencia emocional. Ello permitió elaborar un programa de intervención valorado de pertinente y novedoso.

Palabras clave: Inteligencia emocional; Violencia en adolescentes; Acoso escolar; Bullying escolar.

Summary

School bullying has become a trend among adolescents, a situation that affects the correct performance of social relationships. This study was conducted at the Rafael Orejón Forment Urban High School in Guantánamo with the objective of proposing an intervention program to promote

emotional intelligence in adolescent victims of bullying. For the study, a sample of 16 adolescent victims of bullying in that center was chosen, to whom different instruments were applied such as the interview, drawing, documentary review, observation, survey, and the Trait Meta-Mood Scale; yielding as results insecurity, anxiety and sadness, aggressions such as threats, harassment, intimidation, pushing, insults and marked difficulties in the components of emotional intelligence. This allowed the development of an intervention program that was considered relevant and innovative.

Key words: Emotional intelligence; Violence in adolescents; Bullying; School bullying.

Introduction

The relationships and experiences that children and adolescents live in the family, school and neighborhood are essential for a good emotional, social and cognitive development. However, coexistence and human relationships involve conflicts and disturb these safe and warm environments. One of these conflicts, that arouses great social alarm, is the violence or bullying that is generated between children and adolescents at school.

As part of this macro social phenomenon, in recent times violence in the educational environment, is what the authors have coincided in calling school harassment or bullying. In European countries, such as Spain, for example, almost 6 % of children have been involved in some kind of bullying at school. Ninety percent have witnessed this type of behavior in their environment. 30 % have participated in some occasion either as a victim or as an aggressor. Between 25% and 30% of the students in the first cycle say that they have been victims of aggression at some time. 5, 6 % are actors in or victims of systematic bullying.

According to UNICEF, in Latin America between 50% and 70 % of Latin American and Caribbean students have been victims of some kind of bullying, and therefore warn about the increase of violence in schools. Among the countries on alert are Mexico, Colombia, Paraguay and Peru.

Authors such as Román and Murillo (2011), state that Cuba as a country in the region does not escape this phenomenon; however, UNESCO itself states that the percentage of children who are physically and verbally assaulted is lower.

In this sense, although part of the background research related delinquency and violence to thinking factors, for decades it was limited to highlighting the existence of a certain correlation between behavior and low intelligence, studying the latter only as a global construct and only linked to the

cognitive aspect, without taking into account how emotions and their control mediate in the origin of violent behavior.

Emotional intelligence is an aspect that allows us to develop as emotionally mature people to face various problematic situations, especially problems that affect the emotional stability of each one, for example, when going through a divorce or a breakup of the family environment, especially when the human being is in a stage of emotional conflicts in his personal life and within the family or in other areas of life as in school in which they must also face complex situations such as bullying.

According to Candelá, Barberá, Ramos and Sarrio (2002), in the last decade, research related to emotional intelligence, both in the supposedly healthy population and in the psychiatric population, has achieved considerable momentum.

Hence, the importance of understanding this problem in an analysis from psychology in view of the need to study emotional intelligence in adolescent victims of bullying, since intelligence has traditionally been a factor that has been the object of analysis of criminology as a science. In this way, it attempts to characterize these victims by breaking with the stereotypes that stigmatize them as individuals. Being able to identify from the investigated experience in manifestations such as:

- Increased violence in 7th grade adolescents due to school bullying.
- Low self-esteem and school rejection in students who suffer school bullying.
- Scarce personal resources to face the problems generated by bullying.

The study population consisted of adolescents from the Rafael Orejón Forment Urban Basic Secondary School (ESBU) in the city of Guantánamo, of which 16 adolescents were identified as victims of bullying. Since this is a figure that allows the feasibility of the study, it is considered to work with 100% of the population without the need to use sampling. For this, the only inclusion criterion required was the willingness to participate in the study.

Taking into account the above aspects, the following scientific problem is posed: How to promote emotional intelligence in adolescents of the ESBU Rafael Orejón Forment who are victims of bullying?

Therefore, the objective is stated as follows: to propose an intervention program to promote emotional intelligence in adolescent victims of bullying at the ESBU Rafael Orejón Forment.

Development

For decades, psychology as a science has considered intelligence as the use of skills necessary for survival and progress. Consequently, intelligence tests measure aspects such as, for example, the retention of general information, the understanding of expressions and situations, analogical-mathematical reasoning, among others, which is why our society has persistently valued during the last centuries a very specific ideal of the human being: the intelligent person. In traditional schooling, a child was considered intelligent when he or she mastered the classical languages, Latin or Greek, and mathematics, algebra or geometry.

Authors such as Extremera and Berrocal (2002), state that "each society, context or era has established its ideal of the intelligent person" p. 2. This idea in Western culture has been very well summarized by Gardner (1987), when he stated that "the traditional intelligent person was one who mastered certain subjects such as mathematics and algebra" (p. 6).

More recently, intelligence quotient (IQ) has become the benchmark for this ideal and this argument is supported by the positive relationship between students' IQ and their academic performance: students who score higher on IQ tests tend to get the best grades in school.

Other authors, such as Goleman (1995), mention that there are more important skills than a high IQ level; people with well-developed emotional skills have greater satisfaction with life, are more effective and therefore show greater productivity in the personal, work, academic and social spheres.

On the other hand, Bisquerra (2012) points out that a high IQ does not guarantee success in life and that a high degree of happiness and satisfaction depend on the knowledge and development of other skills, including emotional ones. Therefore, Emotional Intelligence is understood as a protective factor of problematic behaviors such as violence, impulsivity and emotional maladjustment, so it is advisable to carry out primary prevention, using for this purpose the learning of basic skills of emotional intelligence in early educational stages.

From this perspective, intelligence has begun to be studied from aspects that transcend the purely cognitive and to link this concept with social, emotional, etc. variables. Such is the case of a recent psychological construct called emotional intelligence, of which there are almost as many definitions as there are authors who have written on the subject. However, the origins of this novel term go back to the study of social intelligence, initially identified by Thorndike in 1920, quoted by Extremera and Berrocal (2002, p.3), who defines it as "the ability to understand and manage men and women, boys

and girls, to act wisely in human relationships". Later, Mayer and Salovey (1997) included these two types of intelligence in what they defined as Emotional Intelligence.

However, one of the main authors, Goleman (1995), refers to emotional intelligence as a set of skills, attitudes, abilities and competencies that determine an individual's behavior, reactions or mental states and defines it as: the ability to recognize our own feelings and those of others, to motivate ourselves and to adequately manage relationships.

Other authors more recently, such as Cooper and Sawaf (2004), cited by García and Jiménez (2010, p. 44), define Emotional Intelligence as:

The ability to feel, understand, and effectively apply the power and acuity of emotions, as a source of human energy, information, connection, and influence. It encompasses a paradigm of elements which are conjugated; intelligence besides being a cerebral capacity is a set of functions through which a successful level is produced.

However, it is evident that from the above definitions the term includes two alternative ways of being studied:

1. Emotional intelligence can be understood as a personality trait that allows one to adapt effectively to the environment, learn from experience and overcome obstacles through reflection.
2. The concept alludes to psychophysiological reactions of people to stressful situations from an adaptive point of view, such as those involving danger, threat, harm, loss, success, novelty, etc

These reactions may be universal in nature, independent of culture, and produce changes in affective experience, physiological activation and expressive behavior. This is why the theory proposed by Mayer and Salovey (1997) provides a new and accepted framework to investigate and understand the mechanisms of emotional adaptation to stressful situations.

For this reason, this study assumes as theoretical support of emotional intelligence the proposal of Mayer and Salovey (1997, p. 6) from which emotional intelligence can be defined as:

The ability to process the information provided by emotions, emotionally intelligent people are those who know how to attend to the emotions originated in their environment, understand the possible causes and consequences of those emotions and, consequently, develop strategies to regulate or manage those emotional states.

In order to homogenize the measurement of the emotional intelligence construct, several models have been proposed for its study. However, the review of the existing models highlights that for the understanding of this construct, the most important models have been classified into two groups: Mixed Models and Ability Models.

The mixed model is a very broad view that conceives emotional intelligence as a compendium of stable personality traits, socio-emotional competencies, motivational aspects and various cognitive skills. These include personality traits such as impulse control, motivation, frustration tolerance, stress management, anxiety, assertiveness, confidence and/or persistence.

Goleman establishes the existence of an Emotional Quotient (EQ) that is not opposed to the classical IQ but rather the two complement each other. This complement is manifested in the interrelationships that occur. In this sense, the author establishes components that constitute emotional intelligence:

- Self-awareness: is the awareness of one's own internal states, resources and intuitions.
- Self-regulation: is the control of our states, internal impulses and internal resources.
- Motivation: explained as emotional tendencies that guide or facilitate the achievement of objectives.
- Empathy: is understood as the awareness of the feelings, needs and concerns of others.
- Social skills: the ability to induce desirable responses in others, but not understood as the ability to control another individual.

From this described position it can be affirmed, according to Goleman (1995, p. 8), that:

People with a high level of emotional intelligence are persistent, empathetic people, who maintain self-motivation and that of the group, despite difficulties, are emotionally stable, accept criticism favorably, are flexible in their positions, take into account the opinion of others, adapt better to situations of uncertainty and tolerate frustration better, since they are able to make adequate use of their emotional resources, even in adverse situations, from which they usually derive learning.

The above characteristics refer to people's abilities; therefore, in this research, emotional intelligence has been assumed from the perspective of ability and not trait. The ability models postulate the existence of a series of cognitive abilities or skills of the prefrontal lobes of the neocortex to perceive, evaluate, express, manage and self-regulate emotions in an intelligent way and adapted to the achievement of well-being, based on social norms and ethical values. This has been reformulated with new contributions, with the inclusion of new skills such as:

- Emotional perception: ability to identify emotions in oneself and in others through facial expression and other elements such as voice or body expressiveness.
- Emotional facilitation of thought: ability to relate emotions to other sensations such as taste and smell, or to use emotion to facilitate reasoning. In this sense, emotions can prioritize, direct or redirect thought, projecting attention to the most important information. On the other hand, happiness facilitates inductive reasoning and creativity.
- Emotional understanding: ability to solve problems and identify which emotions are similar.
- Emotional management: understanding of the implications of social acts on emotions and regulation of emotions in oneself and others.
- Reflective regulation of emotions to promote personal growth: ability to be open to feelings whether positive or negative.

In this sense, peer relationships during childhood are determinant to prove their social recognition and to be able to evaluate their skills and attitudes, reaffirming them in their position in the world, and stimulating their social development, which is linked to the cognitive, which stimulates and amuses them. This is why it is important to recognize the abilities of adolescents who suffer from bullying.

Understanding the phenomenon of bullying involves multiple factors associated with the origins, social and cultural context, family background and socioeconomic level of the subjects involved and the school institution that houses them. Given the complexity of the phenomenon, any type of study on it requires knowledge of the context in which it becomes evident, of its actors and of the aspects that directly and indirectly influence its appearance and development.

In this particular case, the school context becomes the focus of attention in a stage as complex as adolescence. There are numerous investigations, most notably that of Pizarro (2012), on bullying, being a widespread phenomenon in schools, and agreeing that the most dangerous ages are those between nine and fourteen years of age.

According to Olweus (1983, p. 367), bullying is defined as "a behavior of physical and/or psychological persecution carried out by a student against another student whom he/she chooses as a victim of repeated attacks". This negative and intentional action places the victim in a position from which it is difficult for him/her to escape by his/her own means. He adds that the continuity of these relationships has clearly negative effects on the victims: lower self-esteem, anxiety and even depression, which hinders their integration into the school environment and the normal development of their learning.

In bullying, peer relationships are unfavorable in every way; this is because there is reciprocity of arrogance of aggressors and subjugation for the victims, generating extremely serious effects, which can lead to serious psychological problems, serious injuries, and even suicide for those who suffer it.

In general terms, it can be assumed that the act of harassment or bullying is characterized as an aggressive, repetitive, methodical and systematic behavior, which occurs over a prolonged period of time. The objective of bullying is to intimidate, isolate, threaten, insult, emotionally and intellectually subdue the victim, that is, to control the victim through thought and/or action and to satisfy the victim's need to control, dominate, attack, and destroy others. The aggressor violates the victim's personality and self-esteem.

These are classified into four basic types: physical, verbal, psychological and social exclusion, which usually occur simultaneously and not separately.

In general, school bullying can affect victims in all their adolescent activities, their school attendance, physically, emotionally and mentally, making them more vulnerable to problems such as depression and mood disorders as they grow older and, on some occasions, leading to retaliation. It is important that both the student himself as well as the family and teachers know how to recognize the manifestations of bullying, in order to give attention and treatment to this problem together, given the consequences that can lead not only in the school life of victims but in the development of the personality of the victim and the aggressor himself.

For the diagnosis of the study, different psychological tests and evaluation techniques were applied: document review, in-depth interview, free drawing, observation, survey and the Trait Meta-MoodScale (TMMS-24). These revealed that most of the subjects studied identified intimidation, threats and harassment as the most common forms of bullying, and insults and pushing and shoving as the least common. These are experienced daily and have a constant duration in time, i.e., they are manifested systematically whenever the interaction of the victims with the aggressors takes place.

The activities are mostly elaborated by participatory techniques that make it possible to address some theoretical contents, reflect on them and generate changes in the way of thinking and acting of adolescent victims of bullying and their peers. Participation and interaction among the participants was maintained at all times, paying attention to their opinions, expressions and criteria and offering feedback and reaffirmation when deemed necessary.

The activities are structured by: theme, objective, time, materials, development and closure.

Some of the techniques included in the program are specific adaptations of other manuals that are part of the bibliography consulted.

Activity 1 Getting to know each other

Objective: to get to know the participants and the characteristics of the activities, schedules, dates expectations of the program.

Duration: 35 min

Materials: balloons

Development: participants and facilitators will stand in circles, each one will have a balloon in their hands and will write their name on it, then everyone will throw the balloons in the air and go around, they must catch any balloon and establish contact with the person who has the name of the balloon they caught. With this person they will exchange their name, likes and dislikes what they hope to learn in these activities. When all the duos have finished, the coordinator or facilitators will introduce themselves and explain the objectives of the activities, the importance of the activities, the schedules, dates and all the necessary details.

Closing: The session is closed by encouraging participation in the next activity.

Activity 2: How do I feel?

Objective: To reflect on the importance of identifying emotions and how to identify them.

Duration: 45 min

Materials: stories

Development: the children's story Cinderella is taken for analysis and an analysis of some of its characters and their emotions will be made. In the case of the Cinderella story, the emotions of the stepsisters, how these emotions influenced their behavior, what consequences these emotions produced, etc. can be worked on. After the analysis, the facilitator will emphasize the importance of identifying our emotions and how they can negatively or positively influence our behavior.

Closing: to conclude, they will be asked to identify an emotion that they have ever experienced and that has been unpleasant or annoying.

Activity 3 Bullying and psychological effects

Objective: to learn about the psychological effects of school bullying.

Duration: 45 min.

Materials: computer and blackboard.

Development: it starts with a debate based on the following intentional question.

1. What do you understand by psychological bullying? An exchange is developed to listen to your criteria and points of view on the subject, doubts are clarified and then the next question is asked.
2. Give an example of an experience you have had in your practice regarding this problem?
3. What resources did you use to identify this manifestation?
4. What advice would you give to other people to avoid these conflicts?

Then, a video is shown with the main manifestations of school bullying and a critical commentary is made at the end based on their lived experiences.

Closing: this will be done using the closing technique: The collective poem. It is proposed to the group that each one of them elaborates a verse, whose content has to do with possible solutions to the situation they experience. The participants are asked one by one to say out loud the verse they have elaborated and it is reflected on the blackboard. Each verse is integrated with the previous ones to form a whole. At the end the whole poem is read. Then the group dissolves evaluating all the work achieved, finally asking if they fulfilled their expectations and objectives.

Activity 4 I know how you feel

Objective: to reflect on the importance of identifying emotions and how to identify them in other people.

Duration: 45 min.

Materials: cardboard masks

Development: different cardboard masks will be made with holes at the level of the eyes to observe through them. The nose will be drawn but not the eyebrows or mouth. Each participant will draw the mouth and eyebrows of his or her mask showing an emotion. Afterwards, everyone will put on their masks and in a circle they must identify the emotions of the other participants. The facilitator promotes the discussion based on the following questions:

How did you identify the emotions of others?

Do you think it will be just as easy to identify the emotions of other people who are not wearing masks?

How would you do it?

What do you think it is useful for you to know the emotions of others?

Closing: as a homework assignment, until the next activity, they should make a record of someone they know and identify an emotion in them, how they identified it and what it was useful for them to know it.

Activity 5 Looking for help

Objective: to recognize the importance of support in the face of negative emotions.

Time: 45 min.

Materials: the story about "The Athlete".

The race is proceeding normally; the three runners make it down the home stretch well away from the rest of the participants. With only 100 m to go, it's now or never! Sergio takes the front position and starts to open up a lead over the other two runners.

But sometimes, things happen that we haven't counted on: Sergio falls to the ground just before the finish line. He has hit his knee hard and is complaining loudly about the pain. Marcos moves forward, overtakes Sergio and arrives at the finish line as the winner. Felipe, a good friend of Sergio's, drops out of the race and approaches his teammate to see what's going on. He stops to help him stop and together they arrive at the finish line last. However, they have been the most acclaimed by the public!

Development: After the story is read, participants are asked to reflect on the importance of providing support to better cope with emotions. The discussion can be directed towards the following questions:

How do you think Sergio felt when he took the lead position in the competition?

How do you think he felt when he fell to the ground?

What things did Sergio feel besides pain in his knee?

How do you think Sergio felt when he saw his friend helping him?

How do you rate the attitude of Sergio's friend, and why?

Closing: Close the activity by suggesting to the children that during the week or until the next meeting, they identify a negative emotion in someone close to them and give them support.

Activity 6: The value of listening

Objective: to highlight the importance of active listening for the achievement of an adequate communication.

Duration: 45 min.

Development: the meeting will begin by reflecting on the experiences and experiences expressed by the children about the activity left in the previous session.

For this activity, it will be suggested that each of the members tell in a simple way what they did last weekend. At the end, the partner on the right should remember and tell what the partner on the left told. The facilitator can ask about some of the emotional issues implicit in the stories. Finally, the importance of active listening for an adequate communication process will be emphasized. Only in this way will it be possible to understand and know the emotional world of those around us.

Closing: we will close with the PNI technique.

Activity 7 The traffic light

Objective: to identify new emotions and how they are expressed in behavior.

Duration: 45 min

Development: explain that all people have some physical signs in their body when they experience emotions, for example, if they are angry and show anger, their hands sweat, their face becomes redder, their vision becomes blurred, their ears ring, and their heart rate increases. For this reason, they will be taught the traffic light technique, which is described below:

Red Light: when they identify in themselves the characteristics described in the previous paragraph, they should act with the red light, and that is, they should stop.

Yellow Light: it is when you identify that the intensity of the emotions has decreased and you can reach an understanding.

Green Light: it is time to move forward but conscious of finding the best way to reach a normal state.

Closing: the encounter will be evaluated with the PNI technique.

Activity 8 Lets relax

Objective: to identify new ways to deal with negative emotions and turn them into pleasant ones.

Duration: 45 min

Materials: mats.

Development: everyone will be placed on the floor, looking for a comfortable and calm position. The coordinator can play a melody in the background and with his voice; guide the children in an exercise of deep relaxation. When the exercise is finished and they have left the state of relaxation, the facilitator will highlight the importance of using this exercise by themselves to deal with some emotions that can become annoying and negative such as: fear, anger, anger, helplessness or sadness.

Closing: each participant will express through the drawing of a face the state achieved in the meeting.

Activity 9 Collaboration and mutual help

Objective: to explain the value of collaboration and mutual help to avoid the occurrence of bullying in the school context.

Duration: 45 min.

Materials: watch, whistle

Development: teachers will also participate in this activity. All students are placed at one end of the field beforehand and the facilitator appoints a participant (to be chosen intentionally) who will be located in the middle of the field, at his indication all participants must run to the other end, the participants who are caught by him, must hold hands and, without letting go, try to catch the other players who start on the other side of the field. The player who is the last to be caught wins.

The value of collaboration and mutual help is explained to them by teaching them to share, when they begin to perform actions in favor of others, in a way that leads to positive behaviors.

The positive reinforcement by the teachers of the behaviors favorable to a relationship of help among equals, is one of the main elements in the emergence of emotions that accompany the cooperative encounters, and the students, by achieving their approval, will gradually manifest more and more those behaviors that are reinforced as positive in their relationships with others, such as mutual help.

Closing: the PNI technique is applied and a summary of the teachers' criteria is made.

Activity 10: Our strategy

Objective: to evaluate and integrate the contents addressed in the different activities.

Duration: 30 min

Materials: colored paper, white sheets, pencils, glue sticks, books, magazines.

Development: participants will reflect on the knowledge they had about emotions before the activities and compare it with the knowledge they have now. A small debate will take place. Finally, each one must represent with an emotion how they have felt with the program and will look for a way to make their answer graphic (either through a phrase, a poem, a drawing, a cutout, etc.) Finally, all the graphic expressions will be captured on a mural and thus will form "Our strategy".

Closing: each participant will express in one word what they thought of the meeting in general.

Conclusions

The adolescents studied are subjected to frequent manifestations of bullying, among which threats, intimidation, harassment and, to a lesser extent, pushing and shoving and insults stand out. Insecurity, dependence and marked traits of anxiety and sadness predominate, and they lack the capacity to identify and understand their emotional states and, therefore, present difficulties in their emotional

regulation in the face of bullying. That is why the proposal of an intervention program such as the one proposed according to the opinion of the teachers and the experience of the authors is very relevant and necessary.

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