

**Adults and school bullying in the series *Thirteen Reasons Why*:
a bio-ecological analysis****Adultos diante do *bullying* escolar na série *Thirteen reasons why*:
uma análise bioecológica****Los adultos y el acoso escolar en la serie *Thirteen Reasons Why*:
un análisis bioecológico**Karen Yukari Kimura¹, ORCID 0000-0001-9335-4104Manoel Antônio dos Santos², ORCID 0000-0001-8214-7767Eduardo Name Risk³, ORCID 0000-0001-7290-2597Marta Angélica Iossi Silva⁴, ORCID 0000-0002-9967-8158Wanderlei Abadio de Oliveira⁵, ORCID 0000-0002-3146-8197¹ Pontifícia Universidade Católica de Campinas, Brasil² Universidade de São Paulo, Brasil³ Universidade Federal de São Carlos, Brasil⁴ Universidade de São Paulo, Brasil⁵ Pontifícia Universidade Católica de Campinas, Brasil**Abstract**

School bullying is a serious public health problem and television drama series can contribute to shedding more light on its numerous facets. Hence, this study sought to analyze the discourses and practices of adults when they learn about or witness bullying situations in the television series *Thirteen Reasons Why*. This exploratory study employed a qualitative approach based on Bronfenbrenner's Bioecological Theory. The methodological procedures comprised analyzing and selecting the episodes, identifying the scenes that contained bullying, classifying the adults' perspectives and actions, and data analysis. We found an insufficient understanding of the adults in situations of bullying that were witnessed or known. Coercive behaviors, punishments, and transference of responsibility between contexts were the most identified actions. This study contributes to raising awareness among managers and civil society about the role of adults in managing and preventing cases of bullying in schools.

Keywords: school violence; adolescents; audiovisual data; victimization

Resumo

Bullying escolar é um grave problema de saúde pública e séries dramáticas podem contribuir para iluminar suas diversas facetas. Este estudo teve como objetivo analisar os discursos e práticas de adultos ao tomarem conhecimento ou testemunharem situações de *bullying* na série *Thirteen reasons why*. Trata-se de estudo exploratório de abordagem qualitativa fundamentado na Teoria Bioecológica de Bronfenbrenner. Os procedimentos metodológicos foram: análise e seleção de episódios; identificação de cenas que continham *bullying*; classificação das perspectivas e ações dos adultos; análise dos dados. Notou-se uma compreensão insuficiente dos adultos frente às situações de *bullying* presenciadas ou conhecidas. Comportamentos de coerção, punições e transferência de responsabilidade entre os contextos foram as ações mais identificadas. O estudo contribui para sensibilização de gestores e sociedade civil sobre o papel dos adultos no gerenciamento e prevenção de casos de *bullying* nas escolas.

Palavras-chave: violência escolar; adolescentes; dados audiovisuais; vitimização



Resumen

El acoso escolar es un grave problema de salud pública y las series dramáticas pueden ayudar a iluminar sus múltiples facetas. El objetivo de este estudio es analizar los discursos y las prácticas de los adultos que conocen situaciones de acoso escolar en la serie *Thirteen reasons why*. Se trata de un estudio exploratorio y cualitativo fundamentado en la teoría bioecológica de Bronfenbrenner. Los procedimientos metodológicos fueron: análisis y selección de episodios; identificación de las escenas que contienen acoso; clasificación de las perspectivas y acciones de los adultos; análisis de los datos. Se verificó una insuficiente comprensión de los adultos frente a situaciones de acoso presenciadas o conocidas. Las conductas de coerción y castigo, y la transferencia de responsabilidad entre los contextos que se presentan en la serie fueron las acciones más identificadas. El estudio contribuye a sensibilizar a los directivos y a la sociedad civil sobre el papel de los adultos en la gestión y prevención de los casos de acoso escolar.

Palabras clave: violencia escolar; adolescentes; datos audiovisuales; victimización

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Bullying is a set of aggressive, unwanted, and provoked behaviors by one or more schoolmates against another. The phenomenon involves an imbalance of power between peers and has a high probability of repetition and components of intentionality (Olweus, 2013). It can manifest itself through physical and verbal aggression (direct bullying) or through more subtle behaviors that are difficult to identify (indirect bullying), including gossiping, spreading rumors, or isolating the victim from the peer group (Silva et al., 2014), and it is an academic-pedagogical, psychosocial, and public health problem whose consequences affect the students involved (Moore et al., 2017). One of the phenomenon's most serious consequences is the victim's ideation or adopting suicidal behaviors (Costa & Miranda, 2020).

Research has shown have shown that classrooms are the places in school where bullying is most likely to occur (Silva et al., 2014). This is where teachers play a crucial role and, consequently, must be able to prevent conflicts or aggression among students (Kollerová et al., 2021; Zequinão et al., 2020). However, educators often fail to intervene in these situations because they consider them typical events for the age group and/or overestimate their abilities to identify the phenomenon (Zequinão et al., 2016). Other times, the measures adopted are insufficient to prevent or inhibit bullying behaviors (Ahtola et al., 2012).

Regarding the family, the literature has shown that parents and guardians must be concerned about their children's involvement in bullying situations and that students with a positive family relationship have lower chances of triggering or perpetuating bullying behaviors (Oliveira et al., 2020). Nevertheless, families experiencing difficulties of different natures or domestic violence are associated with an increased risk of student involvement with the phenomenon.

As bullying occurs in the context of social interactions, the bioecological theory of development proposed by psychologist Urie Bronfenbrenner provides a robust theoretical and methodological framework to analyze this phenomenon (Senna & Dessen, 2012). According to this theory, development occurs in systems classified as microsystem

(e.g., school, family, and work), mesosystem (interaction between two or more microsystems), exosystem (e.g., parents' work), and macrosystem (cultural, social, and political dimensions) (Analisah & Indartono, 2019). This theoretical model can also collaborate with proposing multidimensional interventions that are the most effective in reducing the frequency of bullying and managing individual and extrinsic risk factors, including the actions of adults in the face of this phenomenon.

In recent years, academic interest in understanding how television series can contribute to knowing the representation of certain psychosocial phenomena of relevance in contemporary times has increased. Hence, this study selected the television series *Thirteen Reasons Why* (TRW), which has already been the object of previous investigations (Levinzon, 2018; Ribeiro & Guerra, 2020; Silva & Rodrigues, 2020), but which did not contemplate the perspective of adults, which is one of its original contributions. Additionally, the study focused on adult figures who, according to the literature, have the potential to adopt measures to inhibit the occurrence of bullying in schools, a highly relevant aspect to justify developing research on this theme.

Given the above, this study sought to analyze the discourses and practices of adults (teachers, principals, and family members) when learning about or witnessing bullying situations in the school setting of the series TRW.

Method

Study type

This is an exploratory study with a qualitative approach that used audiovisual material as a secondary data source.

Composition of the corpus

Thirteen Reasons Why is a US television series distributed in Brazil by the streaming platform Netflix. In the first season (2017), the plot revolves around the possible reasons that led the teenager Hannah Baker to commit suicide and the psychological consequences of this act for her peers. Season two (2018) depicts Hannah's parents' lawsuit against the school, and season three (2019) radically changes the plot by addressing the murder of the student Bryce Walker. After watching all 39 episodes made available in December 2020, 16 episodes were selected to analyze the scenes of adult involvement regarding bullying: nine from season one and seven from season two. Given the purpose of this study, no episodes from season three were selected. In addition to the actions and speeches of the adults, the scenes in which bullying situations were identified were documented.

Procedures

The procedures adopted to create the corpus consisted of (1) analyzing the synopsis of the episodes available on the Netflix platform, (2) pre-selecting episodes with adult participation, (3) selecting episodes to be analyzed, (4) identifying scenes that portrayed bullying, (5) classifying perspectives and actions taken by adults, and (6) producing the analytical synthesis. The episode selection stage was conducted by two previously trained researchers under the guidance of the researcher responsible for the study, who watched the series' first three seasons. The stages were carried out from October 2020 to July 2021.

Data analysis

Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was applied from the following steps: (1) reading the synopses and watching the episodes, (2) generating the initial codes, (3) grouping the codes into potential themes, (4) reviewing the themes to generate the thematic “map” of the analysis, (5) defining and naming the themes, and (6) producing the final report.

After defining the themes, categorization was performed and inspired by the material school violence and bullying: report on the global situation (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, 2019). No categories were defined a priori, and this material only inspired the naming of the themes built from the analytical process. The coding and theme generation process was carried out jointly by two researchers (KYK and WAO). The two researchers watched the scenes and discussed the potential themes or features that could result in the categorization process. For instance, a character reports in a note the depressive feelings concerning a person at school, and the teacher discusses the issue with the class; based on the teacher’s attempt to help solve the problem, the researchers qualified the issue as “modest availability of specialized help” and included it in the category “intervention and prevention strategies.” This was done with all the scenes analyzed.

Results

To qualify the situations in TRW as indicative of bullying, the criteria described by Olweus (2013) were applied: repetitiveness, intentionality, and power imbalance. We identified that male students perpetrated most bullying-type behaviors and that this occurred through verbal bullying, which was characterized by derogatory terms and humiliating or vexatious nicknames, among other factors. Other types of violence were verified but not qualified as bullying.

In order to analyze the adult discourses and practices, 16 episodes were selected and analyzed. Three general contexts related to the life of the adolescent were revealed: the school (involvement of the faculty members, management, and other staff with the students), family (bonds established between the adolescents and family members/guardians), and society (involvement of the adolescents with the rights system and its respective operators, such as lawyers and police officers). Tables 1 and 2 list the scenes selected for the study and the themes that emerged from the analysis. To facilitate the presentation of the data in the tables, themes and categories were synthesized into codes presented in notes.

Table 1*Description and analysis of scenes involving adults from the first season of the series Thirteen Reasons Why*

Episode	Scene	Timestamp	Context	Brief description of the scene	Theme	Category
2	1	22:00	School	The student Clay is required to collect signatures from teachers with class participation notes.	1	CS
	2	47:06	Family	Olivia, Hannah Baker's mother, finds a list with the names of girls categorized as "hot or not hot." Hannah's parents discuss whether the content of the list is violent or "flattering."	2 and 3	MUA
3	3	3:20	School	Posters about "seeking help" are posted on the school's walls that hold musical concerts in the courtyard.	4	IPS
	4	7:00	Family, School	Olivia goes to the school to talk to the principal about her daughter's behavior, and he refuses to provide detailed information.	5	LCP
	5	8:58	School	Olivia cries in the school bathroom, sees graffiti (cursing) on the doors, and takes pictures.	2	LCP
	6	13:11	School	Porter, a student advisor, talks to the principal about Hannah Baker's suicide.	3	MUA
	7	36:00	School	Porter talks to student council members about students whose situation may shake most.	4	IPS
4	8	5:41	Family	Tyler's schoolmates throw rocks through his bedroom window and his father asks for the names of those involved, and Tyler does not inform him.	6	MUA
	9	10:41	Family	Clay's parents talk to him about the need to establish an open channel of communication between them.	7	IPS
	10	11:36	Family, School	The principal and Porter talk to the students' parents about suicide.	4 and 8	IPS
	11	12:35	Family, School	Olivia goes to the lecture, confronts the principal about bullying, and shows him pictures of the graffiti in the school bathroom.	5	LCP
	12	15:44	School	The principal and Porter inspect the bathroom doors and are startled by the content of the graffiti.	2 and 9	MUA
5	13	14:00	School	Tyler suffers bullying in the hallways and is referred to talk to Porter, who blames him for the belligerence he has suffered.	6 and 10	MUA

Episode	Scene	Timestamp	Context	Brief description of the scene	Theme	Category
6	14	5:14	School	Alex and Montgomery fight on the street near the school, and Porter breaks up the fight and takes them to the vice-principal, who transfers the responsibility to the student council.	11	LCP
7	15	15:44	Family	Mr. Jensen tells Clay that he was bullied when he was in school.	7	IPS
	16	37:22	School	Hannah anonymously sends a note from a person with depressive feelings. The teacher puts the topic up for discussion.	4	IPS
8	17	33:03	School	An intimate poem by Hannah is published in the school newspaper without her consent. The poem is misunderstood by the students and becomes ridiculed. The teacher analyzes the poem in class.	12	MUA
10	18	39:50	Society	Lawyers discuss a court settlement. Ms. Jensen, in charge of the school's defense, mentions the implementation of suicide prevention and anti-bullying programs.	13	IPS
13	19	19:40	School	Hannah seeks Porter's help to resolve her situation. However, she is frustrated when she does not feel welcome.	6 and 10	MUA

Notes. Themes: 1: Institutional control; 2: Adult contact with evidence of violence among adolescents; 3: Attempt to normalize negative behaviors or the phenomenon; 4: Modest availability of specialized help; 5: Lack of quality bond between school-family contexts; 6: Lack of adolescent trust in adults; 7: Establishment of qualitative communication channels between adolescents and adults; 8: Contains the risk of suicide; 9: Lack of recognition of the school environment; 10: Lack of welcoming and investigative posture; 11: Transfer of responsibility; 12: Reinforcement of aggressive behavior; 13: Mention of intervention programs. Categories: CS: Control strategies; MUA: Mistaken understanding of adults; IPS: Intervention and prevention strategies; LCP: Lack of contextual partnerships.

Table 2*Description and analysis of scenes involving adults from the second season of the series Thirteen Reasons Why*

Episode	Scene	Timestamp	Context	Brief description of the scene	Theme	Category
1	20	10:58	Family	Alex's father talks to his son about returning to school after trying to commit suicide.	7	IPS
	21	21:20	School	Zach tells Alex and Jessica that all students can be suspended if they discuss suicide.	14	CS
	22	36:07	Society	Tyler testifies in Hannah's case and talks about the insecurity at school.	2 and 6	MUA
	23	36:33	School	In the school hallway, Bryce questions Tyler about what he said in court. Porter appears and Bryce walks away. Porter tells Tyler that he is summoned to social skills class.	15	CS
	24	39:33	School	Porter and Rick talk to the athletes about sexual consent.	16	IPS
2	25	14:46	School	Lesson on alternatives for conflict resolution.	4	IPS
	26	16:15	Family	Hannah tells her mother that she has heard noises around the house and talks about the possibility of a stalker. Her mother reassures her that it is possibly animals or anxiety.	3	MUA
	27	31:42	School	The school prohibits Tyler from taking pictures of the athletes but allows the other boys.	14	CS
	28	41:44	Family	Faced with the revelations in court, Tyler's father talks to him about the advisability of changing schools.	7	IPS
	29	44:06	Family	Courtney's parents take her in.	7	IPS
3	30	17:33	Society	Jessica speaks in court about her feelings of insecurity at school.	2 and 6	MUA
8	31	8:13	Society	Hannah's father is a witness in the court case and says that his choice of school was guided by information that there were anti-bullying programs.	13	IPS
	32	16:09	Society	The school defense attorney asks Hannah's father how his extramarital affair may have affected his daughter.	11	LCP
	33	28:41	Society	Hannah's mother speaks in a deposition about her daughter and her psychological issues in her own family.	11	LCP
	34	34:41	Family	Hannah's parents discuss their marital and parental relationship and perceive responsibility for Hannah's actions.	17	IPS

Episode	Scene	Timestamp	Context	Brief description of the scene	Theme	Category
9	35	17:09	Society	Bradley testifies about the resources he used when receiving Hannah’s note.	4	IPS
	36	18:45	School	The principal talks with Clay about his absence when Hannah’s tapes were published. They discuss the school’s actions before and after Hannah’s death.	8 and 15	MUA
	37	21:48	Society	Porter testifies about the day Hannah asked for help.	18	IPS
	38	32:20	Society	The defense attorney asks Porter about compliance with the school’s procedures regarding aid and bullying.	19	MUA
11	39	15:13	School	Zach confronts the coach about the lack of actions in the “Club.”	20	MUA
12	40	19:07	School	Coach talks to Bryce about the responsibility of using the space called “Club.”	20	MUA
	41	24:19	Society	The prosecuting attorney argues with the jury about the school’s responsibility in Hannah’s case.	17	IPS
	42	25:15	School	Tyler and his parents talk to the director about the vandalism he committed with Cyrus. The principal recommends a re-orientation program and conditions a return to school.	4 and 11	LCP
	43	26:53	Society	The defense attorney for the school argues about the multiple factors that led Hannah to end her life and that the responsibility should not fall solely on the school.	17	IPS
	44	48:06	Society	The jury finds the school not guilty.	11, 20, and 21	MUA

Notes. Themes: 2: Adult contact with evidence of violence among adolescents; 3: Attempt to normalize negative behaviors or the phenomenon; 4: Modest availability of specialized help; 6: Lack of adolescent trust in adults; 7: Establishment of qualitative communication channels between adolescents and adults; 8: Contains the risk of suicide; 11: Transfer of responsibility; 13: Mention of intervention programs; 14: Institutional control (coercion and punishment); 15: Punishing the victim; 16: Sex education; 17: Multifactorial understanding of the phenomenon; 18: Availability of specialized help; 19: Adult understanding of the phenomenon and its consequences; 20: Perpetuation of the cycle of violence; 21: General understanding of the bullying phenomenon. Categories: CS: Control strategies; MUA: Mistaken understanding of adults; IPS: Intervention and prevention strategies; LCP: Lack of contextual partnerships. Regarding the participants included in the analyses in Tables 1 and 2: Hannah Baker: student, victim of bullying, suicidal; Clay: student, bystander to bullying situations; Alex: student, bystander; Zach: student, bystander; Justin: student, bully; Jessica: student, bystander; Tyler: victimized student; Marcus: student, bully; Courtney: student, bystander; Montgomery: student, bully; Bryce: student, bully; Olivia Baker: Hannah’s mother; Andrew Baker: Hannah’s father; Porter: school counselor; Matt Jensen: Clay’s father; Lainie Jensen: Clay’s mother and school defense attorney; Gary Bolan: principal; Jane Childs: vice principal; Bradley: communications teacher; Dannis Vasquez: attorney for Hannah’s parents’ family; Bill Standall: Alex’s father; Rick: baseball coach; Down: Tyler’s father.

As described in Tables 1 and 2, the communication processes between parents/guardians and children are weak in the family microsystem, making it difficult to understand the bullying experienced or committed by students. This occurs simultaneously when relationships of trust are not built, which increases the adolescents' experiences of insecurity and lack of protection. The naturalizing reading of the adults in the family about behaviors and anguish, proper to the context and conflicts among students, increases the feeling of helplessness intensely experienced at school. When the adults express concerns, they are related to Hannah's suicide and how this act could affect their children's lives or of other students. At this point in the series, attempts are made to open communication channels, which are often thwarted. Nevertheless, during the episodes, parents/guardians also discover their children's secrets, welcome their anguish, consolidate communication channels, and present feasible alternatives for dealing with the problems experienced at school.

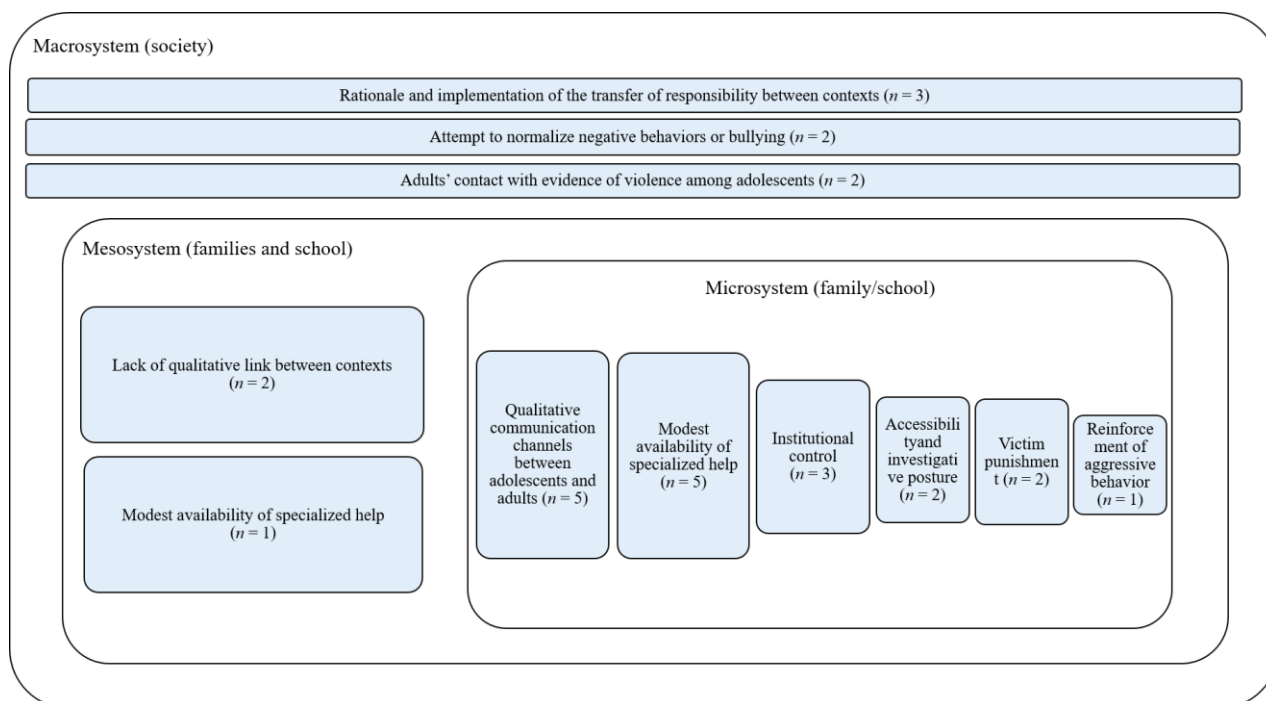
The adolescents' lack of trust towards adults (teachers, counselors, and principals) was also portrayed in the school microsystem. The vertical relationship and lack of effective/accepting dialogue about issues that permeate the school environment are flagrant. The school authorities are even insensitive and oblivious to what happens in the institution (e.g., graffiti in the bathrooms and verbal aggression). At the same time, as a rule, professionals are unprepared to deal with aspects related to bullying and suicide. Often the victims were blamed for the aggressions they suffered. However, we noted that the adolescents sought to establish more horizontal relationships with the adults.

In terms of mesosystem, the family and school contexts objectively connect only in the scene of the lecture that the school promotes, focusing on the main behaviors indicative of suicide for parents/guardians. The absence of more scenes about the intersection of these contexts suggests that the relationship between school and family occurs occasionally and only when there is a situation/problem. It is also notable that the school and families are concerned about suicide but often neglect cases of sexual harassment, rape, and bullying. This ambivalent scenario favors the conditions for establishing relationships based on the mere transfer of responsibilities between contexts.

At the macro-system level, the broad society portrayed is included only when anti-bullying and suicide prevention programs are mentioned, especially in the dialogues between the school's lawyers and Hannah's parents. The transfer of responsibility between school and family is notorious when most scenes occur in the courtroom. At the same time, the difficulty in understanding the complexity of factors involved in bullying or suicidal behavior of young people can be highlighted. After the trial, the lack of understanding of the phenomenon of bullying and its readings based on individual issues stands out. The main themes attributed to the discourses and practices of adults in their respective contexts are presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Summary of the main themes identified and the number of occurrences of each one, according to the numbers listed in Tables 1 and 2

**Discussion**

In this study, there was a low representation of scenes in which adults directly witnessed bullying situations. Nonetheless, a modest availability of specialized help, movements of transference of responsibility, and the attempt to normalize negative behaviors or the bullying itself stood out. Our findings showed that even when the phenomenon gains fatal proportions among individuals, adults offer little or no skilled help. The tepid understanding of bullying by adults, who often understand it as normal/acceptable adolescent behavior, favors the adoption of coercive and punitive behaviors, which must be avoided in cases of managing the phenomenon, which increases the lack of confidence of adolescents and contributes to the perpetuation of the cycle of violence.

As a reading key, the bio-ecological model provides information that allows one to understand how different levels can articulate themselves, contributing to the occurrence of bullying in schools. These conclusions are not simple and do not solely concern the models that assume the replication of experiences of one context in another; they favor a model of multilevel understanding about how environmental/contextual issues are relevant to understand the phenomenon, going beyond the logic of individual accountability and even contemplating macrosystemic aspects (Rivara & Le Menestrel, 2016).

Specifically, regarding family issues represented in the series, it is clear that it is essential to maintain open communication channels and promote positive relationships and a nonviolent family climate, as reported elsewhere (Oliveira et al., 2020). Preventing and inhibiting bullying behavior cannot be the responsibility of schools alone, even though it is in this space that aggression occurs because its psychosocial roots go through other systemic levels. Parents and caregivers of school-age children and adolescents must

mature their perceptions about the problem to take responsibility. At this point, we alert to the responsibility of students who practice bullying at school and often do not have their behavior interpreted as problematic.

In the case of schools, TRW points to different problems, including the lack of appropriate qualifications of professionals to deal with the issue. However, research indicates that one of the factors that best contribute to preventing or reducing bullying in schools is the active responses of teachers (Kollerová et al., 2021). It is necessary to propose a transformation of power relations and that verticalization is not only based on arrogant postures but on establishing authority postures whose goal is to improve the school climate from the very exercise of adulthood, which is composed of subjects capable of assisting in the process of children's and adolescents' healthy development.

Given the complexity of interpersonal relationships established in classrooms, teachers may inadvertently actively participate in bullying by reinforcing students' aggressive behaviors or by requiring students to resolve conflicts among themselves without their due intervention (Fung, 2012). Teachers also hold erroneous beliefs about bullying, such as the assumption that victimized students would not be bullied if they avoided contact with their aggressor or if they knew how to defend themselves from aggression. Another widespread belief is that bullying constitutes a set of normative behaviors that help learn social norms (Silva et al., 2014). These aspects are also related to cultural values that are shared and experienced not only in the school context since they refer to the macro-systemic level and the way people, in general, interpret the problem.

The bioecological model can help shed more light on the daily life presented in TRW, since the teledrama is starred by adolescents and, therefore, an active subject, product, and producer of their development within their context and time (Senna & Dessen, 2012). While giving protagonism to adolescents, the series reveals the inability of traditional social institutions (e.g., family and school) to reorganize themselves to deal with complex problems that plague the daily lives of children and adolescents in contemporary times.

In the series, the interactions established between adults from different contexts (mesosystems) are also portrayed and reveal the lack of understanding of the phenomenon of bullying in a multifactorial way (i.e., viewing it as a problem that happens in the perimeter of the school), but that, in fact, is the responsibility of everyone, including the family and society as a whole (Oliveira et al., 2020; Rivara & Le Menestrel, 2016). In this sense, it is pivotal to highlight that teachers and other school authorities are in a privileged position to deal with bullying situations. However, these agents will only be able to undertake effective initiatives if changes in the social context often encourage intolerant, violent, or aggressive behavior to resolve conflicts or deal with diversity.

In terms of practical implications, this study points to the importance of adults in minimizing or decreasing the occurrence of bullying in schools. This is especially the case when one realizes, from the data procured in the series, that the phenomenon is not clearly faced by adults and is often tolerated. In this sense, actions to raise awareness among parents, teachers, and other education professionals are encouraged. These actions can use excerpts from TRW as a trigger to raise awareness and discuss the issue with adults. There is also a lack of communication and/or dialogue channels for students to ask adults for help and for schools to create strategies to encourage reporting situations experienced or observed in schools.

Intervention initiatives that include adults are also consistent with multidimensional anti-bullying programs that have already been widely evaluated in the

scientific literature. Examples of such interventions are NoTrap! (Italy), Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (different countries), and KiVa (Finland and other countries). The success of these programs in reducing peer violence is mainly justified by the involvement of the whole school and community (Gaffney et al., 2021). Theoretically, these interventions are also in line with the bioecological theory of human development employed herein as a guiding matrix.

Final Considerations

This study examined the television series *Thirteen Reasons Why* and identified a limited understanding of teachers, parents, and other adults who have witnessed or learned about bullying at school. We realize that the series has the potential to inspire extended reflections on everyday issues and promote awareness among school administrators and civil society about the role of adults in setting goals for preventing and managing bullying in schools. Furthermore, our findings can stimulate other studies to expand the understanding of the theme, especially from the perspective of the strategic role of adults in preventing and inhibiting bullying behavior.

Regarding this study's limitations, it should be mentioned that this is an analysis of a drama series with a specific context and that, despite keeping a certain verisimilitude with reality, the situations represented are dramaturgical and fictional solutions. Evidently, the scenes portrayed have little or nothing to do with the daily life of Latin American society or schools. It is also possible to notice that, in many situations, a magnifying glass is placed on the phenomena dealt with (bullying, suicide, etc.). In spite of these limitations, given the public repercussion and worldwide dissemination of the series, TRW becomes interesting material as an exercise in understanding different problems, such as bullying.

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