

SCHOOL COEXISTENCE AND THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: TRANSFORMATIONS, TENSIONS, AND POSSIBILITIES (2020-2025)¹

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ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed deep fractures in school relationships and highlighted the fragility of care and belonging structures within educational institutions. In this context, this article aims to analyze the scientific literature on school coexistence produced between 2020 and 2025, focusing on the effects of the pandemic and post-pandemic periods. This is a scoping review based on the methodological framework proposed by Arksey and O'Malley and complemented by the PRISMA-ScR guidelines. The literature search was conducted in SciELO, Scopus, ERIC, and EBSCO databases, covering publications in Portuguese, Spanish, and English, and resulted in the analysis of 205 articles. Data processing was supported by Python and categorized by thematic, methodological, and contextual criteria. The findings reveal that school coexistence was strained by the health crisis, with increased symbolic and emotional violence, affective dysregulation, and difficulties in readapting to school routines. The review highlights a predominance of quantitative and descriptive studies focused on students, with limited inclusion of teachers, administrators, and families. The most promising experiences emphasized non-punitive approaches, collective care strategies, and the inclusion of multiple school voices. The discussion frames school coexistence as a political and ethical dimension of school life, essential for promoting mental health, relational justice, and the rebuilding of educational bonds in times of crisis. The study concludes by emphasizing the urgency of expanding context-sensitive policies and integrative pedagogical practices that move beyond disciplinary models and respond to the complexity of the present.

Keywords: school coexistence, pandemic, scope review.

CONVIVÊNCIA ESCOLAR E PANDEMIA DE COVID-19: TRANSFORMAÇÕES, TENSÕES E POSSIBILIDADES (2020-2025)

RESUMO

A pandemia de COVID-19 escancarou fissuras nas relações escolares e lançou luz sobre a fragilidade das estruturas de cuidado e pertencimento nas instituições educativas. Diante desse cenário, este artigo tem como objetivo analisar a produção científica sobre convivência escolar entre os anos de 2020 e 2025, com foco nos efeitos da pandemia e do pós-pandemia. Trata-se de uma revisão de escopo, realizada com base nas diretrizes metodológicas de Arksey e O'Malley, complementadas pelo PRISMA-ScR. A busca abrangeu as bases SciELO, Scopus, ERIC e EBSCO, nos idiomas português, espanhol e inglês, e resultou na análise de 205 artigos. Os dados foram processados com o auxílio da linguagem Python e triados por critérios temáticos, metodológicos e contextuais. Os resultados indicam que a convivência escolar foi tensionada pela crise sanitária, com aumento da violência simbólica e emocional, desregulação afetiva e dificuldades de readaptação às rotinas escolares. Observa-se predominância de estudos quantitativos e descritivos centrados nos estudantes, com pouca escuta ativa de docentes, gestores e famílias. As experiências mais promissoras revelaram a importância de abordagens não punitivas, estratégias de cuidado coletivo e valorização das múltiplas vozes escolares. A discussão ressalta a convivência como dimensão política e ética da vida escolar, essencial para a promoção da saúde mental, da justiça relacional e da reconstrução dos vínculos educativos em tempos de crise. Conclui-se pela urgência de ampliar políticas situadas e práticas pedagógicas integradoras que superem modelos disciplinadores e respondam à complexidade do presente.

Palavras-chave: convivência escolar, pandemia, revisão de escopo.

CONVIVENCIA ESCOLAR Y LA PANDEMIA DE COVID-19: TRANSFORMACIONES, TENSIONES Y POSIBILIDADES (2020-2025)

RESUMEN

La pandemia de COVID-19 dejó al descubierto fisuras profundas en las relaciones escolares y evidenció la fragilidad de las estructuras de cuidado y pertenencia en las instituciones educativas. En este contexto, el presente artículo tiene como objetivo analizar la producción científica sobre convivencia escolar entre los años 2020 y 2025, con énfasis en los efectos de la pandemia y del período pospandémico. Se trata de una revisión de alcance, realizada conforme al marco metodológico de Arksey y O'Malley, complementado por las directrices PRISMA-ScR. La búsqueda fue hecha en las bases de datos SciELO, Scopus, ERIC y EBSCO, en los idiomas portugués, español e inglés, y resultó en 205 artículos. Los datos fueron procesados con apoyo del lenguaje Python y organizados según criterios temáticos, metodológicos y contextuales. La convivencia escolar fue tensionada por la crisis sanitaria, con aumento de la violencia simbólica y emocional, desregulación afectiva y dificultades de readaptación a las rutinas escolares. Predominan estudios cuantitativos y descriptivos centrados en los estudiantes, con escasa inclusión de docentes, directivos y familias. Las experiencias más prometedoras resaltan la importancia de enfoques no punitivos, estrategias de cuidado colectivo y la valorización de las múltiples voces escolares. La discusión enfatiza la convivencia como dimensión política y ética de la vida escolar, esencial para promover la salud mental, la justicia relacional y la reconstrucción de los vínculos educativos en tiempos de crisis. Se destaca la urgencia de ampliar políticas contextualizadas y prácticas pedagógicas integradoras que superen modelos disciplinarios y respondan a la complejidad del presente.

Palavras-clave: convivencia escolar, pandemia, revisión de escopo.

INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade, educational systems in Latin America have experienced significant transformations in understanding and management of school relationships. The concept of school coexistence has changed from being a secondary concern, primarily focused on discipline, to a crucial element of educational policies in several countries across the region (Morales & López, 2019; Fierro-Evans & Carbajal-Padilla, 2019). This evolution has been driven by both increasing rates of school violence and the recognition of the vital role coexistence plays in enhancing inclusion, student retention, and the socio-emotional well-being of students and teachers. International organizations, such as the Regional Bureau for Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (OREALC) of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), have actively contributed to this transformation by promoting guidelines, action frameworks, and programs that address coexistence through the lenses of rights, citizenship, and democratic school culture (UNESCO, 2024).

However, this normative consolidation did not occur without tensions. As López et al. (2023) state, school coexistence is a concept characterized by significant polysemy. In different contexts, it is associated with codes of conduct, institutional or affective practices, or even used as a synonym for school climate or organizational culture (Ascorra et al., 2018). This conceptual ambiguity has fostered normative or punitive approaches, limiting the formulation of policies based on mutual recognition, care, and educational justice (Morales & López, 2019). Before the COVID-19 pandemic, this ambivalence was translated into policies centered on behavioral control, conflict resolution, and violence prevention, with little integration of pedagogical, relational, or community dimensions (Carrasco et al., 2019).

The COVID-19 pandemic was a significant turning point in this journey. Couzin-Frankel, Vogel, and Weiland (2020) estimate that approximately 1.5 billion children and adolescents worldwide transitioned to remote learning following school closures. This forced shift to virtual or hybrid formats disrupted the daily bonds of school life and exposed, or even exacerbated, structural inequalities already present in Latin American educational systems (Salas et al., 2020). The post-pandemic scenario has been characterized by an intensification of school conflicts, widespread psychological distress, teacher burnout, and the weakening of institutional care networks (Fuentes-Parrales et al., 2024).

The case of Chile shows this crisis. After returning to in-person school, there were significant increases in incidents of school violence, including physical assaults, cyberbullying, and even extreme cases such as the homicide of a student and an arson attack targeting a school administrator. In

the third quarter of 2024 alone, the Superintendence of Education recorded over 8,800 reports of peer-to-peer mistreatment, marking a historic high (Superintendência de Educação, 2024). Concurrently, national studies indicate that more than 60% of students have symptoms of depression or anxiety, and that burnout affects over 90% of teachers in some regions (Martínez-Líbano & Yeomans-Cabrera, 2024; Orrego Tapia, 2022). This dual crisis, rising violence and deteriorating mental health, has led to a perception of relational breakdown within schools, exacerbated by institutional exhaustion, the emotional strain on educational communities, and a loss of collective purpose.

Several public policies have sought to reposition school coexistence as a structural component of daily school life. In Chile, the update of the National School Coexistence Policy (2024–2030) and the implementation of the *Seamos Comunidad* (Let's Be a Community) plan represent explicit attempts to rebuild the relational bond of schools by prioritizing preventive, developmental, and collective interventions. Within this new narrative, coexistence is no longer understood merely as a set of behavioral rules but rather as a relational, pedagogical, and political institutional architecture that shapes how the school is inhabited and defines the possible horizons for educational justice (Mineduc, 2024).

This reconfiguration was also influenced by theoretical advancements that connect school coexistence with the concept of school climate. Authors such as Cohen et al. (2009) and Wang and Degol (2016) define school climate as the collective perception of the norms, structures, and relationships characterizing the educational environment, offering a clearer and measurable empirical construct. This perspective has been integrated into new Chilean policy, which defines “modes of coexistence” as structural forms of social interaction that consist of organizational practices, affective bonds, and institutional mechanisms. Thus, the aim is to understand coexistence beyond mere normative frameworks, viewing it instead as a cultural and affective intertwining that shapes the conditions for the school experience.

Empirical evidence also supports this approach. Different studies show that authoritative school climates, characterized by high structure and high support, are associated with lower levels of violence, a stronger sense of belonging, and better academic performance (Gregory & Cornell, 2009; Encina et al., 2023). In contrast, authoritarian or indifferent climates foster exclusion and demotivation, and increase the risk of school dropout. Institutional climate has proven to be a key predictor of mental health in educational settings, significantly impacting the prevalence of depressive symptoms, emotional regulation difficulties, and chronic stress (Franco et al., 2022; Lau et al., 2017). After the pandemic, studies such as those by López et al. (2022) report a significant rise in physical, verbal, and digital incidents involving students, families, and teachers, highlighting substantial changes in school relational dynamics.

Recent research demonstrates that school coexistence cannot be understood through an internal logic. External factors, such as socioeconomic context, violence in the surrounding area, and community cultural norms, also directly influence the relationships within the school. Drawing on an ecological and systemic approach (Bronfenbrenner, 1989; Rudasill et al., 2017), coexistence is understood as a situated construct shaped by multiple levels of influence. Rodríguez-Aguilar et al. (2024), for instance, emphasize the importance of linking coexistence to the provision of quality education that acknowledges the material, social, and symbolic conditions of school communities.

Despite the topic's relevance, there is a scarcity of systematic reviews analyzing how the academic field of school coexistence has been reconfigured based on the pandemic's effects and the return to in-person classes. While studies exist regarding mental health, learning, school climate, or teachers' experiences, few works critically synthesize recent approaches, methodologies, and findings focused on coexistence as the object of analysis. Reviews such as those by Fierro-Evans and Carbajal-Padilla (2019), Andrades-Moya et al. (2020, 2023), Leyton-Leyton (2020), and Silva Chanta et al. (2023) converge in highlighting this gap and reinforce the urgent need to strengthen a situated, critical, and interdisciplinary perspective.

In this context, this article aims to analyze the scientific literature on school coexistence published between 2020 and 2025, focusing on the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the return to in-person classes. Based on a systematic literature review across four international databases (SciELO, Scopus, ERIC, and EBSCO), the study seeks to identify thematic trends, conceptual and methodological frameworks, the educational contexts investigated, and emerging gaps. Thus, we aim to contribute to

strengthening a critical perspective on modes of school coexistence, understood as the foundation for care, a sense of belonging, and the democratic transformation of schools.

METHOD

This study is a scoping review of the concept of school coexistence, focusing on publications from 2020 to 2025. This was a period encompassing the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath. We selected this period due to the lack of prior reviews addressing how the school coexistence was engaged during this period of profound transformation in school relationships. Thus, the study sought to analyze how the concept was reinterpreted or challenged within this new context.

The review was carried out following the methodological guidelines proposed by Arksey and O'Malley (2005), complemented by Levac et al. (2010) and the PRISMA-ScR recommendations (Tricco et al., 2018). The purpose of this approach was to map academic output and identify thematic trends, methodological approaches, and research gaps.

The article search was conducted in May 2025 using the SciELO, EBSCO, Scopus, and ERIC platforms. Portuguese, Spanish, and English were used as language filters. The search queries consisted of the following terms: "*convivência escolar*," "*convivencia escolar*," "school coexistence," and "inclusive school coexistence." The results were exported in .ris format and processed using Python, with the *rispy* library used for data reading and manipulation. The article screening process followed these stages, combining automated procedures with manual inspection:

1. Exclusion of articles published outside the 2020–2025 period;
2. Elimination of texts that did not directly address school coexistence;
3. Removal of systematic reviews and literature reviews to avoid methodological overlap;
4. Classification and identification of articles directly mentioning the COVID-19 pandemic in the title or abstract;
5. Identification of the country where the research was conducted, based on information in the article;
6. Thematic classification based on the central objective or main discussion;
7. Methodological classification according to the type of approach used;
8. Identification of research participants or the sample (e.g., students, teachers, family members, administrators, and staff);
9. Identification of the educational stage or modality in focus, using categories such as early childhood education, elementary/middle school (early and final years), high school, and higher education.

Some of these steps were implemented using Python functions, while others required manual analysis, specifically:

- For item 6, a function was programmed to identify the five most frequent words in the abstracts, excluding connectors, prepositions, and articles, to capture the prevailing thematic context;
- Items 7 through 9 involved both automation and manual intervention, as some information was clearly stated and could be captured by the script, while in other cases, the description was ambiguous or context-dependent, requiring analysis of the full text; some articles lacked this information, requiring manual data collection.

The final review dataset comprised 205 studies, organized into a structured spreadsheet with analytical fields that supported the descriptive and interpretive data analysis presented in the following sections.

RESULTS

Temporal evolution and geographic distribution of production

The analysis of scientific output identified a total of 205 studies published between 2020 and 2025, with a temporal distribution that highlights the significant influence of the COVID-19 pandemic on academic interest in the topic of school coexistence. The year 2021 recorded the highest number of publications (51), reflecting a rapid response from the scientific community to the pandemic context. Output remained strong in 2023 (46) and 2024 (45), while only 19 studies were published in 2020, likely due to the abrupt closure of educational institutions and the suspension of in-person research at the onset of the pandemic.

In 2025, the ongoing data collection revealed only nine studies, possibly indicating a stabilization or a shift in academic output toward other post-pandemic topics. This trend suggests that peak interest occurred one to two years after schools reopened, when the social and emotional impacts of the pandemic became more evident within the school environment.

Geographically, production is heavily concentrated in four countries: Chile (75), Colombia (39), Spain (32), and Mexico (25). These countries account for approximately 83% of all mapped studies, revealing a significant concentration of research efforts in specific contexts. These countries have public policies or recent legal frameworks regarding school coexistence, which may explain the higher volume of output.

On the other hand, there is a visible under-representation of countries from Central America and the Caribbean, such as Panama, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Venezuela, with only one study each. Despite its established academic tradition, Brazil appears with just five studies, a figure significantly lower than expected given the country's size and educational complexity. Other countries with a low presence in the sample include Uruguay (Gelpi, 2021) and the United States (Ingram, 2023), with one study each. This shows the invisibility of diverse contexts in recent literature on the subject. There is also the possibility that, in countries with limited output on the topic, school coexistence is referred to or emphasized differently, for instance, as “school climate,” “school violence,” among others.

Methodologies used and study design

From a methodological point of view, the articles analyzed consist primarily of quantitative, descriptive studies (23 articles). The most common technique is the use of standardized questionnaires (38), often having scales measuring school climate, perceptions of violence, or the frequency of risk behaviors. These are followed by perception studies (18 articles) and qualitative interviews (10 articles), though these offer less scope for data generalization.

The low incidence of methodological triangulation is highlighted. Most studies collect data from a single group (usually students) without incorporating perspectives from teachers, administrative staff, or families, or including document analysis. This characteristic diminishes the interpretive depth of the findings and limits the understanding of school coexistence as a collective, situated, and multidimensional phenomenon.

Few studies use participatory methodologies, such as workshops, discussion circles, photovoice, or school narratives (Ascorra et al., 2020; Cedeño Navarro, 2020; Reyes Jaimes & Velázquez Reyes, 2022; Acebedo Roncancio et al., 2025). We did not identify any longitudinal designs or in-depth case studies. This scenario shows a recurring methodological weakness, characterized by an excessive reliance on self-administered instruments and limited contextualized engagement with school realities, particularly during the pandemic, which hinders direct contact with study participants.

There was also a profusion of inconsistent methodological descriptors. More than 80 different ways of naming the methodology were identified across the articles, which hinders categorization and reveals a certain theoretical-methodological imprecision in scientific reports. This lack of standardization sometimes compromises reproducibility and the comparability of studies. On the other hand, given the polyphony surrounding the concept of school coexistence, there are multiple ways of studying it, as well as its correlated variables.

Finally, it is important to note that the criteria for analyzing school coexistence vary significantly across studies. In many cases, coexistence is treated as synonymous with discipline, climate, or violence, without a clear conceptual discussion. This limits the analytical scope and highlights the need to establish more robust and shared theoretical frameworks within the field.

Participants and educational stages investigated

Most studies primarily concentrate on students, particularly those in elementary and secondary education. Teachers are mentioned in 22 studies, while school administrators in 11. Only five studies addressed parents or guardians, and another 11 included multiple participant groups simultaneously. This distribution reveals that students are the focal point of research, yet there is limited consideration of the diverse voices that comprise the school community.

This trend undermines the understanding of coexistence as a relational and institutional phenomenon by silencing important perspectives, including those of school administrators, families, and health and social care professionals within school communities. There is a complete absence of school psychologists, social workers, and intersectoral coordinators among research participants (Pedreros-Carrasco & Aracena-Álvarez, 2021). This is particularly concerning given that policies and programs integrating these professionals into educational environments have become prevalent as a strategy to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 4).

Regarding educational stages, most studies refer generally to basic education (85), while others specify elementary/middle school (43), high school (39), and higher education (7). Early childhood education, despite its formative importance, appears in only three studies (Gómez Hernández et al., 2022; Salas-Romano & Alcaide-Risoto, 2022; Caicedo Veja et al., 2024), and the same applies to rural, religious, or correctional education settings, which have been invisible.

There is also a notable lack of studies regarding contexts of territorial vulnerability, such as *favelas*, urban peripheries, and Indigenous or *quilombola* schools. This limits our understanding of school coexistence as a phenomenon shaped by historical, racial, and socioeconomic inequalities that have gained particular prominence in the pandemic and post-pandemic context.

In summary, the studies analyzed still rely on a limited demographic and institutional scope by focusing on students in urban public schools, failing to incorporate the diversity of school arrangements found in Latin America, for example.

School coexistence during and after the pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic triggered an unprecedented global crisis, the effects of which extended beyond health and the economy, deeply impacting the educational sphere. The suspension of in-person classes, the urgent shift to remote learning, and the disruption of school routines necessitated a fundamental reconfiguration of daily school life. This transformation profoundly altered the dynamic of interaction, learning, and care among individuals. A critical element of this shift was the nature of social interaction within schools, an aspect often overlooked in institutional practices, which faced significant scrutiny due to new forms of interaction, physical distancing, and emotional uncertainty. For this research, 13 articles were selected to analyze or address issues related to the pandemic and school social interaction (Table 01). The “pandemic years” are defined as those characterized by social restrictions and the implementation of remote or hybrid classes (2020, 2021, and 2022), while the “post-pandemic years” refer to the period of full resumption of in-person education following the completion of vaccination cycles (2023, 2024, and 2025).

Table 1: Articles from the systematic review that analyzed the relationship between school coexistence and the pandemic/post-pandemic period.

Title	Citation	Country	Participants	School coexistence concept	Variables analyzed	Methods	Findings
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<i>Recreo en casa: Aprender a convivir a través del juego</i>	(Acevedo et al., 2021)	Chile	200 educational support staff	Communal spaces as sites for students' socio-emotional development	Social-emotional development through games	Game workshops (<i>talleres</i>)	Game-based program that fostered socio-emotional development and strengthened family and school bonds during remote learning.
<i>La convivencia en el contexto de pandemia: Experiencia de docentes de secundaria</i>	(Gómez-Gloria & Caso-López, 2021)	Mexico	16 secondary school teachers	"... un proceso para aprender a vivir juntos, el cual contribuye a la creación de entornos escolares propicios para el aprendizaje, la formación de ciudadanos con base en el respeto, la tolerancia y la igualdad y con la capacidad para solucionar conflictos" (p. 5).	Experiences and conceptualizations of CE, changes in teaching practices	Focus groups	Teachers adapted instructional and communication strategies to strengthen the bonds between teacher, student, and family, particularly regarding empathy and solidarity.
<i>Convivencia escolar antes y durante la pandemia: Análisis de la experiencia escolar y las prácticas de participación desde las voces del estudiantado</i>	(Litichever & Fridman, 2021)	Argentina	626 adolescents aged 15 to 18, secondary school students	"... las interacciones cotidianas y los aspectos que pretenden definir el conjunto de reglas y pautas que se establecen en las escuelas" (p. 4).	Participation and compliance with standards	Online questionnaire, interviews, and focus groups	Students reported a strengthening of virtual bonds, but also conflicts related to academic overload. Changes in the way rules were enforced before and after the pandemic.
<i>Niveles de progresión de gestión de la convivencia escolar a nivel intermedio en Chile</i>	(Ascorra et al., 2021)	Chile	519 support staff (school managers)	The following are the definitions from the National Policy on School Coexistence (2015–2018) ²	Management	School coexistence management scale	There are management levels that vary according to the degree of dependency, the number of schools, and knowledge of the territory.
<i>La convivencia escolar post COVID 19: Una propuesta didáctica desde el coaching educativo</i>	(Serey & Zúñiga, 2021)	Chile	School climate team (teachers and administrators)	"... formas de interacción de los diferentes estamentos que conforman una comunidad educativa" (p. 145).	Theoretical study	Coaching tools	Proposal for educational coaching to prevent conflicts and prepare the team to handle post-quarantine challenges.
Mental health and school life in Durango Parents' perspective	(Lara-Esqueda et al., 2021)	Mexico	1,185 parents of primary and secondary school students	"... development of social and emotional skills in order to provide them with the necessary resources to face the challenges of daily life" (p. 20).	Mental health	Questionnaires: GAD-7, PHQ-9, and the Shirom-Melamed Burnout Measure.	National School Coexistence Program associated with positive effects on parental mental health during lockdown.

² "... un fenómeno social cotidiano, dinámico y complejo, que se expresa y construye en y desde la interacción que se vive entre distintos actores de la comunidad educativa, que comparten un espacio social que va creando y recreando la cultura escolar propia de ese establecimiento" (MINEDUC, 2015, p. 25 *apud* Ascorra et al., 2021, p. 231).

<i>El cuidado en las voces del profesorado: Significados y prácticas durante la pandemia de COVID-19</i>	(Vallejos Silva & Cortés Rojas, 2023)	Chile	14 public primary and secondary school teachers	"... <i>uma ética coletiva del cuidado</i> " (p. 52).	Care practices	Semi-structured interview	The pandemic led educators to develop exceptional care practices.
Validation of an abbreviated scale of the CENVI Questionnaire to evaluate the perception of school violence and coexistence management of chilean students: Differences between pandemic and post-pandemic	(Muñoz-Troncoso et al., 2023)	Chile	848 students during the pandemic period and 1,022 in the post-pandemic period	Set of relationships established in the daily life of the school	Instrument validation	Abbreviated Scale of the CENVI	A validated scale showed higher perceptions of physical violence and social exclusion post-pandemic; coexistence management had no effect on violence.
Bullying and school coexistence in the return to class of primary school students after the COVID-19 pandemic	(Ocupa-Cabrera et al., 2023)	Peru	120 6th-grade students	"... <i>coexistence at school requires values that help students to overcome difficulties and restore harmony, which enrich the learning received in the classroom</i> " (p. 150).	<i>Bullying and school coexistence</i>	The school bullying questionnaire and the school coexistence questionnaire	Bullying levels negatively correlated with the school climate.
<i>Tiempo en pantalla, tiempo sedentario y clima escolar en tiempo de pandemia en estudiantes entre 11 y 14 años de la región de Valparaíso, Chile</i>	(Yáñez-Sepúlveda et al., 2024)	Chile	179 students aged 11 to 14	"... <i>múltiples formas de interacción entre los miembros de un cuerpo escolar</i> " (p. 368).	Physical activity, screen time, free time, and school climate	Classroom Social Climate Scale, The Youth Activity Profile (YAP-SL) (online)	There is a negative relationship between screen time/sedentary behavior and the school climate. Physical activities are suggested.
School environments and educational performance: Challenges and opportunities in secondary education	(Rodríguez-Aguilar et al., 2024)	Mexico	150 high school students from two schools	"... <i>the construction of relationships based on respect and solidarity, which are essential for an educational community without violence</i> " (p. 2).	100 variables regarding school social climate, integration, performance, and sociodemographic characteristics	Ad hoc instrument with 100 variables	The tolerance variable is related to harmonious school coexistence and good academic performance.

Feasibility, acceptability, and appropriability of a national whole-school program for reducing school violence and improving school coexistence	(Rojas-Andrade et al., 2024)	Chile	1,561 members of educational institutions	A multidimensional, complex, and collective phenomenon that must be addressed from a positive, preventive, and systemic perspective.	Feasibility, acceptability, and adoption (implementation)	Acceptability of Intervention Measure (AIM), Intervention Appropriation Measure (IAM) and Feasibility of Intervention Measure (FIM) scales	The results revealed high levels of adherence, supported by adherence to the program and participant receptiveness, factors essential to the success of the implementation.
<i>Desafíos y roles emergentes del personal docente de escuelas amazónicas en la fase post pandemia</i>	(Egúsquiza Loayza et al., 2025)	Peru	12 teachers from rural Amazonian schools	<i>“... convivencia escolar inclusiva, equitativa, segura y saludable para la formación ciudadana ética e intercultural”</i> (p. 288).	Teaching challenges and roles	Semi-structured interviews	There are constant challenges regarding the teacher's role in school participation and social interaction in the post-pandemic landscape.

Source: research data.

In the context of the pandemic, the discussion opens with the article by Serey and Zúñiga (2020), which presents a theoretical pedagogical proposal that uses coaching tools to address issues related to post-COVID-19 school coexistence. The authors outline a program that consists of coaching steps and concepts tailored to challenges faced in schools following the pandemic, aiming to improve school coexistence. This action plan encompasses everything from problem identification to participation in all associated processes. It is worth noting that, given the timing of the publication during the pandemic, such proposals were well-regarded, even though the lack of available results demonstrating their effectiveness or practical implementation.

Litichever and Fridman (2021) analyzed changes in school social dynamics among adolescents before and after the pandemic. They highlight that in Argentina, specific legislation has been in effect since 1999, mandating measures and strategies for promoting school coexistence. This legislation focuses on democratic actions, such as rules and universal compliance with regulations, while fostering harmonious collaboration. However, the authors note that a rule-based system for school coexistence may not be effective; a significant proportion of surveyed students were unaware of these rules. While 81% believed they should participate in their formulation, they felt excluded from the process, leading to a disconnect that reduces adherence to and the effectiveness of imposed rules. In general, regarding school coexistence before the pandemic, students perceived sanctions as arbitrary, unfair, and discretionary at times, despite regulations proposing democratic approaches and pedagogical strategies for conflict resolution. The situation evolved with the pandemic: the rules adapted to incorporate a virtual component, causing the norms to lose their tangible nature (e.g., staying connected, attending meetings, keeping cameras on, and submitting assignments on time). Finally, the pandemic and the transition to virtual interactions led students to experience both a strengthening of bonds among themselves (solidarity) and an increase in academic workload.

Gómez-Gloria and Caso-López (2021) analyzed teachers' experiences regarding school social dynamics during the pandemic in Mexico. The authors revisit the difficulties teachers faced early in the pandemic in maintaining education and learning in pre-existing vulnerabilities that were

exacerbated by the pandemic situation. This made teachers modify and/or adapt their pedagogical practices while interacting with students' families. Focusing on changes made by teachers committed to fostering positive school social dynamics, the results reveal that: a) the more teachers knew about family circumstances, the more they adapted their practices to actively involve family members; b) new forms of virtual interaction led to greater family participation and more open communication; c) the use of social media made playful activities more engaging and fostered greater academic commitment; and d) there was uncertainty about the future, specifically regarding the vulnerabilities students would present after so much loss and social restriction, particularly concerning the facilitation of healthy relationships among students. Finally, the authors observe that the pandemic brought about a spatiotemporal reconfiguration of school social dynamics, bringing teachers closer to the realities and families of their students.

Ascorra, Cárdenas, and Torres-Vallejos (2021) analyzed the management of school coexistence within Chile's subsidy-based model. They highlight significant issues regarding school coexistence in Chile, noting that *"la gestión de la convivencia escolar ocupa el último lugar de prioridades en los municipios, y que existe una estructura jerárquica verticalista que baja directamente desde el Ministerio de Educación (MINEDUC) a los establecimientos, sin considerar la participación de sostenedores, ni la interacción de éstos con sus comunidades escolares"* (Ascorra et al., 2021, p. 228). Consequently, they quantitatively assessed the management practices of these school managers across four areas: a) strategic planning; b) evidence-based planning; c) financial resource management; and d) human resource management. The results reveal three levels of school coexistence management among school managers: a) intuitive level (characterized by limited actions); b) incipient level (characterized by unfocused actions); and c) institutionalized management level (characterized by greater knowledge of the local context and the scope of actions, as well as the highest levels of training in school coexistence). Thus, the findings indicate that the figure of the manager and their specific characteristics can either hinder or enhance school coexistence initiatives. It is worth noting that, as the study dates back to 2021, it may reflect conditions that existed before the pandemic.

Lara-Esqueda et al. (2021) present research conducted between 2020 and 2021 that examines the impact of interventions and proposals from Mexico's National School Coexistence Program on the mental health of parents with children in the Mexican basic education system. This national program reflects ongoing investments by the Mexican government aimed at developing social-emotional skills, fostering respectful emotional management, and promoting conflict resolution throughout the entire school community. The authors underscore the critical role of families in enhancing school coexistence, emphasizing it as a vital context for intervention, support, and collaboration with schools. The findings reveal that 50% of parents reported feelings of discomfort due to increased irritability, difficulty remaining still, and concerns about multiple issues simultaneously during the pandemic years. In response to these findings, strategies were proposed to assist families in overcoming anxiety and depression, conditions exacerbated by social distancing that could affect family dynamics during the period of remote learning.

The article by Acevedo et al. (2021) systematizes and analyzes a Chilean initiative focused on socio-emotional development through games during the COVID-19 pandemic, a time when school closures eliminated traditional school recess spaces. Thus, the *Recreo en Casa* (Recess at Home) program for educational support staff was created. However, the authors make two key points: a) school recess, as both a physical space and a specific time, is where most incidents of school violence occur; b) for this and other reasons, game-based interventions during recess have the potential to improve school social dynamics. The workshops with support staff highlighted the following practices: a) online recess sessions; b) synchronous games and playful activities; and c) videos inviting participation in games. The authors report that the training provided to 200 support staff members impacted approximately 3,660 students (children and adolescents). Beyond the outcomes related to socio-emotional development, the workshops offered strategies for staff care and the strengthening the school teams.

The article by Ocupa-Cabrera et al. (2023) is a key reference for the post-pandemic period. It examines the relationship between bullying and school coexistence. The initial discussion covers central elements of bullying research, such as its characteristics and impact on students, while also highlighting

teachers' lack of preparedness to address bullying within the school setting. The study results revealed that higher levels of bullying correlate with poorer quality of coexistence in the school environment. In light of these findings, the authors emphasize the importance of identifying and challenging the normalization of bullying behaviors, as well as the need to improve student coexistence through the implementation of anti-bullying educational projects that foster democratic coexistence practices in the post-pandemic context.

Muñoz-Troncoso et al. (2023) present the validation of the Abbreviated Scale of Perception of School Violence and Coexistence Management, comparing the pandemic scenario (2020, 2021, and 2022) with the post-pandemic period (2023). The authors highlight that school coexistence has traditionally been measured across various dimensions and associated variables, including citizenship, climate, violence, bullying, conflict resolution, democratic participation, and well-being. This demonstrates the effectiveness of using validated questionnaires to assess the perceptions of students, teachers, and other members of the educational community, enabling the identification of problems and the monitoring of interventions and policies in specific school contexts. In this regard, the authors focus on the psychometric validation of these measurement instruments and propose a scale designed to evaluate three elements: a) perceived violence; b) coexistence management; and c) school attachment. Based on testing parameters, the scale has proven to be efficient and useful for school settings with limited time and resources. It effectively illustrated that students perceived lower levels of violence (due to the lack of in-person attendance) and better management of school coexistence during and after the pandemic.

Vallejos-Silva and Cortés-Rojas (2023) studied the care practices implemented by Chilean teachers during the pandemic within the context of national policies on school coexistence. According to the text, the COVID-19 scenario highlighted the role of schools and teachers in maintaining care-based relationships as a social value essential for moving beyond the neoliberal model. These care practices, rooted in an ethic of care and aligned with the pedagogical logic of teaching, are linked to improved school coexistence. In this context, the authors emphasize that remote teaching, a condition imposed by the pandemic, brought teachers closer to their students, despite the virtual medium. This revealed the extent to which schools were largely unaware of the challenges faced by students and their families. It also critically underscored that, in a traditional in-person learning environment, familiarity with and understanding of students are typically reserved for exceptional cases or specific student challenges. In contrast, during the pandemic, the emphasis shifted towards learning content and assessments, often prioritizing these over issues of coexistence. This approach frequently framed matters in individualistic terms and operated from a meritocratic perspective focused on personal effort. Even when the emphasis shifted to social-emotional learning, the priority remained on academic achievements rather than social outcomes or ethical considerations, reflecting a utilitarian viewpoint.

The article by Rojas-Andrade et al. (2024) analyzes the feasibility, acceptability, and ownership of a national “whole-school approach” program aimed at reducing school violence and improving school climate in Chilean schools. Although establishing effective national programs based on the Whole School Approach (WSA) is challenging, the study demonstrated that the *A Convivir se Aprende* program, structured around technical support provided by universities, has yielded positive results regarding feasibility, acceptability, and ownership, thereby fostering a better school climate. According to the study, a high level of ownership, sustained by program adherence and participant receptivity, is a crucial factor for the successful implementation of an intervention program.

Rodríguez-Aguilar et al. (2024) evaluated school environments and educational performance, focusing on low performance linked to school social dynamics. Using a specific instrument, they assessed 100 variables regarding school social dynamics, school integration, academic performance, and sociodemographic characteristics. The results indicated that School “A” showed higher rates of interpersonal conflict, perceptions of insecurity, and low student integration. Lower participation in extracurricular activities and a higher incidence of academic delay were observed. School “B” demonstrated a more positive school climate, characterized by healthier interpersonal relationships, a better perception of safety, a stronger sense of institutional belonging, and higher levels of student-reported academic achievement. In the comparative analysis, the variable of tolerance showed a positive

association with adaptability, the degree of social integration, the use of emotional tools (such as empathy and self-regulation), the sense of belonging to the institution, and teamwork skills. These correlations indicate that, in contexts characterized by greater tolerance and mutual respect, students tend to develop better socio-emotional competencies and engage more actively in their educational process.

The article by Yáñez-Sepúlveda et al. (2024) explores the relationship between screen time (computer, television, video games, and mobile phones) and sedentary behaviors. The authors note that international health organizations recommend that children and adolescents engage in at least 60 minutes of daily physical activity. However, this guideline has not been followed during the pandemic. Evidence shows a substantial increase in screen time for both children and adolescents during and after the pandemic: children experienced an increase of 84 minutes per day, while adolescents saw an increase of 110 minutes per day compared to a baseline of 162 minutes daily. The researchers argue that, in addition to this link, sedentary behavior may be associated with psychological and physiological issues among students. They emphasize that physical activity can act as a protective factor in these cases, particularly in improving the school climate.

Finally, the challenges faced by teachers in rural Amazonian schools in the post-pandemic period were extensively discussed by Egúsqüiza Loayza et al. (2025). The authors analyzed the persistent difficulties in maintaining school quality and reach within Latin American rural contexts, settings where heightened social and educational vulnerabilities have already been identified. While the study did not focus specifically on school social dynamics, this aspect emerged as one of the challenges for fostering the civic-mindedness essential to intercultural education. For instance, it includes strategies to encourage parental involvement in their children's education and to have teachers reinforce a culture of care and best practices to combat violence and bullying. The discussion then shifts to the roles of teachers within the post-pandemic context, characterized by a high demand for virtual learning and Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in education.

DISCUSSION

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly disrupted the organization of school life, changing not only teaching methods but also the ways in which people relate, care for one another, and coexist within educational settings. Social distancing measures, prolonged school closures, the subsequent return to in-person learning under uncertainties, and emotional vulnerability directly impacted daily school life. The studies reveal that this scenario created unprecedented challenges to fostering a positive educational environment, particularly in terms of mental health, the overall institutional climate, and the intersubjective dynamics that shape school life.

The articles included in this review indicate that school social dynamics underwent a significant transformation during the pandemic. In remote or hybrid learning settings, physical absence created barriers to building bonds and fostering mutual care. Replacing spontaneous interactions with functional, sporadic communication compromised the development of a positive school climate and student performance. There was a weakening of informal spaces, such as recess or extracurricular activities, which previously helped to mediate interpersonal relationships (Acevedo et al., 2021).

As in-person classes resumed, the challenges not only remained but, in many cases, grew more intense. Schools began facing more frequent episodes of physical and symbolic violence, increased levels of anxiety and emotional dysregulation among students and teachers, and difficulties in readjusting to school norms and routines (Muñoz-Troncoso et al., 2023; Rodríguez-Aguilar et al., 2024). These factors reaffirm that school coexistence is a structural, rather than accessory, dimension of the educational process, necessitating systematic and preventive actions that go beyond merely disciplinary responses.

Despite this concerning diagnosis, some studies also highlight resilient institutional experiences that have sought to reshape school life through participatory strategies and collective care. These practices include cooperative methodologies and democratic management programs. Although not yet widely adopted, such initiatives point to potential paths for consolidating a school culture that values well-being, connection, and shared responsibility.

One of the most significant aspects emerging from the analyses is that the coexistence should be viewed not just as the absence of conflict, but as the active development of relationships that

are fair, inclusive, and emotionally secure. Based on the theory of authoritative school climate, it is suggested that schools with clear norms and consistent relational support are more effective at mitigating the adverse effects of the pandemic (Encina et al., 2023). This reinforces the need to understand coexistence as an institutional and relational architecture, rather than as a set of punitive rules or corrective measures.

Another point discussed is the importance of mental health as an essential aspect of school life. The analyzed literature indicates that schools that have implemented systematic emotional care initiatives, even in their early stages, were able to reduce some of the impacts of the isolation and insecurity experienced during and after the pandemic (Ocupa-Cabrera et al., 2023; Vallejos-Silva & Cortés-Rojas, 2023). In these contexts, the promotion of well-being was integrated into both pedagogical and institutional routines, rather than being the exclusive responsibility of health professionals.

It is also important to recognize that the pandemic's impact on school life was mediated by territorial, social, and cultural factors. Schools in rural or Indigenous regions, such as the Amazonian communities studied by Egúsquiza Loayza et al. (2025), faced specific challenges regarding digital access, teacher retention, and the development of a return-to-school plan that respected local knowledge. These findings point to the need for public policies that are situated and sensitive to the context and the historical inequalities that shape education.

Finally, the results discussed reinforce the urgency of rethinking school coexistence in a post-pandemic context and recognizing it as a political, ethical, and pedagogical dimension of school life. The pandemic experience demonstrated that schools are spaces for care and the forging of bonds, and that educational success depends directly on the quality of these relationships. In this sense, investing in a culture of coexistence that values listening, shared responsibility, and mutual recognition is also an investment in rebuilding the democratic, equitable, and transformative educational project that our societies so urgently need.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This scoping review provided to understand into how the concept of school coexistence was addressed and reinterpreted within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and the post-pandemic period. The 2020–2025 period revealed a focus in scientific literature on understanding the emotional, relational, and institutional impacts of the global health crisis on school environments. Coexistence, often treated as a secondary element in pedagogical projects, took on a significant role based on the disruptions the pandemic exposed regarding school relationships and structures of care and belonging.

The studies analyzed show that physical distancing, virtual interactions, and the emotional overload experienced by various members of the school community have contributed to weakening the relational fabric of schools. The return to in-person schooling did not automatically restore social cohesion; instead, it brought to light accumulated tensions, new forms of psychological distress, and incidents of symbolic and physical violence. In this context, it is clear that promoting positive school coexistence must be approached as a long-term institutional project. This should be supported by public policies, professional development initiatives, and democratic organizational structures.

Despite the contribution of the selected studies, we identified gaps that may limit a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon. There is a predominance of research conducted in urban contexts, particularly in South American countries, addressing the realities of rural, Indigenous, or *quilombola* communities. Few studies incorporate intersectional perspectives, such as gender, disability, or sexuality, restricting the analysis of the multiple forms of exclusion and silencing that shape experiences of coexistence.

There is also a limited number of studies using in-depth qualitative approaches or participatory methodologies. Most studies follow quantitative approaches, analyzing perceptions of the school climate, yet few seek to understand the meanings attributed to social coexistence by the individuals directly involved, students, teachers, administrators, and families. This lack of active listening limits the understanding of coexistence as a situated, historically constructed social practice and hinders the development of contextualized, transformative interventions.

While intensifying challenges, the pandemic also created windows of opportunity for pedagogical and relational innovation. Some schools and school systems mobilized strategies fostering mental health, collective care, active listening, and student participation as ways to rebuild the school community. Although isolated, these experiences point to the possibility of transforming how the school environment is inhabited, replacing disciplinary and individualizing logics with collaborative, equitable, and caring forms of interaction.

The data reveal significant gaps. Approaches that reduce coexistence to mere conflict management or the maintenance of order fail to consider its ethical, political, and formative dimensions. There is also a lack of research that incorporates intersectional perspectives, in-depth territorial analyses, and longitudinal studies, which limits our understanding of how coexistence operates and evolves over time. Furthermore, there is an urgent need to expand scientific research in rural, Indigenous, and working-class contexts, where coexistence is linked to other forms of social and cultural justice. We also face a shortage of longitudinal studies that can track the reconstruction of school coexistence over time and assess its impact on school climate and academic performance.

Among the 13 articles analyzed in depth, those from the pandemic years (2020, 2021, and 2022, a period of remote and hybrid learning) focused on proposing alternatives to maintain activities that foster positive school coexistence. Conversely, in the post-pandemic period (2023, 2024, and 2025, marking the return to in-person instruction), research emerged to assess the health crisis's impact on school coexistence, evaluating the use of ICTs and other variables stemming from that period, such as excessive screen time.

We reaffirm that investing in school coexistence means investing in rebuilding the school as a space of dignity, belonging, and well-being. The pandemic experience taught us that protective bonds, respectful relationships, and democratic school climates are just as essential as curricular content. Strengthening coexistence is not merely about preventing violence but about ensuring that everyone has the right to a humanized, inclusive, and transformative educational experience.

Approaching school coexistence through non-punitive strategies means breaking away from a traditional logic that still prevails in many schools: holding students, especially the most vulnerable ones, exclusively responsible for situations of conflict and violence. This approach is not only unfair but also reveals a limited understanding of the dynamics of coexistence, as it overlooks the influence of institutional, community, and relational factors. Recent literature reinforces the need to adopt restorative practices, dialogue circles, and collective forms of conflict resolution, recognizing that building a respectful and welcoming school environment requires the involvement of the entire educational community.

It is essential to ensure that initiatives aimed at fostering positive school coexistence are not merely subordinated to meeting administrative targets. These programs usually are conceived as formal responses to requirements regarding performance, school climate, or the reduction of violence indicators, without genuinely listening to the pedagogical and social needs of the school community. To overcome this limitation, coexistence initiatives must be reconnected to educational processes, recognizing that the quality of coexistence directly influences students' sense of belonging, subjective well-being, and engagement in learning.

The risk of stigmatization that frequently falls upon specific groups within schools is another crucial aspect. Black and Indigenous children, students with disabilities, those from marginalized areas, or those with educational paths marked by disruptions tend to be the targets of the most repressive or controlling interventions. Questioning the effects of disciplinary practices and critically examining who is routinely punished or excluded constitutes an ethical and political step toward rethinking justice within the school environment. Rather than reinforcing inequalities, actions aimed at fostering coexistence should promote diversity and inclusion as foundational principles of collective life.

This set of concerns is supported by SDG 4 of the United Nations (UN) 2030 Agenda, which aims to “ensure inclusive, equitable and quality education, and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”. Goal 4.a, in particular, recommends building safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments. By investing in school coexistence as a formative and ethical axis,

schools contribute not only to preventing violence, but also to guaranteeing the right to education in its entirety, as a space for dignity, citizenship and good living.

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The content of the research text is within the manuscript.

AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTIONS

Author 1 - Data curation, Formal analysis, Investigation, Methodology, Writing: review and editing.

Author 2 - Conceptualization, Funding acquisition, Writing: review and editing.

Author 3 - Writing: original draft.

Author 4 - Writing: original draft.

Author 5 - Conceptualization, Validation.

Author 6 - Writing: review and editing.

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Author 8 - Writing: review and editing.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors declare no conflict of interest regarding this article.