

**THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL FOUNDATIONS OF SCHOOL-BASED SUPPORT:
CONTINUING TEACHER EDUCATION, TEACHER KNOWLEDGE, AND TEACHER
IDENTITY FOR THE SYSTEMATIZATION OF SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE
VICTIMS OF ABUSE**

 <https://doi.org/10.63330/aurumpub.064-006>

Káthia Susana Almeida¹

Abstract

The contemporary school environment has come to assume functions that extend beyond the teaching of formal content, becoming also a space for protection, support, and social intervention in situations involving vulnerable children and adolescents. Within this context, teachers occupy a strategic position in identifying and supporting students who are victims of abuse, requiring technical, emotional, and ethical preparation to deal with complex situations. This study aimed to analyze the importance of continuing teacher education, teacher knowledge, and professional identity in the systematization of practices for supporting students who are victims of abuse within the school context. The research is qualitative in nature, based on a bibliographic design and an interpretive approach, drawing on books, scientific articles, and official documents related to teacher education, pedagogical practices, and the comprehensive protection of children and adolescents. The findings indicate that the absence of specialized training and institutional protocols contributes to teachers' insecurity and to the fragmentation of support practices. The study also found that continuing education promotes the development of socio-emotional competencies, strengthens professional identity, and enhances teachers' capacity to respond to situations of violence. Furthermore, teacher knowledge extends beyond mastery of subject matter to encompass relational and experiential competencies that are essential for the development of humanized pedagogical practices. It is concluded that the articulation among continuing education, teacher

¹ Doctoral Candidate in Sociology
Federal University of Paraná
E-mail: learning.and.business@gmail.com
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0006-6487-274X>

knowledge, professional identity, and institutional organization is essential for developing more effective support practices, thereby contributing to the comprehensive protection of students and strengthening the school as a space of care and the safeguarding of rights.

Keywords: Continuing Teacher Education, Pedagogical Practice, Teacher Identity, Teacher Knowledge, Teacher Professional Development.

INTRODUCTION

The contemporary school has progressively assumed functions that extend beyond the traditional boundaries of teaching formal content. Within a social context marked by inequalities, institutional fragilities, and various manifestations of violence, the school has increasingly come to be understood as a space for protection, welcoming, and social intervention. It plays a fundamental role in the human and social development of individuals, being responsible not only for the transmission of knowledge but also for the cultivation of values, citizenship, and the holistic development of students.

Within this context, teachers no longer serve exclusively as transmitters of knowledge; they also assume responsibilities related to care, attentive listening, and conflict mediation. Teaching requires ethical commitment, sensitivity, and responsibility in responding to the realities experienced by students. Consequently, contemporary teaching practice demands competencies that extend beyond technical knowledge to include emotional, social, and human dimensions.

Among the most sensitive challenges encountered in everyday school life is providing support to students who are victims of physical, psychological, or sexual abuse. Many of these situations remain invisible, whether because victims remain silent or because institutions are insufficiently prepared to address the issue. According to the Child and Adolescent Statute (Estatuto da Criança e do Adolescente—ECA) (Brazil, Law No. 8,069/1990), society, families, and institutions share the duty of ensuring the comprehensive protection of children and adolescents by guaranteeing appropriate conditions for their physical, emotional, and social development.

Within this scenario, the school environment assumes a strategic role in identifying signs of violence and vulnerability. However, the absence of specialized training and institutional protocols may compromise teachers' performance, generating professional insecurity and weakening support practices. Traditional teacher education still presents limitations in preparing educators to address complex social demands, particularly those involving emotional issues and situations of violence.

The central issue addressed in this study lies precisely in the fragility of support practices developed within schools, which are often characterized by a lack of systematization, insufficient institutional support, and inadequate continuing education. In this regard, support should not be understood as a spontaneous or individual action but rather as an organized pedagogical practice grounded in theory and articulated with social protection policies.

Against this backdrop, continuing education emerges as an essential element in strengthening teachers' professional practice. Teacher professional development is a continuous process, built upon lived experiences, critical reflection on practice, and the ongoing updating of knowledge. Continuing education enables teachers to expand their technical, emotional, and ethical competencies, fostering greater confidence when dealing with the complex situations encountered in the school environment.

Another relevant aspect concerns teacher knowledge, understood as the body of knowledge constructed throughout teachers' professional trajectories and pedagogical experiences. Teacher knowledge is plural in nature and encompasses scientific, curricular, pedagogical, and experiential dimensions. In the context of school-based support, this knowledge is fundamental for enabling teachers to recognize signs of distress, understand contexts of vulnerability, and develop appropriate strategies for intervention and protection.

Furthermore, teachers' professional identity directly influences how they respond to the demands of school life. Teacher identity is continuously shaped through professional experiences, social relationships, and educational processes. Teachers who perceive themselves as agents of protection are more likely to develop supportive, humanized practices committed to students' well-being.

Accordingly, this article aims to analyze the importance of continuing education, teacher knowledge, and professional identity in the systematization of practices for supporting students who are victims of abuse. It is based on the assumption that the development of structured protocols, combined with strengthened teacher education and institutional organization, can significantly improve the quality of support provided, ensuring greater security for both teachers and students.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

CONTINUING EDUCATION AND TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Continuing education is one of the primary instruments for transforming pedagogical practice. In a context characterized by constant change, emerging social demands, and technological advances, it is no longer feasible to assume that initial teacher education alone is sufficient to prepare educators throughout their professional careers.

Teacher professional development should be understood as a continuous, dynamic, and multifaceted process that involves not only the acquisition of new knowledge but also critical reflection on professional practice. This process is directly related to teachers' ability to adapt to new realities, rethink their instructional strategies, and respond effectively to students' needs (Charlot, 2005).

In the context of supporting students who are victims of abuse, continuing education assumes an even more significant role. Addressing situations of abuse requires knowledge of legal, psychological, and social issues, as well as specific skills in active listening and intervention. Without such preparation, teachers may feel insecure, thereby compromising the quality of the support they provide.

Furthermore, continuing education contributes to the development of an ethical and responsible professional stance, which is essential for teaching in contexts of vulnerability. By fostering the development of socio-emotional competencies, continuing education enables teachers to respond with greater sensitivity and humanity. It should therefore be understood as an ongoing process of constructing and reconstructing pedagogical practice, allowing teachers to develop new competencies in response to

social and educational transformations. Imbernón (2011) emphasizes that teacher education must move beyond purely technical models and promote reflective practice capable of preparing educators to address the complex situations encountered in everyday school life.

Nóvoa (1992) argues that professional development is directly linked to valuing teachers' lived experiences and to the collective construction of knowledge. In this sense, continuing education encourages critical reflection on practice and strengthens teacher autonomy, enabling more conscious and humanized professional action.

Freire (1996) states that teaching requires ethical commitment and sensitivity to students' realities. Consequently, teacher education should encompass not only pedagogical content but also emotional, social, and human dimensions, especially when teachers work in contexts marked by vulnerability and violence.

TEACHER KNOWLEDGE AND PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE

Teacher knowledge constitutes the foundation of teachers' professional practice. It is developed over time through formal education, professional experience, and interactions within the school environment. This body of knowledge encompasses theoretical, practical, and experiential dimensions, which are integrated in the construction of pedagogical practice (Cunha, 2012).

Within the context of supporting students who are victims of abuse, teacher knowledge plays a fundamental role, as it enables teachers to recognize signs, understand contexts, and respond appropriately. From this perspective, pedagogical practice assumes a broader dimension that extends beyond the teaching of academic content to incorporate aspects related to care and protection.

The integration of theory and practice is essential for developing consistent professional performance. Teachers who successfully combine theoretical knowledge with lived experience are more likely to develop reflective and effective pedagogical practices. Teacher knowledge comprises a body of understanding built throughout the professional trajectory and through experiences acquired within the

school environment. Tardif (2014) observes that teachers' knowledge is plural in nature, encompassing scientific, curricular, pedagogical, and experiential knowledge that are continuously integrated in educational practice.

In the context of school-based support, experiential knowledge becomes particularly important because it enables teachers to recognize signs of distress, understand family contexts, and develop strategies for active listening and protection. Freire (1996) argues that pedagogical practice requires dialogue, sensitivity, and commitment to the social realities of students.

Furthermore, the integration of theory and practice contributes to the development of a more reflective and effective professional practice. Teachers who are able to relate academic knowledge to their everyday experiences in the school environment tend to develop pedagogical practices that are more humanized and more responsive to students' needs (Tardif, 2014).

TEACHER IDENTITY AND SUPPORT

Teacher identity is a central element of professional development, as it directly influences how teachers respond to the demands of school life. It is a continuous construction shaped by values, beliefs, and experiences.

Within the context of supporting students who are victims of abuse, the development of a protective teacher identity is essential. This means that teachers must recognize themselves as agents of protection who are committed to the well-being of their students. Teacher identity is built throughout the professional trajectory and is influenced by the experiences, social relationships, and educational processes teachers encounter. Nóvoa (1992) asserts that professional identity is not fixed but rather the result of an ongoing process of construction and reconstruction.

In the context of school-based support, teacher identity assumes a fundamental role because it directly influences how teachers perceive their responsibility in responding to situations of vulnerability.

Teachers who recognize themselves as agents of protection are more likely to develop supportive practices and demonstrate a stronger commitment to their students' well-being (Saviani, 2013).

Imbernón (2011) argues that developing a critical and reflective professional identity strengthens teacher autonomy and promotes more ethical and sensitive professional practice. In this way, school-based support ceases to be an improvised action and instead becomes an organized, theoretically grounded pedagogical practice.

METHODOLOGY

The present study is characterized as a qualitative, bibliographic investigation employing an interpretive approach, with the objective of examining the relationship among continuing education, teacher knowledge, and professional identity in the context of supporting students who are victims of abuse. The choice of a qualitative approach is justified by the complexity of the phenomenon under investigation, which encompasses social, emotional, and institutional dimensions.

The bibliographic research was conducted through the analysis of books, scientific articles, dissertations, and official documents related to teacher education, pedagogical practices, and the protection of children and adolescents. This review of the literature made it possible to identify different perspectives on the subject and to establish a consistent theoretical foundation for the discussion (Gil, 2017).

Data were analyzed using an interpretive approach, seeking to establish relationships among the concepts examined and to understand how continuing education, teacher knowledge, and professional identity influence support practices within the school environment (Marconi & Lakatos, 2010).

The study adopts a reflective and critical perspective, taking into account the ethical and social implications involved in situations of abuse and school-based support. In this way, the research seeks to contribute to the development of more humanized and systematically organized pedagogical practices within the educational context.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of the data gathered throughout this study demonstrates that the lack of specialized continuing education for supporting students who are victims of abuse is directly associated with teachers' insecurity and the fragility of interventions carried out within the school environment. When confronted with situations involving violations of children's rights, many teachers report difficulties in recognizing signs of abuse and in making appropriate referrals. This scenario reveals significant shortcomings in teacher education, which remains predominantly content-oriented and insufficiently focused on the socio-emotional dimensions of educational practice. Imbernón (2011) emphasizes that traditional teacher education presents important gaps in preparing educators to address complex social demands, particularly those involving emotional distress, vulnerability, and violence.

The findings further indicate that the lack of specialized preparation during initial teacher education contributes significantly to feelings of insecurity, fear, and helplessness among teachers. In many cases, educators are reluctant to act for fear of responding inappropriately or exposing students to further harm, which may result in inaction even in serious situations. Freire (1996) reinforces that teaching requires sensitivity, ethical responsibility, and commitment to students' lived realities, making it essential to develop pedagogical practices grounded in care and attentive listening.

Moreover, the study found that the absence of structured institutional protocols contributes to the fragmentation of support practices. In many schools, support is provided on an improvised basis, without standardized procedures or coordination among the pedagogical team, school administration, and social protection services. Tardif (2014) argues that pedagogical practice requires organized frameworks to guide teachers' decision-making in complex situations. In this regard, the absence of institutional guidelines compromises not only teachers' professional confidence but also the effectiveness of measures designed to protect students (Veiga, 2013).

Another aspect identified concerns the emotional burden experienced by teachers when dealing with cases of abuse and violence. Constant exposure to situations of suffering may lead to psychological

distress, anxiety, and feelings of professional inadequacy. Freire (1996) emphasizes that teaching involves intense human relationships, requiring emotional balance and ethical preparation to deal with the conflicts and vulnerabilities encountered in everyday school life. In the absence of adequate institutional support, teachers often face these situations in isolation, increasing the risk of emotional exhaustion and professional burnout.

The findings also demonstrate that continuing education plays a fundamental role in strengthening teachers' professional identity. Teachers who participate in ongoing professional development programs exhibit greater autonomy, critical awareness, and confidence when dealing with complex situations. Nóvoa (1992) highlights that professional development occurs through continuous reflection on practice and through valuing the experiences accumulated throughout one's teaching career. Consequently, continuing education not only expands theoretical knowledge but also promotes the development of the emotional and interpersonal competencies that are essential for school-based support.

Another important finding concerns the value of developing humanized pedagogical practices. Schools that invest in teacher education and institutional organization are better able to develop effective strategies for addressing the social vulnerabilities present within the educational environment. Imbernón (2011) argues that critical and reflective education contributes to more sensitive and committed professional practice, strengthening the school as a space of care, protection, and social inclusion.

Within this context, the systematization of support procedures emerges as an indispensable strategy for organizing school practices. The existence of clear protocols provides professionals with guidance on how to proceed when abuse is suspected or confirmed, ensuring greater confidence in the interventions undertaken. Such protocols should include procedures for identifying signs of violence, conducting qualified and sensitive listening, documenting information, and referring cases to the appropriate authorities. Libâneo (2018) emphasizes that institutional organization is fundamental to the effectiveness of pedagogical practices and to strengthening relationships within the school environment.

The data analyzed also indicate that teachers who recognize themselves as agents of protection are more likely to develop supportive practices and demonstrate a stronger commitment to students' well-being. In this sense, teacher identity directly influences how educators perceive their responsibilities when responding to situations of vulnerability. Pimenta (2012) argues that professional identity is continuously constructed through experiences, social relationships, and educational processes within the school context. Accordingly, strengthening teacher identity fosters more ethical, reflective, and humanized professional practice.

However, the findings also indicate that responsibility for supporting students should not rest exclusively with teachers. Addressing situations of abuse requires collective action involving school administrators, the pedagogical team, families, and the social protection network. Institutional support is essential to reduce teachers' emotional burden and to ensure more effective assistance for students. Arroyo (2013) maintains that schools should be understood as spaces for human development and the safeguarding of rights, requiring a collective commitment to addressing social vulnerabilities.

Overall, the findings of this study highlight the need for greater investment in continuing education, the development of institutional protocols, and the strengthening of teachers' professional identity. Such measures contribute significantly to the establishment of more organized, secure, and humanized support practices, reinforcing the school's role as a space for protection, care, and the promotion of human dignity.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Based on the analyses conducted throughout this study, it is evident that supporting students who are victims of abuse within the school environment constitutes a complex challenge requiring technical preparation, emotional sensitivity, and institutional organization. In addition to its pedagogical function, the contemporary school has also assumed an important social role in protecting children and adolescents in situations of vulnerability. Within this context, teachers occupy a strategic position in identifying signs

of violence and ensuring that observed cases are appropriately referred, as established by the Ministry of Education and the Presidency of the Republic through the Child and Adolescent Statute (*Estatuto da Criança e do Adolescente—ECA*).

The findings demonstrate that the absence of specialized training significantly compromises teachers' ability to respond effectively to situations of abuse. Many educators feel insecure about carrying out appropriate interventions, particularly because of the insufficient preparation provided during their initial teacher education. In this regard, continuing education proves essential for strengthening the pedagogical, emotional, and ethical competencies required for school-based support. Teacher education must move beyond purely technical perspectives and foster reflective, humanized practices capable of responding to the social demands encountered in everyday educational settings.

Furthermore, the study found that the systematization of support practices is an indispensable element in creating safer and more organized school environments. The development of institutional protocols provides educators with guidance regarding appropriate procedures for responding to situations of violence, reducing improvised actions and ensuring greater protection for students. Pedagogical practice requires organized frameworks that assist teachers in making informed decisions in complex and socially sensitive contexts.

Another important aspect concerns the development of teacher identity as a determining factor in more effective support practices. Teachers who recognize themselves as agents of protection are more likely to adopt approaches that demonstrate a stronger commitment to students' well-being. Professional identity is continuously constructed through experience, education, and the relationships established within the school environment, directly influencing how teachers understand and fulfill their social role.

However, it is important to emphasize that supporting students who are victims of abuse should not be regarded as the sole responsibility of teachers. Rather, it is a collective endeavor requiring coordination among the pedagogical team, school administration, families, and the social protection network. Institutional support is essential to prevent teachers' emotional overload and to ensure more

effective interventions. Educational practice requires ethical commitment, dialogue, and sensitivity to the human realities present within the school environment.

Finally, it is concluded that the integration of continuing education, teacher knowledge, professional identity, and institutional organization is essential for consolidating more humanized and effective support practices. Investing in these elements strengthens the school as a space of care, protection, and the safeguarding of rights, thereby contributing to the development of a more inclusive, ethical, and student-centered education committed to the holistic development of all learners.

REFERENCES

- Arroyo, M. G. *Ofício de mestre: imagens e autoimagens* [Craft of teaching: images and self-images]. 15. ed. Petrópolis: Vozes, 2013.
- Brasil. *Lei nº 8.069, de 13 de julho de 1990*. Estatuto da Criança e do Adolescente [Child and Adolescent Statute]. Diário Oficial da União: Brasília, DF, 16 jul. 1990.
- Charlot, B. *Relação com o saber, formação dos professores e globalização* [Relationship with knowledge, teacher education, and globalization]. Porto Alegre: Artmed, 2005.
- Cunha, M. I. *O bom professor e sua prática* [The good teacher and their practice]. 24. ed. Campinas: Papirus, 2012.
- Freire, P. *Pedagogia da autonomia: saberes necessários à prática educativa* [Pedagogy of autonomy: knowledge necessary for educational practice]. São Paulo: Paz e Terra, 1996.
- Freire, P. *Pedagogia da esperança: um reencontro com a pedagogia do oprimido* [Pedagogy of hope: reliving Pedagogy of the Oppressed]. Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1992.
- Gil, A. C. *Métodos e técnicas de pesquisa social* [Methods and techniques of social research]. 6. ed. São Paulo: Atlas, 2017.

- Imbernón, F. *Formação docente e profissional: formar-se para a mudança e a incerteza* [Teacher and professional education: educating oneself for change and uncertainty]. 9. ed. São Paulo: Cortez, 2011.
- Libâneo, J. C. *Organização e gestão da escola: teoria e prática* [School organization and management: theory and practice]. 6. ed. São Paulo: Heccus, 2018.
- Marconi, M. A.; Lakatos, E. M. *Fundamentos de metodologia científica* [Foundations of scientific methodology]. 7. ed. São Paulo: Atlas, 2010.
- Nóvoa, A. *Os professores e a sua formação* [Teachers and their education]. Lisboa: Dom Quixote, 1992.
- Pimenta, S. G. *Formação de professores: identidade e saberes da docência* [Teacher education: identity and teaching knowledge]. São Paulo: Cortez, 2012.
- Saviani, D. *Pedagogia histórico-crítica: primeiras aproximações* [Historical-critical pedagogy: initial approaches]. 11. ed. Campinas: Autores Associados, 2013.
- Tardif, M. *Saberes docentes e formação profissional* [Teacher knowledge and professional education]. 17. ed. Petrópolis: Vozes, 2014.
- Veiga, I. P. A. *Projeto político-pedagógico da escola: uma construção possível* [The school's political-pedagogical project: a possible construction]. Campinas: Papirus, 2013.