

BEHAVIORAL MEDIATION IN THE CLASSROOM: EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES IN THE FACE OF OPPOSITIONAL DEFIANT DISORDER <https://doi.org/10.63330/aurumpub.032-001>

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Abstract

Behavioral mediation in the classroom has emerged as a relevant pedagogical strategy in addressing the challenges posed by Oppositional Defiant Disorder in the educational context. This disorder, characterized by persistent patterns of defiant, negativistic, and oppositional behavior, significantly interferes with the teaching–learning process, interpersonal relationships, and the school climate. The present study aimed to analyze behavioral mediation practices in the classroom in relation to Oppositional Defiant Disorder, considering their theoretical, legal, and pedagogical foundations, as well as their contributions to inclusive education. This is an integrative literature review conducted through the analysis of scientific articles, academic works, and normative documents published between 2018 and 2025, selected from national and international databases. The results showed that behavioral mediation, when grounded in dialogue, routine predictability, positive reinforcement, and the strengthening of the teacher–student bond, contributes to conflict reduction, improved social interaction, and the socioemotional development of children with Oppositional Defiant Disorder. It was also found that the effectiveness of these practices is directly related to teacher training, institutional support, and articulation with inclusive education public policies. It is concluded that behavioral mediation constitutes an essential pedagogical resource for promoting more welcoming, equitable, and inclusive school environments, reaffirming the role of the school in guaranteeing the right to education and the integral development of students.

Keywords: Behavioral mediation, Classroom, Inclusive education, Oppositional defiant disorder, Pedagogical practice.

INTRODUCTION

Behavioral mediation in the classroom has consolidated itself as a fundamental pedagogical strategy in the face of the challenges posed by Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD), especially in the context of inclusive education. ODD is characterized by a persistent pattern of negativistic, defiant, disobedient, and hostile behavior toward authority figures, occurring most frequently in childhood and

potentially generating significant impacts on the child's emotional, social, and academic development (Côrtes, 2021; Ribeiro et al., 2024). In the school environment, such manifestations directly affect interpersonal relationships, classroom dynamics, and the teaching–learning process, demanding from education professionals pedagogical practices that are sensitive, structured, and grounded in theoretical and legal frameworks.

The school, as a privileged space for socialization and knowledge construction, plays a central role in the early identification of behavioral difficulties and in the implementation of strategies that foster the student's integral development. In this sense, behavioral mediation emerges as a pedagogical resource aimed at guiding, regulating, and reframing behaviors, promoting respectful coexistence, autonomy, and the strengthening of socioemotional skills. Studies indicate that mediated interventions, based on dialogue, predictable routines, and the establishment of clear limits, contribute to the reduction of conflicts and to the improvement of the school performance of children with ODD (Bezerra et al., 2024; Utzig et al., 2022).

In the Brazilian context, the discussion of educational practices concerning ODD must be understood in light of the legal frameworks that ensure the right to education and inclusion. The 1988 Constitution of the Federative Republic of Brazil establishes, in Articles 205 and 208, that education is a right of all and a duty of the State, guaranteeing specialized educational services to learners who require them (Brasil, 1988). This principle is reinforced by the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education, which guides the organization of education systems to meet student diversity, respecting their specificities and educational needs (Brasil, 1996). Moreover, the Brazilian Law for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities broadens the debate by reaffirming inclusive education as a fundamental right, emphasizing the elimination of attitudinal and pedagogical barriers in the school context (Brasil, 2015).

Complementarily, the National Policy on Special Education from the Perspective of Inclusive Education guides the construction of pedagogical practices that foster the participation and learning of all students, regardless of their cognitive or behavioral conditions (Brasil, 2008). The National Common

Curricular Base, in turn, highlights the importance of developing socioemotional competencies, empathy, and conflict resolution—elements directly related to the proposals of behavioral mediation in the classroom (Brasil, 2018). Thus, addressing ODD in the educational context is not limited to isolated interventions but requires coordinated actions among the school, family, and health services.

In the health field, documents such as the Psychosocial Care Notebooks and the Care Pathway for Comprehensive Health Care of Children and Adolescents underscore the need for interdisciplinary approaches to the care of children with behavioral disorders, including ODD (Brasil, 2014a; Brasil, 2014b). This intersectoral coordination reinforces the importance of educational practices aligned with strategies for comprehensive care, in which behavioral mediation assumes a relevant role by fostering communication, social adaptation, and the bond between student and school.

Despite normative and theoretical advances, many teachers still face difficulties in dealing with oppositional behaviors in the classroom, especially due to the lack of specific training and ongoing institutional support. Research shows that lack of preparation can lead to the adoption of punitive or exclusionary practices, which tend to intensify challenging behaviors and compromise the educational process (Mendes, 2022; Menezes et al., 2022). In this context, behavioral mediation presents itself as an ethical and effective pedagogical alternative, prioritizing welcoming approaches, understanding the causes of behavior, and jointly constructing coexistence strategies.

Given this panorama, the research problem is defined as follows: in what ways can behavioral mediation in the classroom contribute to more inclusive and effective educational practices in the face of Oppositional Defiant Disorder? This problematization stems from the recognition that ODD should not be understood solely from a pathologizing perspective, but also as a phenomenon involving power relations, social norms, and institutional contexts, as discussed by authors who analyze the disorder from critical and interdisciplinary approaches (Martins et al., 2021; Gomes et al., 2025).

The general objective of this work is to analyze behavioral mediation practices in the classroom in the face of Oppositional Defiant Disorder, considering their theoretical, legal, and pedagogical

foundations, as well as their contributions to the process of school inclusion. The aim is to understand how such practices can foster the socioemotional development, learning, and social interaction of children with ODD, in addition to supporting teaching practice in the face of the daily challenges imposed by this disorder.

The justification for this study is based on the social, educational, and scientific relevance of the topic. From a social standpoint, understanding and disseminating behavioral mediation strategies contributes to the promotion of more just, welcoming, and inclusive school environments, reducing processes of stigmatization and exclusion. In the educational sphere, the study offers theoretical and practical support to teachers and school administrators, assisting in the construction of pedagogical practices aligned with public policies and the real needs of students. In the scientific field, the research dialogues with recent productions that approach ODD from different perspectives, expanding the debate on behavioral mediation as a pedagogical tool and reinforcing the importance of interdisciplinary approaches in facing contemporary educational challenges (Bandeira & Martins, 2021; Corrêa et al., 2023; Sousa, 2023).

Thus, by addressing behavioral mediation in the classroom in the face of Oppositional Defiant Disorder, this work aims to contribute to critical reflection and the improvement of educational practices, reaffirming the school's commitment to inclusive education and the integral development of all students.

METHODOLOGY

The present study is characterized as an integrative literature review, a method that enables the systematic and critical synthesis of scientific productions on a given phenomenon, allowing for an expanded understanding of the state of knowledge and the identification of theoretical and practical gaps. This approach proved appropriate for analyzing behavioral mediation practices in the classroom in the face of Oppositional Defiant Disorder, as it encompasses studies with different methodological designs and interdisciplinary perspectives, especially in the areas of education, health, and public policy.

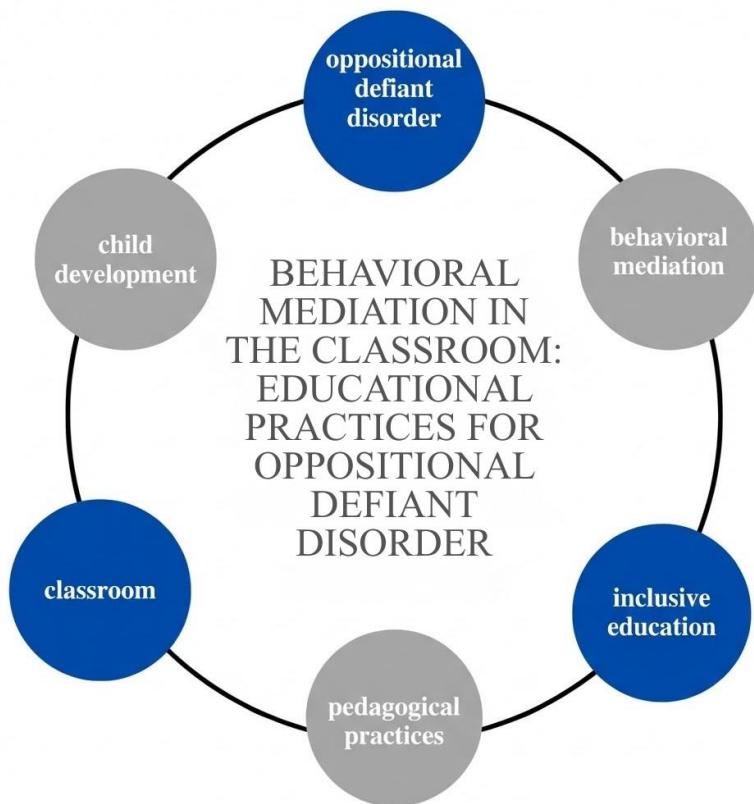
The integrative review was conducted through the following steps: identification of the theme and formulation of the guiding question; definition of inclusion and exclusion criteria; database searches; selection of studies; critical analysis of the material; and synthesis of results. The guiding question was defined as: which behavioral mediation practices in the classroom are described in the scientific literature as educational strategies in the face of Oppositional Defiant Disorder?

The search for studies was carried out in national and international databases relevant to the fields of education and health, including SciELO, the Virtual Health Library, Google Scholar, and specialized scientific journals, in addition to consulting Brazilian normative documents and legislation pertinent to inclusive education. Controlled and uncontrolled descriptors were used, combined through Boolean operators, in order to increase search sensitivity and ensure the retrieval of studies aligned with the research objective.

The descriptors used included terms related to the disorder, the school context, and pedagogical practices, such as: oppositional defiant disorder, behavioral mediation, inclusive education, pedagogical practices, classroom, and child development. These terms were used in Portuguese, considering the predominance of national productions on the topic, as well as the relevance of the Brazilian legal and educational framework.

Figure 1

Flowchart or scheme of the descriptors and search strategies used in the integrative review



Source: Authors (2026)

The inclusion criteria were defined as: scientific articles, literature reviews, case studies, academic works, and official documents published between 2018 and 2025, available in full, in Portuguese, and addressing Oppositional Defiant Disorder in the school context, with an emphasis on pedagogical practices, behavioral mediation, or educational inclusion. As exclusion criteria, duplicate studies, productions that did not address the educational context, or that treated the disorder exclusively from a clinical perspective without relation to school practice were disregarded.

Study selection initially occurred through reading titles and abstracts, followed by full reading of the productions that met the established criteria. Subsequently, critical content analysis was conducted, considering aspects such as objectives, methodology, main results, and contributions to understanding behavioral mediation in the classroom in the face of Oppositional Defiant Disorder.

Data synthesis was performed in a descriptive and analytical manner, organizing the findings into thematic categories such as: characterization of Oppositional Defiant Disorder in the school context; challenges faced by teachers; behavioral mediation strategies; and coordination between pedagogical practices and public policies for inclusive education. This organization allowed for the integration of results and the construction of a critical perspective on the educational practices described in the literature.

As this is bibliographic and documentary research, the study did not involve the direct participation of human beings, thus waiving ethics committee review, in accordance with current regulations. Even so, the ethical principles of scientific research were respected, with appropriate citation of sources used and rigor in data analysis and interpretation.

This methodology enabled the construction of a consistent overview of behavioral mediation in the classroom in the face of Oppositional Defiant Disorder, offering theoretical and practical support for reflection and the improvement of inclusive educational practices.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of the selected studies showed that behavioral mediation in the classroom constitutes an essential pedagogical strategy for addressing the challenges imposed by Oppositional Defiant Disorder in the school context. The results indicate that ODD has significant impacts on child development, especially regarding learning, socialization, and student retention in school, demanding educational practices that go beyond punitive and exclusionary approaches (Côrtes, 2021; Ribeiro et al., 2024).

Recurrent, the analyzed studies highlight that oppositional and defiant behavior directly interferes with classroom dynamics, generating frequent conflicts with teachers and peers, in addition to compromising academic performance. Bezerra et al. (2024) indicate that, when not adequately mediated, such manifestations tend to be interpreted merely as indiscipline, disregarding the emotional, social, and

institutional factors involved. In this sense, behavioral mediation emerges as a pedagogical resource that enables a broader understanding of behavior, fostering more humanized and effective interventions.

The results also reveal that behavioral mediation contributes to the construction of a more organized, predictable, and welcoming school environment—fundamental aspects for students with ODD. Predictable routines, clear rules, and the use of dialogue as a central strategy were identified as factors that reduce episodes of confrontation and favor emotional self-regulation. These findings corroborate the literature by indicating that the organization of the pedagogical environment is a key element in promoting more adaptive behaviors (Utzig et al., 2022; Mendes, 2022).

Oppositional defiant disorder is characterized by a persistent pattern of negativistic, defiant, and hostile behavior, which recurs in interactions with authority figures, especially in the school environment, requiring interventions that consider the multiple factors involved in its manifestation (Côrtes, 2021).

This definition reinforces the understanding that ODD should not be analyzed in isolation but contextualized within the social and institutional relationships in which the child is embedded. Thus, behavioral mediation assumes a relevant role by enabling the reorganization of these relationships, fostering more inclusive pedagogical practices.

CHARACTERIZATION OF OPPOSITIONAL DEFIANT DISORDER IN THE SCHOOL CONTEXT

The analyzed studies indicate that children with ODD show persistent difficulties in complying with rules, resistance to teacher guidance, frequent irritability, and provocative behaviors, which negatively affect the teaching–learning process. Ribeiro et al. (2024) emphasize that such manifestations, when not appropriately mediated, can generate cumulative harms to child development, exacerbating academic and social difficulties over time.

Oliveira and Costa (2021) stress that the school environment, when adopting rigid and inflexible practices, tends to intensify oppositional behaviors, reinforcing cycles of conflict and exclusion. From this

perspective, behavioral mediation presents itself as an alternative to punitive logic by prioritizing understanding behavior and constructing pedagogical strategies that promote inclusion.

When the school fails to recognize the specificities of oppositional defiant disorder, it ultimately reinforces processes of symbolic exclusion, in which the child becomes labeled as indisciplined, hindering effective participation in the educational process (Oliveira & Costa, 2021).

Table 1

Characteristics of Oppositional Defiant Disorder in the school context

Dimension	Characteristics observed in the school context
Behavioral	Defiant behaviors, refusal to obey rules, frequent confrontation with teacher authority
Emotional	Constant irritability, low frustration tolerance, emotional outbursts
Social	Difficulties interacting with peers, recurring interpersonal conflicts
Academic	Impaired school performance, difficulty concentrating and engaging in activities
Institutional	Higher risk of stigmatization, application of punitive practices, and exclusion processes

Source: Authors (2026)

Table 1 presents a synthesis of the main characteristics of ODD in the school environment, as described in the literature, including challenging behaviors, difficulties in social interaction, and impact on academic performance. This systematization highlights the need for pedagogical practices that consider such specificities, avoiding homogeneous and exclusionary approaches.

BEHAVIORAL MEDIATION AS AN INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGICAL STRATEGY

In the studies, behavioral mediation is described as a pedagogical practice seeking to guide student behavior through dialogue, active listening, and the construction of agreements, promoting autonomy and socioemotional development. Utzig et al. (2022) point out that mediated strategies foster social interaction

and reduce conflicts, especially when associated with collaborative practices and the strengthening of the teacher–student bond.

Bandeira and Martins (2021) emphasize the role of psychopedagogy in behavioral mediation, highlighting the importance of systematic observation of behavior and the development of individualized intervention plans. According to the authors, mediation makes it possible to identify triggers of oppositional behavior and to build pedagogical alternatives more appropriate to the student's needs.

Behavioral mediation in the school context is not limited to containing behavior but involves a continuous process of understanding, intervention, and follow-up, in which the teacher assumes the role of mediator of the child's emotional and social development (Bandeira & Martins, 2021).

Table 2

Behavioral mediation strategies used in the school context

Strategy	Description	Contributions to the student with ODD
Positive reinforcement	Valuing appropriate behaviors through praise and incentives	Strengthens adaptive behaviors and self-esteem
Establishing routines	Predictable organization of daily activities	Reduces anxiety and oppositional behaviors
Conflict mediation	Dialogic intervention in conflict situations	Fosters peaceful resolution and socioemotional development
Behavioral contracts	Clear agreements between teacher and student	Promotes responsibility and co-responsibility
Active listening	Attentiveness to the student's needs and feelings	Strengthens the teacher–student bond

Source: Authors (2026)

Table 2 brings together the main behavioral mediation strategies identified in the literature, such as positive reinforcement, conflict mediation, adaptation of pedagogical routines, and the establishment of clear limits. Studies indicate that such strategies are more effective when applied consistently and aligned with the guidelines of inclusive education.

TEACHER TRAINING AND CHALLENGES OF PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE

The results show that teacher training is a determining factor in the effectiveness of behavioral mediation. Mendes (2022) and Menezes et al. (2022) highlight that many teachers feel unprepared to deal with challenging behaviors, which contributes to adopting punitive and ineffective practices. The lack of specific training on behavioral disorders and inclusive education was identified as one of the main obstacles to implementing mediation.

Sousa (2023) adds that workload, large class sizes, and lack of institutional support hinder the application of mediating strategies in daily school life. These factors reinforce the need for public policies that invest in continuing education and multiprofessional support for teachers.

The challenges faced by teachers in managing oppositional defiant disorder in the classroom highlight the need for continuous training and institutional support so as to avoid exclusionary practices and promote school inclusion (Mendes, 2022).

Table 3

Challenges and possibilities in behavioral mediation in the classroom

Identified challenges	Possibilities for addressing them
Lack of specific teacher training	Investment in continuing professional development
Large class sizes	Collaborative pedagogical planning
Absence of multi professional support	Coordination with health teams and educational guidance
Prevalence of punitive practices	Adoption of mediating and inclusive strategies
Teacher workload overload	Institutional support and participatory management

Source: Authors (2026)

Table 3 presents the main challenges faced by teachers, as well as the possibilities for overcoming them highlighted in the literature, including continuing education, interdisciplinary work, and support from school management.

BEHAVIORAL MEDIATION AND PUBLIC POLICIES FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

The analyzed studies reinforce that behavioral mediation must be aligned with legal frameworks and public policies for inclusive education. The Federal Constitution, the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education, and the Brazilian Law for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities ensure the right to education for all students, guiding the adoption of pedagogical practices that respect diversity (Brasil, 1988; Brasil, 1996; Brasil, 2015).

Gomes et al. (2025) discuss the gap between the legal recognition of ODD and its effective consideration in school practices, emphasizing that the existence of a diagnostic report does not, in itself, guarantee educational inclusion. According to the authors, it is essential that the school appropriate the legislation and translate it into concrete pedagogical actions.

Between the report and the law, there is a significant hiatus in which the educational rights of children with oppositional defiant disorder do not always materialize into inclusive pedagogical practices in everyday school life (Gomes et al., 2025).

Table 4

Legal frameworks and guidelines related to inclusive education and ODD

Legal/normative document	Contributions to educational practice
1988 Federal Constitution	Guarantees the right to education and specialized educational services
Law No. 9,394/1996 (LDB)	Guides the organization of education systems to address diversity
Law No. 13,146/2015	Reaffirms inclusive education as a fundamental right
National Special Education Policy (2008)	Directs inclusive pedagogical practices
National Common Curricular Base (2018)	Values socioemotional competencies and conflict resolution

Source: Authors 2026)

Table 4 systematizes the main legal instruments and normative documents that underpin the school's role in the face of ODD, reinforcing the obligation to adopt mediating and inclusive practices.

SYNTHESIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE RESULTS

In an integrated manner, the results demonstrate that behavioral mediation constitutes a fundamental pedagogical strategy for addressing Oppositional Defiant Disorder in the classroom. When grounded in inclusive, legal, and interdisciplinary principles, mediation contributes to improving the school climate, strengthening interpersonal relationships, and promoting the child's integral development. The findings reinforce the need to invest in teacher training, institutional support, and coordination between education and health, reaffirming the school's role as a space for promoting equity and educational inclusion.

CONCLUSION

This study had the general objective of analyzing behavioral mediation practices in the classroom in the face of Oppositional Defiant Disorder, considering their theoretical, legal, and pedagogical foundations, as well as their contributions to promoting inclusive education. Throughout the research, we sought to understand how behavioral mediation can foster the socioemotional development, learning, and social interaction of children with ODD, in addition to supporting teaching practice in the face of challenges imposed by this disorder in the school context.

The results showed that Oppositional Defiant Disorder significantly impacts classroom dynamics, interfering with the teaching–learning process, interpersonal relationships, and the school climate. It was found that challenging behaviors, when understood solely from the perspective of indiscipline, tend to be aggravated by punitive and exclusionary practices. In contrast, the analyzed literature indicates that behavioral mediation strategies—grounded in dialogue, predictable routines, and the strengthening of the teacher–student bond—contribute to reducing conflicts and improving academic and social performance.

It was also observed that behavioral mediation is configured as a pedagogical practice aligned with the principles of inclusive education, as advocated by Brazilian legal and normative frameworks. The Federal Constitution, the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education, the Brazilian Law for

the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities, the National Policy on Special Education from the Perspective of Inclusive Education, and the National Common Curricular Base provide normative support for adopting mediating practices that respect diversity and guarantee the right to education for all students, including those with Oppositional Defiant Disorder.

Regarding the study's contributions, we highlight the systematization of scientific evidence reinforcing the relevance of behavioral mediation as an effective and ethical pedagogical strategy in the school context. The study contributes to critical reflection on teaching practice by demonstrating the need to move beyond punishment-centered approaches and to advance in the construction of more humanized, inclusive, and interdisciplinary educational practices. It also offers theoretical support that can assist teachers, school administrators, and other education professionals in developing intervention strategies better suited to the needs of students with ODD.

Nevertheless, the research also revealed limitations related to the scarcity of empirical studies that systematically assess the effects of behavioral mediation practices in everyday school life. In this sense, future research is suggested to investigate the application of these strategies in different educational contexts, as well as qualitative and quantitative studies that explore the perceptions of teachers, students, and families regarding behavioral mediation in the face of Oppositional Defiant Disorder.

Finally, it is concluded that behavioral mediation in the classroom is a fundamental pedagogical resource for addressing the challenges imposed by Oppositional Defiant Disorder, provided it is coordinated with public policies, teacher training, and institutional support. By promoting inclusive and mediating educational practices, the school reaffirms its commitment to students' integral development and to building an education based on equity, respect for diversity, and the guarantee of rights.

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