SCHOOL AS A SPACE FOR FOSTERING RESILIENCE

LA ESCUELA COMO ESPACIO DE FOMENTO DE LA RESILIENCIA

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ABSTRACT

This study is primarily focused on analysing teachers' perceptions of the school's role as an environment conducive to developing student resilience. To achieve this, interviews were conducted in 24 state and grant-aided schools, revealing a broad consensus on the need to promote resilience within the educational setting. Given the complexity of the topic and the global nature of the study's objectives, a mixed, descriptive-comprehensive, and action-oriented approach was applied, grounded in the complementarity of qualitative and quantitative techniques. Two data collection

instruments were designed, validated, and implemented: EDINRES+D (interview with school leaders) and EDINRES+M (interview with teachers). The main conclusions emphasize the importance of educational institutions driving strategies and teacher training aimed at creating resilient environments.

KEYWORDS: Teacher training in resilience, strength, resilient school environment.

RESUMEN

Este estudio se centra en las percepciones del profesorado sobre la escuela como un entorno favorable para fomentar la resiliencia en el alumnado. A partir de entrevistas realizadas en 24 centros públicos y concertados, se observó un consenso amplio sobre la necesidad de promover la resiliencia desde el ámbito educativo. Dada la complejidad del tema y el carácter global de los objetivos del estudio, se aplicó un enfoque mixto, descriptivo-comprensivo y orientado a la acción, basado en la complementariedad de técnicas cualitativas y cuantitativas. Se diseñaron, validaron e implementaron dos instrumentos: EDINRES+D (entrevista a directivos) y EDINRES+M (entrevista al profesorado), cuyas principales conclusiones subrayan la importancia de que los centros educativos fomenten estrategias y formación docente encaminada a construir entornos resilientes.

Palabras clave: *Formación docente en resiliencia, fortaleza, entorno escolar resiliente.*

1. INTRODUCTION

In this article we present the analysis of the part of the interview carried out in the first stage of the project "Fostering resilience in primary education: innovation and continuous teacher training (ANDREIA)"[1] (academic year 2020-21) with the teachers of participating state and grant-aided schools. The interview explored the perception of teachers regarding the school as an adequate space for fostering resilience. The questions related to this matter have a special relevance for the project, since they call into question its main objective, namely to help the schools involved in the study become spaces where children are helped to acquire a higher level of resilience through the activities planned for the third year. Raising these questions therefore provided the researchers the opportunity to reaffirm their motivation to implement the project, although at the same time it ran the risk of teachers becoming sceptical and reticent about it. Despite being aware of this risk, there is no doubt that the research team started from a certain expectation of obtaining an affirmative answer from the teachers. However, what no member of the team could have anticipated was the total unanimity of all the teachers interviewed in the 24 state and grant-aided schools regarding the need to foster resilience in schools.

Thus, in one of the state schools one of the teachers assured that "bringing the subject of resilience to school is vital" (25:18_36) and then added that "it is essential that we work on this at school" (25:19_36).

Always, always —answered another— it's the main space, it's where children have to socialize with each other and resilience is the basis of

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socialization, because people don't always act in the way you expect or treat you in the way that you want, so here is a basic, fundamental space for children to adapt and learn from the situations that surround them, which are not always good, unfortunately. (28:5_21)

Similarly, in the grant-aided schools, the teachers showed a strong conviction regarding the importance of fostering resilience in their schools. Thus, one affirmed: "It's not that it can be done, it's that we must foster it" (8:8_28), and later: "It seems to me that education is key to fostering resilience, to help them face the suffering, the difficulties." (11:9_42). In other schools the same idea came up repeatedly; the teachers stated that "at school it's essential to work on resilience, evidently" (12:3_21); "it's very important to work on it at school" (16:6_53); "I think it's a perfect place, of course it is" (18:11_28). Finally, one of them specified that, in their opinion, "this is the most important work that's done here [in their school], especially because primary to secondary is such a big step, which is where we believe most work is done on resilience, especially at the teaching level" (29:13_32).

2. IMPORTANCE ATTRIBUTED TO THE SCHOOL AS A SPACE FOR FOSTERING RESILIENCE: EVALUATION INSTRUMENT, METHOD AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

As a part of the research project "Fostering resilience in primary education: innovation and continuous teacher training" (ANDREIA – PID2019-111032RB-I00), developed during the 2020–2021 academic year by the Trivium research group at Universitat Abat Oliba CEU, the present analysis focuses on the dimension "Importance attributed to the school as a space for fostering resilience", one of

the eight dimensions included in the EDINRES+M instrument, designed to assess teachers' perceptions and training needs related to resilience.

To explore this dimension, a qualitative methodology was applied, using semi-structured interviews aimed at gathering in-depth reflections from teachers on their experience and understanding of resilience within the school setting. A total of 89 teachers from 24 public and grant-aided schools in Madrid, Valencia, and Barcelona participated. Interviews were conducted either face-to-face or online, following COVID-19 protocols. All interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim.

The analysis was based on responses to the following guiding questions:

1. Do you believe that the school is a space where resilience can be fostered? What is the role of the teacher in promoting resilience?
2. In what situations within the school do you think resilience can be fostered?
3. Have you carried out any activity or project associated with fostering resilience?

These questions enabled the identification of teachers' perceptions regarding the school environment, their professional role, and the practical strategies implemented to promote resilience in daily school life.

The results were ultimately organized into two main categories that offered complementary insights into the dimension under study:

(1) The importance attributed to the school as a space for fostering resilience, and
(2) Reasons to consider the school as a space to build resilience.

This second category, in particular, provided meaningful context and depth that enriched the discussion of the first one's findings, offering concrete examples and justifications drawn from teachers' real-world experiences.

Ethical clearance was obtained from the Research Ethics Committee of Universitat Abat Oliba CEU. Participation was voluntary and all data were handled confidentially and anonymized.

Data were analyzed using Atlas.ti (version 22). A thematic coding approach was applied to identify patterns in teachers' responses. Codes were grouped under main categories such as: School as a safe and supportive environment, Teacher as resilience facilitator, Situational triggers for resilience-building (e.g., conflict resolution, peer interaction, coping with change), and Experiential practices (e.g., specific projects or emotional education activities).

Each coded segment was assigned a traceable identifier (e.g., "(12:35_77): Document 12, quotation 35, coded as 'Resilience through peer mediation'"), ensuring transparency and rigor in data interpretation. Findings were also triangulated with the EDINRES+D interviews conducted with school leadership teams, providing additional validation of the perceived role of the school in fostering resilience.

3. THE IMPORTANTE ATTRIBUTED TO THE SCHOOL AS A SPACE FOR FOSTERING RESILIENCE: RELATED STUDIES AND SUPPORTING FINDINGS

3.1. The holistic and community nature of resilience

Regardless of the fact that all the teachers agreed with the notion that the school is an ideal space to foster resilience, the majority also expressed the conviction that the participation of the family in this process is very important. However, in some cases they put more emphasis on the school, while others placed it on the family, or they seemed to put the same emphasis on both spaces.

Before describing the reasons the teachers gave to argue their positions on this issue, it is worth remembering that, from the perspective of recent contributions to studies on resilience, it seems evident that the acquisition and fostering of resilient traits must involve a holistic process that encompasses all areas of the life of the individual and society. In his work "Local and community resilience in the face of the crisis of the system", Joseba Azkarraga (2014, p. 89) portrays a gloomy panorama of a systemic crisis in contemporary societies in which "the disarticulation of social space as a world of shared meaning and a secure network of links has the potential to disarticulate the individual subject that is supported in this network and this world" and lists, following the WHO, "stress, anxiety and depression, both in the North and in the South" as "diseases that threaten to become major pandemics". Faced with these collective threats, which have a negative impact on the individual, we also need to search for, according to the author, community or collective solutions that involve all social agents —not only family and school, but also associations, non-governmental organizations, initiative groups capable of promoting resilience-building programs (such as the one proposed in the ANDREIA project) and a host of valuable initiatives that are emerging in various parts of the world and which the author brings together under the common concept of *Transition Initiatives*. These initiatives, according to Azkarraga, are a reason for hope despite numerous fears and threats. However, the step that should be taken and that is in its very earlystages, is to promote actions "at a regional, national and international scale" (Azkarraga, 2014, p. 103). Along the same lines, many other authors insist on the community and holistic character, such as Forés and Grané (2012) or Kotliarenco (2014). Forés and Grané (2012) identify three basic systems that surround the subject and on which foundations must be provided to foster a resilient character: the family, the school and the community.

They also offer practical advice regarding the basic lines of action in each of them (pp. 98-108).

However, returning to the interviews with the teachers participating in the project, it is illustrative to observe the differences regarding the primacy they gave to the school or the family in the process of fostering resilience according to their own experience and reflection. The interviews revealed a notable variety of opinions in relation to this issue that should be taken into account when proposing programs to foster resilience in educational settings.

3.2. The school ahead of the family

In the group of teachers who attributed greater importance to the school than the family as a space for fostering resilience, again, we find professionals from both state and grant-aided schools. One of the state school teachers argued: "We spend a lot of time with them here, many hours and you notice they're more stressed and when you start to push them, they trust you in the end, they trust you because of that, because it's the only place where they can unwind" (2:21_43). In other state schools we heard the following statements: "The school's the ideal place to work on it [resilience]" (23:6_35), and in another, in a more specific way: "Many of our pupils, who have the neighbourhood they have and the situations they have, have a really bad time at home and of course, being able to go back to school and socialize with other ways of doing, being, seeing and living, I think it's helped [make them more resilient]" (28:6_22).

Similarly, in grant-aided schools, some teachers placed greater emphasis on the role of the school in fostering resilience. One identified family overprotection as

the main reason for the difficulty in fostering resilience in the family (an issue that will be addressed specifically in a section further on in this chapter). Thus we heard statements such as: "That parental love blinds us or perhaps makes it difficult for us to view them more objectively and support them" (10:16_35); and in another school: "I really believe that the only space left to give them those tools to be able to face life —that life is full of obstacles— is school" (17:14_36); and yet another, starting from a comparative perspective as a teacher and mother at the same time, emphasized socialization at school: "It's increasingly difficult for parents in the family environment to educate in the broad sense of the term and in particular in this matter, so school has the advantage of enabling socialization" (18:12_29).

3.3. The family ahead of the school

Contrary to what was described in the previous section, other teachers, though not denying the importance of the school as a space for fostering resilience, placed greater emphasis on the importance of addressing it in the family, highlighting that without the support and collaboration of the family it is very difficult, or even impossible for some, to strengthen skills related to resilience. Thus, in the state schools collaborating with the ANDREIA project, some forceful statements were collected in this regard, such as the following: "The family is always the main thing, so sometimes you can't escape from what your family gives you (…) (19:10_33).

They also described the difficulty caused by a lack of a unified approach on the part of the family in the following terms: "Here at school we try to do it [foster resilience] and we do quite well (...) but we're left a little helpless because they follow the family more" (19:34_61). The problems caused by a lack of a common criterion between the

educational action in the school and in the family environment came up in a significant number of interviews. This was observed not only in state schools but also in grant-aided schools, where, among the statements that emerged along this line, it is worth highlighting, for example, the following: "Without the help of families, at school we can't [foster resilience]" (9:13_55); "If I don't have this family support, we can try to instil [resilience], but it's really important that they experience it in the family" (9:15_57). All this is due to the fact that "The family is much more important than the school" (9:14_56).

3.4. School and family: equal opportunity and responsibility

As a final approach regarding the attribution of importance to the different spaces for fostering resilience, the position that some teachers maintained when establishing a certain balance between the school and family roles stood out. Along this line, we observed how in one of the state schools a teacher stated that the task of teaching resilience must be carried out by "the school, together with the families and the entire educational community" (22:4_22); and in another interview, the teacher insisted that "if we can connect the work of the family and the school, even better" (22:6_23).

Similarly, in grant-aided schools there were also those who demanded the equitable distribution of the weight of responsibility between the family and the school, such as the teacher who gave a positive example of collaboration: "Personally, it's helped me a lot when the school has notified the parents, when we've worked on some virtue, because it's true that they support us a lot; so the school, yes, but also from home" (10:20_37). Another participant mentioned this collaboration and sharing of responsibility as a necessary condition for successful fostering of resilience. Otherwise, they affirmed, "a project that only stays within the school walls

falls short, and therefore, if it isn't supported by parallel work, at least communicative (...), it won't do any good (...); if it doesn't have continuity during the day [at school and in the family] it's pointless (...)" (17:17_40).

Nevertheless, and regardless of whether emphasis is placed on the school, the family or on the equal collaboration between the two, what is striking, as mentioned at the beginning and verified in this section, is that in no instance did they reject the idea of fostering resilience at school, not even in the case of those who had to have the meaning of such a concept explained to them at the beginning of the interview because they lacked prior knowledge of it.

Having verified the importance given to the topic, in the following section we identify in detail the specific reasons that appeared recurrently in the different interviews and that, according to the respondents, would justify the fostering of resilience at school.

4. DISCUSSING AND GOING DEEPER IN RESULTS: REASONS TO CONSIDER THE SCHOOL AS A SPACE TO BUILD

Today we know not only through intuition and the always illuminating speculative philosophy of the classics (Echavarría, 2018), but also through the empirical research of more recent authors who have dedicated their lives to school research, that formal education can be a privileged space for the development of the individual (Amado, Fernández and Oporto, 2020). However, precisely because of them, we also know that the opposite can be the case (Guerrero Serón, 1996). The school, therefore, is not *per se* in the abstract suitable or not for human development. It is its development in action, in a specific context in which specific people, flesh and blood, interact, facing particular circumstances in an equally particular way, which will

determine whether or not its potentialities are put to good use. In our study we aim to provide elements that help turn these school potentialities into realities, focusing on an essential aspect, namely that of resilience. In this regard, the extensive process of interviewing early childhood and primary education teachers about the potentialities that they themselves highlight implies a "pool" of reality that puts specific reasons, sifted through the sieve of experience, on the table; an immersion in specific contexts of those who are, day after day, on the tatami of educational combat, which gives us a privileged vision to determine relevant arguments.

We have already explained how, after analysing the various comments and even with different levels of importance, it was possible to verify the enormous consideration of the school as a suitable space for the fostering of resilience by teachers and also how we were able to identify the systematic appearance of reasons that justified this affirmation. Next, we describe in the following sections the subcategories in which they were grouped.

4.1. The school as a space for socialization

Both state and grant-aided school participants stated that the school is a privileged space for socialization and, therefore, also for fostering resilience.

Several professionals interviewed agreed that the school is an extension of society, which makes it possible to find spaces of adversity in it naturally, as happens in society. This statement serves as an example of many of them: "The school is also [influential], it's a continuation of society" (19:13_34), with the difference that they can be dealt with in a more systematized way because the educator has more control over the context of action and can even deal with conflicts in a specific way due to the demands of the curriculum. This is reflected in comments such as the

following: "What I see they've most needed this year, above all, is to express emotions, feel listened to and also to listen to the opinion of the others" (24:24_48);"I'd say that it's increasingly difficult for parents to educate in the broad sense of the term and in particular in this matter within the family environment, so the school has the advantage of socialization" (18:12_29); "I think that the school in many cases is providing things that you used to see at home and that you had at home"(20:8_32).

Other research carried out in the educational field also highlights this inter-influence. As an example, we cite De la Fuente (2012), who shows how cultural changes inevitably affect the school. This is evidenced through a specific experience based on such an everyday element as music, which very often penetrates into the classroom, even if only through intimate comments or produced in pupils' moments of expansion. De la Fuente (2012) explains, as most professionals do in our ANDREIA study, that a school becomes, whether intentionally or not, a "test bed" with members from very different contexts outside of the system itself but who, by virtue of daily coexistence, become socializing agents with mutual influences from which they cannot escape. This means that the difficulties that take place outside the school environment affect the school. However, beyond being considered an inconvenience, if we look at it from the point of view of resilience, we will realize that it constitutes an opportunity for coping.

4.2. The school as a space free of overprotection

In this section we will continue to explore the identification of the socialization process in order to address the issue of overprotection referred to under this heading with certainty and greater depth. It is therefore important to understand that, like the family, the school is a space for socialization, as human relationships are established

in both contexts. Fernández Enguita (1998, p. 100) specifies that the human relationships from which no person —precisely by being a person— can escape, make up what we could call the "socialization process", which would be defined and made visible through a triple influence that the socializing context (family or school) would exert on the person (offspring or pupil) through many other types of actions, namely: inculcation (internalization of ideas about reality), selection (the school or the family do not transmit culture, in general, but a culture) and exclusion (voluntarily or involuntarily, cultural or social elements that are not the subject of educational action are always excluded). At ANDREIA we identified that, in one way or another, the interviewees alluded to these three actions typical of the socialization process. This analytical look at it helps us to recognize more clearly how the opinions given by the participants make it operational, that is, they translate it into a palpable reality for them, in which resilience plays a decisive role. We observed, therefore, how several of their most representative statements identified with each of the socializing processes mentioned, and how they directly relate them to the possibilities of teaching resilience at school. Having identified the first two, we will explore more extensively the third, as it is especially relevant for understanding this section:

- Inculcation: "I truly believe that the only space left to give them those tools to be able to face life, that life is full of obstacles, is school" (17:14_36).
- Selection: "This [the explicit and systematic teaching of the difficulties of life and the natural teaching of resilience in areas outside the school] doesn't happen now, so since it doesn't happen, it seems to me that we have to take a step up to the plate there" (20:6_31).
- Exclusion: The analysis of the affirmations in relation to this third element of socialization yields us an important and surprising finding: the interviewees

stressed that the school is a key socializing agent, not only because of specific elements that it contributes in its own context, but also because of those it can exclude. They state that the overprotection of the family can be excluded from school much more effectively than in any other context, at a time when it seems that families find reasons to justify any of their children's actions. Such consideration has been quantified mainly in the responses provided by participants from grant-aided schools. For them, the school represents an excellent space for working on resilience because it constitutes a "space free" from the overprotection that families exercise over their children, especially in those family contexts in which they try to avoid any type of difficulty or suffering; that is, when, possibly with the best of intentions, parents become staunch a priori defenders of their children and create a family context that artificially protects them from the inherent difficulties of life, the consequence of which is the construction of a kind of bubble that deprives the learner of tools to independently face setbacks or difficulties of various kinds. What may be seen in the short term as a protective exercise that in turn relieves parents of the tedious task of dealing with other related conflicts, ends up becoming in the long term a disservice to their children because it disables them in a particular way in the strengthening of resilient behaviours. This is how several interviewees put it when they stated:

They're really protected, they're really used to having their problems solved, they're really used to having the serious things that really happen in life hidden from them and when they finally find themselves alone, that's when the anxiety comes. And one of the places where they are most often alone is at school. (12:6_21)

Why do we have to do this? It's the only social space, because today's infants are a precious commodity and we all wrap them in cotton wool, and it's where we put them in a situation, where they are not the kings and queens of their homes, but rather share space with twenty kings and queens of their homes and that gets really, really complicated. (17:14_36)

The pattern that she is commenting on that "I am the king of my house, do whatever you like to me here", if it doesn't continue during the day it's useless, useless, that's basic. (17:17_40)

In relation to the above, the so-called third-generation contextual theories that are emerging in the world of academic research in psychology address from an empirical, but at the same time practical, point of view the relationship between learning and language. Therefore, we can find in them clues that provide a theoretical foundation and, therefore, a reliable explanation for the observation that the teachers in our study reflected on overprotection, whose exclusion (absence from the school context) they refer to as one of the advantageous features of resilience work in school.

The aforementioned theories focus on the capacity to produce and receive language as a privileged educational weapon, due to the fact that it belongs exclusively to human beings. They argue that it is time to join forces and overcome traditional academic disputes in order to solve practical problems, since anthropological, linguistic and psychological sciences close ranks around a basic idea from which to build: that language is a specifically human trait (Hayes et al., 2020). It is also unanimously accepted that its appropriate use in the teaching-learning process is prescriptive in any educational action that aims to be effective, whether stated from positions that emphasise more the cognitive processes, or from those positions that emphasise, like the interviewees, the behavioural ones. Along these lines, Hofmann, Lorscheid and Hayes (2021) identify training in basic (arguably resilient) coping skills

as key, since they provide psychological flexibility. In other words, the overcoming of mental anchors by virtue of which people remain subject to those processes learned throughout their personal history and that are harmful or block independence, such as the overprotection that our participants mentioned.

The perception of the teachers surveyed is consistent with the statements of other researchers who are increasingly encountering the phenomenon of overprotection. In this regard, the relevant empirical data provided by Albornoz (2017) are illuminating in that they reveal the existence of a direct relationship between overprotection and the process of school adaptation, which is consistent with the intuition shown by the interviewees, who consider work on resilience as a weapon that can favour school adaptation while overcoming the anchors, blocks or resistance caused by the overprotection of some of their pupils.

The contributions of Millet (2021), who addresses specific causes and consequences of over protection and whose findings show us possible prospective paths for further study, are also very much in line with the perceptions of the interviews in our study. Millet (2021) extracts a multitude of subfields derived from parental overprotection on which it would be more than justified to work on resilience, which would help us provide a specific response to this intuition and, we would say, request for help by professionals. Millet (2021) similarly introduces words that more precisely define each of the fields of overprotection that she identifies. For reasons of brevity and clarity in the presentation of the main ideas expressed by the interviewees, it exceeds the aims of this article to go deeper into this topic, but it is worth briefly mentioning some of these words that she coins as they represent a sample of the interest teachers' intuition about overprotection has to the current educational panorama. The two words that we would like to mention here originate from the author's identification of features typical of what we could call "postmodern

parenting" and its immediate consequence, namely *hyper-parenting* (in reference to the excessive exercise of parental protection) and *hyper-children* (a human product resulting from the educational reception of the "*hyper-parenting*" character), who have to deal with a wide variety of problems related to child anxiety.

4.3. The school as a substitute safe space to explore adversities originating in other contexts

Also closely related to the school socialization process, we find another recurring theme in the interviewees' responses, which provides an interesting nuance. We observed it both in state and grant-aided schools and it relates to the emphasis they placed on the consideration that the school provides opportunities to alleviate what is not done at home in terms of fostering resilience. Although it appeared in both types of schools, it seems to assert itself more emphatically and frequently in state ones. This was highlighted by statements such as the following in which:

- It is noted how the substitute nature stems from the pupils' own expectations: "At school, parents and children expect us to solve problems that aren't created at school" (23:38_94).

- They explained how the school directors themselves assume the role of addressing difficulties that do not originate in their own context: "All the teachers, and especially the directors, are trying make it a safe, happy, inclusive place and perhaps this is not found in some of these families" (19:11 _34).

- Notably, it was the teachers themselves who stated that they deal with conflicts that occur outside their context out of a sense of responsibility and self-efficiency: "(...) [we act from within the school on problems that arise

outside it] solving cases, that [students] see that, yes, that here when they have a problem it's solved" (19:26_46).

- Also evident was the ineptitude that teachers find in some families to adequately address the problems and difficulties reported by their students, which is why they decide to intervene: "[about problems that students report and that occurred in other non-school contexts] and you end up solving it yourself, because with the parents it's impossible" (23:41_102). The following quote is along the same lines: "I think that in many cases the school is providing things that you used to see at home and that you had at home" (20:8_32).

In both state and grant-aided schools, quotes were observed from participants who specified that the school was not only a safe space to address adversities originating in other contexts that are not so safe, but the only safe space. However, this perception seemed to be emphasised in the statements of the state school participants, of which we select the following:

Many of our pupils, who have the neighbourhood that they have [so broken] and the situations they have [so unfavourable], have a really bad time at home and of course, being able to go back to school and socialize with other ways of doing, being, seeing and living, I think that's helped (28:6_22).

At school we try to make sure that the time they spend with us is as happy as possible because sometimes, when they leave here, their day-to-day life is really hard (28:26_61).

In reference to the demands that, like those expressed by our interviewees, reality itself presents, Jares (2001) identifies the lack of tools for dealing with difficulties as the main cause of coexistence problems found in classrooms. Based

on his own observation throughout a long professional teaching career and in dealing with families, he proposes a number of basic premises for dealing with the difficulties that he considers urgent and that should, therefore, be worked on jointly by both schools and families (Jares, 2001, p. 129). These are:

1. See conflicts that arise as learning opportunities.
2. Dedicate explicit time to the management and resolution of conflicts.
3. Create suitable spaces.
4. Encourage independent resolution of student problems.
5. Unconditionally accept students.
6. Avoid exclusionary measures.
7. Show teaching commitment.
8. Encourage staff to come together to support each other in difficulties.
9. Combine group and individual tutorials.
10. Train in the use of conflict resolution strategies.

Although it is true that a joint approach would be ideal, Jares (2001) assumes that in many conflict situations arising outside the schools, it is precisely these schools —and specifically, the people in whom they are embodied— who usually face the external conflicts they are aware of out of a sense of professional responsibility. The way in which these conflicts or any other difficulty arising outside the school context but with repercussions in the school are addressed will depend on each context. Nevertheless, in light of the experiences of the professionals we interviewed, we believe that the proposed premises could represent a starting point to guide and face with certainty their role as a substitute, which should always have provisional, non-accommodating vocation with the aim of making families and, by extension, any external social agent, assume their own responsibility. We

found that resilience plays a key role in the acceptance of these guidelines for action.

4.4. The school as a natural setting for the appearance of adversities and for coping with them

Although in the previous section we focused on the school as a place of reception and management of difficulties arising outside its context, in this section we focus on those that appear within its own space.

We observed that in both state and grant-aided schools we find quotes from participants who stated that school is a natural setting where adversities occur and are dealt with. In these quotes:

- We were given a glimpse of the variability and unpredictability of problems that both pupils and teachers have face on a daily basis in a school that also aims to be inclusive: "Work on resilience within the inclusive school in general is necessary, because here [pupils and teachers] encounter a different problem every day" (1:15_29).

- Problems that naturally arise at school are cited as opportunities for dealing with resilience: "The factors that school gives us are already good enough to create situations of contrast and conflict that set in motion the issue of resilience, it has to serve as a starting point for this teaching" (23:11_44).

- We observed that the large amount of time that pupils spend at school becomes a logical factor in the emergence of problems: "It's where they spend more hours, it's the children's working day" (24:20_42). Along the same line we find these quotes: "(...) with all the hours that they're here, it's an ideal place to work on it [growth from difficulties]" (18:10_26); and "we're here for many

hours and they're large groups and very different from each other, with our ways of doing and of... and of course, this also means that there may be more conflicts" (21:15_42).

- The school appears to be a place of specific conflicts that do not appear in other contexts: "[The school] favours [the development of] many areas that aren't in the family, such as the whole relationship between equals, with adults who aren't your parents, relatives, etc., with whom there's another type of relationship, and other types of conflicts arise" (13:3_23).

In line with these experiences, we find multiple references in educational research to the school context as a natural place in which a wide range of difficulties arise. Indeed, following Signes and Vázquez (2022) in their analysis of recent research on resilient school contexts, we find that, given the inherent nature of conflict and the difficulty in the school environment, there is a clear need to introduce in any school guidelines for dealing with them that are accessible to any member of the community. Focusing on the teaching role, we would say that we need resilient teachers in resilient schools who know how to manage well the people with whom they will inevitably have to face difficulties derived from their shared context. Calvo (2003), in a previous but very similar analysis of the current status regarding the problems that arise specifically in schools, indicates the need for each educational community to have committed members who favour dealing with problems, since "through the process of socialization we learn to be members of a specific community and to internalize the values and roles of the society in which we were born" (p. 43), and therefore, "we understand that [the activities themselves that encourage pupils to cope with problems] have to be carried out in the classroom" (p. 106).

4.5. The challenge of structured time and new post-pandemic needs

Despite the statements of the teachers participating in the project, who make it clear for the various reasons stated above that the school is important for the fostering of resilience, it is nevertheless surprising that practically none of them declared explicitly the existence of a structured time dedicated to this purpose in their schools. This paradoxical observation suggests, on the one hand, the unanimity in the conviction of the importance of fostering resilience in the school and, on the other, the lack of organized, structured activities oriented towards this end. This highlights the importance of the urgent creation and implementation of programs and projects such as the present ANDREIA project, which, through an approach expressed in the form of narrative itineraries, specifically offers schools a practical program for structured time dedicated to fostering resilience.

Moreover, along with the need for schools to have structured activities, the researchers of our project identified another considerable challenge, namely, to meet the new needs arising as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic. Among the needs that became more acute during the course of the pandemic, teachers in state schools identified, for example, the urgency of providing pupils the ideal conditions to "express emotions, feel heard and also listen to the opinion of others" (24:24_48). Likewise, they also pointed to a shortfall inherited from the pre-pandemic era and that needed to be addressed given the daily news about the numerous deaths caused by the virus, some of which affected pupils' immediate environments. Thus, we heard in one of the state schools that "the school would have to prepare people [for] the subject of death, because (...) death is a subject that is not worked on until it is affects you" and, later, in the same interview: "[we must] provide these resources throughout primary and throughout the schooling stage so that whatever that situation is [the pupil is

able to reflect on] how I accept everything that happens to me, how I manage it and then how I decide to take it" (25:25_38).

On the other hand, teachers in grant-aided schools also identified new challenges posed by the pandemic. In general terms, they coincide in pointing out that "with many months without coming to school [the problems] multiplied, even exponentially" due to "all that suffering and not being able to share it". This situation was due to the fact that "living isolated at home during all this time meant that we couldn't share with others (...) so the children bring all this baggage" (13:6_29). In addition to fewer opportunities to communicate, there were also a number of "family crises" (11:9_42) that arose as a consequence of the pandemic.

All in all, several teachers from the grant-aided schools highlighted not only the aspect of challenge or difficulty, but also the opportunity to provide support and build a platform of trust with the children as they gradually rejoined the face-to-face educational process. In this regard, we heard that "in the end, where the students relate the most is here [at school], where they have their group. In their bubble group, sure, but [outside the school] they're barely able to do any social activities" (10:18_36). Therefore, as teachers from another school added: "the children themselves [of the] groups that have been confined and have been confined a couple of times, the first thing they tell you when they come back to class is that they love coming to school, even in fifth and sixth grades, (...) they tell you that they feel supported here..." (8:14_46). Ultimately, as teachers from yet another school added, "no matter how hard we try to apply these new technologies [on-line], human contact is basic" (8:15_48). Incidentally, in this way, teachers correctly intuit what has been confirmed by some of the most important researchers on resilience, namely that among the different factors or bases of resilience, the most important is that of relationships or emotional connections. In the words of Cyrulnik (2004) it is clear that

"no child can become resilient on their own. To acquire their internal resources, they must find around them (...) an emotional bubble that allows them to record in their memory a process of internal stability that encourages them to seek the reassurance they need" (Cyrulnik, 2004, p. 30). Along the same lines, Rojas (2010, p. 65), when proposing emotional connections as the fundamental pillar of resilience, expresses his conviction that "the primordial base on which resilience rests is our extraordinary ability to communicate, relate, live together emotionally connected and support each other". Similar expressions and statements can be found in the contributions of most prominent authors in the field of resilience. It seems worth noting that the teachers interviewed, unaware of scientific literature in this field, were able to effectively identify the core of resilience based on their day-to-day experience at school.

5. CONCLUSIONS

One of the objectives of the first phase of the ANDREIA project was to verify the perception of teachers regarding the needs and potential of fostering resilience in schools. Among different aspects of this perception, it is worth highlighting the fact that there was a surprising unanimity, both in state schools and grant-aided schools, regarding the recognition of the need to foster resilience in general terms and, even more so, in post-pandemic times. Another aspect in common between the perception of the teachers of the state schools and the grant-aided schools that participated in the project is the conviction that, despite clearly seeing the need to foster resilience, the schools lack structured spaces (both in terms of physical space and temporary space) stipulated within its training action for this purpose. Hence, the importance of creating and implementing tools to foster resilience, such as the importance focused on by the ANDREIA project. It might seem, therefore, that common aspects predominate

in the attitude towards the need and appropriateness of resilience building in both types of schools participating in the project. However, a significant difference was also observed, namely that in many cases in state schools, teachers stated that one of the main advantages that the school provides with regard to fostering resilience is the fact that it is a space of safety and support for students, which is often lacking at home. In contrast, the teachers from grant-aided schools perceived the school as a space where challenges are posed —necessary for the proper development of the student— in the face of a certain overprotection that usually occurs at home. Regardless, even for reasons that differ in some aspect, the research carried out makes clear the general conviction regarding the need and suitability of fostering resilience at school[2].

6. FUNDING

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[2] Another interesting question that the project researchers identified when reviewing the evidence would be to investigate the relationship between the ideology or school project of each school and the different aspects of resilience-building addressed in the project. This task, however, is not included among the project's objectives and remains to be addressed in future research.

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