Article

Influence of anger management and emotional skills on self-esteem in pre-adolescents and their relationship with emotional control and psychological well-being

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ABSTRACT

Background: One of the challenges addressed in secondary education is the prevention of students' potentially inappropriate behaviors in school. Consequently, educational programs have been implemented to develop students' emotional competences from an early age and foster better management and control of emotions such as anger. Some studies relate emotional intelligence to adolescents' more adaptive behaviours, and others show that better emotion regulation predicts healthy self-esteem. In the present study, involving 234 elementary school students, their emotion regulation and its corresponding relationship with higher self-esteem were evaluated with the aim of preventing inappropriate behavior. **Method:** The Childhood and Adolescence Evaluation System self-report and Tutor Emotional Competences protocols were administered. **Results:** a positive and predictive relationship between students' anger regulation and high self-esteem was found. **Conclusion:** educational programs should be promoted to improve primary school students' emotion intelligence in order to generate higher self-esteem, which, in turn, leads to better psychological well-being in secondary education. Appropriate emotional and behavioral control will facilitate adaptation to the student's environment.

Influencia del control de la ira y las habilidades emocionales en la autoestima en edades pre-adolescentes y su relación con control emocional y el bienestar psicológico

RESUMEN

Antecedentes: Uno de los retos que se deben de abordar en la educación secundaria es la prevención de posibles conductas inapropiadas de los alumnos en los centros educativos. Como consecuencia de ello se han implementado programas educativos para desarrollar las competencias emocionales de los alumnos en edades más tempranas y permitir una mejor gestión y control de emociones como la ira. Son diversas las investigaciones que relacionan la inteligencia emocional con comportamientos más adaptativos de los adolescentes y otras que muestran que una mejor regulación emocional predice una autoestima sana. En el presente estudio con 234 alumnos de centros de primaria se evalúo la regulación emocional de los alumnos y su relación con una mayor autoestima, para prevenir conductas inadecuadas. **Método:** Se administraron de manera auto-informada los protocolos Sistema de Evaluación de la Niñez y la Adolescencia y el Protocolo de Competencias Emocionales del Tutor. **Resultados:** se muestra una relación positiva entre la regulación emocional de la ira y una elevada autoestima del alumno. **Conclusión:** se requiere promover programas educativos para mejorar la inteligencia emocional de los alumnos de los centros educativos de primaria para generar una mayor autoestima que les genere un adecuado bienestar psicológico en la educación secundaria. Un apropiado control emocional y de la conducta facilitara la adaptación al entorno del alumno.

Introduction

In the early stages of the learning process, but particularly in primary and secondary schools, the management of emotions has an increasingly important role to play, not only when it comes to understanding oneself and others, but also to socializing properly, and facing ever-changing challenging situations (Arauco & Alza, 2021). In this teaching methodology, new knowledge is based on previous experiences and motivation in the classroom is crucial, emphasising collaborative work and constant teacher-student interaction (Saarni, 2010). A meaningful learning process in one that manages to generate healthy self-esteem in students, making them feel part of the developmental process and prepared to face its objectives with the requisite competence (Salguero & García, 2017), thus avoiding a lack of emotional control and subsequent deficit in emotional competences that may have consequences during secondary education, through the proliferation of internalizing and externalizing problems, with self-esteem, being areas of great educational and social interest (Cobos et al., 2017; Resurrección et al., 2014)

Some authors show in their studies how threats, insults and disobedience are repeatedly reproduced in educational settings (Rodríguez et al., 2020). These behaviors violate social rules, harm social coexistence, and decrease academic performance (Jurado et al., 2020; Schonfeld et al., 2017), with the effect that more and more teachers are interested in understanding their students (Peña & Aguaded, 2019) with the aim of addressing issues such as the lack of empathy, emotional control, along with low levels of self-esteem (García et al., 2019). Interventions are often aimed at increasing well-being in adolescents (Suldo et al., 2014), since it seems that this type of behaviour is associated more with a lack of skills than with an excess of hostility, and where boys and girls with a high degree of aggressiveness will have low emotionality, self-esteem and tolerance to frustration (Garaigordobil & Oñederra, 2010).

At the different developmental stages of students, emotional and behavioral problems and the lack of specific personal skills affect boys and girls on the path to secondary education (Rodríguez & Imaz, 2020). More specifically, the group of so-called externalizing problems are those that manifest an alteration of the control and self-regulation of behavior that is shown in the environment, provoking discomfort, and conflict in one's surroundings (Vahedi et al., 2019) and which is characterized by lack of anger control, due to behavioral problems, aggressiveness, defiant behavior and rule-breaking, stemming from self-esteem problems (Inglés et al., 2014).

Regarding externalizing problems, studies with young under-graduates show the relationship between emotional intelligence and behavioral problems (Visser et al., 2010); other research also indicates that young people at risk have lower emotional intelligence coupled with low scores in self-esteem (Fariña et al., 2008); these findings were corroborated in a study with children, between 7 and 12 years of age, in primary school (Mavroveli & Sánchez, 2011). In addition, according to several studies, in secondary education who are lacking in self-confidence and self-esteem express themselves through hostile and aggressive behaviors and expressions, (Gracia et al., 2005) and these results are also shown with adolescent university students, where low self-esteem is related with externalising problems (Donnellan et al., 2005) and with aggressiveness (Xin et al., 2007).

Considering these types of problems and the absence of necessary skills that can rectify them, there are numerous studies that have investigated the relationship between self-esteem and behavioral problems in secondary education and university (Collins & Echezona, 2017; Estévez et al., 2008). In addition, but to a lesser extent, there are studies which relate anger control to the efficient development of self-esteem at the beginning of the formal education stage (Liceth & Tacuri, 2021). It would appear, therefore, that self-esteem is influenced, among other factors such as family, by students' capacity for self-regulation, which also has an impact on academic performance (Baumeister et al., 2003). In some studies, revealing a greater probability of causing behavioral issues in children (Salmanian et al., 2017) and an increase in emotional problems in girls (Van Droogenbroeck et al., 2018).

The problems resulting from anger control arise when a person, unable to control this emotion, is then guided by it, showing reactivity or impulsivity. In the case of secondary education, these episodes affect academic functioning owing to the lack of emotional and personal skills, frequently displaying inappropriate emotional regulation (Valizadeh et al., 2010).

Self-esteem and anger develop during childhood, doing so through a series of socialization and interaction processes which establish links with the environment, featuring primary education centres as the main spaces for interaction. Family also plays an important role via relationships with parents, and the emotional load they transmit, as well as parenting styles that affect psychological and behavioral factors, and are decisive in the development of self-esteem (Estévez et al., 2007), and anger (Claux, 2017). Other authors show that negative family interactions promote the worst academic performance (Álvarez & Barreto, 2020).

Self-esteem represents the set of thoughts and feelings that an individual has about his own worth, that is to say, the evaluation of the individual in reference to themselves and where they express approval or disapproval (Rosenberg, 1965), although more recent contributions (Zenteno, 2017) conceptualize self-esteem as the opinion and assessment that we give ourselves based on the accumulation of knowledge collected over time and this assessment will be favourable or unfavourable depending on life circumstances. Other authors (Erol & Orth, 2011) indicate that self-esteem is necessary for adequate personal, social and school development, because it provides self-confidence and security; and other research has shown that presenting high self-esteem correlates with people who are more active, less anxious and have better social relationships (Hernández et al., 2018). Similarly, low self-esteem is associated with feelings of apathy and passivity (Cándido et al., 2016).

Accordingly, it would appear that self-esteem is one of the most powerful predictors of the degree of well-being (Moreno & Marrero, 2015) and psychological adjustment, during adolescence and adulthood (Reina et al., 2010), where emotional skills play a significant role in increasing the self-esteem of adolescents, equipping them with the resources to face difficulties and facilitate psychological development (Anto & Jayan, 2016; Cheung et al., 2015) as well as being effective predictors of self-esteem (Reina & Oliva, 2015).

Emotional regulation is the ability to attend to and understand the emotional responses of others and to be aware of one's own emotions (Gratz & Roemer, 2004), recognizing and observing them (León & Diego, 2006). Some authors relate self-esteem to emotional regulation (Salcedo, 2019; Alegre, 2018; Piñan, 2019), thus illustrating that low self-esteem can be associated with significant affective regulation deficits (Hervás & Vázquez, 2006). These results are also corroborated by other studies, which show the association between emotional attention and self-esteem (Fúlquez et al., 2011). These two constructs are of great importance for adequate psychological health (Barry et al., 2015; Delhom et al., 2017; Keane & Loades, 2016; Ordóñez et al., 2016). Thus, self-esteem and emotional intelligence are two constructs directly related to externalized problems, preventing insults, threats, and poorly adaptive behavior when we reach adolescence (Donahue et al., 2014).

There are several authors who have been interested in the emotions of students and their impact on education, approving of the well-being of the emotional health of boys and girls (Roque & Canaza, 2022; Uitto et al., 2015). Some studies show the relationship between the lack of emotional skills and aggressive behavior in secondary education (Rodríguez, 2021; Pérez & Gómez, 2021), and several authors indicate that social skills affect self-esteem, self-regulation of behavior and academic performance both in childhood and adult life (Gil et al., 1995; Monjas, 2002; Ovejero, 1998). Other studies have shown the link between emotion and cognition, evidencing the correspondence between physical and emotional health and non-aggressive behaviors (Gutiérrez et al., 2016). Thus, attending and paying adequate attention to emotional states will allow for greater self-control that results in a healthy self-esteem, and therefore enables students to deal with the situations that are presented to them with appropriate forms of behavior.

In conclusion, some authors (Gómez, 2018; Martínez & Valiente, 2020) determine that resorting to inadequate behaviors is the product of poor control of emotions (Freire, 2019), lack of social skills (Rodríguez, 2022) and impulsive behavior (Roque & Canaza, 2022).

Given this theoretical contextualization, the objective of the present research is to study the relationship between anger control and emotional skills, together with the influence of these variables on the manifestation of healthy self-esteem in boys and girls aged from 6-12 in primary education. First and foremost, the research specifically sets out to analyze whether a lack of skills and poor emotional regulation, coupled with low self-esteem, promote the display of inadequate behaviors and poor well-being.

Secondly, the aim is to identify a predictive model which relates the control of anger in the youngest age group as a predictive variable of self-esteem in the oldest age group in primary school. Finally, the objective is to analyze the emotional competences protocol of tutors as an effective tool for understanding students emotionally, promoting and teaching the necessary emotional skills which demonstrate a direct relationship with self-esteem and better anger management.

With these objectives in mind, and taking the results of previous studies as a reference, the following hypotheses are then formulated: (1) it is hypothesized that students with greater control of anger will show a healthy self-esteem and better emotional competences during the first educational years; (2) that a better anger control in early ages, will have a significant relationship with high self-esteem in older ages; and, (3) the emotional competences and control of anger predict the self-esteem in the early ages of education but not in the last stage; and, (4) finally, it is hypothesized that the emotional evaluations carried out by tutors show a significant relationship between emotional control and self-esteem, and that this is a useful tool to facilitate the development of these skills.

Method

Participants

The research is done on a random sample consisting of 234 primary school students, 148 boys (63.20 %) and 86 girls (36.80%), between 6 and 12 years old, with a mean age of 8.44 and a standard deviation of 1.57, from five public education centers in the city of Lleida.

The participants took part in the study voluntarily, by way of an extracurricular sports activity for boys and girls of the different levels of primary education in the public sphere. The ethical criteria for research with human subjects were met (informed consent of parents, teachers and students, right to information, protection of personal data and guarantees of confidentiality, non-discrimination, and the possibility of leaving the study at any time).

Instruments

Firstly, the data of all the students from primary school participating in the activity were acquired via a sociodemographic questionnaire, making it possible to code the collected data and work in complete anonymity. Secondly, the students from each of the centers underwent a primary assessment using the evaluation system for children and adolescents (Fernández-Pinto et al., 2015) according to their age, namely for the Initial Cycle (from 6 to 8 years old), Middle Cycle (from 8 to 10 years old); and Upper Cycle (from 10 to 12 years old). Finally, the tutors and monitors of the participating students were concurrently administered a self-report Emotional Competences Protocol to determine the opinions and emotional competencies of their students.

The Childhood and Adolescence Assessment System (SENA) (Fernández-Pinto et al., 2015) is a self-report model which, according to the age of the student, enables the detection of a wide spectrum of emotional disorders and behavioral problems: internalized, externalizing and specific problems. Its application for the students of the Initial Cycle was carried out through a protocol adapted to allow the use of paper and pencil, with appropriate instructions being supplied by the administrator before each of the questions, and in the Middle and Upper Cycle it was conducted by means of an online version with prior explanations being given before its completion. Each questionnaire consists of a series of items, ranging from 77 to 188, with a Likert response format, through which the frequency of appearance of the behavior described is evaluated using a five-point scale (from 'never' to 'almost never' to 'always' or 'almost always'), except in the case of the self-evaluation of children

aged 6 to 8 years, which has a scale of three options: 'yes', 'no' and 'sometimes'. The questionnaires have a multidimensional approach and assess a broad range of content using three scales: scales of problems, vulnerability, and personal resources. The problem scales are organized into different groups, according to type of disorder being assessed. Thus, the group of internalized problems; the group of externalizing problems features scales like: Anger control problems (IRA) and Behavioral problems (PCO), and a third group includes scales that enable the assessment of specific problems. The final block is composed of the contextual problem scales: Family problems (FAM), School problems (ESC) and Problems with colleagues (COM). In addition, a block of vulnerability scales is also included, which allows the assessment of aspects such as Emotional regulation problems (REG) and Sensation seeking (BUS), along with a group of personal resource scales, which are Self-esteem (AUT), Integration and Social Competence (SOC) and Awareness of Problems (CNC).

The scores obtained show internal consistency in the vast majority of scales and indices (> .70), in accordance with established standards (Hernández et al., 2018). The test-retest reliability coefficients indicate that the temporal stability of the scales and indices is also satisfactory (> .70) and, in fact, could even be considered to be high given the age at which the test is performed (del Barrio, 2014). This internal structure of SENA confers upon it construct validity with the required psychometric guarantees, providing information in a fast, efficient, and non-invasive way on emotional and behavioral problems for use in children and adolescents.

In terms of psychometric properties, the SENA scales show a high alpha coefficient (>.70) with the emotional and behavioral scales having the highest values (>.80) or .90. The results of the confirmatory factor analyses show that the structure of the data obtained with the application of the instrument is largely in line with the theoretical structure predicted and support the interpretation of the indices obtained from the main scales. This underlines the grouping of the different scales into two large dimensions of broad spectrum: the internalized and externalized dimensions that the SENA extracts as global indices of problems and are complemented by a third factor which is the executive dimension. This internal structure of the SENA gives it construct validity and usefulness for practical application with children and adolescents.

In relation to the Emotional Competences Protocol, the ad hoc tool was administered to each tutor, and to the monitors of the participating pupils at the beginning of the extracurricular activity. The test is designed according to Bisquerra's theory of the five groups of competences (Bisquerra & Pérez, 2007), which identifies Emotional Awareness, Emotion Regulation, Autonomy, Social Competences and Competences for Life and Wellbeing. Bearing in mind this theory and the different evolutive stages of the subjects, researchers adapted the test accordingly. The test consists of a battery of ten questions, each having only one possible answer, with no correct or incorrect answers and a graduation from 'almost never'; 'rarely'; 'sometimes'; 'frequently' to 'almost always', where the participant marks the response, they think best describes themselves, responding as quickly as possible without overthinking their answer. The questionnaire aims to discover the emotional competencies and personal opinions of the pupils to focus the work sessions on those aspects that are most in need of attention.

Procedure

This study was conducted in accordance with the ethical considerations of the Declaration of Helsinki, (World Medical Association, 2008), regarding research projects, as well as national legislation for clinical trials (Law 223/2004 of February 6), for research biomedical (Law 14/2007 of July 3) and participant confidentiality (Law 15/1999 of December 13). The administration of the instruments was applied in the presence of the main investigator for each of the groups in their corresponding cycles, and only those participants whose response pattern was complete and satisfactory according to the protocols were taken into account.

Given the young age of the students, parents gave full consent to the schools to enable their children to undergo the study. Parents were informed and those pupils who did not want to take part were given the option to abandon the study. Subjects who showed interest had the opportunity to ask investigators and teachers and only those who were 100% sure of their willingness to participate were included. Once the students filled out the questionnaires, they also gave consent of their participation in writing.

Data Analysis

The statistical program SPSS 27.0 was used to perform the statistical analysis. First, descriptive and normality tests were carried out. To explore the relationship between variables, several correlation analyses were conducted. Finally, results suggested interesting predictions among anger and self-esteem, which prompted the authors to analyse data with a regression analysis among the different educational cycles.

Results

To verify the hypotheses of the study, and explore the relationship between variables, different statistical procedures were carried out.

The very first analysis performed was the exploration of the association between anger, self-esteem and emotional competences. The results obtained can be found in Table 1.

According to the results, the study variables were introduced in each of the educational levels (initial cycle, 1st and 2nd year of primary school), middle cycle (3rd and 4th year of primary education) and superior cycle (5th and 6th year of primary school).

In the first cycle, when children are younger, correlation analysis showed that anger levels were inversely associated in a statistically significant way with self-esteem and emotional abilities. That is to say, the greater the control of anger, the higher the self-esteem, and the other way around. Those students exhibiting higher anger levels will also show a lower self-esteem. Within the same level, and referring to the emotional competences variable in this case, a significant inverse relationship with anger is also displayed. Therefore, in the initial cycle, pupils with higher scores in the anger variable seem to also display lower self-esteem and lower levels of emotional competences, with

significant correlations and moderate association.

Table 1.
Spearman Correlations between Anger, Self-esteem and Emotional Competences by Educational Cycles.

	Anger	Self-esteem	ECT
Initial cycle			
Anger	-	-.564**	-.303**
Self-esteem	-.564**	-	.312**
Emotional Competences	-.303**	.312**	-
Middle cycle			
Anger	-	-.341**	-.068**
Self-esteem	-.341**	-	.464**
Emotional Competences	-.068**	.464**	-
Superior cycle			
Anger	-	-.179**	-.244**
Self-esteem	-.179**	-	-.282**
Emotional Competences	-.244**	-.282**	-

Note. ** significant correlation at level 0.01 (bilateral); ECT: Emotional Competences Protocol

When we explore the second educational level of the model, the results are very similar to the ones found in the initial cycle, and the significant relationship between anger and the other variables is repeated. However, in contrast to the preceding level, in this case, a greater statistically significant positive relationship is found between anger and self-esteem, and the relationship with emotional abilities is, albeit significative, of lower association.

Finally, in the third level of the model, or, more concretely, in the upper cycle, the significant relationship of the anger variable with respect to both self-esteem and emotional abilities is again evident. This may suggest that, if the association remains significant during all the educational stages of primary education, there might be a predictive role of anger variables and initial self-esteem reflected in self-esteem when children are older (upper cycle).

With this in mind, a regression analysis was carried out (see Table 2) with anger management and self-esteem of first cycle pupils as predictors of the level of self-esteem in the upper cycle, when children are the oldest in primary education.

Therefore, in the analysed linear regression model, anger management of first cycle pupils and self-esteem are introduced as a predictor variable. These variables refer to the ability to regulate negative emotions related to anger and the observed self-esteem levels of students.

The model accounted for a total of 21.2% of the variance (R=.212). However, when analysing the role of its variable, we can see different accountability for each one of the predictors. As the table shows, anger management was the only variable that predicted self-esteem in later years of primary school, as being statistically significant. This may suggest that those who regulate anger in a more efficient way might also exhibit higher levels of self-esteem later on.

On the other hand, emotional competences, and self-esteem in the first cycle of education did not seem to predict the level of self-esteem at later stages of education, according to obtained results (see Table 2).

Table 2.
Statistically Significant Comparisons between Anger Management and Self-Esteem and its Relationship with Emotional Regulation as a Predictive Model in Primary Education.

	Non-standardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients		
Model (n=234)	B	Standard error	Beta	t	p
	1001.072	514.368		1.946	.054
Anger management	1823.635	876.242	10.545	2.081	.040
Self-esteem	-87.924	168.412	-.361	-.522	.603
Emotional Competences	-1.891	1.442	-.127	-1.311	.192

Discussion

Given the need for prevention and intervention during adolescence, school programs are an increasingly effective way of improving positive functioning (Freire et al., 2018). To reach the secondary education with the necessary resources, it will be important to identify and express what is thought and felt on an emotional level to ensure a child's appropriate social functioning (Güemes et al., 2017). The primary education stage is ideal for the acquisition of socio-emotional skills to promote better adaptation to one's environment. That is why this research examines in a novel way how anger control at an early age predicts healthy self-esteem in pre-adolescent ages.

Some authors (Ros et al., 2017) show that appropriate emotional management together with healthy self-esteem predict a better emotional state and well-being in primary school students. Indeed, it is essential to enjoy high self-esteem for optimal adaptive functioning (Laure et al., 2004). Observing the incorporation of programs to promote emotional competencies among primary school students, a decrease in negative behaviors has been found (Filella-Guiu et al., 2014).

Other investigations indicate significant negative relationships between inappropriate behaviors with self-esteem and emotional competencies, emphasizing the importance of working on social-emotional skills focused on self-esteem to improve self-control (Martínez & Valiente, 2020). In addition, one study (Schoeps et al., 2019) establishes that self-esteem is a clear predictor of emotional and behavioral problems in adolescence and another one that self-esteem and emotional intelligence are two constructs directly related to externalized problems (Donahue et al., 2014). Related to the present investigation, studies also exist that refer to the development of emotional competencies and their relationship with anger control, emotional intelligence and better well-being in students from 4 to 16 years old (Garaigordobil, 2018). In the same vein, a study with primary school children shows the positive relationship between better anger control and higher self-esteem (Miranda, 2021). Those investigations tie in with the findings of the present study where it is shown that a better control of anger entails higher levels of self-esteem and emotional competences in all the primary educational cycles, thus confirming the first hypothesis (1).

Previous studies, such as Donnellan et al. (2005) indicate the relationship between low self-esteem and externalizing problems such as anger; and others reveal the importance of emotional regulation of anger for a better development of self-esteem (Liceth & Tacuri, 2021). Thus, the variable that best explains high self-esteem in the students is the management of anger control,

which is found in our study, where only anger control would be a valid and unique variable for higher education students to express higher self-esteem, thus fulfilling hypothesis (2).

Another author (Rodríguez, 2021) shows that emotional competencies are directly related to emotional intelligence, allowing proper regulation of social skills and, consequently, a significant reduction in conflicts. By the same token, failure to promote these types of skills can lead to self-esteem problems. What is more, other research asserts that the emotional competences regulated by emotional intelligence can help avoid low self-esteem and prevent the development of antisocial behaviors (Cerón & Villanueva, 2016). Other authors found that high school students with greater levels of emotional intelligence, also possess better self-esteem, which generates enhanced psychological well-being, thus ensuring an increased command of emotions and conduct, which leads to a more suitable adaptation to the environment (Reignier & Fita, 2014). Studies are also observed where the importance of greater emotional regulation, increased well-being and fewer psychological problems is valued (Gullón, 2019). In line with these investigations, it has also been shown that poor emotional competencies and low self-esteem are strongly related to internalizing problems in adolescents (Schoeps et al., 2021). All the studies cited above are aligned with the present one where emotional competences imply greater emotional regulation, specifically of anger, being predictors of greater self-esteem in the initial and middle educational cycles, thereby supporting our hypothesis (3).

The scientific literature underlines the relevance of the interactions that occur between educators and children to ensure educational quality (Valverde, 2015), and its effect in the classroom, effecting the way teachers work on student performance (Pianta et al., 2016). There are several authors who highlight the importance of emotional management training programs for both the development of schoolchildren, and better social adjustment between peers (Extremera & Fernández, 2004), as well as for the sake of physical and mental health (Ortega, 2014). In line with this, one author emphasizes the need to implement activities that aim to develop the teacher's socio-emotional competencies based on real situations and involving emotional strategies to gain a better understanding of the students, with the overarching objective of promoting competencies which will enable them to nurture personal well-being, and to function efficiently (Palomares, 2014). Similarly, it has been found that students who establish positive socio-emotional relationships with their tutors in the classroom tend to have better emotional self-regulation (Garner & Waajid, 2008). There is other research which affirms the importance of working on emotions in elementary school students to facilitate the growth of socio-emotional skills which reduce conflict (Pérez & Gómez, 2021); and others which identify that the self-perception of teachers in emotional intelligence is related to a harmonious environment in the classroom (Barrientos et al., 2020). Finally, there are studies indicating that the development of social competence prevents involvement in problems of a violent nature (Romera et al., 2017).

Consequently, about the last hypothesis of the present study (4) and, taking into account the evaluations of the emotional abilities of the students by tutors, it would appear to be an effective tool for emotional observation, and as a result, for the promotion of healthy self-esteem. The results indicate with a high degree of precision that there is a significant relationship between emotional control and self-esteem. Although the relationship in this case is less predictive than the emotional control variable over anger with respect to self-esteem, it is no less valid that the commitment to and promotion of these type of tools can foster better development among students as some of the aforementioned authors indicate. At the same time, high self-esteem acts as a protective factor in avoiding maladaptive behaviors, and it is therefore important to emphasize and promote educational programs accordingly.

The limitations of this study lie in expanding the research thus far carried out to secondary education centers and universities to explore the evolution of the study variables, specifically the emotional control of young people in the stages beyond childhood and primary education. Furthermore, future studies should consider the gender differences in the study variables proposed in primary school students, which would enable us to delve deeper into the research objective.

As for prospects, the research should be broadened with a longitudinal study that permits student evaluation in the long term, which could help us to gain a deeper understanding of the evolution of emotional competencies, and thus be able to influence and improve the type of interventions that are performed in educational centers. The evolution of specific educational programs would facilitate the promotion of protective factors against internalizing and externalizing problems, and enhance self-esteem, as well as emotional intelligence and social skills. In the same vein, and in accordance with other investigations (Tejada et al., 2020) with school-based, multicomponent positive psychology interventions that enhance subjective and psychological well-being and reduce students' symptoms of depression, it would be desirable to implement interventions of this nature in schools to boost the mental health of teenagers.

Taking into account the results obtained in this study, coupled with the extensive scientific evidence on the subject of reference, it can be concluded that educational programs based on developing emotional competences and better emotional control of students in the initial stages of primary education will be the best means to promote the psychological well-being and self-esteem of students, thereby allowing them to face educational and professional milestones and challenges in the further stages of their lives.

Conflict of interest and financial issues

Each author has substantially contributed to conducting the underlying research and drafting this manuscript. Additionally, to the best of our knowledge, the named authors have no conflict of interest, financial or otherwise.

Each authors confirms that this manuscript has not been previously published and is not currently under consideration by any other journal. Additionally, all of the authors have approved the contents of this paper and have agreed to the Revista de Psicologia y Educación/Journal of Psychology and Education and submission policies and we have also taken into account all the "Ethical Responsibilities".

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