

Art as an attractive methodology of resilience and self-esteem

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this research is to know the relationship between the level of self-esteem and resilience that people with intellectual disabilities have and the methodology of work including art. In this study, a mixed methodology has been used, the resilience indicator chosen in this research was the level of self-esteem. For the collection of data, a Likert scale and a semi-structured interview were used. The results show that there are significant differences between the self-esteem of people with intellectual disabilities that are influenced by methodologies that include art, concerning to other methodologies.

Keywords: Pedagogy; Mental disability; Emotional education.

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INTRODUCTION

The research executed has the main purpose of studying the relationship between the level of self-esteem and resilience that people with intellectual disabilities present and the work methodology followed, that is, to check if there are significant differences when including art or not.

In the study, a mixed methodology was used, combining the qualitative and quantitative approaches, with descriptive research design, with the self-esteem of people with intellectual disabilities being the chosen indicator of resilience in this research.

The importance of the topic to be investigated is evidenced by the implications that adequate self-esteem has on a person. Self-esteem is key to the complete development of any person, being even more relevant in people with disabilities since they have more possibilities of developing low self-esteem.

The relevance of investigating which methodologies are most effective in promoting this aspect has a direct influence on society, and it is possible to apply the results of such investigations for the benefit of people with disabilities in various fields: formal education for children and young people, formal education for adults, and non-formal education. This leads us to the need to empirically study whether artistic methodology positively influences the development of self-esteem in people with disabilities, thus promoting their resilience (Grasten et al., 2019). Cefai and Cooper (2011) in the research conclusions say the needed to “*develop an intervention model that is adapted to the needs and values of the local educational context while remaining faithful to the theoretically sound principles and practices of therapeutic education*” (p. 70).

In the last few years, the importance of emotional intelligence has been increasingly studied both to maintain an optimal personal adjustment, as well as to establish adequate and effective coping strategies, thus being able to consolidate a personal life project (Soler et al., 2016; Burga et al, 2016; Lomeli et al., 2016; Boddice, 2017; Puertas-Molero et al. 2017). For the integrated development of a person, it is essential to promote the different areas of oneself. Following Gardner (2001) and his theory of intelligences, it has been established that intelligence is not one-dimensional, but that a person has multiple intelligences: visual-spatial, logical-mathematical, musical, verbal-linguistic, kinaesthetic, intrapersonal, interpersonal, naturalistic and emotional. The importance of this last intelligence - emotional intelligence - is highlighted by Punset (2013) in his foreword in the book “*How to educate emotions?*”.

As Duncan (2007) states, emotional intelligence is essential to adapt reactions to different situations and relationships of daily life. People, “*the more they trust this safe foundation, the more prepared they are to respond to the problems they face in life, the more emotionally stable they are and the more [sic] they take advantage of the opportunities*” (p.42). For the whole development of a person, to be able to respond to daily life problems and for adequate emotional health, it is essential to have good self-esteem and a self-concept according to one’s reality (Jalanyondeja, 2016; Boddice, 2017).

In the words of Medina and Gil (2017) “*it is important to reflect, based on results (...) on whether interventions and treatments are being the most appropriate to respond to these people's needs.(...)*” On the other hand, psychoeducational interventions (in our case, arts-based methodologies) aimed at helping these adults to better deal with stressful social interactions and the negative emotions caused by them, can also be an effective alternative to psychopharmacological treatment. In fact, results suggest that stressful interpersonal relationships, casual attribution style, and problem-solving skills are important mechanisms that can maintain depression in adults with a slight intellectual disability (Syrnyk, 2018). Liranzo et al. (2017) reinforce this

argument by exposing that *"the EPA workshops (Psycho-affective Encounters), as a playful and artistic intervention (...), favours the ability to identify all the feelings corresponding to the expected situations. (...) In this study, it is mandatory to recommend its application in a more continuous and integrated way to the school structure, so that the benefits achieved can be extended to all actors in the educational experience"*.

To substantiate this research, it is necessary to specify what we mean by resilience. Resilience, a scientific concept that has gained considerable prominence in the field of education due to the important role of the school as a promoter of well-being (Mu, 2019; Chacón-Cuberos et al. 2017; Toland & Carrigan, 2011). The word resilience derives from the Latin *"resilire"* which means *"jump backward, bounce, retreat"* and is defined by the Royal Spanish Academy of Language as *"the ability of a living being to adapt to a disturbing agent, state, or adverse situation"*. Lucthar et al. (2000) refer to the concept of resilience as *"a dynamic process that encompasses positive adaptation within the context of significant adversity"* (cited in Becoña, 2006, p. 127).

Resilience, empowerment and socio-educational support are shaping what we call resilient dynamics or processes. These resilient dynamics generated by people and their environments constitute interesting synergies and socio-educational resistance to social exclusion (Dearden, 2004). In the school environment, it is noteworthy that although it is largely unknown at the moment whether resilience is a stable predictor of a higher level of school involvement, a positive correlation between both variables should be considered, so that the students who respond in a resilient way to the stressors in the school context, could display adaptive reactions towards the educational and academic centre, participate in school and dedicate more time to learning tasks than non-resilient students (Morrison and Flouri, 2017). In this research, the concept of resilience is used as the capacity that a person has to face adversity and to become stronger, all of which come from the interaction of multiple elements and situations throughout their life.

Numerous investigations have studied the relationship between a person's resilience capacity and their self-esteem, establishing as characteristics of resilience: self-esteem and self-concept, psychological well-being and autonomy, among others (Dearden, 2004; Mendoza, 2009; García, 2014; Barrios, 2005; Calás, 2014; Morales & González, 2014; Becoña 2006).

The self-esteem and self-concept of a person with a disability are, in essence, the same as in other people, but there is a relevant difference that does not depend on the subject himself: society. A difficulty that the environment adds to people with disabilities is how they are perceived and interacted with, which determines how they form their self-image. For this reason, it is of the utmost importance that the people surrounding a person with disabilities act in order to define this person through their qualities and particularities - beyond their disability, that is, approaching the concept of disability from a different perspective than the traditional one, associated with a deficiency, and focusing on one centred around the person, their needs and strengths (Calás, 2014; González & Maccinci, 2013).

González and Maccinci (2013) affirm that art is a group and individual way of working that has the ability to enable the body and mind of a person with disabilities: *"art is healing, training and enabling, it is freedom, communication, creativity, diversity"* (p.5).

Art therapy is a discipline encompassed by creative therapies, and it is consolidated as a discipline based on the knowledge of the development of the person in a whole way through therapeutic means, in order to help with emotional conflicts, disabilities, self-esteem, social and family problems; all this through artistic means (Gürgens and Rasmussen, 2010; Kandler et al. 2016). Ramírez (2018) highlights the great importance of the

field of art, and the development of creative activities in this way allowing the boy and girl to be brought closer to sensory stimuli. All this is endorsed by the World Health Organization:

Arts activities can involve aesthetic engagement, the involvement of the imagination, sensory activation, evocation of emotion and cognitive stimulation. Depending on its nature, an art activity may also involve social interaction, physical activity, engagement with themes of health and interaction with health-care settings. (Fancourt & Finn, 2019, p. 2).

There are four defined artistic therapies: Dance-movement-therapy, Music therapy, Drama therapy and Art therapy (referring to plastic and visual arts). But the common use of the word art therapy encompasses these four artistic therapies, referring to the term "art" as all types of art, not just plastic. Art therapy has a double perspective, on the one hand, it is based on the knowledge of art and its practice and, on the other hand, psychological study intervenes, but always taking the person as the centre and axis of intervention (Conroy, 2009).

In a school and pedagogical level, in the words of Herrera (2019) "art (...) acts as motivator, contributing to the improvement of classroom practices (...) Thus, from the curriculum project, it is expressed that what is involved is not to train artists, but to turn art into a means of pedagogical action" (p. 84).

Currently, people may work with dance and movement in the Physical Education Area of school, in the words of Suárez and Pérez (2006) "In Primary, in order to educate in the diversity by means of the education-learning activities that in her are made the idea of the acceptance of the difference like fundamental element in the education." (p.1). In this way, it is a requisition that teachers are trained in the task described, as it is mentioned in Crawford (2011) "that respondents (100%) wished to participate in further specific training in APA [Adapted Physical Activity] (...) for the provision of quality APA to children with SEN [Special Educational Needs]" (p.91). This training is also advantageous for pupils and teachers according to the essay done by Kofi et al. (2008) which show that "The results confirmed that in teaching children with SEN in the mainstream, teachers experienced psychological stress" (p.71). Thus, a suitable teacher training avoid any socioemotional troubles for teachers as well as it benefits the students with special educational needs (Mu, 2019; Martin et al., 2007).

The entities participating in the study maintain methodologies that actively include art within their classes and workshops. The methodologies that include art aim to create a social resource giving the opportunity of learning and developing activities of inclusive art.

The main axes of these methodologies are:

- The active participation of the students and/or participants, in a playful, dynamic, motivating way and fostering a collective feeling.
- To be a transformative methodology, that is, one that makes it possible to create spaces of knowledge and social transformation.
- The wholesome attention to the person who is participating. This methodology must promote the global development of the person in all its dimensions, both cognitively, emotionally and attitudinally.
- Throughout the entire activity, the methodology must be flexible, in order to adapt to people.
- The use of creative and artistic tools: plastic arts and performing arts.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

Investigation problem

After the theoretical analysis is carried out, two questions arise for the investigation. The first of them is: what level of self-esteem do people with intellectual disabilities have? And the second question of interest for the study is: is there a relation between the level of self-esteem and resilience of people with intellectual disabilities and a methodology that includes or does not include art?

Objectives and hypotheses

Based on the research problem to be studied, the following objectives were formulated:

- To show the level of global self-esteem presented by people with intellectual disabilities.
- To identify the relationship between the level of self-esteem and resilience of the people with intellectual disability analysed, and the applied work methodology (including or not including art).

Therefore, and taking the research objectives as a reference, the following hypotheses are proposed:

- (H1) There will be significant differences between the level of self-esteem of people with intellectual disabilities and the applied work methodology (including or not including art).
- (H0) The differences will be insignificant between the level of self-esteem and resilience of people with intellectual disabilities and the applied work methodology (including or not including art).

Basing ourselves on the bibliography review and the previous experiences in this field of study, the expected hypothesis is H1.

Investigation methodology

The work procedure followed in the investigation is composed by a mixed methodology. This mixed approach arises when the research is based on the two main approaches: the qualitative and the quantitative approach (Hernández et al., 2003). For this reason, two scales have been used, closer to a quantitative research approach, and an interview, an instrument closer to a qualitative approach. All this makes possible the triangulation of the obtained results since this investigation includes the use of various methods (qualitative and quantitative) to study the same phenomenon.

Quantitative approach

Participants

The population studied are people with disabilities, more specifically students from various centres and associations in Andalusia (Spain). The sample is constituted by 72 people with intellectual disabilities, from different entities. Of these, 44.4% (n = 32) were women and 55.6% (n = 40) were men, aged between 18 and 72 years.

The choice of the subjects was made under two criteria:

- Conglomerates: specialized entities that assist people with disabilities were chosen.
- Strata: from this specifically selected conglomerate, two strata were chosen based on the work methodology carried out, making two groups: G1: entities whose main work method is art, and G2: entities that do not include art in their methodologies.

The sample was classified according to these two groups, with 54.2% (n = 39) subjects from G1 and 45.8% (n = 33) subjects from G2.

Measures and procedures: Quantitative instruments

Rosenberg scale without significant adaptation

Starting from a quantitative methodology and with a descriptive and correlational research design, the Spanish translation of the Rosenberg scale has been used to carry out the study, and to analyse the level of global self-esteem from the age of 12. This instrument has not been significantly adapted for an ideal adjustment to the subjects to whom this research is directed. This scale is based on Guttman's one-dimensional model, which is why this instrument is developed based on four criteria: economy of time, validity, ease to manage scale and one-dimensionality (Olivia, w.d.). The test consists of 10 items, six of them stated positively and four of them stated negatively, distributed randomly within the scale, all to avoid the effect of acquiescence. One of the adaptations of the instrument has been in its mode of application. Instead of being self-administered, in this investigation, the test will be completed by the researcher. This measure has been taken in order to eliminate the possible variable of reading comprehension, given that, in this area, people with intellectual disabilities, in general, tend to present difficulties to a greater or lesser extent. Another adaptation carried out and derived from the mode of administration has been the reformulation of the items, from an enunciative sentence to an interrogative sentence. It is necessary to clarify that the meaning of the items has not been transformed to maintain the validity and reliability of the scale.

The reliability coefficient validated by Rosenberg is 0.82 on its original scale. (Olivia, w.d.). Likewise, after the adaptations were made, the internal consistency of the scale was re-evaluated based on the Cronbach's alpha index, giving reliability of 81.7% ($\alpha = .817$) for this investigation.

Likert scale

For the research, we designed a Likert scale. The construction of the instrument was carried out from an operationalization matrix, combining objectives, variables, dimensions, indicators, items and units of measurement. We have rated each item from 1 to 4, with 4 being the maximum score for the question and 1 the minimum. The number of items on the scale is 25, grouped into five dimensions obtained from the corresponding specific objectives, which are: disability, art, methodology, self-esteem, and resilience.

Next, we analysed the validity of the information collection instrument. Initially, content validity was carried out by fifteen specialist doctors (Malla & Zabala, 1978) authorized to carry out this evaluation and belonging to different universities. Their competence coefficient was calculated, being $k = 0.9$, which shows a high level of competence. After analysing the validation questionnaires, some questions were readjusted. On the other hand, a pilot test was carried out on a subgroup of the sample to review comprehension difficulties, identify the questions that prompted doubt, etc., the corresponding checklist was used (Iraossi, 2006). Pilot test results were satisfactory; therefore, the instrument is considered validated. Later, the internal consistency of the scale was evaluated based on the Cronbach's alpha index, giving a reliability $\alpha = .93$ for this investigation. Taking the scale as validated and reliable, the 72 subjects who constitute the sample were administered.

Quantitative analysis

For the analysis of the quantitative data resulting from Likert scale, the SPSS version 22 software has been used.

Qualitative approach

In summary, it can be indicated that the qualitative approach is the one that "*uses data collection without numerical measurement to discover or refine research questions and may or may not test hypotheses in its interpretation process*" (Hernández et al., 2003).

Participants

Following the ontological option (since society is a set of systems) the sample is made up of the "parts" of a "whole". In our research, they would be subjects of the same association, therefore, the choice of the sample has been intentional. The selection criteria is to have professionals who are specialists in social integration, dance and visual arts working in it. With this, the sample is composed of five subjects from this entity:

Three expert professionals in working with methodologies that include art: Subject 1 (inclusive dance specialist), subject 2 (inclusive plastic arts specialist) and subject 3 (psychopedagogy and social integration of people with disabilities specialist). From the same association, two relatives of students with disabilities who participate in workshops/classes using artistic methodologies were selected: Subject 4 (mother) and subject 5 (sister).

Measures and procedures: Technique and instrument

Semi-structured interview

Depending on the research objectives, questions were elaborated, creating a guideline or guide with the topic to be discussed, giving the interviewees certain freedom to change the order of the topics to be addressed, depending on the evolution of the dialogue. All this allows for the possibility of delving more or less into the subject, according to the predisposition of the interviewees and the interest for the research. The interview was validated following the same procedure as the scale.

Qualitative analysis

For the analysis of the qualitative data resulting from the interviews carried out, the MAXQDA version 12 software has been used.

RESULTS

Quantitative data analysis and results development

Below, we present some of the results of the study carried out using the quantitative approach, responding to the objectives established at the origin of the research.

Rosenberg Scale

The analysis of the research result indicates the following levels of self-esteem in people with intellectual disabilities: 86% have high self-esteem, 13% average self-esteem and only 1% show low self-esteem.

Appreciating that a great majority of the subjects, 86%, have high self-esteem (it is necessary to emphasize the clarification, that the term "*high self-esteem*" is synonymous with "*normal self-esteem*") the average of the scores from global self-esteem has been analysed based on the two selected strata. From G1 (entities whose main working method is art) the average resulting from global self-esteem scores is 37.54, and from G2 (entities that do not include art in their methodologies) the average is 32.79; both scores included in the "*high self-esteem*" range (30 to 40 points).

The results shows us that within the "*High Self-Esteem*" range (30-40 points), the G1 is notably in the upper half of the range, and the G2 is close to the lowest score within this range.

Interpreting these results, we can indicate that, even though both groups are within normal scores, participants with intellectual disabilities who work using artistic methodologies obtain better results in global

self-esteem levels than people with intellectual disabilities, who, on the contrary, do not work with these methodologies.

Regarding the average, we have analysed whether there are differences within these scores according to the gender of the participants. G2 scores do not differ between the sexes, with a minimum difference of 0.13; However, in the G1, a significant contrast can be seen between the average score for the female gender (30.57) and the male gender (34.42).

Making a comparison between both groups, we can highlight in G1 the high frequency of responses with the highest score ("Yes, a lot" in the positive items and "No, nothing" in the negative items), while in G2 the variability in the responses is much greater and therefore causes lower calculations in the scores of the global self-esteem level.

Considering the data, it was considered convenient to study the correlation between the global self-esteem score and the applied work method (including or not including art). In this investigation, the Pearson correlation is 0.598, reflecting a moderate intensity and with a positive relationship direction. A $P = 0.000$ is obtained, indicating that it is a significant correlation.

Table 1. Correlations.

		Methodology (Art)	Global self-esteem score
Methodology (Art)	Pearson correlation	1	.598**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	72	72
Global self-esteem score	Pearson correlation	.598**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	72	72

Note: **. Correlation is significant at the .01 (2-tailed).

After statistical analysis, the null hypothesis (H0) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H1) is confirmed since the value of $P = 0.000$ is less than 0.05. With a degree of reliance in the H1 statement of 100%. Being the expected hypothesis (H1) "There will be significant differences between the level of self-esteem of people with intellectual disabilities and the applied work methodology (including or not including art)".

Table 2. Chi-square. Contrast statistics.

	Global self-esteem score	Methodology (Art)
Chi-Square	38.417	.500
gl	14	1
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.480

Likert Scale

From the frequency analysis carried out we will highlight some of the items corresponding to the five dimensions:

- Dimension 1. Disability. Interviewees (people with intellectual disabilities) "agree" that the concept of disability does not help to include people in society.
- Dimension 2. Art. Interviewees "strongly agree" that dance and fine arts should be given more importance in the educational system.
- Dimension 3. Methodology. Interviewees "agree" that for a class to be motivating, some form of art must be included.

- Dimension 4. Self-esteem. Interviewees "agree" that a person who performs fine arts develops good self-esteem.
- Dimension 5. Resilience. Interviewees "agree" that a teacher who works with art teaches them to face life's difficulties.

Qualitative data analysis and results development

The qualitative analysis of the five interviews performed, was coded using the MAXQDA program.

Part of a piece of data (paragraphs, phrases or words) was selected and the corresponding code was assigned. The codes system and subcodes were developed with the main concepts of this research. Each code or sub-code was assigned a descriptive word and a certain colour, in order to enable the analysis of data in a narrative and visual way.

Next, in the interviews portraits (made according to the assigned colour codes) it is possible to visually appreciate the number of times each code is mentioned throughout the interview.

Data collected with the interviews portraits are complemented by the information provided in the code matrix.

In light of the data obtained, we can demonstrate that all the interviewees, to a greater or lesser extent, valued positively the methodologies which include art. Teachers and their expectations that they have of their students, favour the inclusion of such methodologies within the context in which it fosters resilience and the self-esteem of the disabled students who attend classes and workshops.

Continuing with the data study, the code co-occurrence analysis establishes that there are relationships between all the codes except for the "Goals and limits" code. However, it establishes that there is a very strong relationship between the "Artistic Methodology" and "Self-esteem" codes.

We can highlight that the co-occurrence of qualitative analysis codes can be linked to the significant correlation found through the quantitative method, establishing, on both occasions, relationships between artistic methodologies and self-esteem.

DISCUSSION

Departing from the research problems: what level of self-esteem do people with intellectual disabilities have? Is there a relationship between the level of self-esteem and resilience of people with intellectual disabilities and a methodology that includes or does not include art ?, we have come to a conclusion based on the quantitative and qualitative data.

According to the triangulation of qualitative and quantitative results that we have previously developed in-depth, we can indicate that both methods yield similar results, thus corroborating the research findings. Since the first analysis, the Rosenberg scale shows that 86% of the people with intellectual disabilities have a high global self-esteem, 13% have medium self-esteem, and only 1% shows low self-esteem. Participants with intellectual disabilities who work with artistic methodologies obtain better results in global self-esteem levels than people with intellectual disabilities who, on the contrary, do not work with these methodologies. Diverse authors, Conroy (2009), Gürgens & Rasmussen (2010), González & Maccinci (2013) and Ramírez (2018), in

their investigations, have concluded that, through artistic work, people with ID greatly increase their self-esteem.

The Likert scale shows that the interviewees (people with intellectual disabilities) “agree” that: the concept of disability does not help to include people in society; for a class to be motivating it is necessary to include some form of art; that a person who performs fine arts develops good self-esteem, and, finally that, a teacher who works with art teaches us to face life's difficulties. Interviewees state that they are “*very much in agreement*” that dance and fine arts should be given more importance in the educational system.

These results are consistent with what was established by Grasten et al. (2019), Kofi et al. (2008), Fancourt & Finn (2019), Olivia (w.d.), Becoña (2006), Barrios (2005) and Lucthar et. al (2000).

The quantitative analysis allows us to confirm the hypothesis: There will be significant differences between the level of self-esteem of people with intellectual disabilities and the applied work methodology (including or not including art).

The qualitative analysis of the interviews carried out indicates that all the interviewees, to a greater or lesser extent, have positively valued the methodologies that include art since both, professionals and their expectations about their students, favour inclusion within the context in which develop and promote the resilience and self-esteem of students with disabilities who attend classes and workshops.

These results are in line with the information given by Syrnyk (2018), Mu (2019), Puertas-Molero et al. (2017), González & Maccinci (2013), Soler et. al (2016), Morrison & Flouri (2017) and Ramírez (2018) who also establish this relationship.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, we can confirm that the level of self-esteem of the interviewees with intellectual disabilities is high; self-esteem that is favoured when an artistic methodology is used, although the inclusion of disability labels is not favourable, art helps for good self-esteem, so dance and plastic arts should be an effective integral part of the educational system.

It can, therefore, be concluded that there are significant differences between the self-esteem of people with intellectual disabilities who are under the influence of a methodology that includes art, compared to other methodologies. Art, within the work methodology, favours inclusion and fosters the resilience and self-esteem of students with disabilities who attend classes and workshops, giving them new horizons for their disability and their own emotional intelligence.

The limitations of the study reside mainly in access to the entities. Fortunately, not all occupational associations and/or centres prevent or hinder the access of people or external researchers, which can make it difficult to carry out projects and studies. Therefore, the total number of the sample is not as broad as initially estimated.

This leads us to establish as a prospect that in the future the study can be replicated by extending the number of subjects in the sample, as well as the number of entities located in various Spanish provinces and regions.

Another possible closely related research route would be to increase the selected strata, expanding it to people with intellectual disabilities who do not go to any specialized entity, establishing three study groups:

- G1: entities whose main method of work is art.
- G2: entities that do not include art in their methodologies.
- G3: people with intellectual disabilities who do not go to any specialized entity.

As an open line of research, it could be interesting to extrapolate these artistic methodologies to the educational field, for they could be even more useful to the person if inclusion, culture and the ability to excel arise in their closest and most basic nucleus, the school. As these benefits are reaped by all, students and the educational community, an inclusive school, committed to the integral development of every one of its students is created.

On the other hand, and according to the results obtained in this research, the training of professionals in the fields of art and disability should be encouraged, in order to implement artistic methodologies in the various entities that work with groups of people with disabilities.

To conclude, it can be affirmed that this is an inalienable path towards the life quality of people with disabilities, which is why the results of this research could serve as a reflection and starting point for implementing these methodologies, not necessarily novel, but with new and renewed ideas.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The author Laura de la Chica Herrador has carried out the preparation and subsequent execution of the surveys and the composition of the theoretical framework. Furthermore, Eufasio Pérez Navío has contributed to the development and composition of the theoretical framework while the elaboration of methodological framework has been done by Antonio Hernández Fernández.

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