



# The role of family and school during lockdown: Notable differences regarding children's satisfaction with their support

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## Abstract

Studying the support received from key agents in children's lives, family and school, from the point of view of the children themselves, will allow us to be better prepared to guide them in a post-pandemic scenario. The main objective is to study the perceptions and evaluations of students between the ages of 9 and 17 regarding the guidance and support they received during the pandemic, and more specifically the help they received from their family and school. With a quantitative design, a questionnaire was administered to a sample of 1216 children ( $M=14.3$ ;  $SD=2.468$ ), from five geographical areas in Catalonia, Spain. Two multiple regression models were built with a good fit ( $p < .001$ ) and explanatory capacity ( $\text{adj}R^2=0.42$  and  $\text{adj}R^2=0.45$ ). One of the outstanding results is the huge difference between the children's satisfaction with the help received from their family (very high) and from school (very low). In addition, children who identify as non-binary as well as secondary school students show much lower average levels of satisfaction with the support they receive. The ultimate purpose of this article is to make proposals to

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strengthen personalization and support from the perspective of community socio-educational resilience.

#### KEYWORDS

COVID-19, family, resilience, satisfaction, school, support

## INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic, and in particular the measures of strict home lockdown for 4 months in the Spanish State, had consequences for children and adolescents, with varied effects, depending on the children's family, social and economic conditions, contributing to an increase in pre-existing inequalities (Bonal & González, 2020; Martínez et al., 2020; Montserrat et al., 2021; Wilke et al., 2020). Therefore, studying the support received from the two key agents in the lives of children and adolescents—family and school—from their point of view, will allow us to determine what mechanisms need to be articulated in the post-pandemic era, as well as be better prepared to guide young people in the face of future adversity. The present study aims to find out not only what support they received depending on their age, gender and the origin of their parents but also their satisfaction with their family and school, and how they felt affected. The theoretical basis of the study is founded, firstly, on the construct of community educational resilience, based on Magis (2010) and developed by Iglesias et al. (2022). In a similar vein, research is additionally based on quality-of-life studies (Campbell et al., 1976) in that they explore the areas of satisfaction with family and school (Casas & González, 2017; Diener, 2012) and, above all, in the recognition of children as valid participants in research (Ben-Arieh, 2008).

## Education in times of pandemic

The coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) crisis wreaked havoc globally. In the field of education, it caused the closure of schools in more than 195 countries. According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), during the period of the strictest lockdown, more than 1.5 billion students (87% of the world's student population) stopped attending school (UNESCO, 2020).

Children and young people, who are the least affected by severe symptoms of COVID-19, saw their right to education violated and had to accept very harsh restrictions that influenced their mental health and social relationships (Barbet et al., 2020; Sheppard et al., 2021). The impact was also unequal, affecting vulnerable children and young people more intensely (Alberich et al., 2020; Di Prieto et al., 2020; Uribe, 2021).

Most countries' response to the closure of schools was the deployment of remote learning models. The closure, in general, did not respond to policies and structured plans that provided guidance to teachers, students or families to adapt to the new learning conditions (Sheppard et al., 2021). The response was very uneven amongst schools (González & Bonal, 2021), some informing and deploying virtual tools quickly and others, the least prepared, acting slower and less decisively. In any case, education moved into the home, which required an increase in the involvement of families in supporting children's learning (Bonal & González, 2020; Khalid & Singal, 2022), and this support was also very uneven.

Remote learning clearly increased inequalities in access to learning amongst children and young people, mainly due to either the lack of necessary resources or infrastructure available to everyone (Fernández-Rodrigo, 2020; Sheppard et al., 2021; Tadesse & Muluye, 2020; Van Dijk, 2020) or the cultural and social capital of the family (Bonal & González, 2020; Chen et al., 2021). Thus, children from families from a low socioeconomic background were more affected by being exposed to greater risk factors, having both less access to technological devices and families with fewer digital skills (Fernández-Rodrigo, 2020; Tadesse & Muluye, 2020). Furthermore, Di Prieto et al. (2020) add that families from more privileged backgrounds possess better socio-emotional skills for dealing with problems, such as those posed by lockdown. Therefore, the education of some children and young people was limited not only by access to technologies (connectivity or electronic devices), but also the quality of this access. The digital gap is bounded by the mastery of software, and the ability to search, select and compare information, or to navigate safely (Luque et al., 2020), all of which require support that was not always possible either from school or from the family milieu during lockdown (Luque et al., 2020; Sheppard et al., 2021).

Thus, the suspension of school activities was a burden on many families (Zies, 2020). Balancing work and family was complicated, and studies point to parental stress during COVID-19 (Oppermann et al., 2021; Zies, 2020). However, for some families, it also meant an opportunity to strengthen family ties (Chavez et al., 2021; Souza et al., 2020). Partington et al. (2022) identify four patterns of families: thriving, managing, struggling and distressed. Thriving families were those who had less anxiety about financial issues, less dissatisfaction with their partner's help, more capacity for emotional self-regulation, less emotionally temperamental children and more capacity to adapt to lockdown. These conditions helped children to have better social and emotional well-being both during the lockdown and in the months that followed.

Both school and family, children's fundamental pillars for guidance and support, had to adapt to the situation presented by the pandemic and be resilient.

## Community educational resilience

The construct of community resilience (based on the works of Magis, 2010 and Norris et al., 2008) and more specifically that of community educational resilience (Iglesias et al., 2022) goes beyond the most commonly employed concept of resilience. That is to say that from a psychological point of view, it is understood as a process carried out by the individual and their ability to recover in the face of adverse situations (Zolkoski & Bulloch, 2021) or from an educational point of view focused on students who obtain good academic results despite suffering adverse conditions (Gardner & Stephens-Pisecco, 2019). Instead, Magis (2010, p. 401) emphasizes resources in the context of people and groups which make it easier for them to face adverse environmental situations filled with change and uncertainty. In addition, this approach to resilience is related to the systemic and ecological perspective of Bronfenbrenner (1977), where two or more living situations, such as school and family, can be linked, which is the focus of the analysis in this article. Bryan et al. (2020) also show the benefits of employing a multi-systemic model to explain and promote resilience, because the ability to face situations of change and adversity on the part of a system, such as school, improves when it acts in concert with other systems, such as family and the network of services. Therefore, it is above all about recognizing the role played by different social agents in promoting resilience.

Iglesias et al. (2022) propose dimensions to analyse the processes that promote community educational resilience, which Montserrat et al. (2022) have adapted into three dimensions of

analysis: (a) guidance and personalization, (b) collective action and social capital and (c) communication and information. This article focuses on the first dimension, that of guidance and support, which refers to a wide and heterogeneous range of strategies, resources and actions to promote children's learning and development based on their active participation in the process (following Coll et al., 2020). More specifically, this dimension can be used to analyse the existence of emotional support from family and close friends, of spaces available for support and guidance, of support adapted to the demands and needs of children, of spaces for social interaction which foster bonds and trust, or of active participation of children in activities or projects.

## Life satisfaction with family and school

When it comes to determining the assessment that children make of the support received from their immediate environment in times of adversity such as the pandemic, understanding their satisfaction with the support they received from family and school bolsters the results. In this sense, quality of life studies and more specifically one of their main components, subjective well-being, open the door to discovering how people evaluate their living conditions, taking into account the different areas that make them up (Casas, 2011). Research carried out in recent years has shown that, in general, children are more satisfied with life compared to adults and that there are areas that contribute more importantly to their well-being, such as satisfaction with family and friendships (Casas, 2011; Diener, 2012), while other areas, such as school, generally generate much less satisfaction (Casas & González, 2017). The study by Nic Gabhainn and Sixsmith (2006), which delved deeper into what children understand as well-being, identified loved ones, including family and friends, as the main category and identified actions such as playing together, helping each other, making each other laugh or doing activities together. This was followed by activities such as partaking in sports, and eating and drinking. Also, the results of the study by Navarro et al. (2017) suggest that the areas with the most impact on the subjective well-being of children are relationships with family and friends, increasing or decreasing well-being depending on whether these relationships are positive or negative. The study also highlighted that satisfaction with family decreases as the age of the participant's moves into adolescence. Additionally, according to children, problems at school contribute to decreased well-being amongst all ages.

A few decades ago, Epstein and McPartland (1976) conceptualized school satisfaction as an outcome of schooling rather than solely academic performance, and from there research became interested in determining which components were part of the concept. Casas et al. (2013) showed that when asking children about school satisfaction in general, questions mainly focused on academic learning and qualifications, leaving aside other aspects of socialization. In their study, Casas and González (2017) stress that the importance of satisfaction with peers in the context of school must be taken into account when analysing the quality of school life, given the effect that friendships as well as relationships with teachers have on subjective well-being. Finally, it also seems interesting in view of the study we are presenting, to echo the research of Coombes et al. (2013) where the participating children identified some topics related to health and emotional well-being that were not reflected in the school curriculum, leading them to prefer to talk about it with friends rather than in class. This reveals the need for the children to participate in the design of curricular activities, an issue also highlighted in the dimension of guidance and personalization that we have mentioned.

Finally, it should be noted that the methodological approach of studies on quality of life is based on the conviction that in order to evaluate a complex phenomenon, the voice of the main

people involved, perceived as stakeholders, is necessary (Casas, 2011). A child-centred approach (Lundy & McEvoy, 2012) forms the baseline for the study presented in this article. Thus, the study provides the perspective of children, so rarely present in studies that analyse the effects of the pandemic period (Thompson et al., 2021).

## Aims

The objective was to study the perceptions and evaluations of students between the ages of 9 and 17 refer to the moment of the survey regarding the guidance and support they received during the pandemic. More specifically:

- Analyse their satisfaction with the help they received from their family and school
- Analyse this satisfaction according to variables relating to:
  - Personal characteristics (gender, age, educational level and origin of parents)
  - The support they received from family (mother or father)
  - Guidance and personalization from school (teachers, peers, access to class materials, internet connection and information from the teacher)
  - The children's ability to share any problems they had, and their perception of happiness.

All in all, the ultimate purpose of this article is to make proposals to strengthen the dimension of personalization and support from the perspective of community socio-educational resilience.

## METHOD

The data presented in this article are part of a wider study carried out within the framework of the competitive project [2020 PANDE 00166]. This article presents the quantitative results, obtained through the use of a questionnaire, in order to collect the perspective of students in Catalonia regarding the guidance and support they received from family and school during the lockdown caused by COVID-19.

## Sample

The study sample is made up of 1216 children, between the ages of 9 and 17 ( $M=14.3$ ;  $SD=2.468$ ) at the time of the survey, from five geographical areas in Catalonia, which correspond to the Ciutat Vella district of Barcelona, Celrà, Girona city, Olot and Palafrugell (see Table 1). The selection of these regions was based on three criteria: (a) socioeconomic and urban diversity amongst territories, (b) previous experience working with social agents in these areas and (c) proximity to the jurisdiction of the institution that carried out the study. The participants were selected from a sample population through the schools in order to reach a representative sample of the territories. It was sent to all schools in these five areas (100 schools, most of them public) and the response rate was 26%. The great diversity of the schools that participated and the fact that those that declined to participate did not form a specific subgroup was positive for the purpose of the study. The final sample includes students from several grades in 26 schools, three of them special education. The main characteristics of the resulting sample are shown in Table 2.

**TABLE 1** Number of students by school territory.

School municipality	<i>N</i>	%
Barcelona (Ciutat Vella)	112	9.2
Celrà	166	13.7
Girona	299	24.6
Olot	289	23.8
Palafrugell	350	28.8
Total	1216	100

**TABLE 2** Characteristics of the children in the sample.

Sample characteristics	<i>N</i>	%
<b>Gender (<i>N</i> = 1212)</b>		
Male	545	45.0
Female	635	52.4
Non binary	32	2.6
<b>Living situation (<i>N</i> = 1205)</b>		
Biological family	1179	97.8
Foster family	11	0.9
Residential centre	9	0.7
Other	6	0.5
<b>Siblings (<i>N</i> = 1211)</b>		
Yes	1047	86.5
No	164	13.5
<b>Child's birthplace (<i>N</i> = 1198)</b>		
Spain	1084	90.5
Abroad	114	9.5
<b>Parents' birthplace (<i>N</i> = 1215)</b>		
Spain	801	65.9
Abroad	414	34.1
<b>Educational level (<i>N</i> = 1216)</b>		
Primary	288	23.7
Secondary	495	40.7
Post-mandatory	433	35.6

## Instrument

An anonymous, self-administered online questionnaire was designed based on the 5 dimensions of community socio-educational resilience analysis (Iglesias et al., 2022) that underpin the original research: (a) guidance and personalization, (b) identification and use of existing knowledge, resources, assets in the community, (c) collective action and participatory culture, (d) communication and information and (e) governance and leadership.

The instrument is structured in three blocks and consists of a first part for the collection of socio-demographic data, a second with questions related to lockdown and a last part for final assessments. It features closed questions (dichotomous, multiple choice, Likert scale of agreement or frequency and an 11-point satisfaction scale) and open questions, all of them referring to the period of lockdown during the pandemic.

The design of the questionnaire reflected sensitivity towards diversity in order to collect the opinion of all children. Thus, accessible, understandable and age-appropriate language was used. Gender diversity, the diversity within their living situation, and the country of birth of the students or their parents were considered. A version adapted for students in special education schools was also developed.

Finally, an internal validation was carried out, where the instrument was reviewed by 10 members of the research team and, subsequently, a pilot phase was carried out with 6 children between the ages of 9 and 17, from which the final version was established.

## Procedure

Between the months of October and March of the 2021–2022 academic year, the participation of schools in the five territories previously mentioned was requested in order to administer the questionnaire to classes from the fourth to sixth grade of primary school, third and fourth grade of secondary school, and vocational and baccalaureate studies (both in post-compulsory education), as well as special education schools. Beforehand, authorization was also requested from the regional and local educational authorities in Catalonia. The research team contacted the schools and explained the research and the procedure for administering the questionnaire to the class. The questionnaire was completely anonymous, self-administered and the participating students could give their consent through it before starting. In the case of students under the age of 14, parental consent was obtained beforehand. The schools received a link to access the questionnaire as well as detailed instructions on how to explain the questionnaire and how to administer it. Students were provided with a laptop to answer the questionnaire, which was administered in the classroom, during school hours, with a teacher as facilitator and in few schools also with staff from the research group as a school request.

## Data analysis

Once collected, the data was analysed. For this article, some variables have been selected from the total data collected in the original study and analysed. [Table 3](#) shows the variables that were analysed.

The quantitative analysis of the data consists of three distinct parts. First, a descriptive analysis of the two dependent variables of the study was carried out. For both quantitative dependent variables, satisfaction with the support received from family during the pandemic and the support received from school during the pandemic, distribution, mean, standard deviation, median, the interquartile range, the minimum and the maximum were analysed.

Subsequently, a comparison analysis of the means of the two dependent variables was carried out using the Student's *t*-test for two independent samples, as the independent variables were dichotomous (two categories) and the non-parametric Games–Howell test to compare the averages of three or more groups (variables with three categories or more).

TABLE 3 Summary of variables analysed.

Variable	Stats / Values	Freqs (% of Valid)	Graph	Missing
gender [factor]	1. Boy 2. Girl 3. Non-binary	545 (45.0%) 635 (52.4%) 32 ( 2.6%)		4 (0.3%)
education_level [factor]	1. primary 2. secondary 3. post-secondary	288 (23.7%) 495 (40.7%) 433 (35.6%)		0 (0.0%)
parents_origin [factor]	1. spain 2. abroad	601 (65.9%) 414 (34.1%)		1 (0.1%)
mother_support [factor]	1. never/rarely 2. sometimes 3. often/always	59 ( 4.9%) 139 (11.7%) 994 (83.4%)		24 (2.0%)
father_support [factor]	1. never/rarely 2. sometimes 3. often/always	157 (13.4%) 223 (19.1%) 788 (67.5%)		48 (3.9%)
teacher_support [factor]	1. never/rarely 2. sometimes 3. often/always	478 (42.2%) 324 (28.6%) 330 (29.2%)		84 (6.9%)
friends_support [factor]	1. never/rarely 2. sometimes 3. often/always	269 (24.1%) 238 (21.3%) 609 (54.6%)		100 (8.2%)
classmates_support [factor]	1. never/rarely 2. sometimes 3. often/always	331 (28.8%) 358 (31.2%) 459 (40.0%)		68 (5.6%)
explain_the_problem [factor]	1. I explained it to someone 2. I didn't explain it to an 3. I didn't have any problem	593 (48.8%) 404 (33.2%) 219 (18.0%)		0 (0.0%)
satisfaction_with_family_support [numeric]	Mean (sd) : 8.2 (2.4) min < med < max: 0 < 9 < 10 IQR (CV) : 3 (0.3)	11 distinct values		1 (0.1%)
satisfaction_with_school_support [numeric]	Mean (sd) : 4.8 (3.1) min < med < max: 0 < 5 < 10 IQR (CV) : 5 (0.7)	11 distinct values		0 (0.0%)
homework_or_classroom_supplies [factor]	1. never/rarely 2. sometimes 3. often/always	583 (48.7%) 191 (15.9%) 424 (35.4%)		18 (1.5%)
unable_to_connect_to_school [factor]	1. never/rarely 2. sometimes 3. often/always	698 (58.3%) 273 (22.8%) 227 (18.9%)		18 (1.5%)
get_covid19_information_from_teachers [factor]	1. yes 2. no	737 (65.3%) 391 (34.7%)		88 (7.2%)
pandemic_impact [factor]	1. I am happier than before 2. I am just as happy as bef 3. I am less happy than befo	279 (23.4%) 629 (52.7%) 285 (23.9%)		23 (1.9%)

Finally, two multiple regression models were built. In the first model, the dependent variable was satisfaction with the support received from family during the pandemic, in the second model, the dependent variable was satisfaction with the support received from school during the pandemic. In both models, all the independent variables that have shown statistical significance in the bivariate analysis have been included. In addition, both models have been adjusted



according to gender and parents' origin to ensure that the effects observed in the dependent variables are not confounded by these factors.

Both multiple regression models constructed have shown a good fit ( $p < .001$ ) and a high explanatory capacity of the variability of the dependent variable ( $\text{adj}R^2 = 0.42$  and  $\text{adj}R^2 = 0.45$ , respectively).

## Ethical considerations

The original research has the favourable opinion of the University's Ethics Committee (Code: CEBRU0028). In addition, anonymity has been maintained in the handling of personal data, and its confidentiality is guaranteed in accordance with LO 3/2018 and RGPD 2016/679 of the European Parliament.

## RESULTS

Below are the results organized by objective.

### To analyse the satisfaction with the support received from family and school

In this section, we aim to analyse the satisfaction levels of children with the support they received from their family and school during the pandemic. [Table 4](#) provides a summary of the descriptive statistics for satisfaction with family and school support.

The children's average satisfaction with the help they received during the pandemic and lockdown from their family is 8.3 points out of 10 while the median is 9 points out of 10. For school it is 4.8 points out of 10 while the median is 5 points out of 10 ([Table 4](#)). In this case, the mean and median are far below the satisfaction with the support received from family.

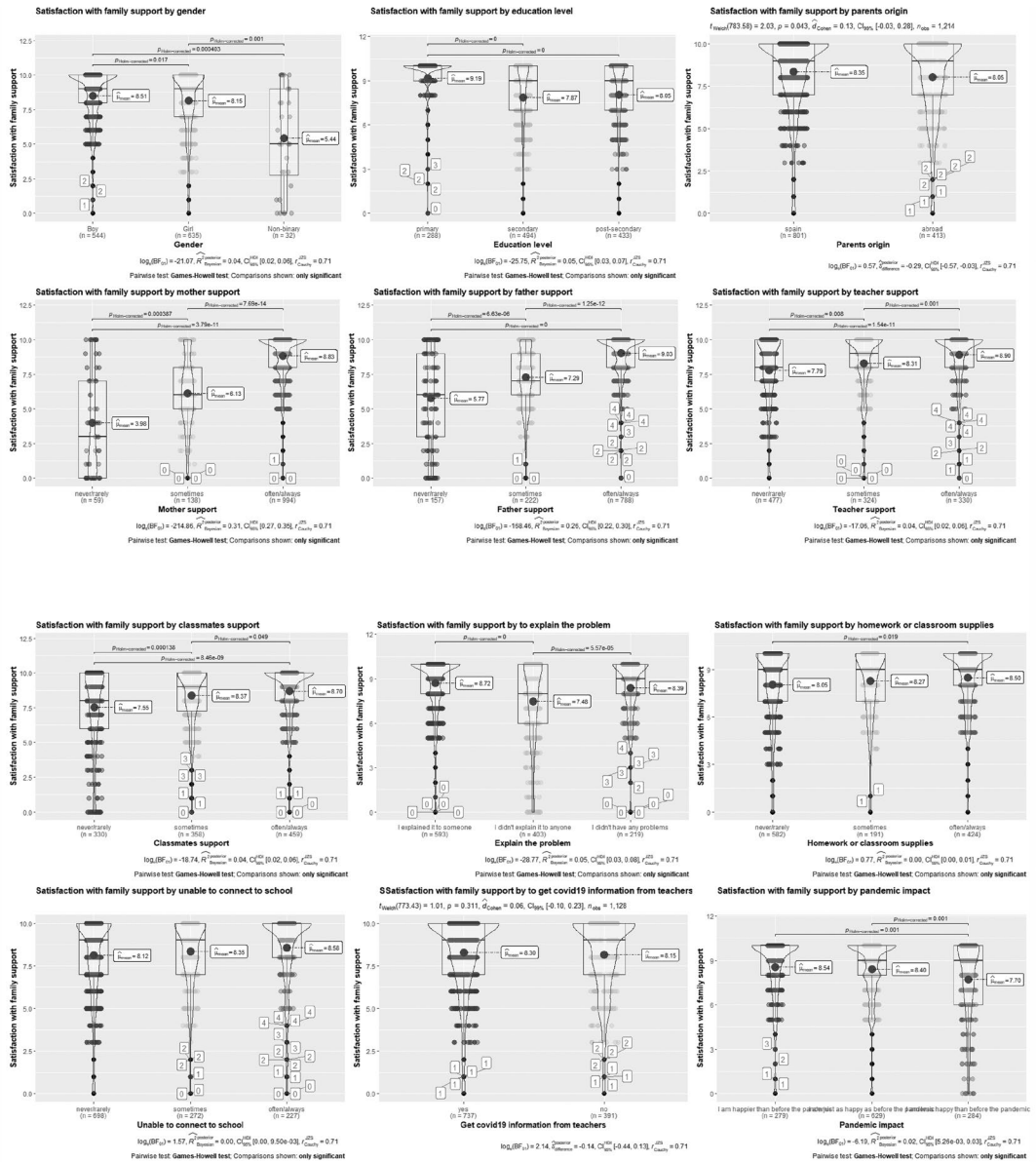
### Analysis of satisfaction with the support received from family according to independent variables

This section examines how various independent variables affect children's satisfaction with family support during the pandemic.

First ([Figure 1](#)), no significant differences can be observed between boys and girls, but, on the other hand, the average is much lower amongst children who self-define as non-binary ( $p < .05$ ). It can be observed that students in primary education show higher averages for satisfaction (over 9 points) than do secondary and post-mandatory students, where there are no observable

**TABLE 4** Satisfaction with the support received from family and school.

	Mean	SD	Min	Median	Max	N. Valid
Satisfaction with the support received from family	8.25	2.36	0.00	9.00	10.00	1215
Satisfaction with the support received from school	4.77	3.11	0.00	5.00	10.00	1216



**FIGURE 1** Satisfaction with the support received from family. \*Parents' origin and teachers' support variables do not reach statistical significance in the regression model, but we keep them in the model due to their relevance. [Colour figure can be viewed at [wileyonlinelibrary.com](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/dsbo.12893)]

differences ( $p < .05$ ). Children whose parents were born in Spain show greater satisfaction with family support than those whose parents are of foreign origin ( $p < .05$ ).

It can be seen that the greater the perceived support they received from the family, the more satisfied the children are with that support ( $p < .05$ ). However, when less support is perceived from their mother, satisfaction averages are lower (below 4 points) compared to when less support is perceived from their father (close to 6 points). The trend is similar with support they received from their teachers, but the average differences according to the degree of support received from teachers are much smaller, although they also reach statistical significance.

Support perceived from peers follows the same trend observed in parents and teachers: as support increases, satisfaction with family increases ( $p < .05$ ). Regarding their ability to share problems during the pandemic, it is evident that the children who were not able to show less satisfaction with the support received from family and the differences are of statistical significance ( $p < .05$ ). On the other hand, no significant differences were noted with satisfaction with family between those who could share their problems and those who did not experience any.

The inability to connect to school or to get COVID-19 information from teachers resulted in no significant differences in satisfaction with family.

Finally, it can be observed that the children who considered themselves less happy after the pandemic show significantly less satisfaction with family, compared to those who are just as happy as before the pandemic and those who are happier ( $p < .05$ ).

In the regression model where the dependent variable is satisfaction with the support received from family (Figure 2), a good fit is observed because it reaches statistical significance ( $p < .001$ ) and shows an explanatory capacity for the variability of the dependent variable 42% ( $R^2 = 41.6$ ).

Specifically, it demonstrates that non-binary children ( $p < .001$ ) as well as girls ( $p < .02$ ) show less satisfaction with the support they received from family than boys, regardless of the rest of the independent variables included in the model.

Children in secondary and post-mandatory education also show less satisfaction with the support they received from family compared to those in primary education ( $p < .001$ ). There are no differences in satisfaction with the support received from family by parental origin.

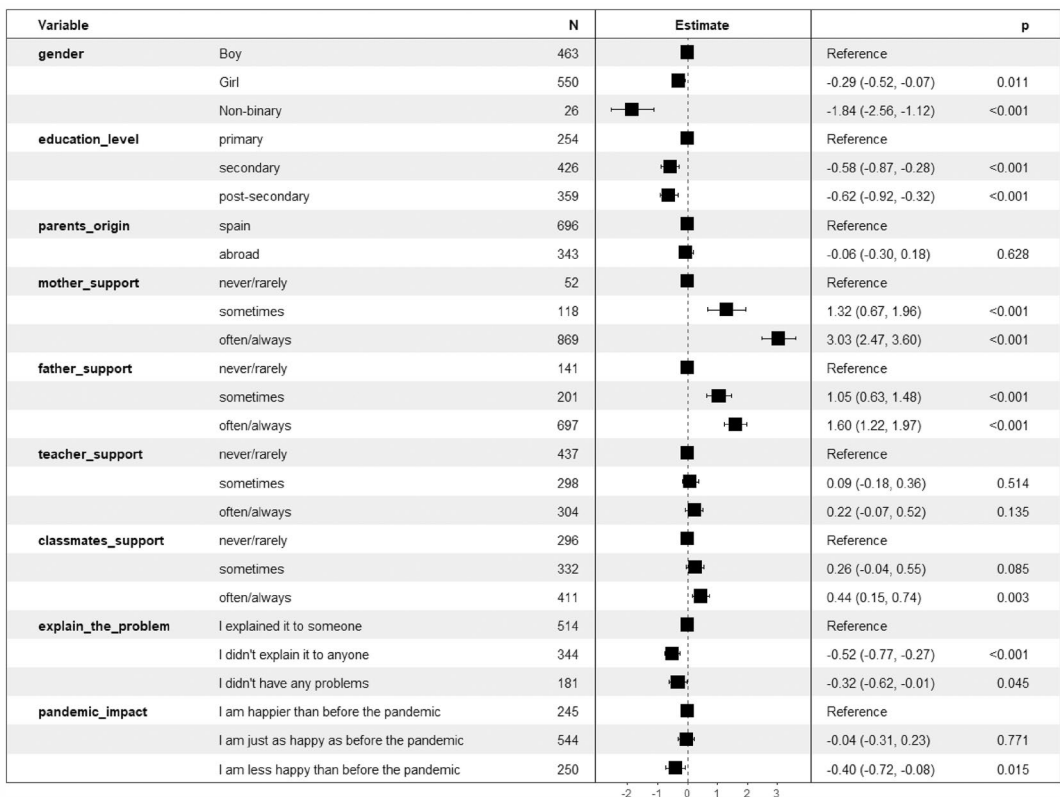


FIGURE 2 Multiple regression model with the dependent variable of the support received from family.

Children who show greater satisfaction with their mother's support also show greater satisfaction with the support they received from family, and the differences with respect to having received no support are statistically significant ( $p < .001$ ). In fact, those boys and girls who consider that they have received greater support from their mother show an average of 3 points more out of 10 points in satisfaction with the support they received from family.

The trend is very similar with the support they received from their father. However, those who consider that they have always received support from their father show, on average, 1.6 points more satisfaction with the support they received from family compared to those who do not.

The level of support from teachers during the pandemic does not affect satisfaction with the support received from family. On the other hand, when support from peers has been steady, it can be observed that satisfaction with the support received from family is greater than when this support from peers has been absent ( $p < .05$ ).

It is evident that both those who were unable to share their problems and those who had none show less satisfaction with the support they received from family. In both cases the differences are statistically significant regardless of the other independent variables included in the model ( $p < .05$ ).

Finally, those who say they are less happy than before the pandemic show less satisfaction with the support they received from family compared to those who say they are happier ( $p < .05$ ).

## **Analysis of satisfaction with the support received from school according to independent variables**

This section examines how various independent variables affect children's satisfaction with school support during the pandemic.

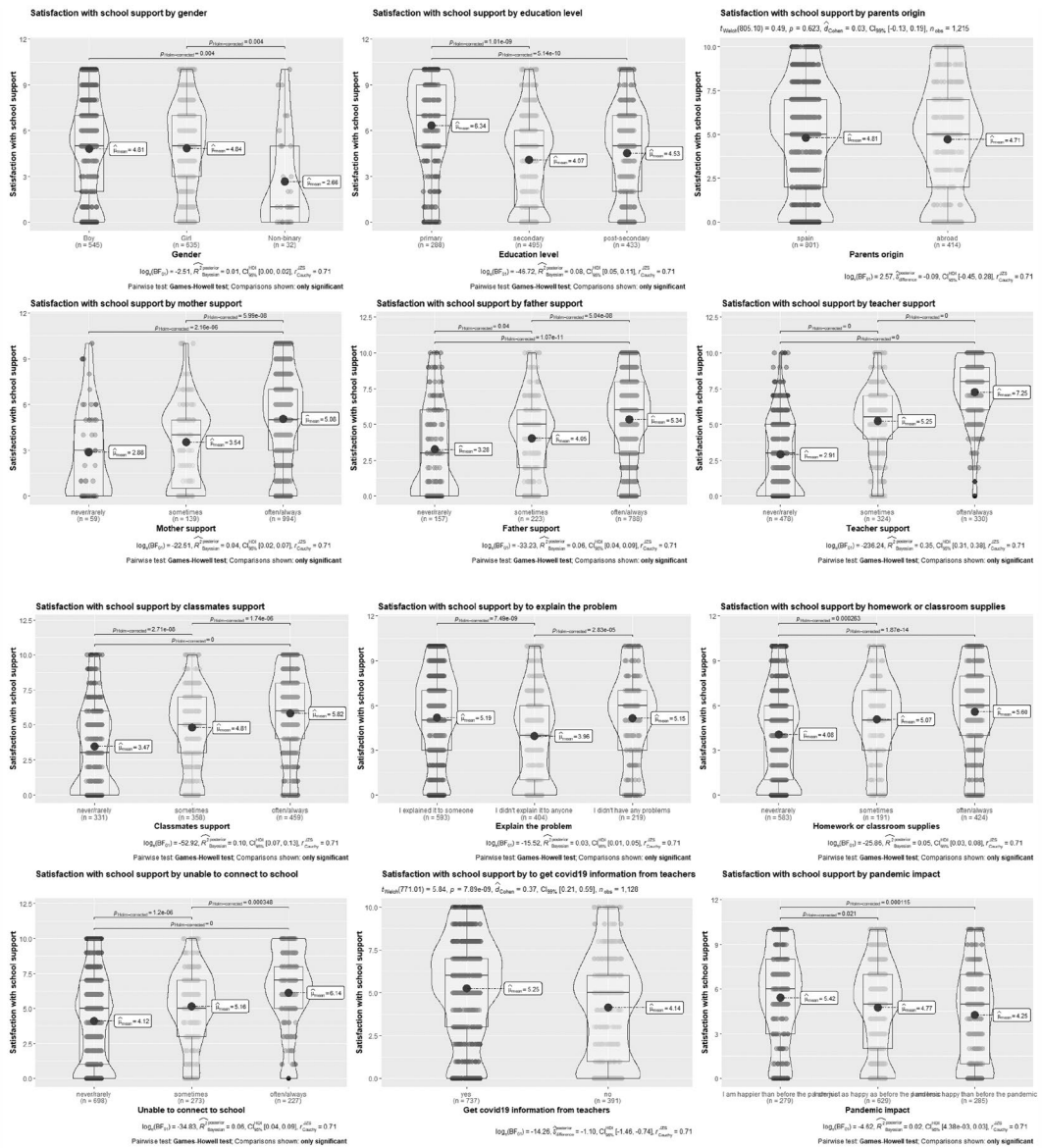
All the average levels of satisfaction with the support received from school (Figure 3) are lower than satisfaction with the support received from family, but the trends with respect to the independent variables are very similar: it can be observed that children who define themselves as non-binary show less satisfaction, and the differences when compared to both boys and girls are statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ). No differences are evident between boys and girls.

Primary school students can be seen to show greater satisfaction with the support they received from school than secondary school and post-mandatory students ( $p < .05$ ). There are no differences in the averages between secondary and post-mandatory students, nor with regard to the origin of the parents.

It can be seen that as the support received from mothers, fathers and teachers increases, satisfaction with the support received from school also increases, significantly in all cases ( $p < .05$ ). However, it can be observed that the highest average level of satisfaction with school is when children perceive greater support from teachers, where the average is above 7 points. Children who consider that they have received support from their peers also show higher average levels of satisfaction with school ( $p < .05$ ).

Furthermore, children who claim to have had a problem during the pandemic and were not able to share it show lower average scores regarding the support received from school and the differences compared to those who did not have any problems and those who were able to share theirs are statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ).

Those students who never had access to school materials show lower satisfaction with the support they received from school, with statistically significant differences when compared to those who sometimes or always did. In the same way, children who did not have an internet



**FIGURE 3** Satisfaction with the support received from the school. \*Parents' origin and mother's support variables do not reach statistical significance in the regression model, but we keep them in the model due to their relevance. [Colour figure can be viewed at [wileyonlinelibrary.com](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/cbsr.12893)]

connection also showed less satisfaction with school support than those who had either an intermittent or permanent connection to the network ( $p < .05$ ).

Children who received information about the pandemic from teachers show greater satisfaction with school support than those who did not ( $p < .05$ ).

Lastly, it can be observed that the children who say they are happier than before the pandemic show greater satisfaction with the support they received from school and the differences compared to those who perceive that they are equally happy and those who consider that they are less happy than before the pandemic are statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ).

In the regression model where the dependent variable is satisfaction with the support received from school (Figure 4), a good fit is observed, since the model reaches statistical significance ( $p < .001$ ) and shows a explanatory power of the variability of the dependent variable of 45% ( $R^2 = 44.5$ ).

First, it is evident that non-binary children show lower satisfaction with the support they received from school compared to boys, regardless of the other independent variables included in the model ( $p < .001$ ). No differences are observed between boys and girls.

According to the educational level, it is clear that both secondary and post-mandatory students show less satisfaction with the support they received from school than primary school students. The differences in both cases are of statistical significance ( $p < .001$ ).

Neither the origin of the parents nor the support received from their mother are variables that reach statistical significance in the model. However, the support received from their father does reach statistical significance: both children who consider that they often receive support from their father and those who always receive it show greater satisfaction with the support received from school compared to those who consider that they did not receive support from their father during the pandemic ( $p < .05$ ).

Children who consider that they always or almost always received support from their teachers show average levels of satisfaction with the support received from school that are 3.3 points higher than those who consider that they did not receive this support. Those who consider that they sometimes received support from their teachers show, on average, 1.9 points more satisfaction with the support received from school than those who did not perceive support from teachers. In both cases the differences are statistically significant ( $p < .001$ ).

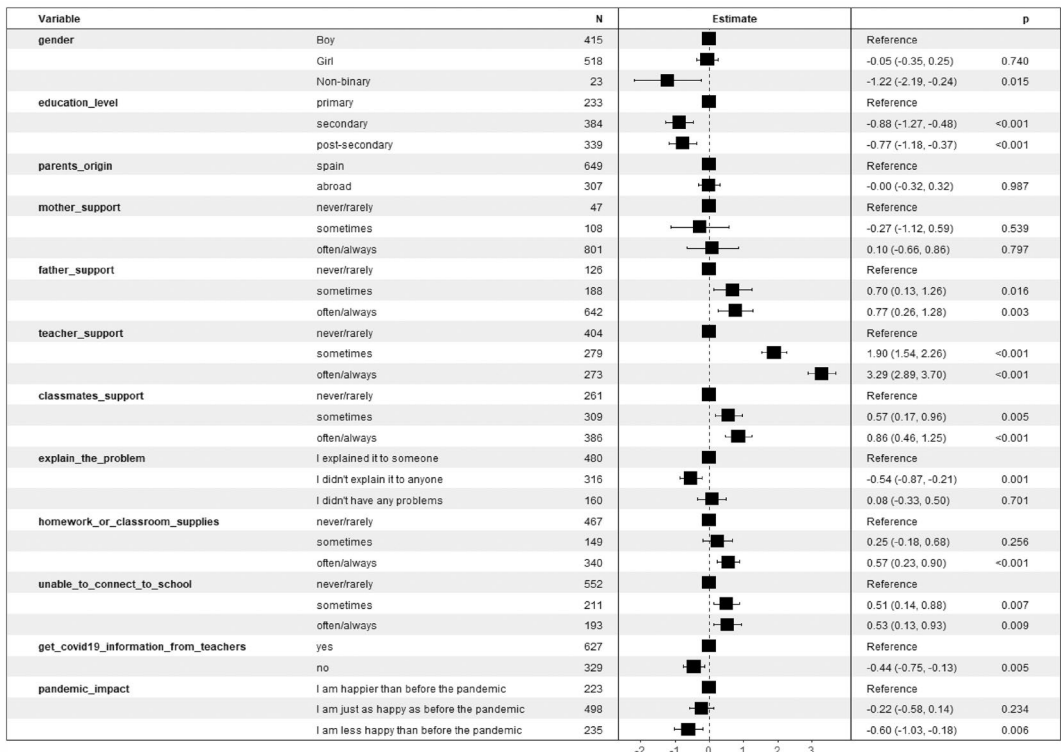


FIGURE 4 Multiple regression model with the variable dependent on the support received from school.

Boys and girls who either always or sometimes received support from their peers show greater satisfaction with the support they received from school than those who didn't receive any support from their peers ( $p < .05$ ).

Those who weren't able to share a problem show less satisfaction with the support they received from school and the differences are of statistical significance ( $p < .05$ ). There are, on the other hand, no differences between those who did not have any problems and those who were able to share theirs.

Children who often or always had access to school supplies show greater satisfaction with the support they received from school compared to those who rarely or never had school supplies ( $p < .05$ ). Similarly, children who sometimes or always had an internet connection show greater satisfaction with the support they received from school compared to those who do not ( $p < .05$ ). Children who did not receive information about the pandemic from teachers show less satisfaction with school support than those who received it, and the differences are statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ) regardless of the rest of the independent variables included in the model.

Finally, those who say they are less happy than before the pandemic show less satisfaction with the support they received from school compared to those who say they are happier ( $p < .05$ ).

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

In this article, two blocks of results stand out for which there are various explanations and practical implications. The first is the vast, significant difference between children's satisfaction with the help they received during the pandemic and especially during the months of lockdown from their family (high) and school (low). Although these results are in line with Casas (2011) and Casas and González (2017), who state that satisfaction with family contributes significantly to the subjective well-being of children and that satisfaction with school tends to be lower, in studies the latter reached averages between 7 and 8 points out of 10 (Llosada-Gistau et al., 2015) and we are not aware of any studies with scores like 4.7 obtained in this one. These results reflect the enormous impact of the pandemic on this area. During lockdown, family played an essential role, and bonds were even strengthened (Chavez et al., 2021; Souza et al., 2020) while school was eliminated for many children, moving education into homes and increasing the involvement of families (Bonal & González, 2020). In addition, the results show that within the family, it is the mother who gives the most support and, moreover, this is decisive when children express high or low satisfaction with family. This is likely because in many households, the mother assumes the central role in parenting, which leads us to think that not only do the structures and performance of gender roles persist, but they also become more evident in the face of adversity (Platero Méndez & López Sáez, 2020). On the other hand, when children are more satisfied with the support received from their father, they show greater satisfaction with the support received from school. It is as if strong support from the father is also reflected within the school environment, an oddity that will need to be studied more thoroughly in the future.

The second block of results makes it possible to analyse and partially explain the support from family and school relative to the personal characteristics of the children, their emotional state and school conditions, which will also form the basis of the proposals in the third part of this section. It must first be said that the results we present below obtained in the bivariate analysis have been confirmed in the multiple regression models.

Children who identify as non-binary, secondary school students (12–16 years) and post-mandatory education (16–18 years) show much lower average levels of satisfaction with the support they received from family and school, compared respectively with those of boys and girls as well as with the youngest children, primary school students (9–11 years old). Meanwhile, the influence of the parents' origin on satisfaction with the support received observed in bivariate analysis are not significant. The results clearly warn, first of all, of the aggravated suffering of non-binary gender children during lockdown, in line with studies by Platero Méndez and López Sáez (2020) on perceiving hostility in such close environments, and which calls for a clear and determined gender perspective in the policies and actions of professionals (Frost et al., 2016). Additionally, the fact that satisfaction decreases with age has been observed in subjective well-being studies (Casas, 2011).

The satisfaction with the support received from school is reflected with higher averages when children perceive that they have received support from their peers, or from teachers, or that they had access to material, an internet connection and information about the pandemic from teachers. It is important to highlight these results as they show that students are very satisfied when the schools work properly and show low satisfaction when they do not receive information about the pandemic from teachers, issues that suggest how to improve schools, and not only in times of adversity. Casas and González (2017) show how satisfaction with school encompasses many more aspects than those purely related to academic learning and instrumental support, and that satisfaction with both peers and teachers is essential. Moreover, in our study, the importance of peer support is relevant. Not only does it have an influence on satisfaction with the support received from school, but children also show more satisfaction with help from family, as this enabled children to maintain relationships with their peers, interpersonal relationships being a key aspect in studies of subjective well-being (Navarro et al., 2017). Furthermore, the results highlight the importance of teachers' support, which plays a decisive role in satisfaction with the support children received from school. Other studies have already pointed out the relevance of this, for example when children are asked whether teachers listen to them (Montserrat et al., 2019).

When considering their emotional state, it can be observed that children who were not able to share problems they had during lockdown and those who consider themselves less happy after the pandemic show lower satisfaction with the support they received from both family and school. Coombes et al. (2013) have already shown that children attach great importance to matters of emotional well-being but that these were forgotten in the school curriculum. This area, in times of pandemic, has been exposed as one of the least addressed when it comes to the emotional needs of children.

This study has some limitations that we must mention, notably that the sample, collected in five territories of Catalonia, cannot be said to be truly representative despite its diversity and breadth, which limits the scalability of the results. We are also concerned that despite including special schools in the study, the sample of their pupils was too small to be included in the data analysis, and again their views are not reflected, an issue that needs to be addressed in future research. All in all, the study brings us closer to the reality experienced by children and allows us, as we said when introducing the article, to make proposals to strengthen resilience with a more focused approach on the community environment (Iglesias et al., 2022). In the light of the results, below we present some proposals.

The homeostatic system which explains that, in general, the population rates life satisfaction above 7 points, can be threatened when life events exceed people's ability to deal with them (Tomyn, 2013). Hence the importance of resources for children's closest support systems—family and school—being activated to compensate and strengthen the measures to deal with those



events. Recognizing their key role in the system is undoubtedly the first step, which schools had difficulty doing.

Along these lines, support from the local milieu is key in offering protection to vulnerable groups, such as people who do not follow sexual and gender norms (Frost et al., 2016), especially children. Taking these groups into account must be a priority from now on, establishing actions with a gender perspective. Environments that are potentially hostile to them can be more so in times of adversity.

Finally, in order to be resilient, all actions for improvement need to incorporate children in the design of activities and projects, especially those aimed at them (Lundy & McEvoy, 2012). Little has been done during the pandemic (Thompson et al., 2021) and had it been done, we would have, for example, realized the importance of taking into account emotional well-being (Coombes et al., 2013), a basic dimension of guidance and personalization that Montserrat et al. (2022) propose in their analysis model of community resilience.

### **AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS**

All authors contributed to the study conception and design. Material preparation, data collection and analysis were performed by Joan Llosada-Gistau and Judit Gallart. The first draft of the manuscript was written by Carme Montserrat, Anna Planas-Lladó and Carolina Martí-Llambrich. All authors commented on previous versions of the manuscript. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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### **CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT**

The authors have no relevant financial or non-financial interests to disclose.

### **DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT**

Available on CSUC repository 'CORA' <https://doi.org/10.34810/data722>.

### **INFORMED CONSENT**

All procedures performed in our study involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the 1964 Helsinki Declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards. Our study was approved by the Bioethics Committee of the University of Girona (No. CEBRU0028). Written informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study as well as from their parents or legal guardians.

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