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EDITORIAL

Special Issue on Social and Emotional Competences

Mental health problems are a major cause of disability and morbidity of modern societies, as several epidemiological studies have evidenced. International reports indicate that before the age of 18 at least 20% of children and young people have a mental health problem, which highlights the importance of early intervention in order to promote good mental health.

In this context, in the last two decades scientific research has consistently focused on the role of Social and Emotional competencies as predictors of mental health, well-being and academic success along the life course. Less adjusted social and emotional functioning is associated with various behavioral, personal, social and academic difficulties. The study and promotion of social and emotional competencies in children and young people, as part of their healthy development, is therefore considered as a national priority in many countries.

The importance of social and emotional competences promotion has been reinforced with the acknowledgment of the resilience concept as a crucial process for overcoming successfully the adversities that we face throughout our life. This process draws on a combination of external resources that are available to children and young people, as well as internal assets that encompass social and emotional competences. Promoting resilience in children and adolescents that have had to deal with with adversity has been the focus of many researchers who work in this field. If social and emotional skills are one of the pillars of resilience, the promotion of resilience naturally implies the learning of these skills and how they can be used when we are confronted with challenges or significant life events.

This special issue draws on six articles, arising from a call for papers exploring on Social and Emotional Competences and Resilience, following the 5th ENSEC Conference, hosted by the University of Lisbon, Portugal, in July 2015, and includes national and international contributions on this topic.

The first article, by Diego Gomez-Baya and colleagues, entitled *Emotional basis of gender differences in adolescent self-esteem, explores gender differences in emotional intelligence and self-esteem in Spanish adolescents*. Results showed that girls presented lower overall self-esteem and lower perceived emotional intelligence than boys. Additionally, high-perceived emotional attention was related to lower self-esteem in girls and to higher perceived emotional clarity and repair in boys, which in turn were associated with higher self-esteem. The authors close the article with some important implications for the design of programmes to improve girls' self-esteem through a focus on emotional attention.

Valéria Silva and colleagues study, called the *Preliminary study for validation of questionnaire "CDC - body, dance and community" for teenagers*, describes the validation of a questionnaire for young dance practitioners. This study was developed in dance classes for young people aged between 6 to 12 years old, organized by Art Centers of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, aiming at looking into the benefits of dance, both in physical (expressiveness and self-perception of emotions), affective (self-confidence and well-being) and social dimensions (interaction and social participation with family, school and community). A questionnaire developed, comprised 105 items in a 5 point Likert scale, demonstrated adequate validity and reliability which allowed the researchers to identify the benefits of dance in two dimensions, the first called affective and social representations of dance and the second designated as personal and social representations of dance.

The article by Anjali Ghosh, entitled *Expressive Differences for Emotions in Hearing Impaired and with Hearing Individuals*, explores difference between hearing impaired and hearing adolescents in an Indian context. Results demonstrated interesting differences between the two groups which have implications for developing work with both groups, and some particular insights relating to how work might be developed in an Indian context.

The article of Paulo Dias and colleagues, entitled *Further evidence for the structure of the resilience scale in Portuguese language countries: an invariance study with Brazilian and Portuguese adolescents*, explores the resilience concept, its associated factors and outcomes, and in particular the measurement issues around this concept. The study presented by the authors aimed to analyze the structural invariance of the Wagnild and Young's Resilience Scale, as one of the most know and widely used resilience measure across the world, in this case with a sample of Portuguese and Brazilian adolescents. In this article two models, namely the original five and two factor solutions, were tested with the full 25 items version scale, as well as an alternative one factor model for the 14-item short version. The results suggested that the short version can be used for cross-cultural studies since the one factor model tested with the short version scale presented a good fit for the Portuguese and Brazilian samples.

Sandra Roberto and colleagues research, *"The place I long to be": Resilience processes in migrants*, aims at understanding the contexts of adversity and resilience resources of migrants in Portugal. This study was conducted to understand the migration process, particularly, the meanings attributed by Cape Verdean migrants to their life in the country of origin, including the decision to migrate, as well as adversities, resources and adjustment. Using biographical narratives two main dimensions of relevance were identified: cultural differences and

interpersonal relationships with the Portuguese concluding that resilience is an ongoing process, changing over time, which includes the annulment of adversity's impact, developing alternative possibilities or overcoming adversities by integrating them into trajectories and life paths.

Finally, the last article, *Resilience and self-concept of competence in institutionalized and non-institutionalized youth*, by Maria Helena Martins and Vanessa Neto, focuses also on resilience, in this case in institutionalized and non-institutionalized youth. Considerations about institutionalization are made by the authors highlighting positive and negative impacts on youth development. Their research explored the relations between resilience and the self-concept of competence in these two groups. Interestingly the results showed no significant differences between the two groups in terms of resilience, but the non-institutionalized sample revealed higher scores on the self-concept of competence, while the correlation between these two variables is stronger in the institutionalized group. The influence of other variables, such as gender, age, school grade, and school retentions is also investigated. Implications for practice are suggested namely the importance of resilience promotion in care institutions.

The Editors,

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