

Covitality as a protective factor against internalizing and externalizing problems in Spanish adolescents (pp. 393-413)

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The covitality model considers that the joint action of certain social-emotional competences cushions the impact of psychosocial stressful events by preventing the development of mental health problems. The objective of the present study was to analyze the protective role of social-emotional competences of the covitality model in the face of internalizing and externalizing problems in Spanish adolescents. The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire and the Social Emotional Health Survey were applied to 438 adolescents (53.2% men) between 12 and 18 years old ($M= 15.04$, $SD= 1.54$). 20.6% Surpassed cut-off points in psychological problems, with higher emotional symptoms in women. For psychological strengths, women stood out in social competence and men in emotional self-regulation skills. There was a tendency to present more symptoms and less social-emotional competence at an older age. Covitality explained up to 30.6%, 30.9% and 23.8% ($p < .001$) of general, internalizing and externalizing symptomatology, respectively. This work provides evidence on the importance of implementing programs to develop of social-emotional competences in a transversal way in the educational context.