

Perspectives on the effect of virtual education and confinement on the emotions of children from two to five years old, and their families, in a pandemic context

Perspectivas sobre el efecto de la educación virtual y del confinamiento en las emociones de niños de dos a cinco años, y de sus familias, en un contexto de pandemia

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ABSTRACT

Keywords:

virtual education, COVID-19, confinement, emotions, family.

The health emergency caused by COVID-19 pandemic forced education systems to modify the traditional way of providing education, schools adopted virtual education as the most efficient alternative to continue studies, bringing with it important emotional changes in the children lives. This article analyzed different perspectives on the effect of virtual education and confinement on the emotions of children aged two to five years, and their families, in a pandemic context. A qualitative approach was adopted as the study method. It was found that children experienced changes in their emotions during the pandemic and virtual education, teachers and parents also reported changes in their emotions, they experienced more tension and stress as a result of virtual education. In addition, the fear of contagion could impact the emotional expression of boys and girls. It's concluded that the data found in this study provide relevant scientific knowledge about the effects of the pandemic and virtual education in early childhood.

RESUMEN

Palabras clave:

educación virtual, COVID-19, confinamiento, emociones, familia.

La emergencia sanitaria ocasionada por la pandemia de COVID-19 obligó a los sistemas educativos modificar la forma tradicional de impartir educación, en la mayoría de los casos las escuelas adoptaron la educación virtual como la alternativa más eficiente para continuar los estudios, trayendo consigo importantes cambios a nivel emocional en la vida de niños y niñas. El objetivo de la investigación es analizar diferentes perspectivas sobre el efecto de la educación virtual y del confinamiento

en las emociones de niños de dos a cinco años, y de sus familias, en un contexto de pandemia. El diseño de la investigación es cualitativo. Los resultados sugieren que, los niños experimentaron cambios en sus emociones en medio de la pandemia y la educación virtual los docentes y padres de familia también manifestaron cambios en sus emociones, experimentaron más tensión y estrés a raíz de la educación virtual. Se encuentra además que, el temor al contagio puede impactar en la expresión del afecto y en la espontaneidad de los niños y niñas. Se concluye que los datos encontrados en este estudio aportan conocimiento científico relevante sobre los efectos de la pandemia y de la educación virtual en la primera infancia.

Introduction

The arrival and progress of the Covid-19 pandemic, declared on March 11, 2020 by the WHO (2020), led governments to take restrictive measures and respond quickly to the state of emergency. One of the first measures adopted to reduce contagions was confinement and quarantines (Erades & Morales, 2020; United Nations, 2020; Sánchez-Villena & de La Fuente-Figuerola, 2020). At the same time, face-to-face activities in educational institutions were closed, so that, around the world, virtual education has positioned itself as a viable alternative that makes it possible to achieve the teaching-learning processes of millions of children, adolescents and young people (ECLAC, UNESCO, 2020; United Nations, 2020; García, 2020; Gutiérrez & Díaz, 2021). This rapid and unexpected transition between face-to-face and virtuality highlighted the marked difficulties and failures existing in the educational systems to adapt to the new modality, as well as the lack of tools to face this challenge (Aguilar, 2020; Quintero, 2020). According to a UNESCO report (2020), in the second quarter of 2020, 86% of primary school children in "low human development" countries were out of school, while only 20% of children in "high human development" countries were out of school.

A report by ECLAC, together with UNESCO (2020), indicates that as of July 7, 2020, most of the 33 countries that make up Latin America and the Caribbean had suspended on-site classes at all educational levels. This report also states that 26 countries initiated online classes and 24 countries implemented offline learning strategies. Of these 33 countries, 22 offer distance learning in both virtual and distance modalities and 23 countries broadcast educational programs on radio and television. These countries aim to reach the audience through traditional media. In the case of Colombia, on March 15, 2020, the suspension of face-to-face classes was declared throughout the country, both for public and private institutions, so managers, administrators and teachers immediately began to design non-face-to-face learning strategies, giving way to virtual education (El Tiempo, 2020). However, the country has a huge inequality gap, and a large percentage of families do not have technological tools or the possibility of connectivity, leaving them at a disadvantage compared to those children and young people who can access their classes through virtual means (López & Gómez, 2020).

In addition, this situation led to a significant number of family systems being forced to become permanently involved in the education of children, unlike in previous years, when it was observed that most parents and caregivers largely delegated the educational processes of their children to the teaching team (Amaya-López, 2020). In the particular case of preschool education, that is, education for children under six years of age, it has its own requirements. According to Aguilar, (2020) education at initial levels in the midst of the pandemic has been quite complex, considering that children are easily distracted and demand more time and support from parents and teachers. In addition, Chacha (2021) mentions that it is possible that many parents and caregivers are not in intellectual and psycho-affective conditions to handle the curricular contents and make use of the technological tools implemented for virtual education, which may affect the learning process of children, especially at initial and primary levels.

Consequently, the need for parents to provide support in the school process coupled with the pressure of the pandemic situation and confinement has brought about important changes in family functioning, physical and mental health (Sáez-Delgado, et al., 2020; Terry-Jordan, et al., 2020). This is corroborated by a survey of 62,837 parents and caregivers of preschool children during the COVID-19 pandemic in Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador and Peru, which found that the mental health of parents deteriorated significantly during the period of confinement; nearly half of the caregivers reported experiencing sadness, tiredness, fear, insomnia and lack of appetite (Näslund-Hadley, et al. 2021).

However, the pandemic and the measures taken to control it have also brought about significant changes in the daily lives of children. Gatell-Carbó, et al. (2021) indicate that the situation of isolation is associated with a negative impact on child and adolescent mental health, specifically, several studies agree that children of both preschool and school age in the midst of the pandemic presented more irritability, sadness, sleep disturbances, anxious symptoms, depressive symptoms, behavioral problems and somatic complaints (Larraguibel, et al., 2021; Gómez-Becerra, et al., 2020; Domínguez, et al., 2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic, with a rapid increase in confirmed cases and deaths worldwide, has had increasingly evident effects on the psychological sphere, both in the general population and in health personnel and vulnerable groups; namely anxiety, depression and stress. (Lozano, 2020; Ramírez et al., 2020)

For their part, Serdán, et al. (2021) affirm that the emotional or psychological reactions to the pandemic situation are heterogeneous among children, that is, the responses of each infant depend on a wide range of factors, such as age range, personality traits, and even the emotional responses of the adults around them.

In general terms, the theoretical evidence shows that the pandemic situation and the move to virtual education has implied a challenge in the lives of all those who make up the educational system. Just like parents and children who receive classes through virtual means, teachers have also been affected by this work dynamic that has been associated with high levels of stress, fear, hopelessness, frustration, among other psychological alterations (Mayorga-Nuñez & Llerena-Novoa, 2021).

Finally, it is important to recognize that, in parallel to the development of the pandemic, the body of scientific knowledge about it has expanded, however, the experiences derived from the pandemic situation vary from one person to another and are determined by the particularities of the context, family system, age, experiences, risk factors and resilience (Pereira, et al., 2021). In this sense, this research aims to analyze different perspectives on the effect of virtual education and confinement on the emotions of children aged two to five years, and their families, in a pandemic context.

Method

Design

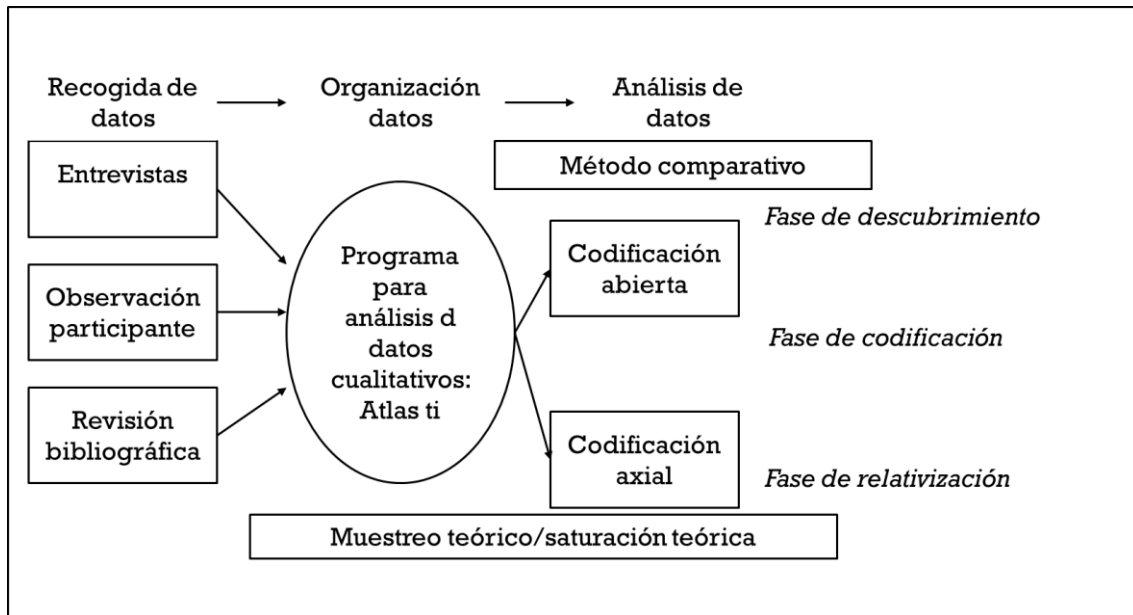
Qualitative approach. Type of qualitative methodology used: Strauss and Corbin (2002) grounded theory and Taylor and Bogdan (1990) guidelines for data analysis.

Qualitative data analysis

The data analysis was carried out using the Atlas ti software, taking into account the grounded theory and the guidelines offered by Taylor and Bogdan (1987), who propose three moments in the data analysis. Figure 1 shows the data analysis process in more detail.

Figure 1

Data analysis process



1. Discovery phase: transcripts were read twice by two different researchers. Next, emerging themes were sought and typologies were developed.

2. Coding phase: all data were coded, and the analysis was redefined if necessary.

3. Relativization phase: the interviewer's feelings at the time of the interviews were analyzed, distinguishing between the perspective of the adolescent girls individually and as a group. A critical reflection was made on the assumptions themselves.

Participants: a teacher from a private school of high socioeconomic level, a psychologist from a private school of medium socioeconomic level and a mother from a private school of medium-low socioeconomic level. Participant observation was conducted in the private school of high socioeconomic level.

Data collection techniques.

Interviews were mainly conducted. Participants were asked about some of the topics listed below:

1. Effect of virtual education on the emotions of preschool children, their parents, and their teachers at the beginning of quarantine by COVID-19

2. Sentiment of children, parents and teachers regarding virtual classes in early education.

3. Effect of virtual education on the family life of preschool children

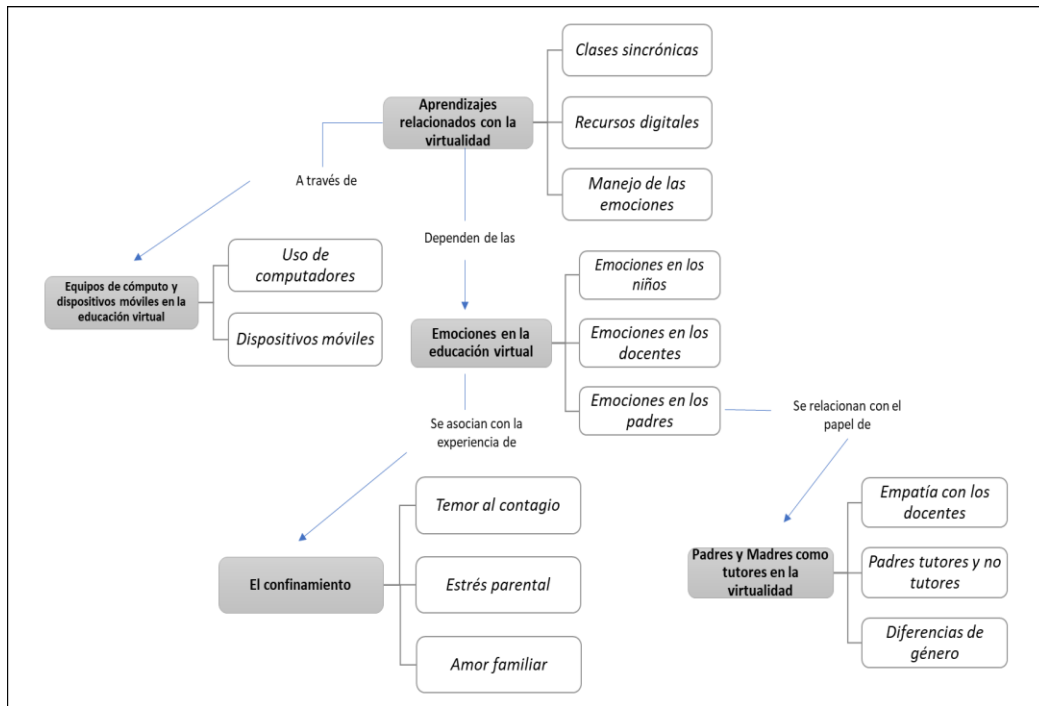
4. Effect of confinement on the emotions of preschool children, their parents and teachers at the beginning of COVID quarantine

Results

Figure 2 shows the categories found in the study in gray and the subcategories in white. The categories have been related to each other.

Figure 2

Categories and subcategories



Learning related to virtuality

1.1 Synchronous classes

Children experienced changes in the number of synchronous hours from home. That is, they went from spending five to six hours at school to spending approximately three hours connected in synchrony with the teacher and classmates. At first, teachers made the effort to have children spend five to six hours on the screens; however, when they realized that children could not spend so many hours with their attention focused on a single stimulus, teachers reduced synchronous classes. Thus, some teachers decided to teach fewer synchronous classes after the snack.

1.2. Digital resources

Teachers learned new digital resources. They learned how to edit videos with more effects and develop more creative lessons. For their part, caregivers also learned how to use new digital resources, how to present videos, and how to use meeting platforms, such as: Meet, Zoom or Teams. In addition, caregivers were more knowledgeable about their children's learning. A psychologist puts it this way: "It has a positive effect to take ownership of what your children are doing, on the educational side, and to be aware of what they are learning. For her part, a teacher says: "it was positive to take ownership of all of their children's content and be vigilant that they were learning."

1.3. Emotional management

Through virtual education, strategies aimed at achieving a balance in the children's emotions had to be restructured. Children showed rejection of educational settings and anger episodes increased. The teachers devised strategies aimed at managing emotions, including activities related to the Emotion Monster. Parents were encouraged to organize their own and their children's schedules. To this end, one school came up with the Everyday Clock strategy. This consisted of making a clock together with the child, reflecting different activities that would be carried out throughout the day. Schedule organization was related to lower levels of stress. A great deal of emphasis was placed on meetings with parents to ask them about their feelings, expectations and to make different recommendations to achieve an optimal learning process from a daily basis.

Computers and mobile devices in virtual education

2.1. Use of computers

Many families had to purchase at least one piece of equipment for a family member. Some families had three children, so they needed at least two computers at home.

Of the three schools, only one lent equipment to families who needed it, especially to those families who had several children in school and did not have computer equipment at home.

2.2. Mobile devices

Those students who did not have computers are called by the schools to inquire about their absence and to make telephone follow-ups. Also, many students who did not have computers worked with their parents' cell phones or tablets. Some families who did not have any of these resources were supported by some schools.

3. The role of parental mentoring

3.1. Empathy with teachers

Many parents helped their children in the first weeks of quarantine, thus many realized how much teachers help their children. One teacher tells us that a mother told her the following: "I don't know what you're doing that you have twenty in one room, and I have two and I'm tired." In fact, "many parents with three children had to seek extra help." A mother recognizes the work of teachers in face-to-face education: "Well, it's a little difficult, to be there explaining, collaborating with the tasks. On the other hand, in the classroom, the teacher is in charge of preparing the homework, correcting it, you don't have to be in charge".

3.2. Guardian and non-guardian parents

In the early days of the Covid-19 quarantine, there were parents who had to decide whether to help their children in the classroom, seek help from a third party or leave them alone. Most figured it would only be for a short time, so some parents decided to help. In this way, some parents were left as the guardians of their children's education while others relied on other people to carry out this task. A teacher comments: "there were teachers who said, it's not that they told me that they are not the teachers, that this work is mine (as a teacher), it was like they didn't want to. I don't want to be my child's teacher now. There were others who said, I'm going to become my son's teacher!". The psychologist tells us: Some parents said: "Well come on. With work and all, let's go" others: "I can't, and I need them to come back because I'm not going to be able to." Parents who decided to become tutors took ownership of the concepts their children were learning and generalized it to everyday life. Some parents reinforced concepts through the day's activities outside of the virtual school day.

However, we also have the case of working parents who cannot decide whether or not to be the guardian of their children. There were parents who simply had to continue working in quarantine, and many of them did not have nannies or teachers who could help them in the virtual education of their children. They had to leave them alone to do the workshops and homework. A mother comments: "Well, you had to help them a lot so that they would know how to manage in the area. There are many who go low academically because their parents were working, they didn't have time, they didn't have someone to guide them. I have always been here with my son, but those who could not?"

A psychologist told us that some parents took the role of tutors very seriously and that in her school she had to talk to some of them to remind them that the teacher was the one who had the knowledge to help children learn with positive reinforcement. This new parental role, according to the teachers, did not cause confusion for the children: A teacher commented: "They have at no time thought that "my dad is my teacher." I don't think that happened in children. I think having their teacher there told them: this is always my teacher, but my dad is accompanying me, my dad helps me with my homework".

3.3. Gender differences

There were more mothers who decided to become guardians of the children, compared to fathers. Few parents were seen by teachers helping their children ("what I noticed in my

classes was that most of them were the moms, or the nanis," said one teacher). Some families took turns: sometimes the mother was there, sometimes the father, sometimes the nanny. A teacher commented: "well I've heard that there are dads who are less patient, moms, even if they are a little impatient, are the ones who can stay the longest." When we inquired a little more about this gender difference and about the possible overload of any of these, a teacher tells us:

"It's just that a lot of them work and answer for all the things in their house. So it's not that hard for them, it's just another thing. Unlike dad, which is just a job.

4. Emotions in virtual education

4.1. Emotions in children: In general, the feelings presented by children from two to five years of age when faced with virtual education at the beginning of the pandemic are: helplessness, tension, desire for contact, aggressiveness, sadness. A mother comments that her son felt: "sad, melancholy and desperate"; when asked why I thought he felt that way, he replies: "because I said I want to be with my friends, this one, to share with them. You know that they need that, at least, to share at recess, they run here and there. It's not the same being in the house."

One teacher states the following: "I watched from the screen as they threw things away." The children's rejection of virtual education was reflected in the children's absence from the screen, the children's crying and tantrums outside and inside the screen, the children wanted to see their peers personally.

4.2. Emotions in teachers: Teachers presented a lot of tension and concern at the beginning of virtual education in the pandemic. There was a lot of information and many new challenges from the school:

"there was too much tension at the beginning, even when they told us there was something new, we said: no way. Because we were so saturated with the news that we wanted to have everything ready."

Teachers had to find solutions to the stress they felt at work: "There were professors who even had to undergo therapy because they were so stressed (...). There was a moment when all the teachers started to share and we all had the same symptoms, there was a lot of tension in our heads."

4.3. Emotions in parents: Parents were stressed by all the changes, by the amount of work, by the possibility of getting sick. Also, some parents were out of work, which was another concern. One teacher comments on the increased stress for both parents and teachers as follows: "Both for the teachers, knowing how to deal with what we are not used to, and for them (the parents) to have one more responsibility, which corresponded to the school". For parents it was "very stressful, many were used to the fact that education was at school (...) I think the fact of being able to manage work and school is difficult" (teacher). Some expressions from parents: "I can't take it anymore, or expressions of: I'm going crazy, I don't know what to do". In addition, parents had to combine work and school life, and if they had several children it was worse: "because many worked from home, others still had to go to their jobs and the last thing they wanted to hear about was school, so I think there was stress for them as well." The psychologist says: "having more than one child also caused stress." In addition, many caregivers suffered from stress because they could not leave home and continue with "normalcy". A mother comments: "there are many people who suffered from stress because they could not go out, could not go to a supermarket or park, and that causes many illnesses due to stress (...) my mom, at least, got sick because she could not do the activities she did. Then he started to get sick.

Confinement and emotions

Fear of contagion

Fear of parental contagion had an impact on children's expression of affection and spontaneity. Some children developed a fear of contagion in the first period of quarantine. The psychologist comments that a mother called the school because she was overcome by an anxiety attack of her four-year-old daughter. The child needed to go to the pediatrician and did not want to leave the house for fear of catching the disease. She didn't want to be touched and she didn't want to touch anything because she thought she was going to get sick and die. A teacher comments: "(...) because, when a father, from an early age, tells you: don't do this, you already know that you are not going to do it, and for the rest of your life you are not going to do it (...), then, if parents are now telling their children: you cannot hug, you cannot greet (...) then I believe that this is an effect that will come now and that children may not express themselves as they naturally wish to do (...). Teachers of children in early childhood education are fearful that children will change their emotional expression because of the pandemic. Due to the adults' insistence that nothing should be touched or hugged, the teacher comments: "Children come, hug, throw themselves, say I love you spontaneously, and throw themselves and hug their friends (...) I think that affection, loving and expressing is going to be something that is going to remain in them, that perhaps, children might not be like they used to be. That is, a child will no longer say: hello profee, if not who is going to say hello, and that's it. (...) In fact, I'm thinking about it, and it provokes something in my heart.

5.2. Parental stress

One teacher commented that there are parents who are at work all day, in the office or online, and when they get to their children, they scold them because they find them getting into mischief, and they scold them and call attention to them. She believes that, although this is part of the children's education, if the children do not receive more than this, they will also find it difficult to give. A psychologist tells us that parents, when they are stressed, don't want to know about "their children's tantrums", she says that parents call their children "Pataletosos" when they want to do their will and don't want to do what their parents tell them to do. In addition, he believes that parents should accompany the expression of children's emotions.

Parents are key in regulating their children's emotions. The psychologist comments that she suggests to parents that, when children are angry or nervous, parents should accompany the emotion, in such a way that we let the child know that we understand his or her feelings and that when he or she is calmer we can talk to him or her more calmly. All interviewees consider that the family is fundamental to help regulate children's emotions and to preserve their ability to express emotions and provide affection. A teacher says: "I believe that the family is the most important source of love. During all the time I have been in preschool I have seen how those parents who are super affectionate, the children also react the same way, they have no limits to love (...). I think that the family is fundamental now for that, that is to say, there are many fathers that at this moment, because they are busy, it is like the way they react: hey, I am working all day, but I need to be responsible for my child's affection. (...) this time is for my son and I will only be pure love with my son."

5.3. Family love

Family love can be key to rescue the expression of affection and spontaneity in children. A teacher proposes love gatherings with the children so that the manifestations of love are not lost. The teacher comments: "Children are little sponges, if you give me love, then I will also give you love. I think the fundamental thing in the family is to take an exact time to give love to your children, exact to enjoy as a family, and to know that the affection is there and has not fallen off."

Discussion and conclusions

Finally, the conclusions of the article will be presented in a last section, followed by the main conclusions. Where appropriate, limitations and proposals for continuity will be included. The existing literature on the behavior of COVID-19 in different age groups indicates that children are not the most vulnerable group to infection and disease by the COVID-19 virus; however, it has been reported that they are one of the most psychosocially vulnerable groups (Lizondo-Valencia, et al. 2021; Galiano, et al. 2020). This vulnerability is the result of the restriction of physical contact, the closure of educational institutions, kindergartens, limitation of contact with peers, restriction of recreational activities and difficulties in accessing protection in situations where children's rights are violated (Morales, 2020, De Matos, et al., 2021). This raises the need to identify the concrete effects of the pandemic experienced by children and their families.

According to Lizondo-Valencia et al. (2021) the psychological distress of children in the midst of the pandemic is not associated in itself with the virus, rather, it is closely related to the limitation to establish social ties with peers and teachers in face-to-face activities, the restriction of social and recreational activities that allow emotional regulation. This could explain the irritability, sadness, tension, rejection of virtual classes and aggressiveness experienced by the children at the beginning of the pandemic and virtual education, as expressed by their parents and evidenced by the teachers through the screens, in addition to the emotional manifestations, parents and teachers expressed that the children presented behavioral manifestations, such as tantrums, which coincides with previous studies that report a significant increase in this type of behavior in situations of confinement (Larraguibel, et al., 2021; Gómez-Becerra, et al., 2020; Domínguez, et al., 2020).

It is interesting to note how parents' perspectives are divided on whether or not to take on the role of teacher and whether or not to assume the tutoring of their children. While some parents said they were motivated to take control of their children's education, other parents said that it was a tiring job and that it depended on the teachers. Possibly, this is related to the response capacity of families to teach from home, since it has been shown that those parents who have a higher educational level and less economic difficulties during the pandemic, find it easier to meet the demands of virtual education, while those families going through economic crises, unemployment, or high levels of stress due to teleworking perceive it as difficult to meet the educational needs of their children (Failache, et al. 2020).

In fact, parental stress is one of the problems evidenced in the findings of this study; parents experience overload in their work activities and their capacity and availability to attend to their children's education in virtual mode decreases. In addition, one of the particular situations expressed by the teachers participating in this study is that stressed parents generally scold and call attention to behaviors that are in the spectrum of what a child does in early childhood, i.e., playing, exploring, or moving most of the time. This situation could have negative implications for the child's development, as stated by Mayorga-Núñez and Llerena-Novoa (2021), when children in early education receive sufficient support in their learning processes and their psycho-affective needs are met, emotional, intellectual, oral and written language development is guaranteed, but when this support is absent, these spheres of development are considerably affected.

Likewise, it has been described that early childhood is one of the critical moments in which children develop habits and lifestyles, and structure their pillars to interact socially; therefore, periods of confinement affect their ability to build social bonds, and pose a new form of relationship between childhood and society (Lizondo-Valencia, et al., 2021; Morales, 2020, Galiano, et al. 2020). In this regard, the teachers' discourse shows concern about this aspect, because of the fear of contagion, children are urged to reduce contact with people outside the family circle and in the future this could have repercussions on the way they relate and establish

bonds, which is why teachers insist on the need to strengthen family ties and expressions of love that can counteract the effects described above.

On the other hand, the findings from the interviews show that in those households where there was more than one child taking virtual classes, stress and tension intensified, a situation described by both parents and teachers. It has also been found in other studies that, since the pandemic is an unforeseen situation, many families do not have technological resources for each member of the family, nor spaces conducive to the development of school activities and teleworking, and this generates a burden of stress, especially for parents who are the ones who face the responsibilities of the home (Ponce, et al. 2020).

In addition, the findings of this study show that there are gender differences in the process of accompanying boys and girls, the mothers participating in this study reported that they were constantly supervising and accompanying their children's activities, the teachers also observed these marked gender differences. Respectively, preceding research has reported that women are generally the ones who take control of their children's virtual education; moreover, mental health distress is higher in those women who assume the greatest responsibility for accompanying children in early education (Näslund-Hadley, et al. 2021). In this sense, for future studies it would be important to thoroughly review the mental health status of mothers who have constantly accompanied their children through virtual education. Although it is important to consider the involvement of families in the success of childhood learning, the socio-historical construction of roles has imposed these tasks as the exclusive responsibility of women. In this sense, the conditions caused by the pandemic have exacerbated the double presence of women, along with the increase in discomfort and negative health effects (Quezada, De la Hoz & Lara, 2021).

A topic of notable interest to this study has been the access that participating families have to technological resources and the ability of parents to use these resources for the benefit of their children's education. While some families had sufficient computer equipment available, other family groups did not have the required equipment and received support from the educational institutions by telephone, in some cases students used their parents' cell phones as a means to receive virtual classes, among other situations that put learning at stake. In this regard, García (2021) points out that in Colombia the closure of educational institutions due to the Covid-19 pandemic has made visible the significant gap that exists in education, specifically for children under five years of age, which implies deficiencies in cognitive achievement that may have repercussions throughout life and an increase in the conditions of inequality in the country in the following decades.

Finally, it is important to note that virtual education has proven to be a challenge for teachers and they have inevitably experienced fluctuations in their emotional state. The participants of this study state that the beginning of the pandemic and virtual education brought with it tension, somatic complaints, worry and uncertainty, especially due to the saturation of information and work to which they were exposed, subsequently, teachers were forced to seek solutions to this state of tension, such as: sharing their own experience of tension and seeking therapy. Similar findings were reported by Calderón and collaborators (2021), who interviewed 14 preschool teachers and reported having experienced stress, anxiety and physical health problems during the health contingency period and the beginning of virtual activities with the children. From the teaching point of view, the use of communication and information tools in virtual training environments is limited, conditioned to motivation and in many cases weak in terms of their training to handle them; many lack sufficient experience in the use of instruments that can be employed in their didactic and methodical non-face-to-face (Pincay, 2018; Cabero and Marín, 2014, cited in Martínez-Garcés and Garcés-Fuenmayor, 2020).

The findings of this research allow us to conclude that virtual education has affected the emotions of teachers, parents and children; likewise, it is evident that the situation of virtual education and confinement becomes more complex in those cases where there are no resources at home: computers, tablets. Secondly, few mothers mention their husbands as support in virtual education, but it is worth noting that in some cases the extended family is in charge of providing support and in these cases the family is better able to handle the overload of virtual education. Finally, the analysis of children's emotions allows us to affirm that the fear of contagion can have an impact on the expression of affection and spontaneity of children; however, it is observed that when parents are calm and manage their emotions adaptively, their children do too, in this sense, love in the family can rescue the expression of affection and spontaneity in children from two to five years old.

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