Article

Inclusion, Dyslexia, Emotional State and Learning: Perceptions of Ibero-American Children with Dyslexia and Their Parents during the COVID-19 Lockdown

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Abstract: The COVID-19 pandemic has transformed educational processes. This has had major consequences for students and, in particular, for those with special education needs. Dyslexic students suffer from widespread educational and legal invisibility, and information on their situation and that of their families during this health crisis is lacking. This article presents the results of an exploratory study based on two online surveys taken by parents (n = 327) and children with dyslexia (n = 203) through the Spanish Dyslexia Federation (acronym in Spanish "FEDIS"), the Dyslexia and Family Association (acronym in Spanish "DISFAM"), and the Ibero-American Organisation for Specific Learning Difficulties (acronym in Spanish "OIDEA"). Data were collected in May–July 2020. The results offer a comprehensive viewpoint (family and children) on the aspects that have helped and hindered learning, such as teacher and family support, emotional state, use of ICT, and the importance of the voluntary/association network. The study provides evidence of how lockdown and school closures have created additional difficulties for learning but also how certain educational processes have been bolstered with the support of technological resources that should serve as benchmarks for education policy and classroom practice.

Keywords: COVID-19; dyslexia; emotional state; family associations; ICT; inclusive education; lockdown

1. Introduction

The complicated and complex COVID-19 crisis has highlighted lots of problems in education that cannot be resolved on their own or without understanding how they have impacted those who have had to adapt to a different system for educating and learning first-hand. Several studies have revealed the negative impact of confinement on certain types of learning [1–3] and also the consequences on the psychological and emotional states of students in compulsory schooling [4,5]. In fact, according to Telli and Altun [6], education has been the sector most affected by COVID-19 after the health sector.

Connecting scientific evidence on dyslexia and other specific learning difficulties with the perceptions and experiences of families and children helps bring us closer to fundamental solutions that facilitate different school responses. This provides us opportunities to look into transformation and improvement by implementing activities that help us to progress in school development in terms of inclusive education to allow fair learning processes.

When it comes to fairness, the initial question we must ask ourselves is whether our education system is fair. Such a broad question has no easy answer. The global crisis we are experiencing is showing us that the gap between fairness and inequality is far from diminishing and, during this pandemic, has widened further [7,8]. This is not due to the

health crisis but rather to the still accepted and unquestioned belief that, in many instances, problems are inherent to a group of individuals, regardless of the educational context. This approach, however, has been questioned for decades. A good example is Ainscow, Booth and Dyson's work from 2006 [9] that underlines the undeniable need to acknowledge that difficulties interact, amongst other things, with teaching and learning methodologies, organisational methods, and interpersonal relations at schools.

Along these lines, Wehmeyer [10] delved into what has been called 'third generation inclusive practices' based on questioning what and how pupils are taught. Emphasis is placed on the quality of an educational programme and its flexibility for personalisation—including a variety of methods, resources, and assessment types—to encourage peer cooperation whilst also using technology and digital resources. Opertti [11] underscored this by demonstrating that one of the most important attributes to ensure fairness and quality in education is strengthening different environments that enable significant learning experiences through the use of a wide range of pedagogical and teaching strategies that provide learning opportunities with access to similar educational experiences for different students.

1.1. Inclusive Education as a Means to Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Sustainability, in terms of the well-being of the planet and its people, is a great global challenge that the Sustainable Development Goals link to inclusive education [12]. Inclusion and sustainability are closely related because the former ceases to make sense if the world we live in is unsustainable [13].

By reflecting on the SDGs, we not only show concern for a planet in which material resources are limited but we also extend our arguments in the social and educational debate.

The fundamental principles of equity and social and educational equality are interdependent as well as fundamental to sustainable development. This involves expanding opportunities for all, opportunities that, in education, are translated into meeting the needs of each and every child and young person and guaranteeing their presence, participation, and progress [14].

Within the framework of the values defined by Booth and Ainscow [15], from an inclusive education perspective, the value of sustainability is nuclear, since inclusive centers are places that promote sustainable development through the learning and participation of all and the reduction of exclusion and discrimination. Therefore, processes of educational inclusion are related to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 17 goals that allow the world to be transformed for all people under a context of sustainable future [16]. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is an instrument that highlights the mutual dependencies that exist between the development of inclusive education and sustainable development [17].

1.2. Dyslexia and Educational Implications

In terms of dyslexia—the specific area targeted in this research—we draw on the definition proposed by the International Dyslexia Association (IDA), which emerged from a consensus amongst renowned researchers and professionals [18]:

Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurobiological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.

An important element to consider is the discrepancy between the effort made in learning by pupils with dyslexia and the quality of the final result. This discrepancy may cause high levels of stress, frustration, and anxiety [19] not only during the reading acquisition process but across all learning stages. Moreover, identifying the needs of these

students early is essential to minimize the gap in success between pupils with dyslexia and their classmates [20,21].

Dyslexia is one of the most common conditions experienced by school-age children [22]. As a consequence of attempting reading and writing problems at the initial literacy stage, this heterogeneous group of pupils may, without early intervention, start to suffer from low self-esteem and a low academic self-concept. Every new experience and educational stage requires adapted support to build significant and positive learning processes. When this support is non-existent and pupils must adapt to standard norms, children and teenagers feel that school-based learning is moving ever further from their grasp [23,24].

1.3. Emotional State and Dyslexia

Few studies have focused on identifying emotions among dyslexic pupils compared with those focusing on the diagnosis of dyslexia and its associated specific learning difficulties. Nonetheless, research from Alexander-Passe [25] suggests that children with dyslexia experience high levels of stress due to their interactions with teachers who have low expectations regarding their performance; this generates strong emotions (fear, loneliness, etc.) and physiological manifestations (tremors, nausea, etc.) that lead to negative feelings about their own performance and well-being. These results are in line with previous research that has pointed in the same direction [26–28].

Three standout studies analysed the emotional load of pupils with dyslexia. The results of research conducted by Ghisi et al. [29] showed that in comparison with other pupils, those with dyslexia have a significantly lower level of self-esteem and more negative self-concept in terms of their own performance versus that of their classmates. This finding was confirmed by the results presented by Novita [30], who demonstrated that pupils with dyslexia show higher levels of anxiety and lower self-esteem, although this varies depending on the educational context. In addition, Zuppardo, Serrano, and Pirrone [31] highlighted that the level of self-esteem of pupils with dyslexia is lower in comparison with that of other peer groups and that these students have higher rates of anxiety and depression. Another interesting point is that these emotional levels manifest across academic settings, both in terms of social relations and non-school contexts. In many cases, this has a long-term impact "characterized by an interplay between the functional challenges of their learning disabilities and the related self-esteem issues" [32] (p. 363).

The emotional difficulties identified in previous research are mainly caused by teacher-set lesson plans that fail to adjust to the particular reading process requirements of children with dyslexia. Binks-Cantrell et al. [33] conducted a study on teacher awareness and knowledge about reading and concluded that teachers do not possess a solid understanding of language components (phonetics, morphology, syntax, and phonology), which directly affects dyslexic pupils.

In this sense, and depending on the educational experiences of pupils with dyslexia regarding their learning pathways, what Lithari [34] (page. 281) has termed a "fractured academic identity" begins to form. Therefore, it can be stated that emotional and social consequences are not an inherent feature of dyslexia [35] but rather side effects that have a huge impact on learning.

Within this framework and taking into account school education being—as it must be—good for all [36], this study aims to explore the perceptions of children with dyslexia and their families during the months of school closure due to the lockdowns introduced to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic situation. As will be demonstrated, in these exceptional circumstances, difficulties and issues have arisen that need to made visible. We intend to suggest guidance for the entire educational community and relevant administrations.

1.4. Objectives

This study analysed the experiences of students with dyslexia from different Ibero-American countries (Spain, Argentina, Mexico, Colombia, Chile, Dominican Republic,

Peru and Ecuador) and their families during lockdowns. The emphasis was on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak on learning and emotional states. The participating countries were selected because their historical and cultural links and because the associations involved in this study operate in these countries. Three specific objectives were put forward:

1. We had an in-depth look at the learning processes of pupils with dyslexia during the COVID-19 pandemic and associated lockdowns;
2. We assessed the usefulness of the tasks performed by pupils and the effective use of ICT;
3. We identified the emotions experienced by families and pupils with dyslexia and the role of association networks.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Participants

The study sample comprised a total of 530 participants of whom 327 were family members of those with dyslexia and 203 were pupils with dyslexia from different Ibero-American nations. Participant selection was performed on a random and voluntary basis.

The affected population was contacted by email, Facebook, and Twitter to invite them to complete an online questionnaire. This was done in collaboration with the Spanish Dyslexia Federation (acronym in Spanish "FEDIS"), the Dyslexia and Family Association (acronym in Spanish "DISFAM"), and the Ibero-American Organisation for Specific Learning Difficulties (acronym in Spanish "OIDEA").

The first page of the questionnaire stated that responses would be anonymous and that participants could withdraw from the questionnaire at any time, since participation was voluntary. To advance in the questionnaire, participants had to expressly accept a clause on the first screen that involved giving their informed consent.

The study involved 50% male and 50% female pupils with dyslexia. The majority were from Spain (50.5%), 38.4% were from Argentina, and 3.4% from Mexico and Colombia. Smaller percentages came from Chile, the Dominican Republic, Peru, and Ecuador. The percentages of pupils in different age groups were as follows: 9–12 years (53.3%), 13–15 years (26.7%), and 16–18 years (14.4%). Most were studying at public schools (52.1%) in primary education (53.3%) or obligatory secondary education (36.7%), with 7.5% in post-obligatory secondary education or the equivalent in different countries.

In terms of the families, gender was a revealing item, since 97.6% of these participants were female with only 2.4% being male. Their backgrounds followed the same composition as for pupils, and their age groups were as follows: 36–45 (62.3%) and 46–55 (30.8%). Mothers made up the vast majority of participating family members (94.8%) (Table 1).

Table 1. Characterization of the sample.

Pupils with Dyslexia		
Variable	**Category**	**Sample %**
Gender	Woman	50
	Man	50
Country	Spain	50.5
	Argentina	38.4
	Mexico	3.4
	Other countries	7.7
Age	9–12	53.3
	13–15	26.7
	16–18	14.4
	19–21	5.6
Type of school	Public school	52.1
	Private school	47.9

Table 1. *Cont.*

Pupils with Dyslexia		
Variable	**Category**	**Sample %**
Educational stage	Primary education	53.3
	Obligatory secondary education	36.7
	post-obligatory secondary	7.5
	N/A	2.5
Family of People with Dyslexia		
Variable	**Category**	**Sample %**
Gender	Woman	97.6
	Man	2.4
Age	25–35	4.8
	36–45	62.3
	46–55	30.8
	>55	2.1

Source: own elaboration.

2.2. Procedure and Instruments

The methodological framework was based on a mixed approach (integrates quantitative and qualitative research elements) employing two strategies: (1) a quantitative analysis with one online survey aimed at exposing the experiences of pupils with dyslexia and their families; and (2) a content analysis of the open-ended questions included in the surveys organised around dimensions and units of analysis [37].

We used the DEA survey (Dyslexia, Emotion and Learning), with the aim of obtaining exploratory and descriptive insights into the experiences of the participants. Surveys are an adequate way of defining and identifying different opinions [38]. Moreover, the questionnaire used has a precise level of internal consistency, as shown by its Cronbach's alpha score of 0.901. According to George and Mallery [39], when the co-efficient is >0.901, instrument reliability is excellent.

As for the measures of the variables, there are no scales available for measuring inclusion, emotional state, and learning for children with dyslexia and their parents during the COVID 19 lockdown. For this reason, an ad hoc scale was developed, which included various aspects related to inclusion in relation to previous literature. To validate the content of the survey, a group of experts, specifically seven university experts in the field with extensive experience in the evaluation of questionnaires, were consulted.

The survey of pupils with dyslexia and their families comprised a total of 35 items and three study dimensions: (a) sociodemographic profile; (b) learning processes during the COVID-19 pandemic and the school lockdown; and (c) personal and family experiences and relationships with friends. The items were assessed on a Likert scale (1: Not at all; 2: A little; 3: Moderate; 4: Some and 5: A lot). The survey included a final open question where participants could indicate positive and negative aspects of their experiences during confinement.

The pupil survey included additional dimensions to assess emotions experienced using two subscales ("Adaptability" and "General mod") from the Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory: Youth Version ages 7 to 18 from Bar-On and Parker [40]. These subscales assessed the ability to manage change and deal with emotions in stressful situations. The subscale "Adaptability" had 10 items and the subscale "General mod" had 14 items. All items were assessed on a Likert scale (1: Never; 2: It happens to me sometimes; 3: It almost always happens to me; 4: Always happens to me). Both of these scales expose acceptable levels of reliability and validity.

The survey enabled us to look further into the learning processes during the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown. In this sense, we looked at how online classes were implemented, the work of teachers, the adaptation in teaching to pupil needs, the management of ICT, study tasks, and the assessment of the entire process.

The instrument was sent via Google Forms for self-administration by pupils and their parents and was supported through a collaboration with the Spanish Dyslexia Federation (FEDIS), the Dyslexia and Family Association (DISFAM), and the Ibero-American Organisation for Specific Learning Difficulties (OIDEA).

Data collection was performed in the final months of the 2019–2020 academic year (May–July 2020), after a global health alert due to the COVID-19 pandemic was declared.

2.3. Data Analysis

The quantitative data collected in the surveys were analysed with the SPSS 26 statistics software package. Basic descriptive and frequency, Chi-square, and mean difference analyses were performed. Despite notable differences in the educational systems among countries, no significant differences were found in relation to the independent variables assessed (gender, country, age, type of school, and educational stage). Further, the response trends were the same for pupils with dyslexia and their families.

The qualitative data obtained from the open-ended questions were analysed with the Aquad 8 software programme [41]. The content analysis complied with the standard procedures put forward by Huber [42] and Saldaña [43] and incorporated our own effective methodology that has already been assessed in previous studies [44–46]. The analyses were geared towards reducing/grouping information by searching for keywords, producing identifiable significant segments, cataloguing, identifying links, and cross-referencing codes.

Given the volume of data, specific abbreviations were used (Table 2) to identify participant contributions and undertake coding for significant segments through the Aquad 8 software program [41].

Table 2. References used for basic identification of the information from open questions in the surveys.

Abbreviation	Identification
Number	Digits to identify the significance segment in the survey (0001, 0023, 0135, 1234 …)
M, F	Gender M: Male F: Female
P, F	Group: P: Pupil F: Family
M, F, S, G, L	Family tie: M: Mother; F: Father; S: Sibling; G: Grandparent; L: Legal guardian
S, A, CO, ME, C, O	Country: S: Spain; A: Argentina; CO: Colombia; ME: Mexico; C: Chile; O: Other countries (Dominican Republic, Peru and Ecuador)
P1, P2, P3, P4, P5	Pupil age: 1: 7–9; 2: 10–12; 3: 13–15; 4: 16–18; 5: 19–21 … . …
F1, F2, F3, F4	Family age (years old): 1: 25 to 35; 2: 36 to 45; 3: 46 to 55; 4: over 55
Codes	Specified in the tables
Examples	Survey 37, segment from a 40-year-old man born in Spain who is a father, and whose 8-year-old child attends a state school. He thinks that online literacy (POL) has been inconvenient (I) due to the demotivation (D) his child has felt. Coded as (037.M.F.F.S.P1.F2) (POL-I-D). Survey 134, segment from a 56-year-old woman born in Argentina who is a grandmother and whose 12-year-old granddaughter goes to a charter school. She believes that online literacy (POL) has been advantageous (A) for technology literacy (TL). Coded as (134.M.F.M.A.P1.F3.) (POL-A-TL).

Source: own elaboration.

The open-ended questions in the surveys referred to perceptions of what participants experienced during the COVID-19 lockdown months. Four common response catalogues and a segment coding system emerged from the analysis, and individual frequencies were established for each segment (f), partial frequencies (F) for each catalogue, and total frequencies (TF) for each dimension. As an example, we include the pupil analysis (See

Appendix A, Table A1). It should be clarified here that we use the term dimension [42] to operationalise the largest groups.

3. Results

3.1. Quantitative Analysis of the Study

Pupils and families had very similar opinions. To provide greater clarity for both the scientific community and the participating pupils and families, we show the response percentages that stood out. This dimension shows responses from pupils, who were the focus of the process. The pupils stated that during lockdown and the last months of the year, classes were mostly online and in groups (49.5%), and they found them more difficult than face-to-face classes (38.9%); however, 24.5% of respondents stated that online classes were easier than in-person classes. A total of 28.4% of respondents stated that they had not seen their teacher throughout this period. Our data show that the work of teachers could be improved (48.8%), since it did not match the specific needs of the pupils (63%) and that the perceived that teachers do not have a good ability to use the technology and tools required for online teaching (47.3%).

In terms of the usefulness of the tasks performed and the use of ICT, pupils stated that they had not adapted to their situation (66.3%) and that they had completed tasks mostly with the help of their families (69.5%). It is important to highlight the negative perceptions of families and pupils regarding the usefulness of the tasks set by teachers and the possibility of online work with teachers and classmates. Only when these tasks led to more learning about how to use the computer and the internet were pupils' and families´ reports more positive (Table 3). Pupils and families clearly stated that during lockdown and online learning periods, tools and resources that could help dyslexic pupils with learning were not used (e.g., text readers, dictation programs, apps to revise English and mathematics, apps for making concept/visual maps, etc.).

Table 3. Usefulness of the tasks done during the COVID-19 Pandemic lockdown and subsequent months.

	% Pupils					% Families				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Revising what was learnt	19.2	30.8	24.0	21.2	4.8	11.6	29.4	28.1	26.6	4.3
Practicing what was learnt	19.2	28.1	23.3	21.9	7.5	9.8	29.1	30.6	27.2	3.4
Being in contact with my teachers	22.6	30.1	28.8	14.4	4.1	24.5	31.5	22.3	16.8	4.9
Contacting my classmates	28.8	24.7	20.5	14.4	11.6	31.5	29.1	22.0	13.1	4.3
Increasing my interest in subjects	30.8	29.5	18.5	15.8	5.5	30.9	35.5	21.4	10.7	1.5
Learning new things	19.2	25.3	24.7	20.5	10.3	20.5	26.9	28.7	19.6	4.3
Organising myself better	24.7	23.3	19.2	18.5	14.4	24.2	24.5	21.7	20.5	9.2
Solving problems	28.8	24.0	18.5	19.9	8.9	24.8	33.0	20.8	17.1	4.3
Working with my classmates	66.4	14.4	9.6	3.4	6.2	52.3	26.9	14.7	4.0	2.1
Learning to use the computer better	17.1	19.2	20.5	21.9	21.2	11.3	13.8	27.2	30.3	17.4
Learning more about the internet	14.4	19.2	23.3	23.3	19.9	11.0	13.1	27.5	31.8	16.5
Being more responsible with my studies	22.2	21.9	20.2	21.9	13.7	22.9	24.8	22.0	20.8	9.5
Collaborating with other classmates	50.0	19.9	13.0	8.2	8.9	51.1	21.1	14.7	8.9	4.3

Notes: The Likert scale, which was adapted for the families and pupils, had the following scale: 1: Not at all; 2: A little; 3: Moderate; 4: Some and 5: A lot. Source: own elaboration.

In terms of personal and family experiences and relationships with friends, pupils stated that the situation differed depending on their nature (Table 4). The most negative experiences were linked to changes in study habits, feelings of being overloaded and stressed due to the tasks provided, missing social relationships with other classmates and pupils, and not feeling well or at ease during these months. In turn, family relationships, belief in and recognition of pupils' progress, and support from family members when organizing tasks were rated positively.

Table 4. Situations experienced during the COVID-19 Pandemic lockdown and subsequent months.

	% Pupils					% Families				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
My day-to-day was the same as before	65.8	11.6	13.7	4.1	4.8	55.4	20.2	17.7	4.9	1.8
I felt fine	28.1	18.5	24.7	12.3	16.4	31.8	19.6	15.6	17.1	15.9
I had to change my study habits	11.6	16.4	9.9	19.2	42.9	8.6	10.7	23.2	25.7	31.8
I felt overloaded and stressed	10.3	13.0	9.2	18.5	49.0	14.4	11.3	12.0	21.1	41.2
I argued with my family about homework	15.1	13.0	19.9	23.3	28.8	10.7	14.4	17.7	22.3	34.9
I argued with my teachers about homework	61.0	17.1	12.3	3.4	6.2	46.8	19.0	15.9	9.8	8.6
I had a good level of concentration	32.9	18.5	24.0	15.8	8.9	27.8	26.0	22.9	13.8	9.5
I was able to do the activities	8.2	21.9	24.0	25.3	20.5	8.9	18.0	27.8	26.0	19.3
My family believed I was able to do the tasks	9.6	9.6	19.9	20.5	40.4	8.3	13.5	24.2	24.5	29.7
My relationships with my classmates were better	45.2	25.3	12.3	8.2	8.9	45.6	25.1	18.7	7.0	3.7
My relationship with my family was better	14.4	15.1	17.8	22.6	30.1	10.1	18.3	16.8	26.9	27.8
My relationship with my teachers was better	41.8	20.5	21.9	11.0	4.8	33.6	26.9	21.7	13.5	4.3
I missed my classmates	8.2	13.7	15.1	16.4	46.6	14.1	10.4	15.6	15.9	44.0
My family helped me to get organised to do the tasks	2.1	5.5	17.1	19.9	55.5	0.6	5.2	9.8	23.5	60.9
My teachers congratulated me on my work	11.0	15.1	16.4	23.3	34.2	11.9	13.1	17.2	19.9	37.9

Notes: The Likert scale, which was adapted for the families and pupils, had the following scale: 1: Not at all; 2: A little; 3: Moderate; 4: Some and 5: A lot.

Regarding emotions, the results from the two subscales on the BarOn Emotional Quotient Inventory: Adaptability (Table 5) and General Mood (Table 6) showed that the general profiles of participating pupils with dyslexia were positive in terms of managing stress and adaptability. However, a subsequent qualitative analysis highlighted the stressful situations experienced by pupils and families.

Table 5. Bar-on emotional quotient inventor, subscale "Adaptability".

Subscale "Adaptability"	% Pupils			
	1	2	3	4
1. When I am asked difficult questions, I try to answer in different ways	12.3	27.4	48.6	11.6
2. It is easy for me to understand new things	25.3	17.1	48.6	8.9
3. I can understand difficult questions	29.5	15.8	50.0	4.8
4. I work on a problem until I solve it	13.7	32.2	37.7	16.4
5. When faced with difficult questions, I can give good answers	13.7	21.9	53.4	11.0
6. When I want, I can find many ways to answer a difficult question	20.5	22.6	39.0	17.8
7. I can solve problems in different ways	16.4	26.7	43.2	13.7
8. When I answer difficult questions, I think of many solutions	20.5	22.6	39.0	17.8
9. I am good at solving problems	21.9	23.3	43.2	11.6
10. I don't give up on problems	19.9	19.9	19.9	19.9

Notes: The Likert scale, which was adapted for the families and pupils, had the following scale: 1: Never; 2: It happens to me sometimes; 3: It almost always happens to me; 4: Always happens to me. Source: own elaboration.

Finally, in terms of association networks, the families rated the advice and guidance received from associations very positively. In turn, they underscored the importance of association networks in providing a space for parents to relate and communicate, organize useful activities, and mediate with schools nearly unanimously.

Table 6. Bar-on emotional quotient inventor, subscale "General mood".

General Mood	% Pupils			
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**
1. I like to have fun	0.7	6.2	20.5	72.6
2. I am happy	1.4	14.4	32.2	52.1
3. I feel confident about myself	6.8	47.9	29.5	15.8
4. I think most of the things I do will work out	8.9	48.6	24.0	18.5
5. I hope for the best	7.5	32.2	26.0	34.2
6. I like to smile	2.1	13.7	28.8	55.5
7. I know things will work out	7.5	32.2	34.2	26.0
8. I know how to have a good time	1.4	16.4	42.5	39.7
9. I feel good about myself	6.8	25.3	27.4	40.4
10. I am happy as I am	5.5	21.9	32.2	40.4
11. I am entertained by the things I do	1.4	21.9	36.3	40.4
12. I like my body	6.8	18.5	28.1	46.6
13. I like how I look	5.5	18.5	28.1	47.9
14. I have not been very happy	49.3	26.7	15.1	8.9

Notes: The Likert scale used, which was adapted for the families and pupils, had the following scale: 1: Never; 2: It happens to me sometimes; 3: It almost always happens to me; 4: Always happens to me. Source: own elaboration.

3.2. Qualitative Analysis of the Study

The Pupil-Online Learning (POL) dimension (see, Appendix A) produced 1708 significant segments (sentences and, at times, words). The segments were codified (grouped) into 64 categories that were classified into four catalogues referring to advantages (8), inconveniences (18), improvements (19), and emotions (19).

From a broad perspective (dimension), we can state that pupils generally associated the main online learning advantages (POL-A) with family support/co-existence (125), technology literacy (110), self-regulated learning (100), and time management (055). The lower number of examinations (030), access to resources (025), and personal tutorials (020) were also scored highly.

The inconveniences (POL-I) were mainly associated with the greater number of activities (055), fewer social relations (043), and difficulty in following instrumental tasks (038)—mainly in Mathematics and English—which respondents thought should include more online interactions. Closely linked to the above were problems linked to this methodology including stress due to the number of tasks (030), feeling lonely (024), and difficulty concentrating (021).

Example: '...online learning over the platform provided by my school was good as it let me go at my own pace when doing classwork...' (035.M.P.P2.F2) (POL-A-SL) (all translations are the authors' own).

In this context, both pupils and families proposed, by way of improvement (POL-IM), more digital training in remote working for teachers (047), developing the highest possible number of video tutorials to help with management (VT) and doing tasks (043), more teacher explanation sessions for essential areas (038), and greater adaptation of resources (038) and tasks (033) to match pupils' needs, expectations, and requirements.

In the emotions catalogue (POL-E), stress (095), being overloaded at different times (093), uncertainty (033), and loneliness (030) stood out as the most negative sensations experienced, although on the positive side, the atmosphere at home in terms of support and greater interaction (042) were highlights.

4. Discussion and Conclusions

The results obtained highlight the great impact that confinement has had on students with dyslexia and their families. This outcome is in accordance similar investigations conducted on other groups [47,48].

Families have had to take on a dual role—mostly mother–teacher and, to a lesser extent, father–teacher. This situation has out emotional strain on the family environment,

overloading mothers and fathers with responsibilities that are not inherent to them and adding to the already difficult work–life balance at a time of major uncertainty and turbulence. Frustration, suffering, anxiety, and stress characterize the impact of the pandemic, considering the diverse range of circumstances that define family situations and this dual role for which many were ill-prepared and lacked the necessary resources. Family–school cooperation in face-to-face and online learning settings is beneficial for the entire community [49].

The sense of belonging is another valuable point. Pupils' responses highlight the lack of contact with their peers as a negative aspect of the situation, whilst time with the family is a positive aspect which, in a way, has compensated for the sense of missing their classmates—necessary and cherished in-person bonds.

The use of ICT is another standout finding from our study. Having computers, tablets, or mobiles does not ensure learning when learning materials are standardized for all, hard-to-access, and fairly unappealing. Indeed, the results are in line with those from Engel et al. [50] who stated that ICT has a limited impact on learning, mainly due to its diminished potential when the necessary skills have not been worked on. Our research results show that most pupils had access to technology, but only a small percentage had used applications that aided their reading, text comprehension, and writing, which, as other research has highlighted, can be hugely effective [51]. The Universal Design for Learning (UDL) [52] represents a practical and inclusive approach to education; scientific evidence supports its scope as it increases access and participation for all pupils [53] and improves academic and social outcomes [54,55].

4.1. Implications for Educational Practice

In light of our results, we have a huge opportunity to implement actions that could completely transform schooling and education by analysing the psychopedagogical implications of traditional approaches that exclude different groups of pupils, whether this is due to dyslexia or other issues.

If we really believe that Inclusive Education is a "process of strengthening the capacity of the education system to reach out to all learners", as proposed by UNESCO [56] (p. 7), then we should be concerned about education in exceptional situations such as the current one. The situation must serve as a launchpad to reflect on education practices and policies, as well as dichotomous relationships between fairness and injustice, equality and inequality, opportunity and impossibility, etc. from a systemic standpoint. The perceptions and experiences of pupils with dyslexia and their families are no different to those of many other families and children, as the evidence collected here shows. It is fundamental to take advantage of this proof to kickstart a broad overview of inclusion (not exclusively focused on disability) that ensures everyone can make progress and access quality education and that multiple different identities and educational needs are respected, as stated in the recently published UNESCO Sustainable Development Goals [57].

As long as there are children and young people who, due to their own personal difficulties, have fewer opportunities to learn and have satisfactory teaching and learning experiences, we need to ensure that barriers to success continue to be torn down. Our education system urgently needs to look at itself in a mirror, see what is lacking, and visualize what it should be in order to provide real opportunities for all pupils so that it "plays a leading role in the successful and sustainable construction of their future" [58] (p. 4). This formulation should consider that inclusion is an ongoing process that requires permanent attention [59].

The quantitative and qualitative data from this research have enabled us to gather opinions whilst also looking more in-depth into the needs of a group of pupils with dyslexia, highlighting the emotions that underpin their learning. The open-ended questions supported this perspective by showing the deficiencies in the education system itself that many agree on and which should be taken into account to determine the real needs of pupils. The voices of families and children could be included to make improvements for educa-

tional cultures, policies and practices. These voices represent a transformational potential by highlighting online and face-to-face learning obstacles. Listening to these individuals could have a major impact on teaching processes, outlining a very different image of current education, schooling, syllabi, organisation, relations with the education community and the roles of these factors in the rounded development of children and adolescents in a democratic society.

Reconsidering education in terms of inclusion, fairness, and quality aids in the prioritisation of pupils' wellbeing as a basis for providing essential teaching for life. In other words, 21st-century schooling must ensure the "genuine right to learn" is provided [60] (p. 42). For this author, this is considered a universal right that involves radical commitment from teachers to instruct all pupils by taking into account their specific needs.

Situations such as those experienced previously may be repeated by further school lockdowns to the COVID-19 pandemic. Indeed, this is already happening. The uncertainty that we will face in 2021 should be a powerful driver for collective consideration to globally visualize the necessary changes to education and construct schooling models for everybody within a prism of inclusive education.

An immediate roadmap that focuses on ethics and educational policies, i.e., on the attitudes and inequalities in schools, is required. The main issue is not the difficulties or weaknesses of pupils but rather what occurs within school walls, as well as political discourse sustained through divisive legal approaches and exclusionary and harmful professional discourse. Carefully questioning the pretexts of both discourses is essential in order to support the efforts of families, pupils, professionals, etc., which, in line with Sapon-Shevin [61], will lead to successful inclusive policies, cultures, and practices—both in-person and online—despite this goal appearing to be overwhelming.

There are pupils who experience school spaces as a barrier to learning, and this was pointed out in the comments analysed in this research. Pupils stated that they have been better off at home than in school, despite not being able to interact with their peers in person. However, we understand that the factors that make this group of students dislike the school experience should be associated with case-specific variables that demand further exploration.

According to the pupils surveyed, time continues to be a major impediment due, in particular, to the increase and lack of coordination in tasks carried out through online teaching. They also highlighted the syllabus as being a barrier due to its reliance on standardization in activities that are meant to be helpful for learning. This was clear as pupils stated that families have played a key supportive role in school work and studying compared to teachers.

4.2. Limitations and Future Research

Some of the limitations faced by this research included the small sample sizes from certain countries used in the qualitative and quantitative analyses. A further major limitation was the inability to collect qualitative data directly (by interviews and discussion groups). In turn, a third limitation was that the sample was selected from families in contact with associations, since it is difficult to gain access to others who are not part of association networks.

In spite of these limitations, we believe that the research highlights major pedagogical, organisational, and policy implications, given that it provides evidence of the urgent need to undertake research into factors associated with the school context that impact the learning experience of dyslexic pupils. While research into successful practices has been expanded and there is significant evidence that highlights the benefits of the use of technology to support learning processes, many pupils are still being confronted by barriers to participation and progress.

In this sense, future research could focus on case studies from a biographical perspective which, according to Desmarais [62], has three fundamental aims: to produce knowledge, to provide interventions to transform reality, and to provide training. Delving into

life experiences through participants' own voices could lead to a deeper and more original understanding of educational realities and barriers, facilitating cultures and practices that allow progress towards inclusive education to be made.

It would also be useful to explore the opportunities provided by the use of technological resources. In turn, it would be interesting to explore how the use of these resources and specific applications impact pupils' learning and performance at school and at home, and more specifically, we suggest that there is a focus on students with dyslexia to make their specific demands more visible

Furthermore, it is important to look into initial and ongoing teacher training regarding the awareness of dyslexia, the teaching of reading and writing, and how ICT and a wide range of applications can facilitate this learning, especially when they are used early in schools to later be transferred into homes.

Research such as this, and in other areas, could contribute to improving the emotional wellbeing of pupils with dyslexia from early childhood to adolescence. The aim would be to provide a solid schooling experience with real opportunities for these pupils to reach their full potential through quality inclusive education.

Dyslexia, emotion, and learning, the generic title of this research, does not involve study to uncover dyslexia and its characteristics, since there has already been wide range of in-depth studies in this area. It is a call to action that invites us to question not just how we are performing in the specific COVID-19 pandemic scenario, but also what we will do every day in obligatory and post-obligatory schooling when the health situation improves and, as Echeita [63] (p. 7) stated, "the necessary calm" returns to education. Our current reality should be used to look beyond the now to future possibilities within the framework of inclusive 21st-century education for all. We should work together to develop a system that acknowledges the voices of families and pupils as a dialogic alternative that serves to construct new spaces for educational democracy [64], forcing us to rethink the educational cultures, policies, and practices that can be developed in classrooms to achieve a truly inclusive educational system [65].

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Appendix A

Table A1. Qualitative analysis of pupils' contributions.

Catalogue	Categories	Code	f **	F ***	FT ****
D * Pupil Online Learning (POL)					
Advantages (A)	Family Support (FS)	POL-A-FS	125		
	Technology Literacy (TL)	POL-A-TL	110		
	Self-managed Learning (SL)	POL-A-SL	100		
	Time Management (TM)	POL-A-TM	055	495	
	Work Flexibility (WF)	POL-A-WF	030		
	Fewer Exams (FE)	POL-A-FE	030		
	Access to Resources (AR)	POL-A-AR	025		
	Personal Tutorials (PT)	POL-A-PT	020		
Inconveniences (I)	More Activities (MA)	POL-I-MA	055		
	Social Relations (SR)	POL-I-SR	043		
	Following Instrumental Areas (FIA)	POL-I-FIA	038		
	Stress due to Tasks (ST)	POL-I-ST	030		
	Loneliness (L)	POL-I-L	024		
	Concentration (C)	POL-I-C	021		
	Group Work (GW)	POL-I-GW	018		
	Too Much Theory Content (TMTC)	POL-I-TMTC	016		
	Accessibility for Dyslexia (AD)	POL-I-AD	015	325	
	Lack of Task Adaptation (LTA)	POL-I-LTA	013		1708
	Low Participation (LP)	POL-I-LP	010		
	Demotivation (D)	POL-I-D	010		
	Too Many Internet Searches (TMIS)	POL-I-TMIS	008		
	Workspace (W)	POL-I-W	006		
	Few Videoconferences (FV)	POL-I-FV	005		
	Dropped Connections (DC)	POL-I-DC	005		
	Exposing Personal Image (EPI)	POL-I-EPI	004		
	Explaining Contents (EC)	POL-I-EC	004		
Improvements (IM)	Updated Teacher (UD)	POL-IM-UD	047		
	Individual Tutorials (IT)	POL-IM-IT	043		
	Teacher Explanations (TE)	POL-IM-TE	040		
	Resource Adaptation (RA)	POL-IM-RA	038		
	Task Adaptation (TA)	POL-IM-TA	033		
	Video Tutorials (VT)	POL-IM-VT	031		
	General Videoconferences (GV)	POL-IM-GV	029		
	Recording Classes (RC)	POL-IM-RC	025		
	Support Teachers (ST)	POL-IM-ST	023		
	Therapist Teachers (TT)	POL-IM-TT	020	406	
	Reducing and Coordinating Tasks (RCT)	POL-IM-RCT	018		
	Methodology (M)	POL-IM-M	016		
	Sequenced Tasks (ST)	POL-IM-ST	010		
	Improving Connections (IC)	POL-IM-IC	008		
	Methodological Flexibility (MF)	POL-IM-MF	008		
	Audios (A)	POL-IM-A	006		
	Correcting Errors (CE)	POL-IM-CE	004		
	Prior Diagnosis (PD)	POL-IM-PD	004		
	Syllabus Suitability (SS)	POL-IM-SS	003		

Table A1. *Cont.*

D * Pupil Online Learning (POL)					
Catalogue	Categories	Code	f **	F ***	FT ****
Emotions (E)	Stress (ST)	POL-E-ST	095		
	Overload (O)	POL-E-O	093		
	Family Trust (FT)	POL-E-FT	042		
	Uncertainty (U)	POL-E-U	033		
	Loneliness (L)	POL-E-L	030		
	Happiness (H)	POL-E-H	025		
	Sadness (S)	POL-E-S	023		
	Anxiety (AN)	POL-E-AN	020		
	Misunderstanding (MI)	POL-E-MI	020		
	Embarrassment (E)	POL-E-E	018	482	
	Unending (UN)	POL-E-UN	017		
	Boredom (B)	POL-E-B	016		
	Fear (F)	POL-E-F	013		
	Calm (C)	POL-E-C	012		
	Resignation (R)	POL-E-R	010		
	Pity (P)	POL-E-P	008		
	Helplessness (HE)	POL-E-HE	003		
	Depression (DE)	POL-E-DE	002		
	Panic (PA)	POL-E-PA	002		

Notes: D: dimension *; f **: frequency; F ***: relative frequency; **** FT: total frequency. Source: own elaboration.

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